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THE EVALUATION OF TE PŪTAHITANGA MĀTAURANGA

Final Report

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Mihi

E te iwi whanui o te Taitokerau kua hui mai nei, ka mihi atu ra. E ai ki te pepeha: ‘Mai i Tamaki ki te Revera Wairua, te tai hoe tane, te tai hoe wahine te rohe o Taitokerau’. Ka mihi atu hoki ki a koutou, ki nga kai pupuri i te mana whenua o Te Taitokerau. Mihi mai ra.
E nga hoa mahitahi, e Te Reo o Te Taitokerau, e te Tahuhu o te Matauranga, kia kaha, kia toa, kia mau ki o tatou tumanako mo a tatou tamariki, mokopuna.
E nga kura, e nga whānau, e ako ana, e poïpoi ana, e aroha ana i nga tamariki, mokopuna, tena koutou.
He mihi whanui, he mihi whakakapi kotahi tenei ki a koutou katoa e awhi nei, e tautoko nei i tenei kaupapa rangahau.
No reira, e rau rangatira ma, tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa.

To all who participated in and contributed to this research, thank you. We are grateful to the communities, schools, and whānau who along with takiwa, runanga and Iwi organisations, met our requests for information and interviews and made us welcome in workplaces and hui.

Working together in partnership to realise ‘Excellence in Education Through Unity’ is highly demanding, and undoubtedly highly rewarding. We acknowledge the efforts and commitment of Te Pūtahitanga Mātauranga partners, TRoTT and the Ministry of Education, and TPM team members as they work to raise the achievement of Māori students in Te Taitokerau. We have deeply appreciated the opportunity to work with all of you and the welcoming assistance that has always been provided.

We are also appreciative of the critical feedback, encouragement and advice received from advisory group members. Your knowledge and input has been invaluable in helping us to complete this report.

Tena koutou katoa.
Executive Summary

This report presents findings from evaluation research of the development and implementation of Te Pūtahitanga Mātauranga (TPM) that was carried out between December 2000 and December 2002.

The TPM Project
TPM is an education improvement and development project aimed at raising Māori student achievement levels in Te Taitokerau. TPM operates through an Iwi-Crown partnership between Te Reo o Te Taitokerau (TRoTT) as the organisation representing Iwi and hapu in Te Taitokerau and the Crown represented by the Ministry of Education. Iwi-Crown education partnerships, which inherently recognise the Treaty of Waitangi as the nation’s founding document, have been set up to raise Māori students’ achievement and to facilitate greater Māori involvement and participation in education.

TPM's Strategic Goal
To raise student/Māori student achievement by improving

The context
TPM is unique as an Iwi-Crown education partnership. Whereas in other such partnerships the Crown has partnered with an Iwi runanga or a similar organisation, in the case of TPM the TRoTT partner began as an entity with a kaupapa committed to the strengthening of te reo Māori across Te Taitokerau. TPM is also the only partnership that covers a rohe where there is not one but at least five major Iwi located across takiwa¹ boundaries.

TPM services a large and complex geographical and socio-economic area, encompassing 78 schools in the north. The schools and communities covered by TPM reflect greater variability than any educational improvement project that has been attempted thus far. Education improvement projects generally serve low decile schools located in communities that have similar characteristics, such as largely urban Pacific Islands and

¹ In Te Taitokerau the term takiwa refers to traditional geographical areas, districts or boundaries.
Māori communities facing similar issues of low employment, health, etc. 2 In comparison, while many schools covered by TPM are low decile, rural and predominantly Māori, there are a number of high decile schools, located in townships with relatively lower percentages of Māori students and a higher presence of Pakeha in the communities. The complex nature of the context is such that TPM’s task has been a formidable undertaking for both partners in their pursuit of the partnership goals.

The evaluation process
The evaluation was formative and qualitative research methods were employed within a Kaupapa Māori methodological approach. Methods included participant observation at a range of hui, and open-ended interviews and surveys. Interviews and surveys were variously developed with feedback from TPM managers and/or team initiative leaders and advisory group members. Data were also collected and analysed from official documents, meeting minutes, initiative proposals and submissions.

Analyses drew on Kaupapa Māori critical analysis approaches and qualitative methods’ use of inductive analyses. Qualitative research often uses quotations, description and case portrayals to report its findings, which is the approach taken in this report.

Evaluation Criteria
In undertaking the evaluation of TPM we worked from three main assumptions. These assumptions developed out of the Kaupapa Māori framework taken and our examination of TPM goals documentation and initial implementation in the scoping phase. These assumptions are that: partnership is a fundamental element in the initiation, development and implementation of TPM; ‘community’ is a critical indicator; and ‘Māori student achievement’ is a strategic goal focus for the improvement sought from strengthening schooling in Te Taitokerau. A fundamental part of the last assumption, and one that a Kaupapa Māori framework presupposes, is that opportunities to learn te reo Māori me ona tikanga is a significant element in Māori student achievement.

In evaluating the TPM project’s ongoing development and tracking the development and implementation of the targeted interventions and initiatives we have used three sets of criteria that critically build on assumptions of partnership, community and Māori achievement described above. These criteria are:

- Developing effective mutually empowering partnership and relationships
- Increasing community participation and control in education
- Increasing capacity and capability of schools and communities to provide quality education.

Evaluation studies
The evaluation was commissioned as part of an evolving TPM project and began after a partnership had been formalised between TRoTT and the Ministry of Education and the project was becoming operational. For these reasons, and as TPM continues to operate, the evaluation does not map the project from beginning to end. Considering that a length of time is needed for interventions to show meaningful results and that TPM intervention

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2 For example, the ‘Strengthening Education in Mangere and Otara’ (SEMO) schooling improvement project.
strategies were only in their very early planning stages, it was difficult to measure the impact of TPM interventions on Māori student achievement at the outset and duration of the project’s evaluation. Other ways therefore were needed to evaluate the extent to which TPM was making a difference to Māori achievement in Te Taitokerau. Amid TPM activities in Te Taitokerau there were particular pointers that lent themselves to the evaluative criteria and related quite well to TPM goals.

Three main studies were developed and refined in consultation with TPM and with the research advisory group. The three criteria described above along with TPM’s strategic goal were mechanisms used by the researchers and advisory team to identify areas for evaluation. ³ This is demonstrated in the following table, ‘Mapping the evaluation’.

³ As presented to TPM in the Scoping Report for the evaluation.
Mapping the evaluation

TPM Strategic Goal: To raise student/Māori student achievement by improving:
- The quality of education
- Access and Māori participation in quality te reo
- Māori participation and influence in education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATIVE CRITERIA</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Developing effective mutually empowering partnership and relationships The extent to which quality relationships are being built.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing community participation and control in education The extent to which the project gives community a voice in education that is listened to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing capacity and capability of schools and communities to provide quality education. The extent to which capacity is increased in order to provide quality education resulting in positive educational outcomes for Māori students.</td>
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<tr>
<th>EVALUATION STUDY ONE</th>
<th>EVALUATION STUDY TWO</th>
<th>EVALUATION STUDY THREE</th>
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A brief overview of the three studies is set out below. Within each study there is a range of activities on which the evaluation focuses.

**Study One: Overview of Development and Implementation of TPM**

A significant pointer for the evaluation was the extent to which the growth of the partnership and the growth of the project help towards meeting the strategic goal through its processes. How effective and mutually beneficial were relationships between the partners? How satisfied were communities (whānau, hapu, Iwi) and schools with relationships being established with the project? The first study explored such processes in four ways, that is through examination of: the development and implementation of the partnership; school and community information gathering processes used in a needs analysis exercise; the development of a takiwa representation model; and capacity building, learning and benefiting in the partnership.

Findings showed that the partnership itself, while there are tensions, is forecasting a positive future.

The initial activity of gathering information from schools and communities for a needs analysis exercise on the other hand was fraught and has had implications for relationship building. It raised great hopes and expectations particularly among the community about how they would be involved in education improvement and development, which were not realised through TPM. Towards the end of the evaluation Iwi and takiwa representatives were still expressing negative perceptions of the process of gathering and sharing information, which has an impact on TPM’s profile.

The development of a takiwa representation model, however, has been a positive development, giving rise to networks that can enable TRoTT as the partner to have an outreach into communities, thereby effecting the TPM goal and TRoTT’s kaupapa of strengthening te reo Māori. At this point of evaluation the nature of the networking is very uneven – still emergent in some takiwa, while in others it is more strongly developed.

TPM shows potential for capacity building, learning and providing benefits. Two key issues are emerging at this stage. One involves identifying whose capacity is being built and who is to benefit. While benefits may accrue to all participants, at this point the most obvious are to the partners themselves. Takiwa and Iwi representatives are saying that benefits accruing to them are minimal, in terms of strengthening their abilities to participate in improving education in their communities. The indications are that capacity building is having a kind of ‘Matthew effect’ where those with lesser capacity (the community) make least gain. We predict this will continue to be that way unless there is a sharing of control, resources and skills, between the partners themselves, and also with community stakeholders. Such capacity building, however, requires cognisance of the dangers of that process fostering dependency and being assimilative rather than being an opportunity for self-determination.

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4 ‘Them that hath shall receive.’
Key points from Study One:

Partnership development:
- Treaty relationship as the basis of partnership between Iwi and Crown requires: sense of equality and power sharing; commitment and capability to partnering with Māori worldviews; significance of Iwi-Crown relationships for improving all areas of national life.
- TPM reflects varying rationales for education partnership and each partner has worked to accommodate the other’s emphasis.

School and community information collecting processes:
- This process raised expectations among community that TPM would facilitate the development of initiatives by and within community and Iwi and had a negative impact on relationship building.
- Information gathering needed to include: coordinated communications; checking that shared, realistic understandings and expectations develop; opportunity for community and school to cooperatively consider the data.

Developing a representation model:
- Developing a representation model to facilitate an educational focus and agenda across takiwa and iwi organisations does not automatically bestow TRoTT with a clear mandate or necessarily reinforce an existing one.
- Provides for the development of networks that can enable TRoTT as the partner to outreach into communities.

Capacity building, learning and providing benefits in partnership:
- Facilitates Māori participation in education, seen as critical within a Kaupapa Māori framework in order to make change.
- Involves identifying whose capacity is being built and who is to benefit.
- Requires cognisance of the dangers of capacity building that foster dependency.
Study Two: Māori participation and influence in education

Another significant pointer was the extent to which TPM activities help increase Māori participation and control in education. Two case studies were undertaken. One focused on Māori on boards of trustees, the other on the development of an initiative and education planning as a way of observing the extent of increased Māori participation and control in one particular takiwa.

Boards of Trustees

The Board of Trustees case study focused on two issues: how to get more Māori on boards (a pre-election campaign) and how to support Māori members on boards once elected (wananga-a-takiwa).

The evaluation showed that pre-election campaign workshops were poorly attended and their impact is questionable. To what extent were TPM expectations met, that community facilitators involved in the information gathering process referred to above would help facilitate community participation in the pre-election campaign? Interviews with elected Māori board members in one takiwa reflected low levels of awareness of the campaign.

While there is a mismatch between Māori board members’ stated expectations of board support and the kind of support wananga-a-takiwa provide, the wananga in actuality are doing a good job in providing collegial and cultural support for board members. They are having a positive role in inter-school and community-school relationships within takiwa.

Initiative development and education planning in one takiwa

The initiative ‘STEP’ aimed at facilitating student transition from small primary schools to a large high school did not reach a formal submission stage because of problems affecting implementation, in particular the cohort of student participants was very small. Other issues emerged. A mentoring model was proposed to address transition problems by working with students and whānau, which located the problem with students and failed to recognise structural impediments that exist to student transition. This is a deficit model in action.

The evaluation found that takiwa education planning that has occurred focused on whānau and community learning rather than on schools as critical for improving Māori students’ learning. School expectations of education planning were that it would include consultation with them and that it would have practical significance for schools. The planning team, however, developed a whānau learning centre concept, in which raising Māori student achievement was seen in relation to changing attitudes and behaviours of parents to schooling through addressing parents’ learning needs. If one takes the view that the goal of education planning was to put education on the community agenda in order to ultimately improve Māori student achievement, then indicators are that what has happened to date is change in a positive direction. Measuring such an impact is likely to be more long term.
Key Points from Study Two:

Case Study 1: Boards of Trustees:

Pre-election campaign

- Possible links between low turnout and lack of shared understandings about TPM expectations of previously contracted community facilitators.
- Awareness of the campaign across incoming trustees was relatively low.
- Reasons for seeking election and views of the significance of having Māori board members’ reflected concerns about Māori representation, school-community relationships and Māori culture/ways of doing things.
- Expectations for board support were that it would address governance-related ‘knowledge and information’ and support Māori board members at an individual and/or individual school level.

Board Wananga-a-takiwa:

- Contrast with expectations described in post-election interviews.
- Provide a context of whakawhanaungatanga, tautoko and manaaki.
- Help positively change and/or strengthen school-school and school-community relationships within takiwa.
- Need to ensure continuing attendance of a high proportion of the targeted group: i.e. Māori board members.

Case Study 2: Initiative development and education planning in one takiwa

Initiative development

- Key issues in the initiative not reaching submission stage were
  - Differences in perceptions of the problem
  - Low potential numbers of students for the project along with equivocal support from small schools
  - Potential efficacy of a mentoring model that does not include a clear focus on change in schools’ views and practices.

Education planning in one takiwa

- Impact of approach taken on Māori student achievement likely to be more long-term than more-school focused approaches.
- Involvement of TRoTT takiwa representation indicates potential for capacity building to occur in a takiwa direction.
- Findings question whether community focus and a school focus could be brought together without community focus being overwhelmed.
Study Three: The development and implementation of two interventions

Increasing capacity and capability of schools and communities to provide quality education was also a significant pointer. When the evaluation began, intervention strategies were only in their very early planning stages. Over the evaluation period, TPM has worked with schools and boards to identify areas of need and areas for development. By the end of the evaluation period there were eight specific initiatives or projects spanning the entire area covered by the project. At the start of the evaluation two potential interventions were signalled at an advisory meeting as likely to be implemented or fully developed during the evaluation period. These were the North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum Initiative and Te RITO Māori, focused on in Study Three.

With regards to the first intervention, while aspects of negotiating participation with schools and boards were problematic, after a year’s implementation the indicators are very positive for student achievement, for school-school relationships and for harnessing community skills and knowledge.

Te reo Māori is a critical dimension of the partnership goal and is fundamental to TRoTT as the Māori partner. For the TPM there are high stakes involved in getting te reo Māori programming right and costs involved in getting it wrong. There are also high stakes for Māori across Te Taitokerau for Iwi language regeneration and maintenance. The provision of te reo Māori programmes emerged as a concern in the needs analyses exercise conducted by TPM in 2000. The development of Te RITO Māori shows a strong match between school and communities’ stated needs with regards to te reo Māori programmes and with regards to expectations of the promised TPM intervention.\(^{5}\) Collaborative and cooperative development with schools was much more evident, although community participation in decision-making varied in strength and degree across the three takiwa in which Te RITO Māori was to be implemented.

\(^{5}\) Implementation began in term one of 2003.
Key Points from Study Three:
North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum Initiative

- Negotiating involvement was problematic.

- After one year showed positive outcomes for
  - Student achievement
  - Student behaviour and mentored principal confidence
  - Developing curriculum programmes on smaller school sites
  - School relationships of cooperation, learning and support
  - Identification and growing of community capabilities to participate in, and contribute to their children’s education
  - Senior students’ views of the initiative.

- Is significant for two reasons:
  - Shows effectiveness of a supportive school-school relationships model to improve education quality
  - Shows valuable knowledge and skills existing in isolated communities facing economic downturn can be tapped to enhance and enrich curriculum and its delivery in very small schools.

Te Reo Itinerant Teachers of Māori (Te RITO Māori)

- Pre-Te RITO intervention
  - Lack of Māori language teachers
  - Poor quality of Māori language programmes
  - Need for adequate and appropriate assessment tools in relation to Māori language delivery
  - Issues of where responsibility lies to ensure te reo Māori provision
  - Low status of te reo Māori in curriculum
  - Negative perceptions of te reo Māori delivery in mainstream English medium.

- Strong match between school and community expectations of Te RITO Māori and its intended outcomes.

- Te RITO Māori development
  - Strong collaborative development with schools in each takiwa
  - More consistent community participation needed in development across takiwa.
CHAPTER ONE
Introduction

As a result of serious reports and reviews on the quality and standard of education in Te Taitokerau region, the Ministry of Education was prompted to set up an intervention mechanism in the region that would deal with the widespread problems documented. Past interventions through the Ministry’s School Monitoring and Support arm had gone some way to trying to resolve and improve the provision of education on a school case by case basis in the north. But the decision to float a schooling improvement project encompassing a large number of schools and communities was a more radical approach as it sought to adopt a wide scale initiative to address the issues with which it was confronted.

Particular strategies were to be employed in the project that required the collaboration and cooperation of many groups in education via an Iwi-Crown partnership in the northern part of Te Taitokerau. This report presents findings from a two-year study of the development and implementation of the educational improvement and development project being carried out, which aims to set about raising achievement levels in Te Taitokerau. The study set out to examine the partnership’s development and processes of change that would impact on contexts for teaching and learning, which are known to directly influence learning outcomes. Given that a key outcome for the project is raising student achievement, student assessment mechanisms are in general built into project initiatives. In addition the Ministry of Education monitors student achievement through School Monitoring and Support. In cognisance of the collection of these achievement data, and that any initiatives were likely to have been implemented for only a short period during the duration of this study, direct measures of Māori student achievement were not planned for.

In November 1999 the research team completed a scoping phase report of the study. Three main studies were developed and refined in consultation with TPM and with the study’s advisory group. The studies undertaken relate in part to the components of TPM’s strategic goal, which is described in the next section. The studies focus on:

1. The development and implementation of the partnership and project
   – School and community information gathering processes
   – Developing a representation model
   – Capacity building, learning and benefiting in partnership

2. Case studies of Māori participation and influence in education
   – Board of Trustees pre-election campaign and wananga-a-takiwa.
   – Initiative development and education planning in one takiwa; and

3. The development and implementation of two interventions
   – North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum Initiative
   – Te Reo Itinerant Teachers of Māori (Te RITO Māori).

The research proper commenced in December 1999. Formative evaluation and qualitative research methods were employed within a Kaupapa Māori methodological approach.

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6 Te Taitokerau is the northern part of the North Island of Aotearoa-New Zealand, the home of Ngati Kuri, Te Aupouri, Te Rarawa, Ngati Kahu Iwi (tribes) and Nga Puhi Iwi. The term is also used in other contexts, e.g. to describe Northland and to denote the Northern Māori electorate, which encompasses Cape Reinga through to North Shore and western suburbs of Auckland.
Te Pūtahitanga Mātauranga: An Iwi-Crown partnership

The project under study operates through a partnership called Te Pūtahitanga Mātauranga between Te Reo o Te Taitokerau (TRoTT) as the organisation representing Te Taitokerau Iwi Māori, and the Crown represented by the Ministry of Education. The partnership was formally launched on 10 June 1999 at Tauwhara Marae in Waimate North, its development seen as an articulation of commitment to principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Its development also took cognisance of government strategic directions, including reducing disparities and Māori capacity building. Study one of this research focuses on these aspects of the partnership. The Ministry and TRoTT have aimed to work cooperatively towards achieving their partnership goal, initially worded as:

- To increase access and participation in te reo Māori within all Te Taitokerau Schools
- To increase Māori participation and achievement in education
- To improve the quality of education for Māori in Te Taitokerau.

There has been a rewording of the project’s goals and at the time this report was written its strategic goal was to raise student/Māori student achievement by improving:

- the quality of education
- access and participation in quality te reo
- Māori participation and influence in education.

TPM proposed to realise these goals through a number of means including:

- Working with communities on solutions for their own area
- Building relationships with Māori, Iwi and Hapu
- Engaging with schools
- Better inter-agency collaboration
- Sharing successful practice
- Increased support for schools and communities.

The interpretation given to the partnership’s name ‘Te Pūtahitanga Mātauranga’ (TPM) is ‘Excellence in Education Through Unity’. The name itself is derived from an important maunga of Te Taitokerau called Te Puputahitanga, known today as Putahi. The maunga is beside Lake Omapere, which is near the centre of Te Taitokerau. It has historical significance as a symbol of coming together for the benefit of Iwi. Te Puputahitanga means the place where many folk would gather, build houses, grow food, and harvest fish from the lake. It is also a place where in the past Māori leaders met to discuss and make decisions for the benefit of their people.

TPM is an Iwi Initiative alongside Schooling Improvement Initiatives within the School Monitoring and Support (SMS) of the Ministry. SMS began as the Schools at Risk Project in 1994, which was established by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with other education sector groups. The project underwent an early name change to Schools Support Project to reflect the nature of work with boards of trustees, rather than focusing on the

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7 Te Tiriti o Waitangi, also known as the Treaty of Waitangi, between the British Crown and Māori was signed in 1840. It ceded governance in the Māori language version and sovereignty in the English language version in exchange for citizenship and protection. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.
8 From TPM presentations to Iwi organisations, community and school stakeholders.
9 A hill or mountain.
situation a board might be in. The overall aim of the project was to provide safety net assistance strategies for schools where the implementation of the National Education Guidelines were at risk, and to work in partnership with them to resolve issues or problems as early as possible. While SMS still operates its safety net strategy with individual schools not performing well, it has developed a school improvement and effectiveness strategy that also involves clusters of schools working together to raise educational quality and outcomes, to improve school and community relationships and to build community capacity.  

Operationally TPM encompasses 78 schools in the Far North Local Territorial Authority area from Cape Reinga to Towai. Prior to TPM various reviews and reports, described in more detail in Chapter Three, identified serious issues with the quality of education being provided that impacted on Māori students in particular. At the start of the partnership project 82% of the schools were deciles one to three. Māori students made up 58% of the total school population, but 80% of students in schools where education outcomes were most at risk were Māori.

A Kaupapa Māori framework

The research being reported was grounded upon Kaupapa Māori. Kaupapa Māori research is in general terms regarded as being research for Māori by Māori, which is framed within Māori worldviews. Kaupapa Māori methodology locates Māori understandings as central to the research process and analysis. As an analytical approach, Kaupapa Māori is about thinking critically, including developing a critique of non-Māori constructions and definitions of Māori and affirming the importance of Māori self-determination and self-valuations. Leonie Pihama describes Kaupapa Māori research as having both local and national aspirations, local in the sense of whānau, hapū and Iwi; and national in the sense of multi-iwi and urban Māori. Important to Kaupapa Māori research is the desire and intention of Māori to represent ourselves. In that, Kaupapa Māori research is considered by many Māori researchers to be inherently political in nature. That is the position taken by researchers at the International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education. There is a growing body of literature regarding Kaupapa Māori theories and practices that assert a need for Māori to develop initiatives for change that are located within distinctly Māori frameworks. Kaupapa Māori calls for initiatives and interventions (including their development, implementation and evaluation) that are generated within communities, acknowledging and drawing on Māori tikanga, knowledge and realities, and the existing strengths located within those communities.

Kaupapa Māori in research is particularly concerned with methodology in contrast to method. This distinction is very important and can be summarised thus: Methodology: a process of enquiry that determines the method(s) used.

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11 Sinclair, M. (2001) Making a difference together. Presentation at School Monitoring and Support National Conference, February, Wellington. SMS has also expanded its framework to include the development of a monitoring strategy that collects and analyses information on student and school performance and provision.

12 A Kura Kaupapa Māori in Whangarei and a general school outside the area are also included in the project.


15 Tikanga as cultural rules, protocols, customs.

Method: tools that can be used to produce and analyse data.
In this sense Kaupapa Māori is ‘a theory and an analysis of the context of research which involves Māori and of the approaches to research with, by and/or for Māori.\textsuperscript{17} A Kaupapa Māori framework is not restricted only to research that involves Māori; it is an approach in which research involving non-Māori participants can also be carried out.\textsuperscript{18}

Graham Smith has described several key intervention elements into Māori educational and cultural crises that can be generalised under the label of Kaupapa Māori. These key elements are often intuitively brought together by Māori attempting to respond in culturally appropriate ways to social difficulties and tensions. When successfully combined these elements have the potential to act as strategies of intervention in areas such as education. It is our belief that these elements undeniably have relevance for the evaluation of a schooling improvement project that has a particular focus on Māori students. Key elements described by Smith\textsuperscript{19} are:

\textbf{rangatiratanga} – relative autonomy principle  
(assuming more meaningful control over one’s life)

\textbf{taonga tuku iho} – cultural aspirations principle  
(having an emotional regard for Māori language, knowledge and culture)

\textbf{ako Māori} – culturally preferred pedagogy  
(preferring Māori cultural ways of doing things)

\textbf{kia orite i nga raruraru o te kainga} – mediation of socio-economic and home difficulties principle (invoking cultural practices and values to mediate the debilitating impact of socio-economic circumstances)

\textbf{whānau} – extended family structure principle  
(developing extended family support networks)

\textbf{kaupapa} – collective vision, philosophical principle  
(ensuring a shared cultural understanding and aspirations among all participants).

As can be seen above, Māori social units are identified as key to Kaupapa Māori approaches. For example, the concept of whānau\textsuperscript{20} is identified as an integral part of methodology in terms of ensuring that Māori are actively included, and in the ethical procedures, organisation and direction of research. This has presented particular challenges for the project in terms of putting together a research team and an advisory group. While there have been changes within the research team over the two year period, a concerted effort was made to ensure that researchers had links with Te Taitokerau. As is the case for many members of the TPM team at the start of this study, most of the research team comprised members who can whakapapa back to Iwi in Te Taitokerau, who have whānau in the region and who regularly visit or live there. Another element that Kaupapa Māori methodology needed to take cognisance of relates to our roles as evaluators, which raises issues that are often discussed in terms of ‘insider-outsider’. Kaupapa Māori calls for the

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{20} Māori structure for family groupings.
recognition and active acknowledgement of whanaungatanga,21 including how researchers and ‘researched’ are connected or related, rather than trying to minimise or reduce these. At times it was difficult to keep ‘lines of relating’ that were specific to the research clearly defined.22 Evaluation team members sometimes faced challenges of overlapping roles in relation to TPM and its evaluation, particularly when they also worked with their own whānau networks as a whānau member. These challenges resonate with the kinds of challenges described in research that use formative approaches.23 Application of evaluation criteria, described below, was important in addressing these challenges, alongside working as a research team.

The role of the advisory group was to provide academic, methodological and theoretical support and advice for the evaluation. Māori and local knowledge was seen as an important component of such support and advice. Thus it was important that the advisory group included Māori members drawn from the partnership, the local runanga, and the Māori research community. Ensuring that the advisory group hui consistently included Māori voices from Iwi did, however, prove a challenge at times in the face of members’ other roles and responsibilities.

**A formative evaluation approach**

The study involved formative evaluation of TPM early in its development as a partnership, and operationally as it has developed and begun to implement educational interventions in Te Taitokerau. Formative evaluation aims at producing information that is useful for planning, refining and improving an intervention, programme or policy.24 Formative evaluation sets up a relationship where a critical purpose of the evaluation is to provide information in order to improve the project. It was envisaged that the research would provide a continuous cycle of implementation, evaluation and adaptation. In this sense, the evaluation was viewed as involving intervention. Patton argues that intentionally viewing evaluation as an intervention is a positive challenge to traditional research notions about independence and measurement. In so doing it addresses what are also traditionally seen as threats to validity by building data collection into projects or programmes being evaluated in ways that enhance their outcomes.25 During the study there were opportunities to present and discuss findings with the governance body of TPM, the Kaunihera, with TRoTT and with school board members whose schools were participating in initiatives.

The development of this study was collaborative, which is in keeping with the Kaupapa Māori framework and formative evaluation approach described above. Maintaining a collaborative approach involved a deal of flexibility in planning and carrying out studies particularly early on in the research, for at least three reasons. Strengthening education in partnership is a very complex and demanding task and that, rather than being ‘top-down’ and centrally planned and controlled, it involves organic, ‘bottom-up’ processes, with negotiation and a willingness to change among the partners being significant factors. This has meant researching in a context that has been likened to ‘liquid cement’ or ‘where goalposts are allowed to shift’. A second reason relates to TPM operations. There were staffing changes in the TPM operational team, which had implications for the timing of

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21 Relationship, kinship.
development and implementation of interventions, and which demanded some re-negotiation of studies. Thirdly, conditions in participating schools such as staffing issues and changes also impacted on initiative development and implementation, which in turn impacted on data collection activities.

Research methods
Qualitative research methods were used to gather data in this study. These methods included participant observation at a range of hui at TPM partnership level, at takiwa and Iwi level, and at school-community and schools level. They also included the use of open-ended and semi-structured interviews, and surveys with members from the Iwi Māori and Crown partners, from Iwi and takiwa organisations, school staff and members of communities involved in targeted TPM initiatives, and participants in takiwa community education activities. Interviews and surveys were variously developed with feedback from TPM managers and/or team initiative leaders and advisory group members. Interviews were carried out kanohi-ki-kanohi²⁶ as much as possible. In some instances telephone or email interviews were undertaken; however, nearly all interviewees met a member of the research team in person sometime during the research period.

Interview data analysis involved members of the research team reading and re-reading interview transcripts and notes, and identifying what the relevant themes were and discussing them. Interviews were then analysed and coded to those themes. Analyses drew on Kaupapa Māori’s critical analysis approach and qualitative methods’ use of inductive analyses. Data were also collected and analysed from official documents, meeting minutes, initiative proposals and submissions. Qualitative research often uses quotations, description and case portrayals to report its findings, which is the approach taken in this report.

Evaluation criteria
In undertaking the evaluation of TPM we worked from three main assumptions, which in turn led to these three sets of evaluation criteria for the study. These assumptions developed out of the Kaupapa Māori framework taken and our examination of TPM goals documentation and initial implementation in the scoping phase.

One assumption relates to partnership being a fundamental element in the initiation, development and implementation of TPM. A second assumption is that ‘community’ is a critical indicator emerging out of TPM’s strategic goal and the means by which they seek to realise it. Additionally, schooling improvement literature, particularly in relation to indigenous groups, emphasises the importance of community involvement. There are differing views of who makes up ‘community’, who represents community and how community should be informed and involved. We define ‘community’ focused on in this research as being Māori, and as such this definition encompasses whānau, hapu, iwi. We have had a focus on how Māori community participation and control over their children’s schooling is being facilitated.

A third assumption pertains to ‘Māori student achievement’ as a strategic goal focus for the improvement sought from strengthening schooling in Te Taitokerau.²⁷ The impact of TPM work on Māori students, in the short to medium term, and implications that such

²⁶ Face-to-face.
²⁷ The information sheets for the Community Questionnaire and the Schools Questionnaire state ‘The aim of this project is to improve Māori student achievement’.
impact has for Māori student achievement in the long term is a critical indicator for the TPM project. A fundamental part of this assumption, and one that a Kaupapa Māori framework presupposes, is that opportunities to learn te reo Māori me ona tikanga is a significant element in Māori student achievement. In evaluating the TPM project’s ongoing development and tracking the development and implementation of the targeted interventions and initiatives we have used the following three sets of criteria that critically build on assumptions of partnership, community and Māori achievement described above.

1. **Increasing community participation and control in education**

The first set of criteria relates to the extent to which the TPM project is giving Māori communities a voice in education that is listened to and epitomises the kaupapa Māori intervention element of rangatiratanga as described by Smith. This set of criteria also encompasses issues of ‘mandate’ and what the term is understood to mean; such issues emerged as a key factor for the success of the project during the scoping phase of this research.

Another issue relating to community participation and control is communication. Communication with community and schools plays an important role in ensuring continued commitment and confidence in a project. During the scoping of this study we found that information had not yet begun being effectively communicated to all Te Taitokerau communities and schools and TPM team members themselves brought up communication as an issue.28

Criteria that were used to assess community participation in the TPM partnership and initiatives that the research focused on were:

- Representativeness of community participation;
- The ways community participate and significance of that participation for their children’s education;
- The extent community participate in decisions made about: schooling interventions and initiatives put in place; identification of what will count as success for the project and for such interventions; deciding whether interventions have been successful.

2. **Developing effective, mutually empowering partnership and relationships**

The second set of evaluative criteria relates to the extent that an effective, mutually empowering partnership develops that involves quality relationship building, and the engendering of trust. Partnership and how that would be played out has been a key focus throughout the planning of the TPM project. Getting the partnership ‘right’ in itself, as well in order to get positive outcomes, has been an important part of the task that faces TPM. It is one that is explicitly recognised by the parties involved. Issues that are raised in relation to partnership involve questions such as:

- Whose criteria is used to select an appropriate partner?
- Whose criteria for partnership is used in developing a partnership?
- Whose values govern a partnership and decision-making?

Te Tiriti o Waitangi was another factor relating to partnership that emerged during the scoping phase of this research. Some voices expressed the need for the Tiriti to be central to the partnership and relationships, be they between the Ministry and TRoTT, TPM and schools and communities and so on. In contrast others voiced concern that an emphasis on

28 Knowledge and understanding of TPM was found to vary greatly across school and community representatives that we interviewed during scoping. For example, a community facilitator who expressed enthusiasm and commitment to TPM, when asked what they understood to be the focus of TPM replied, ‘In all honesty, I couldn’t really say.’
Treaty issues in partnerships may shift the focus from issues specific to education to issues of wider concern to Māori. One of the significant challenges facing the partnership is the degree of cynicism and mistrust within communities of Crown-sourced initiatives. In education, Māori confidence and commitment has been reduced as a result of layers of negative experiences of government initiatives. Questions arising out of this set of criteria related to:

- Developing partnership between TRoTT and the Ministry
- Relationships between TPM, communities and schools
- Attitudes towards Crown-sourced partnership initiatives within communities.

3. Increasing capacity and capability of schools and communities to ensure quality education

The third set, which is directly linked into the two above, relates to the extent to which the capacity and capabilities of schools and communities increase to provide quality education that will result in positive educational outcomes for Māori students. This encompasses how the knowledge and expertise in the teaching profession is being strengthened in sustainable ways through TPM operations and initiatives. It also encompasses how knowledge and attitudes in the community including takiwa and Iwi organisations are being changed through the partnership.

The development of the research studies has also been guided by three themes that were presented by TPM for the evaluation: partnership, relationships and clustering. The themes of partnership and relationships overlap with evaluation criteria described above. Priority relationships were identified as:

- Schools and communities
- Schools and TPM
- Iwi and TPM/TRoTT
- Schools and schools.

Clustering, and the ways that schools are grouped together for initiatives aimed at improving and developing education in Te Taitokerau, partly encompasses the ‘schools and schools’ relationship prioritised above. TPM has grouped the 78 Far North schools into 10 takiwa based on Te Taitokerau Iwi and hapu boundaries and one group based on Kaupapa Māori schooling. Clustering compares and contrasts with TPM’s grouping of schools and also with the development of a representation model by the TRoTT partner that has brought representatives from takiwa into TRoTT and arguably into the partnership.

Report organisation and overview

The report is organised so that the criteria and the themes for the evaluation described above are variously foregrounded. It is also organised in a manner that takes cognisance of the key components of the partnership goal to raise student/Māori student achievement, which are: the quality of education, access and participation in quality te reo, and Māori participation and influence in education. In organising the report this way, this is not to say that the themes and the goals are not inextricably interrelated. A focus on partnership, for

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29 As noted in the pepeha used in the report’s mihi, Te Taitokerau stretches from Cape Reinga to Tamaki – the area of Auckland, and the fact that TPM effectively cuts out part of Te Taitokerau has emerged as an area of debate during this study. TRoTT has put energy into developing relationships with Taitokerau Iwi organisations outside of the TPM area.

30 See Chapter Three.
instance, does not mean that relationship and clustering issues were not significant in how
the partnership itself has developed and how capacities of the partners and who they
represent have been affected. It does not mean that education quality and te reo Māori are
not seen as fundamental in the partnership. TPM is a large and highly complex partnership
project. Researching TPM was not a simple exercise nor did it enable an exclusive focus
on any one of its goal dimensions at any given time. Demands of reporting research are
such that we have attempted to focus each chapter on a particular aspect of the interrelated
complexities that are TPM. While focusing on specific parts, however, the ‘big picture’ is
also part of the view at all times.

Chapters Two to Four foreground the theme of ‘partnership’. Chapter Two focuses on
partnership as it pertains to Iwi-Crown relationships. Much has been written about the
significance of partnership as a strategy to improve and reform education and schooling
across many countries. Relatively less material is available that focuses on partnership
with indigenous groups; however, key factors emerging out of some research and
discussions point to the pursuit of greater indigenous control of its education. In Aotearoa
New Zealand the existence of a Treaty between Crown and Māori, the indigenous group,
has significant implications for partnerships involving Māori. There are a growing number
of educational partnerships between Iwi and Crown that incorporate a Treaty basis. While
there is research available on partnership models that have been applied in local schooling
improvement initiatives to date, these models have not been explicitly Treaty-inclusive.
This chapter examines national and international approaches to partnership as a means to
educational improvement and development and considers Treaty implications of building
such partnerships between Iwi and Crown.

Chapter Three focuses on the TPM partnership, discussing its development and providing
an overview of the social and historical context of education in Te Taitokerau. The needs
analysis exercise undertaken by TPM in the first year of operation is examined and its
effects on early perceptions and engagement with the developing partnership are
discussed. The focus then turns to representation models used that provided representation
from the education sector early on in the partnership, then from takiwa and Iwi.

Chapter Four focuses on capacity building, learning and benefits occurring in the
partnership. There have been significant capacity-building implications for TRoTT and for
takiwa and Iwi in Te Taitokerau as they have worked to come to grips with educational
issues and to make worthwhile contributions to the partnership goal. There have also been
significant implications for the Ministry and TRoTT as they have been learning to work
together to improve education and schooling in Te Taitokerau.

In Chapter Five community participation and influence in education and the theme of
relationships are foregrounded. Two case studies are reported. The first section reports a
case study focused on Māori Board of Trustees members and begin with a discussion of a
follow-up of Māori board members in one takiwa after the 2001 board elections. It then
examines the Boards of Trustees Wananga-a-takiwa, which was the first TPM initiative to
be implemented. The initiative is different from later ones where schools are the fund
holders in that it was planned as marae-based rather than school-based and TRoTT became
the funding holder. The second section reports a case study focused on education planning
in one takiwa and examines the implications of the planning approach taken. This section
begins with a discussion of an attempt to develop a takiwa school-based transition
initiative. The focus then turns to the community based takiwa education planning that
occurred. Initial partnership expectations were that takiwa education planning would
involve community and schools cooperatively developing an educational plan for their takiwa, which would include a schooling improvement and development emphasis. What transpired in the case study takiwa was the development of a plan for community and whānau education that did not include any explicit focus on schooling.

Chapter Six foregrounds aspects of the goal pertaining to the quality of education and to access and participation in quality te reo Māori. It also links into the themes of school-community and school-school relationships and of clustering. Two interventions are examined in this chapter. The first, the North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum Initiative, was developed as a strategy for building the capacity of small schools to provide quality education in their communities in 2002. The initiative is significant for two reasons. One relates to the power a supportive and cooperative school-school relationships model can have to improve education quality compared with a competitive model. The second relates to the existence of valuable knowledge and skills in very small, isolated and often economically challenged communities that can be tapped to enhance and enrich curriculum and delivery in very small schools.

The second initiative Te RITO Māori, was signalled by TPM in 2001 and its development was tracked over 2002. The initiative involves 14 schools from four takiwa that have been grouped into three clusters. Te reo Māori is a fundamental element of the partnership goal. It is an inherent part of the existence and development of TRoTT as the Māori partner. There are high stakes involved in Te reo Māori programmes in getting it right and costs involved in getting it wrong. There are also high stakes for Māori across Te Taitokerau for Iwi language regeneration and maintenance. Many schools and communities had identified te reo Māori programmes of consistent high quality, as a high need that they faced. Te reo Māori programming has presented schools with challenges related to human, curriculum and assessment resources. Te RITO Māori aims to help address these through schools clustering to share the use of and responsibility for such resources. Takiwa also have key roles to play in the initiative vis-à-vis involvement in decision-making, Iwi knowledge and in local dialect fluency.

In the final chapter TPM’s achievements are reviewed and critical issues and challenges facing it are discussed. A significant feature is that while there has been an operational emphasis on the quality of schooling provided in Te Taitokerau, within the partnership itself there is not a singular focus on schooling as the locus for raising educational outcomes. Another significant feature of TPM has been how the Treaty-driven partnership model utilised to improve and develop education and schooling in Te Taitokerau has in turn set up education as a context for trying to practise what a Treaty relationship might mean in real-life terms. This has not been an easy or straightforward undertaking for either partner.
CHAPTER TWO
Iwi-Crown educational partnership

The concept of partnership has taken on a current vogue. It is a word that slips off the tongue and on to paper with ease. ‘Partnership’ can have multiple meanings and is a word for which no single definition exists that categorically describes what it is or its relative components. Cooperation, trust, reciprocity, mutual benefit, co-ownership, profit, shared power, shared decision-making and shared resources are but some of the many terms we have found that are used to discuss elements of partnership. Partnership usually has connotations of working together in order to achieve something. Thus partners, who are involved in a process of working together, jointly determine what it is that is important to achieve and believe this can be realised more effectively or efficiently by working together than by working alone. ‘Partnership’ is contextual. The reasons for its existence, the partners involved, the particular time and space it occupies all work to shape how partnership is understood, what it looks like and how it works.

Within educational contexts an emphasis on partnership as a means to improve educational quality has existed across the last few decades nationally and internationally.31 Such partnerships have involved educational ‘stakeholders’ such as schools, students, families and communities through to educational managers, administrators and policy-makers. They are found across educational sectors such as early childhood, compulsory schooling, tertiary, and community. Partnerships can also focus on the education of targeted groups such as specific minority groups, the poor and indigenous peoples.

In Aotearoa New Zealand the concept of ‘partnership’ has a longer genesis that exists outside of education and brings with it a local and unique dimension. This dimension is particularly emphasised in cases where Iwi or Māori are involved as a significant partner. Partnership has been identified by the Crown via the courts as a key principle arising out of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which is widely regarded as the founding document for this country and lays out in its various versions patterns for Māori-Crown relationships.

In this chapter some of the multiple ways in which partnership is understood and defined are explored. This chapter then focuses national and international partnership approaches taken to improve and develop education. Finally, partnership as it pertains to Māori and Crown is discussed and the implications of building a partnership based on educational agenda and Te Tiriti o Waitangi relationships are explored.

Understanding partnership

Understanding partnership can be approached in varying ways. One approach is from a strictly legal viewpoint. In commercial terms, a legal partnership is seen to require three essential elements without which a partnership cannot exist: a business, a view of profit and partners who are directly involved or represented.32 A legal partnership usually includes agreement to not only share profits but also any losses that the partnership might accrue. Business partnerships are described as underpinned by the principle of voluntary exchange.33 If two people or parties make a voluntary exchange, there must be a degree of trust that both will keep to their sides of the bargain and deal in good faith.

What legal and business notions of partnership indicate is that they are often both process and outcome related. Purely outcomes driven partnerships are extremely rare; there will almost always be a task orientation to a greater or lesser degree. There are partnerships, however, that may be purely task oriented and involve a finite lifespan, so developing any ongoing relationship is not of any critical concern. In some contractual partnerships the arrangement comes to a conclusion once the terms of the contract are met through the completion of the contractual task. Often in these circumstances there is no expectation for the arrangement to continue unless expressly desired by either party. However, reputation and observed integrity can give rise to confidence, which is particularly important to an ongoing business partnership. A feature of many markets is that they involve repeat transactions, so that if you break your word on one occasion there may be erosion of trust. Consequently, importance is often given to outcomes as well as to task delivery in business partnerships. An analogy that was drawn to the evaluation team’s attention was of the building of a house. Carpenters, builders, plumbers and even gardeners put up the frame, walls and roof, and then beautify the finished product. These are task driven accomplishments. A positive outcome of such partnership may result in an ongoing mutually beneficial relationship that extends beyond the completion of the original task, which is completing that particular house.

Partnership arrangements between institutions in general establish agreement in the expectation of mutual benefits. Institutional partnerships typically involve cooperative relationships that may be formally signed off, for example, in a memorandum of understanding. A memorandum of understanding is intended to be a vehicle to express mutual commitment to work together in advancing mutual objectives. It documents a relationship between partners that can be subject to review, change or termination. It may or may not be legally binding, although it does not necessarily contain legal components such as risk or loss sharing or penalties if aspects of an agreement are not met. A memorandum of understanding is viewed as appropriate under particular circumstances such as when parties involved have a mutual interest in partnership objectives while wishing to exercise their own authority independently but cooperatively, or wishing to maintain control of their own resources. Memorandums are also often contextual in regard to mutual interest and clearly defined in such ways so that institutions can have a memorandum in some aspects of their operations but not necessarily all. For example, two separate institutions may agree to jointly provide particular education programmes while at the same time other programmes that each respectively operate are kept separate.

In contrast to a contractual partnership, some partnerships are seen right from the start as fundamental and enduring relationships. When marriage or de facto marriage arrangements and family are conceived as partnerships, for instance, they are seen as ones that demand lifelong commitment, mutual respect, fidelity and sacrificial love. Partnership in this context carries levels of moral, spiritual, emotional and psychological requirements, as well as legal ones. The partnership under study here was set up in order to more effectively achieve a clear goal in mind, to raise educational achievement, by working together. It also reflected elements of a contractual partnership, such as a memorandum of understanding and agreements of a schedule of payments for services in the form of funding provision agreements between the partners. The partnership also contains moral, spiritual and emotional elements and commitment that are seen to underpin more personal partnerships.
**Education and partnership**

‘Partnership’ has emerged as a significant discourse in educational reform and schooling improvement attempts in many parts of the world. In reviewing studies and discussions of educational partnership, Helen Timperley and Viviane Robinson have identified different kinds of rationale that may drive the development of such partnerships, and their corresponding significance. They describe one major rationale as reflecting a social theory perspective, which advances a political and social agenda of partnership. This perspective is accompanied with such values and outcomes as empowerment, equity and social equality, democratic participation and responsiveness. Partnerships in this instance often involve bringing together various stakeholders under new forms of governance to address ongoing and difficult educational issues. Another rationale, viewed as more functional, is one that focuses on students’ achievement and school performance. As Timperley and Robinson point out, the perspective taken has implications about the extent and ease that a partnership can be successful in reaching its goals. ‘Equality’ and ‘empowerment’, for example, are arguably more difficult outcomes to measure but are no less open to manipulation than student achievement outcomes.

TPM encompasses both the above rationales in its goal statement and in its modus operandi. TRoTT entered into partnership from explicitly cultural and political agenda of the maintenance and regeneration of te reo Māori me ona tikanga and of Māori authority in education. Alongside this was its concern with the very visible underachievement of Māori students in Te Taitokerau. The Ministry was concerned to make measurable and sustainable differences in the quality of education provided and in educational outcomes. The Ministry saw participation and influence of Māori stakeholders in Te Taitokerau as a key element to addressing the serious educational issues identified and thus settled on a partnership approach.

Just as there is no one definition of what a partnership is, there is also not a singular partnership model that has been applied in education in Aotearoa New Zealand. The use of ‘partnership’ within the educational sector has spanned recent phases of educational reform in this country. ‘Tomorrow’s Schools’ incorporated the establishment of governance-management partnerships between schools, communities and government. The notion of partnership has been fundamental to board of trustees since their inception and was used to aid the process of decentralisation and devolution of responsibilities for running schools from central government to local schools and communities via boards of trustees in the early 1990s.

Partnership has also been applied to other education related developments, such as that of shared enterprise between businesses and schools. The ‘enterprise partnerships’ document released by the Ministry of Education strongly reflected a business model of partnership. While it identified Māori as a key focus there was no mention of the Treaty of

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34 Timperley & Robinson (2002), op. cit.
Waitangi partnership between Māori and Crown. That policy discussions of educational partnership have not always reflected an acknowledgement or an incorporation of the Treaty partnership has led to scepticism about the degree to which such policies will make a positive difference to Māori educational outcomes.

Any discussion of education partnerships in Aotearoa New Zealand necessarily includes consideration of the Strengthening Education in Mangere and Otara Partnerships (SEMO) project findings. The research reports are particularly significant in terms of their discussion of partnership and its potential application overall to schooling improvement projects. SEMO was designed as a partnership between the state, schools in Mangere and Otara, and their communities. It differs from the partnership underpinning TPM, which is explicitly between the Crown and TRoTT. In this sense the SEMO partnership approach as described in SEMO reports encompasses a number of partnerships. What were described in the SEMO reports as partnerships that variously involved schools, communities, early child education centres, boards and Ministry have been conceptualised to us as relationships by TPM.

The SEMO report uses the definition that partnerships are purposeful, requiring goal directed activities and the success of partnership should be evaluated on how well those goals have been achieved. Essentially, therefore, partnerships are two-dimensional. Dimension one requires the partnership to have a task focus. In addition, partnerships involve relationships, which evolve alongside the task activity.

The SEMO evaluation has provided useful insights into both the nature and process of partnership. It is essential that partners have a clear rationale for why they are in partnership. Robinson et al states that the rationale should be grounded in their purpose and their context, rather than in general platitudes about ‘working together’, because working together is not synonymous with task accomplishment. This task focus is identified as the major influence in the schooling improvement change management process. The process involves four phases of task activity: scoping, initiation, bedding in and sustaining. Consequently, it is held that the relationship dimension will evolve ‘naturally’ alongside successful completion of task.

The model presented in the evaluation of SEMO is one that proposes partnership in which there is shared power over relevant decisions, but not necessarily equal power. The evaluation of SEMO states that there need not always be consensus about every task relevant decision, nor that the overall degree of influence exerted by the partners be equal, as trying to realise such a situation would lead to paralysis. Partnership is thus about relationships that include, but are not exclusively determined by, the way in which power is distributed. Partnerships may or may not be based on equality or on equity. However, some have argued that in the case of indigenous groups real partnership must involve equitable cooperation otherwise it does not move beyond cooperation under the yoke of paternalism.

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39 Sutherland, B. (1994), op. cit.
40 Robinson & Timperley (2002) suggest that in some instances developing a partnership relationship can be its actual task.
42 Ibid.
SEMO covers an area of Auckland with a high Māori and Pacific people’s population. Although Māori students and their families have participated in SEMO, their roles as partners has been in the context of their relationship to schools as community members, rather than in terms of their relationship as indigenous treaty partners with the Crown. The partnership model that has been applied in SEMO is not one that is explicitly Te Tiriti o Waitangi-inclusive. SEMO researchers themselves acknowledge possible limitations in the extent to which such theory of partnership may be applied to Māori and recommend comparisons with other conceptual frameworks of partnership, including concepts of partnership informed by Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Education partnerships with indigenous peoples outside of our national context can help provide valuable insights into what partnership might mean and how working in partnership is being approached as a means to address issues of educational underachievement experienced by indigenous groups such as Māori.

**Education partnership models and indigenous peoples**

Partnership has emerged as a strategy to improve education outcomes of indigenous peoples in Australia, Alaska, United States and Canada, particularly in relation to indigenous rural communities. While Alaska, and some Canadian and Australian states, have all worked on the development of partnerships between state governments and indigenous peoples, there are contrasts in terms of the partnership approach and the identified desired change. Partnership approaches involving indigenous peoples can differ greatly in who defines what the educational problems are and where they are located, how they should be solved and what the goals for indigenous education should be.

There are partnership models that see the goal as preparing indigenous students for ‘mainstream’ non-indigenous life in society, shown in Figure 1 below as a mainstream-driven model.44 Such an approach can reflect a deficit theoretical base, which tends to blame a problem on those who suffer most from it. Problems faced in indigenous education and development may thus be located with indigenous students and peoples themselves. In the case of educational underachievement, the locus of the problem is often viewed as an inherent lack of ability or a lack of appropriate cultural resources for learning, with the solution seen in the sufferers changing, usually in a direction that will mean that they will become more like the non-indigenous partners.

Approaches from such a model can also view education needs of indigenous peoples as being essentially the same as any other group that experience underachievement, such as rural or migrant communities, and therefore the solutions are also very much the same. There may be acknowledgement that effective community partnerships that enable the development of educational initiatives and projects tailored to local needs and conditions are important; however, the place of local or indigenous culture, knowledge and practices in improving education is not considered an issue.45

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44E.g. in the Northern Territories of Australia the partnership focus for indigenous education is described as establishing partnerships in the delivery of indigenous education, in order that indigenous students achieve levels of educational achievement necessary for undertaking post-compulsory education and for participating in Australian society. Department of Employment, Education and Training Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2000–2004. Northern Territory Government, Australia.


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In contrast there are models described as indigenous driven models in Figure 1, which include a focus on preparing indigenous students as members of their indigenous groups. Such approaches are ones that take cognisance of indigenous aspirations and that incorporate indigenous values, knowledge and practices. They almost always include preparing indigenous students for a national society.46

An indigenous model tends to include an analysis of power imbalances between those represented in the partnership. Real change in the education system is seen as only being able to occur once indigenous people and their organisations became more empowered in relation to the system itself. From this perspective indigenous input into all levels of education decision-making was seen as crucial.

**Figure 1: Partnership Models for Indigenous Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indigenous-driven model</th>
<th>Mainstream-driven model</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous identified educational aspirations and goals</td>
<td>State identified educational aspirations and goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement in indigenous language and culture</td>
<td>Achievement in nationally ‘mainstream’ valued language and culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous participation and control in decision-making about indigenous education</td>
<td>Indigenous consultation and involvement in decision-making about indigenous education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous practices, values and knowledge inherent in partnership processes</td>
<td>Mainstream/state practices, values and knowledge inherent in partnership processes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While Figure 1 proposes two distinct partnership models, in reality partnerships involving indigenous peoples are likely to fall anywhere along a continuum and may reflect aspects of both models.

In the national context current arrangements of Te Kohanga Reo47 can be viewed as reflecting indigenous partnership, as can relationships between the Ministry of Education and Te Runanga Nui o nga Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa discussed below.48 As partnerships, they project the indigenous-driven model, although aspects of the mainstream model can also be seen reflected. Both emerged out of Māori identified educational aspirations and their respective development involved Māori direction and decision-making. Whānau involved in Te Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori seek educational outcomes that ensure Māori students are knowledgeable members of their Iwi, enable them to operate and to achieve their aspirations in both Māori and wider societal contexts as Māori. Both Te Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori are, however, subject to various state-set controls and requirements.

Canada provides some interesting parallels to the context in Aotearoa New Zealand, in which treaty relationships provide a much-debated context for the conceptualisation of partnership. The pre-existence of treaty relationships is also a precursor to current day

46 See e.g. Kashman, J. W. & Barnhardt, R. (1999) *Study of Alaska Rural Systemic Reform: Final Report. Alaska Native Knowledge Network.* Partnerships as described in Alaskan educational reform have been about engaging indigenous communities in education, integrating indigenous culture, language and knowledge into the curriculum and also about reaching Alaska’s state-driven academic standards.

47 Te Kohanga Reo are Māori medium learning centres for pre-school children that operate according to Māori preferred values and socialisation practices.

48 Kura Kaupapa Māori provide schooling through the medium of te reo Māori based on Māori philosophy and practices. Te Aho Matua is the philosophical statement that guides Kura.
partnership efforts in Canada. In the latter part of the 1990s Canada embarked on an action plan that sought to renew its partnerships with indigenous (Aboriginal) peoples in order to bring about meaningful and sustainable change in relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. Reaffirming existing treaty relationships was a key objective of the plan. A high priority has also been given to education by some engaged in partnership and treaty relationship efforts.49

**Te Tiriti o Waitangi**50 and partnership

As the Treaty of Waitangi itself has legal standing only inasmuch that it is included in any acts of Parliament, it sets up an essentially political and arguably quasi-constitutional partnership between the Crown and Iwi and hapu. During the last quarter of the twentieth century, and after over one hundred years of Iwi and Māori pressure, protest and litigation, successive New Zealand governments have been trying to act in accordance with the Treaty of Waitangi and to redress historical infringements. Various government ministries and other agencies of the Crown have made moves to work in partnership with Iwi and Māori groups pursuant to provisions and a set of principles of the Treaty that were identified through the mechanism of the Waitangi Tribunal and the New Zealand Court of Appeal. This set of principles essentially governs how, when and for what purpose the Crown shall relate formally with Māori. Firmly established in the New Zealand Māori Council case 1987, the principles of the Treaty are said to include:

- **Kawanatanga**: the government’s right to make laws and govern
- **Rangatiratanga**: Māori authority over their own resources
- **Equity**: equality for all New Zealanders before the law
- **Reasonable Cooperation**: the basis of the relationship between the Crown and Māori
- **Redress**: the government’s responsibility to provide for the resolution of grievances51

The New Zealand Court of Appeal has stated that the principle of reasonable cooperation evolves from a special relationship analogous to a ‘fiduciary relationship’, akin to a partnership. The principle of reasonable cooperation is now commonly referred to as the partnership principle and requires that the Crown and Māori partners ‘act reasonably toward each other and with the utmost good faith’.

The Treaty context partnership is based on an Article Two relationship between the Crown and Māori, or the Crown and Hapū. Under this article, Māori hapū and rangatira (chiefs) were promised ‘tino rangatiratanga’, chieftainship, over their ‘wenua’ (land) ‘kainga’ (villages) and ‘taonga’ (treasures). Significant to the TPM partnership, ‘taonga’ has come

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49 Canada’s indigenous peoples experienced an arguably more violent and aggressive history of assimilatory schooling, such as the residential school experience. Outcomes, however, have been strikingly similar to those experienced by Māori: many of their students leave school with minimal skills helpful for gaining meaningful employment, and without the language and cultural knowledge of their people. Over the last quarter of the twentieth century there has been strong advocacy for indigenous control of indigenous education in Canada. See e.g. Deborah Jeffrey (1999) Summary Report of Selected First Nations Education Documents. Submitted to the British Columbia Teachers’ Federation Task Force on First Nations Education, January 1999. Available on-line at [http://www.bctf.bc.ca/social/AboriginalEd/appendix.html](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/social/AboriginalEd/appendix.html); Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (1997) *Gathering Strength: Canada’s Aboriginal Action Plan*. Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada. Available on-line at [http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/gs/chg_e.html](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/gs/chg_e.html).

50 Hereon referred to by its English equivalent title, the Treaty of Waitangi.

51 The Treaty principles are also generally understood in terms of ‘partnership’, ‘participation’ and ‘protection’.
to include te reo Māori. Article Three extended the rights and privileges of citizenship to Māori. Crown-Māori partnership thus encapsulates the general obligations and responsibilities owed to all Māori as tangata whenua and as New Zealand citizens. Crown-Iwi partnership overlays these general obligations with specific obligations to ‘recognised’ Iwi groups.

Some commentators have argued that the ‘treaty partnership’ is ill-defined, misleading and raises impossible expectations around equality and sharing. A sceptical Māori view would be one wary of partnership as a structure of Western prescription, where the promise of equal input and equitable outcome are implied. However, Durie (1998) observes that ‘partnership’, although difficult to define or arrange, and sometimes used inappropriately to describe working relationships between Māori and government agencies, has generated enough positive experiences to justify further enthusiasm and commitment to the principle.

Considering the history of education in Aotearoa New Zealand, it is necessary to reflect on the role of partnership in this historical-political context. Since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, the inequitable outcomes of partnership for Māori are evident. The education arena is one in which historically there has been failure to realise Treaty obligations. The results of such failure have been keenly felt by Māori and by Aotearoa New Zealand at large and are reflected in ongoing disproportionate underachievement experienced among Māori and systematic failure to validate, maintain and protect te reo Māori and tikanga.

Recognition of the Treaty within education made a significant appearance in the Wai 11 Treaty claim relating to te reo Māori. The Waitangi Tribunal held that the Treaty requires the Crown to take active steps to protect the Māori language and Māori culture. Ways this can be done include the development of te reo Māori curriculum materials, resources including teachers, te reo Māori programmes, and support for educational establishments that operate within a Māori value system such as Te Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori. Additionally, Treaty obligations were acknowledged in education in the ‘Curriculum Review’ in 1987 and in ‘Administering for Excellence’ in 1988.

Fulfilling the Treaty within education can also include:

- Māori being consulted before major education decisions are made and actively involved in decision-making
- Māori values and aspirations being understood and taken account of in education planning and decision-making
- The value base including Māori values, but not appropriating or co-opting them
- Education seeking to address inequalities caused by past breaches of the Treaty, or at the least not aggravating such inequalities.

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53 This is highly problematic in terms of who or what gets recognised as ‘Iwi’ by whom and for what purpose, e.g. this has caused great friction and debate in the decision-making about the distribution of benefits from the Fisheries Settlement.
**Iwi partnerships**

In Aotearoa New Zealand educational partnerships involving Māori that include a Treaty basis have come to be known as Iwi partnerships. The major community voice in Iwi partnerships is Māori, which differs from schooling improvement partnership models that involve multiple partnerships between schools, communities and the Ministry, and in which Māori are but one of many voices (as for example SEMO). Iwi initiatives have three essential elements. They are concentrated in manageable, sometimes isolated, geographic areas. There are usually strong leanings toward one Iwi grouping. As a result, mandate and representation are arguably less likely to be a contentious issue when flowing from a more singular traditional Iwi base. The first Iwi-Crown educational partnership was launched in 1998 with Tuhoe, which led to the setting up of the Tuhoe Education Authority (TEA).  

The Iwi partnership approach has provided the Ministry of Education with strategic networking and influence in communities. The approach is largely developmental and involves relationship building as well as a task-oriented focus on initiatives to raise student achievement. More importantly, these relationships strive to achieve a collaborative approach to supporting schools to better meet their obligations to Māori students, whānau and community and to ensure that Māori communities have greater participation and influence in the education of their children.

Iwi educational partnerships vary in scope and the type of work to be undertaken but essentially share the same characteristics. These are: to implement initiatives to raise education outcomes for Māori learners; to strive for sustainable improvement in the equality of education provided; to commit to an enduring relationship; to display respect for the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi; to keep each other informed on important education issues affecting the project; and to support the involvement of Māori at a local level in the development and implementation of initiatives. Some are also being explicitly used as a means to maintain and develop Iwi knowledge and language.

The challenge for the Ministry of Education has been to remain flexible enough to recognise and to foster the differing approaches of Iwi to these partnerships while maintaining the necessary accountabilities as a government body. Such an approach if it is to have any real value is one that is able to acknowledge and support the distinctiveness of Poroutanga and Tuhoetanga, for example, and in which Iwi are empowered. A ‘one-size fits all’ approach does not provide for this. This has led to the Ministry in effect utilising partnerships to grow its own capacity, reviewing its own lines of management and structures and, along with its Iwi/Māori partners, exploring alternatives including more direct involvement of other Ministries and agencies as Crown representatives in the partnership.

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57 Tuhoetanga is the focus for the kaupapa underpinning TEA, which involves the implementation of strategies to improve student achievement in 14 schools within the rohe of Tuhoe. All of these schools adopted a memorandum of understanding with the Authority. In the same year a partnership ‘Whaia te Iti Kahurangi’ that involves 19 schools was set up between Te Runanga o Ngati Porou, as a representative agent for Ngati Porou Iwi, and the Crown, represented by the Ministry of Education. The partnership focuses on the shared goal of strengthening educational outcomes in the Ngati Porou rohe. It also is seen as an opportunity to develop and maintain Ngati Poroutanga. In 1999 the Tuwharetoa Māori Trust Board signed an educational partnership agreement with the Ministry of Education, again the focus has been on establishing an education strategic plan to strengthen the performance in Tuwharetoa schools. In 2000 a similar agreement was signed with Te Runanga o Turanganiu a Kiwa, an Iwi organisation representing the Poverty Bay Iwi: Te Aitanga a Mahaki, Rongowhakata and Ngai Tamanuhiri. Development of a partnership with Ngai Tahu began in 2002. There have also been more possible partnerships signalled.

58 This is also discussed in Chapter Four.
Kaupapa Māori education partnerships

In contrast to Iwi partnerships based on traditional Māori tribal groupings, Māori organisations have also formed partnerships that have a Treaty basis with the Ministry to assist in improving school performance. Rather than representing specific Iwi groups, these organisations are fundamentally kaupapa based. One such project is the Māori Boarding Schools or Paerangi, which above all seeks to recognise the special spiritual and cultural character of each Māori boarding school. A Runanga made up of representatives from each of the schools oversees the Paerangi project.

Te Runanga Nui o Nga Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa is involved in another such partnership project with the Ministry that provides contracted support arrangements, called Te Tari Tautoko. Te Tari Tautoko helps to address workload issues and improve governance and management in existing and new Kura Kaupapa Māori. Te Tari Tautoko emerged out of an educational initiative developed by Māori for Māori; namely, Kura Kaupapa Māori. A recent review of this partnership arrangement identified implications for policy development related to making space for ‘by Māori for Māori’ initiatives. Such policy developments needed to support rather than control Māori initiatives, acknowledging Māori realities and aspirations rather than attempting to make these ‘fit’ current general policy directions and mainstream educational frameworks.

An Iwi-Crown partnership in Te Taitokerau

TPM reflects similarities to the above two partnership approaches with Māori, which are Iwi and Kaupapa, although partnership was not originally included for a school improvement project in Te Taitokerau, nor was there any mention made of the Treaty. TPM was going to be a Schooling Improvement project that fell within the Ministry’s preventative policy of strengthening schools through clustering to minimise risks occurring in individual schools. The proposed strategy involved creating clusters around successful schools and thereby enhancing and sharing local best practice that in turn would support the building of long-term capability and sustainable education improvement.

Over recent years Schools Monitoring and Support under which TPM emerged has developed in a direction that has seen partnership become a fundamental element in strengthening schooling and education. Schooling Management and Support, while emphasising schools and students as the locus of educational improvement and development, also recognises community participation as fundamental to raising the quality of education. The Schools Monitoring and Support context divides Ministry of Education partnership arrangements into different schooling improvement groupings involving: clusters of schools of the same type; clusters that are made up from geographically based communities and their schools; and Iwi initiatives usually involving partnerships with Iwi organisations.

TPM varies from education partnerships that involve one Iwi because its area encompasses that of at least five Iwi. This raises a challenge that is specific to this partnership model, that is, how to ensure that community voices across various takiwa and Iwi will be represented in the partnership. We have heard TRoTT, the partner that represents Te

59 Developed around specific vision/philosophy/sense of purpose.
60 The Ministry of Education has worked with the proprietors of the schools on the long-term financial viability of Māori Church boarding schools. In 1999 and 2001 two of these schools closed after having been found no longer financially viable by the proprietors and also as having fallen well below minimum educational standards according to the Education Review Office. The fate of the two schools caused a great deal of concern and anger among Māori.
Taitokerau Iwi Māori in the partnership, at different times referred to as an Iwi partner, a ‘pan’ Māori partner or a Māori partner by both Ministry and community. TRoTT did not start out as an Iwi organisation as such. Rather it began as a kaupapa based Māori organisation focused on te reo Māori in education in Te Taitokerau. Over the first year and a half of TPM’s existence, TRoTT evolved from an organisation largely made up of education sector representation to one that now largely consists of takīwā and Iwi representation. The kaupapa of te reo Māori still remains as the fundamental focus of TRoTT. As such we see TPM in essence as an Iwi-Crown partnership sitting within an intersection of Iwi-based and Kaupapa-based partnership.

The TPM partnership encompasses aspects of an indigenous model and aspects of a mainstream model of partnership. The idea of partnership was Ministry-sourced, that is proposed by the Ministry. The goal statement is seen to reflect Ministry and TRoTT goals and aspirations in which there is room in the partnership goal for achievement to be understood in terms of both achievements in Māori language and culture and in terms of mainstream-valued English language and culture. We have also observed the use and acknowledgement of Te Taitokerau Iwi practices and of Ministry practices in the partnership.

Power sharing in partnerships
As mentioned earlier, the SEMO report highlights the importance of power sharing in defining partnership in comparison with consultation. In a consultative relationship the power to make decisions always rests with one party. That party chooses whom to consult, about what, and also decides the outcomes of the consultation process. When this research started we saw that the partnership with TRoTT, while still in its early stages, had not moved that far beyond the consultative stage. The notion of unequal power relations was most evident in the interviews undertaken with four Ministry staff and five TRoTT trustees on the Kaunihera early in 2001. The partnership was not viewed as a partnership of ‘equals’ in terms of power to make decisions. The perceived inability of TRoTT to make decisions without the agreement of the Ministry of Education was also cited as an example of the unequal power relationship by a TPM team member in early 2001.

The important decisions such as funding are not made by the partnership. The current process involves the drafting of proposals and sending them through to the Ministry, who has the final decision as to whether it will be okayed. The Ministry of Education also holds the funding. Where the money is held is not really important, what is important is what sort of decisions are being made and funded and who has that say and, ultimately, what is the partnership's role in all that. The partner (TRoTT) sees it as inequitable in that the Ministry controls the funding.

Māori expectations of the TPM partnership expressed by TRoTT trustees stemmed from the Crown’s Treaty of Waitangi obligations. One Trustee expressed concern that TRoTT as partners were not emphasising treaty rights;

We are equal as Māori partners, not only with the Ministry but also under the Tiriti. We never pushed our treaty rights, that alone to me is priority number one.

The desire for some form of Māori influence over attitudes or behaviour of schools and teachers and over policy, through to control or authority in education is a theme that has emerged over the years as Māori have expressed more and more their frustrations at the persistence of Māori educational underachievement. In Te Taitokerau the notion of empowering communities, organisations and individuals had also been expressed through

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a proposal for the establishment of a Taitokerau Māori Education Authority. For TRoTT the evolution of a partnership has been seen as something of a compromise from what was contemplated as authority, reflected in a comment made by a TRoTT trustee.

It's [authority] still on the back burner. We started off wanting our own authority.... They lessened it to a partnership ... but the idea is still a te wa pea

Attempting to align the expectations of partners is challenging. There was a clear expectation expressed on the part of TRoTT trustees that the partnership, while remaining task focused, would also be outcome focused by ultimately providing for some measure of influence, authority and control. One TRoTT trustee put it this way,

Māori Education Authority is the ultimate aim. Representing the interests of whānau, hapu and Iwi on this project is with that in mind. Māori Education Authority is uppermost even though TRoTT is in partnership with the Ministry of Education. The partnership is part of the process of reaching that goal.

There was, however, a view expressed in a Ministry interview that the power dynamics between the partners would change as TPM progressed, which resonated with the Trustees’ views illustrated above.

We know that it's not a 50/50 partnership. The idea is that TRoTT becomes more of an 80% partner in the future.

Mason Durie in his address to the second Hui Taumata Matauranga in 2001 summed it up by saying that there are two fundamental types of relationship that Māori can engage in with the Crown. Settlement relationships are essentially colonial in nature, have the aim of righting a wrong, have the goal of compensation, focus on the past, start from the modes of injustice and grievance and are full and final settlements. That is, at some pre-agreed to stage there will be an exit point, a definite end to the relationship. In contrast, relationships for educational progress should be based on mutual respect and autonomy, have the aim of fulfilling Māori aspirations, have the goal of educational advancement, focus on the future, reject inequality and begin with determination to an ongoing commitment.62

Evaluative comment

The Iwi-Crown education partnership advances three agendas in Te Taitokerau. One seeks to ensure that education provided in schools is such that there is meaningful improvement in the level of Māori students’ achievement. Another emphasises participation and power sharing between the Ministry and Māori in significant education decision-making. A third, which essentially spans what might be called ‘partnership business’ and ‘TRoTT business’, focuses on developing sustained and ongoing commitment across schools and communities to the maintenance and advancement of te reo Māori.

Understanding partnership we saw reflected in many ways. TPM has developed out of a stated desire of the Crown via the Ministry of Education to work cooperatively with Māori to raise the quality of education in Te Taitokerau. Alongside the educational kaupapa, there are expectations that the partnership will be one that involves and produces trust, cooperation and mutual benefit. The partnership also reflects business notions of partnership through the existence of formal contractual arrangements between the Ministry

and the Māori partner. The partnership itself is formalised through a memorandum of understanding.

TPM reflects varying rationales for education partnership. Emphasis by the Iwi Māori partner on Māori authority, empowerment and greater participation in education through partnership with the Crown reflects more of a social theory rationale. A Ministry emphasis on improving the quality of schooling to raise students’ educational achievement levels reflects more of a functionally oriented rationale. During the course of the evaluation we have seen evidence of each partner working to accommodate the other’s emphasis.

The Treaty relationship is such that the concept of partnership between Iwi and Crown necessarily includes an overall sense of equality and power sharing. The theme of partnership, to hold authenticity within a Treaty relationship, requires commitment and capability to partnering with Māori worldviews. Effective partnerships that involve Iwi are ones in which Māori values, beliefs and practices are inherent. Along with Māori worldviews a partnership that promotes Māori aspirations rather than a deficit perspective acknowledges and affirms the Treaty of Waitangi. Taking such a partnership approach to Māori education and schooling issues in Te Taitokerau recognises the significance of Iwi-Crown relationships for improving all areas of national life.
CHAPTER THREE
Development and implementation of the partnership

This chapter discusses the development and initial implementation of TPM. Beginning with a brief look at the historical and social context of schooling in Te Taitokerau, the chapter tracks the emergence and evolution of ‘Iwi-Crown partnership’ as the pivotal mechanism for raising Māori student achievement in Te Taitokerau. Two things were happening around the time that the need for education intervention in Te Taitokerau was being identified and possible intervention approaches were being developed. In the Ministry there was movement towards partnership as a model for schooling improvement projects. In Te Taitokerau there was a renewed call for some measure of autonomous Māori education authority as a means to intervene in critical levels of Māori underachievement and to regenerate and maintain te reo Māori in the region. Both of these helped to influence the shape TPM finally took.

Two studies are then reported that examined efforts to help realise partnership with Iwi in action. The first study focused on one of these efforts that involved gathering information from communities and schools for a needs analysis exercise that TPM undertook during 2000, the first major operational exercise undertaken by TPM. The significance of the needs analysis exercise for the partnership was that along with being expected to help identify potential areas of schooling in need of intervention and improvement, it was an attempt to instantiate TPM’s goal as it pertains to Māori participation and influence in education. This was to be achieved by contracting takiwa and Iwi organisations to survey Māori community members about their views and aspirations for schooling in their community. Another intended outcome of the needs analysis exercise was that it would bring schools and community members together to help improve Māori achievement. The exercise was problematic, revealing in particular issues around communication, expectations, and school and community understandings about TPM’s roles and functions. The exercise had some negative implications for TPM’s emerging profile in schools and communities at the start of 2001 and TPM has worked hard to overcome these and to regain their confidence.

The second study focused the effort of developing a takiwa model of representation that replaced education sector representation at the end of 2000 and start of 2001. The development of takiwa representation sought to realise partnership at the level of TRoTT’s organisational practices as the organisation representing the interests of Iwi Māori in Te Taitokerau in the TPM partnership. When TPM first started TRoTT used a representation model that drew on educational sector organisation to try and ensure effective representation. The development of takiwa representation emphasised issues of mandate and issues of the projection of TPM out into communities. Having a representative from each takiwa did not automatically bestow TRoTT with a clear mandate or necessarily reinforce an existing one. What it has provided is the development of necessary networks that can enable TPM, as well as TRoTT in its own right, to project into communities. The development of takiwa representation also highlighted issues of Māori influence within the

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63 Written and verbal information given at training workshops for setting up and carrying out community surveys indicated that the intention was to work with schools to identify Māori community members who were viewed by schools as relatively uninvolved or having a level of disconnection with schooling.

64 Takiwa representation is based on Hapu and Iwi organisation. During most of the study 10 takiwa and the Kura Kaupapa Māori cluster had a representative to TRoTT.

65 During the first part of 2001 TPM was heavily involved in facilitation work with schools. The development of takiwa representation can be seen as projecting TPM into communities.
partnership. Takiwa representation has provided a means for TRoTT to grow and strengthen Iwi influence in the partnership at the Kaunihera, governance level.66

Within a Kaupapa Māori framework, takiwa representation is seen as a particularly significant development for at least two reasons. One reason relates to the principle of rangatiratanga – Māori autonomy and self-determination. While TPM in its current form does not reflect rangatiratanga in its fullest sense, aspects of it are evident in partnership efforts to ensure that Iwi have a voice and a strong influence in decisions made about improving and developing education in Te Taitokerau.

Another reason relates to the principle of nga taonga tuku iho – Māori knowledge and practices. Māori social, political and educational systems were in place when the first missionaries and settlers arrived in Te Taitokerau. Aspects of these continue to exist, albeit in more contemporary forms. The partnership has drawn on takiwa as an organisational system and networking principle not only as a means to increase Māori participation in education at school levels but also at hapu and Iwi levels. Takiwa representation, te reo Māori as part of TPM’s strategic goal, even the name of the partnership itself, reflect how the partnership has sought to acknowledge and draw on important Māori knowledge and local tikanga to develop its approach and practices. Each of these examples sits comfortably with Kaupapa Māori in which Māori tikanga, knowledge and practices as valid, appropriate and normal is a given.

Schooling in Te Taitokerau

Tracing back to the first introduction of non-Māori educational institutions in this country, Te Taitokerau has the longest history of contact and participation with so-called Western style schooling. Māori relationships with schools began in this country in 1816 at Rangihoua in Pewhairangi, the Bay of Islands, with the establishment of the first Church Missionary Society mission school. The first school folded after two years, an early indication that educational relationships in the north were not going to be without issue.

By the 1830s Māori interest in attaining Western literacy and knowledge was on the rise and Māori saw schooling as a means of acquiring these. Schooling was perceived by missionaries and later by colonial governments as an effective means of ‘civilising’ and assimilating Māori into European or British ways of life. Māori interest in missionary schooling in Te Taitokerau as well as other parts of the country declined significantly as Māori and Pakeha settlers became increasingly engaged in struggles over land and political power. The subsequent development of state controlled schooling in 1867 was initially for Māori children, with the establishment of the Native Schools system, and then for all children with the establishment of the Department of Education board schools. The Native Schools system era presented issues around the place of Māori language, knowledge and practices in schools, with periods of virtual exclusion then controlled inclusion, along with issues around Māori participation and influence in schooling.67 These issues have continued to be significant into the twenty-first century.

One hundred and seventy years after the closing of the first school for Māori, Te Taitokerau was again host to a historic Māori educational moment in the form of a

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66 The development of takiwa representation also has significance for capacity building, discussed in Chapter Four.
declaration calling for Māori education authority in the schooling of Māori. Such historical moments reflect continued concern in Te Taitokerau about how Māori might best relate to the education system that has developed in this country and what sort of education might best meet the needs of Māori children, communities and society as a whole. Another key feature of this backdrop is the level of educational underachievement that has been experienced in Te Taitokerau across a number of generations.

**Improving education in Te Taitokerau**

The period leading up to the initial implementation of TPM can be understood in three phases summarised below in Table 1.

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<th>Table 1: Timeline of Development</th>
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<td><strong>PHASE ONE – Background issues identified</strong> (1997–1998)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Review of Kaitaia schools</td>
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<td>- Analysis of school demographics</td>
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<td>- Analysis of social demographics</td>
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<tr>
<td>- ERO Report on Far North schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>- (MOE) Strategic Management Group proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Joint Minister proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Partnership proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Partnership formalised with TRoTT</td>
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<td>- Formal public signing</td>
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<td><strong>PHASE THREE – Initial implementation</strong> (late 1999 – 2000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Setting up of Kaunihera as governing body</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Appointment of Project Manager (MOE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Appointment of Strategic Project Manager (TROTT)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Staffing TPM</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Information gathering with schools and communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Broadening representation in partnership</td>
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**Identifying the issues**

Phase one involved the identification of background issues facing education in Te Taitokerau and development of a strategic plan. Early in February 1997 the Ministry of Education began to investigate issues of poor underachievement in the region, and an initial Ministry planning group began meeting in the same month, their focus on improving educational outcomes for Taitokerau. Phase one also included the analyses of school and social demographics. Concerns about the quality of education in the area were heightened by findings of two Ministry reviews of education in the Far North. Not long after the Ministry had begun its investigations the Education Review Office (ERO) also undertook a

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68 The Matawaia Declaration 1988, formally adopted at the Hui Reo Rua o Aotearoa held at Matawaia in January 1988. The Matawaia Declaration called for the establishment of an independent Māori education authority in the form of a fully autonomous statutory body as a means of Māori control over Māori philosophies and practices in education from pre-school through to adulthood. The declaration reflected the heavy dissatisfaction felt by some Māori at the time with the ways the education sector and the then Department of Education were addressing Māori education, particularly in relation to te reo Māori me ona tikanga. The idea of Māori authority in education continued being discussed in various Te Taitokerau fora, along with Māori underachievement and associated unemployment and economic hardship experienced in the region.

69 Two reviews of education were undertaken, one in Kaitaia and one in Rawene-Omanaia. See Appendix Four in Ministry of Education, Strategic Management Group ‘Education in the Far North’, 28 September 1998, p. 14.
major review of schools in the region. This review provided the final impetus for a large-scale schooling improvement project. In summary, of the 78 schools reviewed ERO found that only 15% were performing well, 44% were only performing adequately and as many as 41% of all schools surveyed were performing poorly. The ERO review highlighted the factors affecting student achievement, which included school and non-school influences, identifying the inability of schools to attract or keep high quality teachers as arguably the critical factor affecting students’ schooling. Poor quality board management, poor professional leadership and poor teaching compounded this. Non-school influences such as social and family circumstances, drug use, poor physical and mental health, high absenteeism and lack of early childhood education opportunities were found to have a huge impact on how well students achieved at school. Further recognition of the socio-contextual issues affecting educational achievement in Te Taitokerau also came in 1998 when the Children, Young Persons and their Families Agency (CYPFA) reported on the Strengthening Families Policy – Northland Initiative.

The Ministry’s Northern Management Centre first developed an educational strategic plan that emphasised consultation and involvement with key stakeholders of Te Taitokerau to address the serious educational issues identified in the above reports and reviews. Priority was to be given to addressing the needs of those involved in rural education, highlighting the specific needs of those involved in Māori education. Structural and systemic issues were also given priority. The plan intended that individuals and groups working within Te Taitokerau would carry out any ensuing implementations. From the outset developing relationships with Māori was an element of the proposed project in that community involvement was referred to as an important factor in improving Māori participation and achievement in education in the Far North. The principles underpinning planning included a partnership approach between the Ministry and local communities and were intended to set the foundation for future intervention in Te Taitokerau.

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71 ERO further defined adequately performing schools into three categories: (1) schools which had been poor but were beginning to move upwards, (2) schools which had been high performing but were starting to drop and (3) schools which were just coasting.
72 A follow up review was carried out with schools that were identified as performing well, highlighting areas of best practice. See: Education Review Office (1999) Good Practice in the Far North. Wellington: Education Review Office.
73 An intervention strategy seeking to improve the coordination of the various social services provided by Government Agencies in Te Taitokerau. The report highlighted serious issues affecting families in Te Taitokerau including the second highest unemployment rate in the country contributing to a high proportion of the resident population, mostly Māori, receiving income support. The strategy attempted to address issues related to the communities within which schools operate and which impact on those schools. Sixty percent of the 159 schools in Te Taitokerau ranked in the bottom three deciles nationally, 50% of all Northland students attending schools ranked in one of the bottom three deciles. High criminal justice and poor health statistics were further factors contributing to the implementation of the Strengthening Families initiative.
74 Structural issues: Factors such as the size of schools, remoteness, limited choices of secondary schools, isolation of senior students from tertiary institutes, lack of management expertise, quality of teachers and lack of educational achievement. Systemic issues such as the educational, legislative and regulatory framework, which schools operate within determines the level of support and intervention required of a central agency (Improving Educational Outcomes: Taitokerau 1997).
75 Principles also included:
  - An inter-sectorial approach by government and agencies
  - Timely implementation of necessary interventions through the employment of local facilitators
  - Interventions promoting board, principal, teacher and community cooperation and commitment to schooling improvement
  - Interventions to increase self sufficiency and capability.
  - Significant direct intervention where required, e.g. school board disestablishment.
In the second phase, as development of the project plan progressed, Ministry partnership with Māori emerged as the proposed pivotal mechanism for education improvement.\(^{76}\) Discussion of a formalised partnership between the Ministry and a partner in a spirit consistent with the Treaty of Waitangi first appeared in March 1999.\(^{77}\) Documentary evidence that Māori involvement was being considered in terms of the Treaty partnership relationship also appeared in May 1999, in notes on partnership from a project meeting, which stated,

> Education in the Far North District Council territory involves significant Māori communities. Māori students are disproportionately disadvantaged by poor educational outcomes. The Crown has explicit obligations to redress Māori achievement levels under the mantle of Te Tiriti o Waitangi; therefore, the Ministry’s partner in this project must be Māori.

In February 1999 Te Runanga o TRoTT had put a proposal to the then Minister of Māori Affairs for the establishment of a Māori Education Authority. The idea of such authority was not unfamiliar to Te Taitokerau, which had seen the adoption of the Matawai Declaration in 1988.\(^{78}\) Although the proposal was not accepted, the idea of Māori Education authority for Te Taitokerau did emerge in phase two of the project’s development,\(^{79}\) and can be seen reflected to a limited extent in the concept of educational partnership that allows for some measure of educational decision-making to be devolved to local Iwi.

**Developing and forming an educational partnership**

The Minister of Education approved financial assistance in November 1998, where the intention was ‘to achieve better educational outcomes for students in the Far North region’, with specific focus on Māori students. The Ministry further stated that it believed that communities needed to be involved in making decisions about strengthening education and suggested ways in which this might be achieved. To improve education in the Far North, the Ministry recommended that it:

- Work closely with Māori
- Work closely with communities
- Share best practice between schools
- Improve access to support services
- Coordinate services.\(^{80}\)

TRoTT met with the Ministry in late March at which a plan for improving achievement in Te Taitokerau was outlined. On 31 March 1999 TRoTT offered to be the Ministry’s Iwi partner. Te Taitokerau communities were asked for their ideas on how the Ministry should form a partnership with a representative body. By the end of May 1999 over 300 groups and individuals (schools, boards, communities and sector groups) had been formally consulted about the partnership and potential partners.\(^{81}\) There were generally positive responses from community to the proposed project. As Te Taitokerau has a high

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\(^{76}\) September 1998 – the Ministry’s Strategic Management Support Group reported on a proposal that emphasised partnerships with Māori as a means to strengthen governance.

\(^{77}\) The partner’s role was envisaged at that time as working jointly to facilitate key results for strengthening education, to provide advice on Te Taitokerau cultural issues, to ensure consistency of employment processes with cultural principles and practices, to provide access to networks and community and members for a proposed project advisory group.

\(^{78}\) The desire for some form of Māori authority in education was evident during regional consultation hui on an ‘Education Strategy for Māori’ held with Māori around the country at the end of 1997, minutes from 21 of the 25 consultation hui held noted various calls for Māori control, tino rangatiratanga, autonomy, authority, ownership, in education from hui attendees.

\(^{79}\) A discussion draft on ‘Māori education authority’ was attached to March 1999 Ministry document.

\(^{80}\) Draft 2 Far North Proposal, Outline for Community Discussion.

proportion of Māori, Ministry and community members considered that the proposed partner must be Māori. It was further expected that the partner would be able to articulate a vision for improving educational outcomes in Te Taitokerau, as it also needed to have knowledge of the education sector and an understanding of issues impacting on children’s learning.

There were two main contenders for the partnership. Support for Te Runanga o TRoTT as the preferred partner came from members of Iwi and community who attended four hui held in early May 1999 on the appropriateness of the Runanga as the initial partner. These hui reflected that the majority of people who attended were in agreement with the aims of the Far North proposal. The main issues that arose in consultation hui reflected a consistency of themes:

- Local solutions were required for local issues
- Isolated schools must be recognised as having priority needs
- That there be a focus on student learning needs
- The role and purpose of a Māori Authority for education
- Scepticism of the Ministry as a government agency.

In regards to Te Runanga o TRoTT, all hui made recommendations that it broaden its base from a secondary school focus to include all education sectors and to also be inclusive of community – Hapu and Iwi. At this stage the Ministry had consulted widely with over 330 groups and individuals about the project. The Ministry’s view was that Te Runanga o TRoTT was the most appropriate choice as an initial partner according to selection criteria view, particularly because it was fundamentally driven by the strength of commitment and emphasis on children’s learning and its understanding of education. On 31 May 1999 Te Runanga o TRoTT was formally asked to enter into partnership with the Crown via the Ministry and the partnership was formerly launched on 10 June 1999 at Tauwhara Marae, Waimate North.

Bringing together partners with different histories and capabilities and overlapping but distinct agendas is not a straightforward task. The Ministry came into the partnership with established structures, systems, processes and resources, the Runanga o TRoTT came in as a charitable trust that brought te reo Māori teachers together, but with little in the way of resources and established structures and systems. It was faced with the challenge of developing its capacity and capabilities as it began its role as a working partner alongside the Ministry. The first step the Runanga took as a partner was to essentially re-form itself into a new charitable Trust in August 1999 under the name ‘Te Reo o Te Taitokerau’ – TRoTT.

What was first contemplated in the partnership was honoured in a Memorandum of Understanding agreement signed between the parties in October 1999. The memorandum provided a way of integrating the partners’ respective agendas of schooling improvement on the Ministry’s side and of te reo Māori and of Māori education as life-long learning on TRoTT’s side. Representatives from both partners viewed the memorandum as a very important milestone and formal document from which the partnership could be built. The partners formally reviewed the document in June 2002 and while some changes in wording were recommended, it was still seen as a critical partnership document. TRoTT described experiencing the need for such a document that would make what the partnership was all about more explicit, and provide another level of security. The memorandum began by establishing the Treaty of Waitangi as the basis for a formal relationship between Māori and the Crown, a constitutional relationship. It stated the reasons for the agreement, to
work in an educational partnership to ensure that improved educational outcomes occur for Māori students in the Far North Territorial Authority rohe. What the memorandum was silent on was the specific strategic goals of the project and pointed to the development of a strategic plan at some time in the future to be appended to the document. The memorandum included TRoTT’s specific objective at the time, which refers to the importance of an education that results in cultural knowledge and identity.82

The memorandum provided for operational elements of the relationship between the partners through the establishment of an overview group initially called ‘Te Pūihatanga Mātauranga’ which later became known as the Kaunihera, and TPM staffing. The overview group began meeting with Auckland regional managers representing the Ministry and four trustees representing TRoTT; education sector representatives also attended the early meetings.83 During the years the composition of the Kaunihera has reflected changes in TRoTT trustee numbers and in Ministry staffing. At the end of 2002 Ministry representation included staff from Whangarei, Auckland and national offices of the Ministry. In 2001 TRoTT takiwa representatives were also invited to attend meetings. For both partners the Kaunihera is an acknowledgment of an ongoing partnership at the governance level in which there is room for different views and interrogation of those differences, as described in the following way by one Ministry staff member;

It is considered by both partners as a type of ‘marriage’. The partnership enjoys a respectful relationship whereby there is a growing respect for differences of opinion, a willingness to work through them and an understanding that because you have a different opinion you don’t say well that’s it we’re off! Both partners are in it for the long term.

TRoTT trustees noted in interviews with them at the start of the evaluation that they saw meeting and spending ‘quality time’ together with Ministry as critical during the early stages if there was going to be a strong partnership. They also described the development of warm, respectful relationships with Ministry individuals, which they believed enabled rigorous and intense debate about how the partnership should work and the development of a level of trust. TRoTT’s perspective reinforces the importance of developing face-to-face relationships in order to get on with the work of the partnership, which compares and contrasts with the idea that relationships evolve alongside work. As noted in the previous chapter, the building of relationships is considered a fundamentally important task in itself as well as important for addressing the work at hand. Also from the perspective of TRoTT, the Kaunihera illustrated that the government and the Crown were willing to listen to ‘ordinary people’. TRoTT members described feeling able to submit ideas to a forum that, if endorsed, could then go directly to the Ministers or at least their representatives at the highest level.

The Memorandum also provided for staffing. The staff team has gone through intensive periods of building and redevelopment. The initial one-year contract arrangements have been changed to maintain staffing continuity. When this study began at the end of 2000, the team consisted of two strategic managers (one from each partner), a senior support officer, two team leaders and three educational facilitators. Members of the team were either from Te Taitokerau, or had a long service record in education in the region, and most were Māori.

82 TRoTT’s whainga (objective) as stated in MoU is ‘Kia mohio te tangata; ko wai ia no hea ia e ahu ana ia ki hea kia tu tangata ai i rito i toa ao me te ao whanui.’ Only when one has a sense of identity, of belonging, of purpose and direction, can one stand with pride and confidence in one’s own world and the wider world.

83 Minutes of TPM hui from 15 June 1999 up until name change to Kaunihera hui 26 April 2000, which was attended by TRoTT trustees, Auckland Ministry Managers and TPM managers.
At the end of 2002, there were two strategic project co-ordinators (one was a new appointment that year), two support officers, 2.5 TRoTT education facilitators and three new Ministry facilitators (appointed during the year). There was a greater mix in terms of length of time spent in Te Taitokerau, and of Māori and non-Māori. In addition, two pouwhakataki were located at the TPM offices.

There was a change in operational approaches from 2000 to 2001, shown in Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Staffing Approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2000 | Strategic Managers (Ministry and TRoTT) (2)  
Team leader (Community)  
Community facilitators (contracted via community agencies)  
Senior Support Officer (1)  
Support Officer (1) |
| 2002 | Strategic project coordinators (2)  
(Ministry and TRoTT CEO)  
(TRoTT employed)  
TPM facilitators (3)  
Contractor (1)  
Senior Support Officer (1) |

Up until 2000 the operational part of TRoTT essentially consisted of a staff of one. The need for TRoTT to build its capacity has been acknowledged in the partnership in arguably small but significant growth of two staffing positions focused respectively on kaupapa of te reo Māori and on takiwa education, and an administrative support position. TRoTT’s development of a takiwa representation model, which is discussed in a later section of this chapter, is also a significant aspect of its capacity building.

The next section focuses on TPM’s information gathering processes with communities and schools for a needs analysis exercise during 2000. This exercise was also significant in terms of TPM relationship-building work with community at the level of takiwa and Iwi and with schools.

School and community information gathering processes

TPM described the needs analysis exercise as having been envisaged in four phases.

Phase one: data gathering (in three roll-outs shown in Table 3 below) and situational analysis in eight schools and communities.

Phase two: schools and communities working cooperatively to address problems and needs identified in phase one.

Phases three and four: consideration of structural and organisational changes to create effective learning environments for students and teachers.

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84 Māori Liaison Officers working between the Māori community and the MOE.
The information gathering processes occurred in three roll-outs shown in Table 3 and began before the evaluation research started, although researchers did attend a training day held for the third roll-out. An external agency was contracted to help analyse the information that was collected. The agency advised TPM that the qualitative nature of the information gathered in roll-out 1 made it very difficult for them to carry out their analysis. Paper questionnaires for schools and communities were then developed with the agency. The questionnaires were used in roll-out 2 and then reviewed and a student questionnaire was added for the third roll-out.

### Table 3: Information gathering roll-outs – 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll-out 1 April–May</th>
<th>No. takiwa</th>
<th>No. schools</th>
<th>Process used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roll-out 2 June 2000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Community and school questionnaires&lt;sup&gt;87&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roll-out 3 September</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Community, school and student questionnaires</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TPM contracted various runanga and takiwa organisations to help with data gathering. TPM’s expectation was that community facilitators who were familiar with the community and the schools in that community would collect information from community members. The Ministry analysed the collected information and produced summaries for the schools involved in the second and third roll-outs. Analysis of data from the first roll-out were collated into summaries for each of the schools, which also incorporated data<sup>88</sup> from School SMART<sup>89</sup>, ERO reports, and then TPM gave schools their summary reports in the first term of 2001.

**Data collection**

Six schools and communities across three takiwa were identified for this study in discussions with TPM managers, the advisory team and TPM facilitators employed at the time. A total of 20 participants (five principals, five board members, three teaching staff and seven community facilitators<sup>90</sup>) were interviewed in 2001 after summary reports had been received. The semi-structured interview focused on three areas:

1. The information collecting process that was used; what was good and not so good about it and why?
2. Effects of involvement in the process as agency/runanga, community members, or school; what had been learned from the process?
3. Outcomes of the process, what they expected the outcomes to be and why? What was done with the information and to what extent was this useful?

<sup>85</sup> The KKM cluster began the story-telling approach with two kura but after the change to questionnaires decided to focus on a strategic planning approach begun at a hui in November 1999.

<sup>86</sup> Questions for schools focused on what school was trying to do; what it thought it was achieving and doing well and evidence for this; what it thought it wasn’t doing well and why, barriers to providing appropriate education for Māori students; uses of resources; improving quality of teaching and learning. Questions for community focused on what was known about: their children and their children’s education; their school and what they thought needed to happen to raise Māori achievement there; their needs as parents and how school and community could help them help their children’s education.

<sup>87</sup> School questionnaires covered: quality learning and teaching, school-community relationships, student well-being, governance. Community questionnaires covered: quality learning and teaching, student well-being, school management and governance, parental support, school-community relationships. Student questionnaires covered: te reo Māori, teacher-parent contact, their views of their school, achievement, parent involvement with their school.

<sup>88</sup> Which was described by Ministry as ‘hard data’.

<sup>89</sup> A website providing information to schools about their performance in comparison to similar type schools.

<sup>90</sup> This included two community coordinators, one of which requested that the interview be ‘off the record’, comments did not differ greatly from those of other community facilitators. One of the school principals declined to be involved.
Interviews carried out in 2001 with TPM staff and Ministry staff, which included information and views about the processes, were also analysed. In addition we attended various hui\(^{91}\) where discussions occurred about the exercise, particularly in relation to feedback of results. We also analysed materials provided to the facilitators, TPM reports and documents from roll-out 1 and the summary reports provided to schools in roll-outs 2 and 3.

**Findings**

The findings of this study are presented firstly as views and expectations of the information collecting processes. Analysis of the effects of involvement and the expected outcomes is discussed in terms of two issues that emerged; the issue of communication and the perceived impact of TPM.

*Expectations and views of the process*

Two kinds of expectations of the information gathering exercise emerged out of the interviews.

- Expectations about how and what the information would be used for.
- Expectations about feedback of the findings to communities and schools.

The main expectation for the information collected that was reflected in the interviews was to identify areas of need that schools and community together would consider for possible intervention. The other use was to assist in the development of education plans on takiwa and Iwi bases. By the time of the third roll-out schools and communities from the earlier data collection roll-outs were beginning to ask about results and feedback.

The information gathering processes provided large amounts of information, which did not get processed in an acceptable manner in the view of both school and community interviewees. Perceived delays in feeding results back to schools and a lack of clear, formal feedback to communities had a negative impact on perceptions of the project during the first half of 2001. Community facilitators expressed the view that communities did not feel that they had yet been in the feedback loop in any systematic way. The facilitators’ expectation had been that community hui would be called to present reports on the information that was collected. Schools did receive summary reports, principals, staff and board members reported that they expected reports to provide them with new information and had been disappointed that the reports generally presented information that was already known or available to them via ERO reports and the Ministry. Principals and board members from three schools voiced similar concerns about the need for a more explicit feedback process to community, for example one board chair said:

> The only thing is we’re still waiting on a final report. [TPM has] carried out initial feedback back to the board and staff, that’s been done. Not to the community. My understanding was we were going to have one of those [a report back to the community]. I wanted to include all the data collectors ... and we would get an overview then give it back to the community.

Initial community responses to the idea of gathering information about schooling held by the community, and interest in being involved in the process, were described as having been very positive across interviews. Initial school responses were reported as being more variable, ranging from schools being really positive about the concept, the focus of TPM and about the information collecting exercise, to being cool or negative.

\(^{91}\) These included Kaunihera, TRoTT, Iwi runanga and takiwa hui.
Staff, board members and community facilitators from the first roll-out who experienced a story-telling approach to data collection viewed it as having been a good process because it provided space for people to identify and focus on what they thought were important areas and issues for schooling in their communities. For instance a principal, staff and board member interviewed from one school described it as particularly timely for their community. They reported that aspects of the process continued during 2000 in the form of school-community focus group meetings and community participation in education related discussions and decision-making in words similar to those of the board member:

One of the good things that came out of it was that we could see from the facts coming back from the researchers [community facilitators], there were concerns out there in the community. So as chairman of the board I initiated a focus group … where the parents or the community could come and talk about anything that they had concerns about, about the school… These focus groups were [also] an opportunity for positive things to be discussed, and how we might even develop those a little bit further, have more parent participation.

Community facilitators showed a preference for more qualitative approaches that enabled community members more scope to identify areas they wanted to talk about. One facilitator who had been involved in both the story-telling and questionnaire process commented that while the questionnaire approach ‘was easier’; a more qualitative story-telling approach was able to bring out what the issues were for community members in more depth.

Facilitator: [Collecting information] was to do more of a one-to-one questioning … then they changed it into a tick box sort of thing.

Interviewer: A questionnaire?

Facilitator: Yes, a questionnaire, it was easier that way but I don't think that’s really what was needed at the time, I think they needed a more qualitative, more in depth kind of thing.

Interviewer: So there were questionnaires. Was there any other data collection sort of forum that you were involved in?

Facilitator: Yes there was, we had some group discussions, but they came down back to a questionnaire type thing. We had the groups on the maraes. What was on the maraes, I don't think that was actually captured, as much as we would have had liked to. Some of the stories were really quite touching and that was, I don't think that was captured, it became quite bland at the end.

Staff and boards from three schools involved in the questionnaire process variously described it in using such terms as ‘frustrating’, ‘confusing’. Their comments related to two areas. One related to the questions asked, and interviewees reported that not everybody surveyed in their schools felt that they had been able to respond well or meaningfully to all parts of the questionnaire. The other area related to the problems with organisation of the process, such as low levels of TPM contact and follow-up and postponed meetings, for instance: ‘we could never arrange a meeting … it was on again, off again’.

The major aim of the exercise was to gather information that would help identify where education initiatives should be focused with Māori communities and 78 schools that TPM encompassed. From our reading of TPM materials and documents and analysis of interviews with TPM staff, another significant aim we see was to build relationships. These included:

1. relationships between TPM and Māori organisations and communities using facilitators from the community to canvas community members
2. relationships between TPM and schools using TPM staff to collect information from school staff and boards
3. relationships between schools and communities in takiwa using information collected to discuss education planning.

However, interviews with TPM staff also indicate that the move from a story-telling to questionnaire approach was not so much driven by aims as by views that the move would give data that was easier to collect and analyse. A question that emerges for us here is what sort of approach would have supported both the collection of useful data from community and schools and relationship building? Two things could have helped achieve this:
1. Collection of essentially qualitative data that identified what the significant educational issues and expectations were in the eyes of the community and school
2. An approach that facilitated community and school coming together to cooperatively consider what the data showed alongside other already available data, and helped them to prioritise areas of educational need and development.

Communication
Issues of communication emerged in terms of the changing nature of the process used to collect information. Interviews with TPM staff members revealed assumptions about what the exercise entailed and roles and capabilities required. These assumptions were particularly significant firstly in terms of collecting information from community, which did not appear to have been explicitly worked through with those contracted to carry out its collection and secondly in terms of feedback of results. One TPM staff member reflected on this in the following way:

There were some assumptions that we all made about each other that didn't actually turn out to be justified ... for example, we engaged runanga as the community partner to drive the community facilitation to survey the whānau. And this was taken to the executive level like the CEO where the focus and priority is not on education, whereas I would have probably gone to one of the service delivery arms. ... Things that we thought would happen didn't... And in the meantime schools were thinking we [TPM] should be able to bring it [the analysis] back within a month or two.

TPM staff expressed frustration about the level of change and how this affected their work and timelines, for instance:

My role was forever changing I think ... because decisions were made and then were changed. And then we'd follow that line, and then it would change, and then we'd follow that line, and then it would change. An example would be: we were asked to identify community facilitators and that the runanga would be responsible for that, so the runanga went and did that. Then a late item that came in was we needed to get those names checked by the principals as well and ask the principals to contribute some names. That just added another layer of difficulty or timing...

Communication issues are also reflected in reports from three community facilitators of encountering school resistance against information collecting processes with community. Facilitators reported that some schools did not necessarily fully understand or in some instances agree with the processes. Additionally TPM’s expectation that community facilitators would know the community and schools was not necessarily picked up by organisations contracted to collect information. Some of the community facilitators were considered to have little or no previous interaction with the community’s school by schools or by TPM staff, as indicated below:

One of the things that I think that worried me at the time was their selection of community facilitators ... we wanted them to choose people from communities, who knew the communities, who knew the school, who were part of it ... a local person who in time would perhaps even evolve into being a local liaison with a school community. It didn't [always happen] ... they kind of sub-
contracted and said, 'Could you find us five people...’ but [those people] were not living in and part of [the community] necessarily.

The relative lack of shared understandings between TPM, schools and those contracted to collect information from community was an important factor in terms of initial relationship development not only between schools and TPM but also between takiwa and TPM. The degree to which relationship building with takiwa via community facilitators had or had not occurred did have implications for board election activities discussed in the next chapter.

**TPM’s role and function**

An important question at this point was what TPM thought was critical for schools and communities to understand about its role and functions, particularly as at the time there was a range of perceptions reflected across interviews. What schools understood about TPM and what they thought about its potential impact on the quality of education they were able to provide was significant in terms of ensuring that TPM did not get viewed in ways that, for example, might foster a dependence to ‘provide’ rather than facilitate schools’ development on one hand, or a rejection of its support and input as irrelevant on the other.

Principals, teaching staff and board members’ views about expected outcomes related to variations in their understandings of the roles and functions of TPM reflected how they saw school ‘core business’ in relation to ‘TPM business’. TPM activities were viewed by interviewees from three schools as ‘add-ons’ to what schools are essentially about. For instance two principals commented that while they were happy to maintain contact with TPM there was an ‘annoyance factor’ in that TPM activity took energy away from what they saw as their ‘everyday work’.

Principals and board members across four of the schools believed that their school had clear ideas about what their needs were and knew what was needed, or were doing what was needed to address these.92 There was a query from one principal about whether their school not yet being involved in any initiative development reflected a perception that they did not have any significant needs to be addressed and said, ‘If we are okay, tell us we are okay’.

The interviews reflected that at that time not all the schools clearly understood the schooling improvement and development approach that TPM was undertaking. For example, one of the principals described being left with the early impression from TPM that its work would not involve funding going to schools but later heard through a principals’ network that initiatives involving groups of schools were going to be funded. So while schools did see TPM being concerned with identifying and addressing needs or problems for schools so that they could do their work more effectively the ‘how’ of this was not necessarily clear to them at the time of interview.

**Evaluative comment**

The views and discussions about the needs analyses exercise reported above were presented to Kaunihera hui and there was a general acceptance that the exercise had been problematic. Kaunihera also conveyed a sense that the partnership had ‘moved on’. Since

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92 Responses were similar to school responses described in the first SEMO evaluation report, e.g. ‘We are the best ones to know. Give us the money and we will do it.’
this study, TPM efforts to re-engage a number of disaffected schools in the project, the Board of Trustees Wananga-a-takiwa initiative\textsuperscript{93} and work on developing interventions\textsuperscript{94} has helped to mediate this with schools and boards. The views and discussions presented above then were understood as being located at a particular time in the development of TPM.

The initial impact of the needs analyses process reflected in interviews as well as views we heard expressed in community contexts such as hui was not positive on TPM’s profile in communities and schools. The needs analyses process raised expectations particularly among community facilitators and Iwi organisations that TPM would facilitate the development of initiatives by and within community and Iwi. These expectations were not realised through TPM.

Collecting useful information from schools and community that provides strong direction for education improvement and development, and builds relationships across schools and communities, including Iwi organisations, to facilitate effective initiatives is critical for education projects founded on Iwi-Crown partnership. The above findings point to factors that might help in this, including:

- Qualitative information from schools and communities on what are the significant educational issues and expectations for them
- Coordinated communication with schools and community about information collection that leads to shared, realistic understandings and expectations
- Effective points of connection across community and school information collecting processes, including reporting back and opportunities for community and school to cooperatively consider what data show and to help prioritise areas of educational need and development.

A representation model

This section focuses on a representation model that TRoTT developed to ensure that Māori community voices across various takiwa and Iwi in the area that TPM covers would be represented in TRoTT’s organisation and in the partnership. One of the roles envisaged by Ministry for its partner was to provide access to established networks and communities in Te Taitokerau. One of the strategies the TPM goal has for raising student/Māori student achievement is to improve Māori participation and influence in education in Te Taitokerau. Ensuring as full and as active Iwi representation as possible at the highest levels of partnership decision-making is one way for TRoTT to help facilitate progress towards TPM’s strategic goal, as well as the Ministry’s initial vision.

When the TPM partnership was formalised in 1999 TRoTT essentially comprised secondary school teachers of te reo Māori and a small group of kaumatua and had made a commitment to broaden its representation. Before this evaluation began, TRoTT had sought to do this through a representation model that drew on school and educational sectors beyond secondary schooling. Education sector organisations and associations identified some representatives, while others were invited to be representatives because they were perceived as educational knowledge, skills and approach that would be valuable and relevant to TRoTT and to TPM. While this model provided a level of representation from Te Taitokerau communities it was essentially in the form of Māori community members employed in the education sector. What it did not necessarily ensure was

\textsuperscript{93} See Chapter Five.
\textsuperscript{94} E.g. interventions examined in Chapter Six.
community representation as takiwa and Iwi. Education sector representation was replaced with a takiwa representation model at the latter part of 2000 when TRoTT identified that this was a more appropriate means to widen its representation. In October 2000 an invitation was sent out to runanga or Iwi organisations in each takiwa for a representative to attend the November 2000 meeting of TRoTT. The letter outlined TRoTT’s role in partnership with the Ministry, what its role would be in relation to supporting and assisting potential takiwa representatives and the qualities that were being looked for in takiwa representatives.95

Data collection methods
For the purposes of the evaluation, in order to find out about takiwa representation used in the partnership and their effects, data was collected from written sources, hui attendance, and from interviews. Written sources included 1999 and 2000 TPM planning hui minutes, TRoTT and TPM Kaunihera hui minutes, documents and correspondence. Hui attendance included various monthly 2001 and 2002 TRoTT hui,96 and six-weekly Kaunihera hui.

Interview data came from three sets of interviews with a total of 34 participants. The first set of interviews carried out at the beginning of 2001 was with the Kaunihera (five TRoTT trustees, four Ministry representatives) and seven TPM staff. These interviews provided information about the forms of representation used and reasons and decisions underlying their respective development. The second set of interviews carried out in April 2002 was with the five previously interviewed TRoTT trustees (one trustee was also a takiwa representative) and nine TRoTT takiwa representatives (two of these representatives became trustees around this time).97 Takiwa representatives were invited to participate in an interview and given a list of open-ended questions at one of TRoTT’s monthly hui. Trustees were also given copies of questions. The interviews with takiwa representatives focused on:

1. How they became representatives
2. What they thought the role was going to involve and what they actually do
3. Their knowledge about and involvement in TPM activities in their takiwa
4. Support they received and they would like to receive as a takiwa representative.

Open-ended questions for trustees focused on:

1. Reasons the takiwa representation was set up
2. Takiwa representatives’ role and tasks
3. Perceptions of the importance of takiwa representation for TRoTT and for TPM
4. Any emerging strengths and weaknesses
5. Support that representatives were provided or needed.

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95 17 October 2000 letter also provided these criteria for representatives: a passion for education; preferably can communicate in Te Reo; a good knowledge of local educational issues; a knowledge of wider education issues; availability to attend monthly meetings; credibility with local Iwi.
96 TRoTT hui 12.2.01, 30.7.01, 17.8.01, 7.11.01, 3.4.02. Minutes of other TRoTT meetings were also read for information on discussions and decisions made about representation.
97 Interviews were conducted individually, except in the case of two trustees, and in whatever way suited the participant. Four interviews were face to face, three were phone interviews and four of the trustees who had been previously interviewed responded to questions via email. We were unable to arrange an interview with one takiwa representative. However, this representative had been interviewed in November 2001 and we were able to analyse discussion of aspects of takiwa representation work in this interview.
A third set of interviews was carried out in July and August 2002 with 11 Runanga or takiwa organisation representatives who were chairs, management or staff members of their respective organisation. All but two organisations had a TRoTT takiwa representative. Interviews included a focus on:
1. Expectations of takiwa representation on TRoTT
2. Expectations of relationships with TPM
3. Levels of confidence that those expectations could be met.

Findings

The findings of this study are presented in three parts, reasons for takiwa representation and partners’ initial views of the model; takiwa representatives experiences in the role; and runanga and takiwa organisation representatives’ views about representation.

Moving from education sector to takiwa representation
TRoTT trustees saw takiwa representation as critical for the partnership because it:
• has both a takiwa representation and an Iwi mandate role
• gives TRoTT wider perspectives on Iwi affiliations and of Iwi educational aspirations
• is a necessary and positive development for the partnership
• brings more transparency and honest dialogue between Ministry and flaxroots people.

The most significant reason given by TRoTT for the move to takiwa representation was in order that Māori communities and Iwi in the TPM area could be more explicitly represented in the partnership. Trustees believed that bringing more people from different takiwa into TRoTT would significantly help the partnership to learn about the direction of educational thinking and activities that were happening in takiwa and Iwi across Te Taitokerau. One trustee stated it in the following way:

And it's from that [takiwa representation] we feel we have a better understanding of what's going on out there. For I lose touch with areas of the north, as [it is] with the other trustees.

The move to takiwa representation was seen as also rising out of TRoTT learning that it needed to increase Iwi influence on Ministry thinking beyond its own organisation, if ‘Māori participation and influence’ was going to be a means to help improve education. One of the trustees worded it this way:

I've been involved in trying to persuade the Ministry that there are better ways, not just myself but with the other trustees. Now we've got representatives from other areas it's a matter of working with the Ministry personnel and trying to get them to shift their thinking. …

Trustees saw attendance at hui under the education sector representation model as also influencing the shift to Iwi and takiwa representation, as described in the following interview example.

They [the representatives] weren't available for the meeting dates that were scheduled. So [TRoTT] tried to find a way whereby the representatives of that particular rohe, wherever they might be, are going to have a part to play in the issues, the discussions and decision-making and so that TRoTT would know what they're doing in rohe, and vice versa. ... It was difficult to have teachers represented at those meetings because they are so busy that they just couldn't be available. Only some of them did come, but then you want the lot.

Not all education sector representatives had been readily available to attend every hui; while some were present at most if not all hui, others attended intermittently. What this
essentially meant was that only some education sectors and organisations were consistently represented and thus in a position to influence TRoTT and TPM activities, which put the extent that effective representation was being achieved into question. Ministry representatives also commented on attendance as an issue of education sector representation. One stated that,

... some of the [Māori principals, teachers], who are great educationalists and who really did have good ideas, ceased to come. That was a bit of a loss. I don't know that their contribution was recognised and they were always deferring to kaumatua. And I do see the tension between kaumatua being the important ones and they are to be respected and all those things, and how much the young ones who know stuff should be allowed to influence and that is always a tension...

The seven staff at TPM interviewed in 2001 expressed a shared belief about the importance of whānau, hapu and Iwi involvement and representation in the partnership. However, views were probably equally divided about how or whether Iwi or takiwa organisations were the most appropriate avenue for representation. Three believed that these organisations were not directly in touch with parents and families of school students. The following comments from different facilitators reflect the range of views held:

The establishment of TRoTT at the Iwi level is really good. Education is being talked about more in Māori communities now. There's still a long way to go though.

There are hapu within the Iwi runanga. They need to talk among themselves, first as Māori parents and to their children, so that they can believe in themselves, firstly before they go to school. There needs to be korero taking place among whānau, hapu and Iwi of all rohe, to know who is who and where this kaupapa is heading.

Many Iwi organisations do not represent the voice of parents who have school aged children. Many Māori parents have no faith in their Iwi organisations.

Although there was some regret at the decline in contribution from Māori educationalists such as that expressed above, Ministry representatives interviewed around the time of the change were generally positive about TRoTT's move to takiwa representation as a means to improve both community involvement and TPM’s relationships with communities. There was some concern expressed by Ministry representatives about having a lack of clarity about what role takiwa representation would play, for example two Ministry representatives respectively said:

The role that they will play in TRoTT and TPM has yet to emerge, I think we always said that we would wait and see what they thought of that.

I think there is some uncertainty around the role of various groups. In particular, there is the Kaunihera and there is a meeting of takiwa representatives. So I think there needs to be a much greater clarification around the role of particularly the takiwa representatives.

However, Ministry representatives did view takiwa representation as having a role in terms of TRoTT’s mandate as the partner, through takiwa and runanga. There was a level of concern expressed by three of the Ministry representatives interviewed in 2001 about the extent of TRoTT’s mandate, such as;

I don't think TRoTT's got the mandate. I think they have managed really well; they're starting to get takiwa representation ... but I don't think it's gone beyond takiwa with that representation. So they haven't actually taken time to sit back and say, 'Now that we've got this representation ... there are several things we need to do. We need to get the Iwi to give us the mandate to represent them...’
Around the time an Iwi runanga had begun direct negotiations with the Crown that included an educational component, illustrating the complexity and depth of the issues around Iwi capacity building. This had arguably heightened concerns about mandate. For their part, Ministry representatives made it clear that the Ministry was unlikely to contemplate two educational relationships in Te Taitokerau and that mandate and representation issues were ones that the Iwi Māori partner needed to resolve.

TRoTT’s view, on the other hand, was that a mandate for its role as the partner had been successfully gained through the 1999 consultation hui process. However, for about a third of the runanga and takiwa organisations’ representatives that were interviewed, the issue of mandate had not been sufficiently addressed when the original consultation rounds were held. For example, one runanga interviewee believed that the issue of whether TRoTT had the necessary mandate from Iwi had never been resolved satisfactorily as it had not been required to seek the mandate of individual hapu and Iwi and that the project had thus ended up with a ‘pan tribal organisation’.

While the Ministry undertook extensive consultation across the Far North communities to identify an appropriate partner for the project, concerns were still expressed about whether a ‘true mandate’ actually existed. Understandings of mandate we encountered across interviews with Ministry, TRoTT, runanga and takiwa organisations ranged from mandate involves agreeing to being represented through mandate gives the political authority to act on behalf of the ‘mandate givers’. However it is defined, gaining a mandate is no easy task in communities as diverse and complex as Te Taitokerau. It raises questions around who have given the mandate and who the ‘mandate givers’ themselves represent. The issue of mandate strongly points to the need for strategies that secure continuing commitment and confidence in a group that has been mandated to represent and carry out work for the greater Iwi community. We see the development of takiwa representation in TRoTT, discussed below, as significant to this.

TRoTT takiwa representatives themselves were fairly equally divided about their own mandate, with about half of them seeing it as part of their role as a takiwa representative. Differences emerged in what representatives saw the mandate as actually encompassing. They saw their ‘mandate’ ranging from being able to describe and discuss takiwa or runanga decisions with TRoTT or TPM and vice versa, through to contributing to TRoTT or TPM decision-making on behalf of a takiwa or runanga. The next section discusses takiwa representatives’ views of their role.

**Being a takiwa representative**

What TRoTT and the research found was that while information was sent out about how TRoTT saw the role of representatives to runanga and takiwa organisations, representatives themselves were not necessarily aware of it and that there was a need to check that representatives themselves received such information. All but three reported that when they first became a representative they saw the role as an information link either between TRoTT and takiwa, or TRoTT, TPM and takiwa. Four also described their role as including some contact with or monitoring of schools in their takiwa. One of the representatives had initially thought the role involved contributing te reo Māori skills to a Māori speaking group. Three said that when they started they were unsure what the position was about, one described feeling very inadequate at the start because of no knowledge about what representatives were supposed to do.
At the time of interview most of the representatives had been in the role for at least a year. Takiwa representatives described various ways of coming to the role. The majority had been approached by a takiwa or Iwi organisation to be its representative at TRoTT. Three said that they were replacements for the original representative who had either not been able to attend meetings regularly, or did not want to continue in the position. They described their work as involving representing their takiwa at TRoTT hui, and information dissemination between takiwa and TRoTT. A requirement to present a written report at TRoTT hui about education activities and issues in their takiwa had been introduced by that time and representatives saw this as a significant move forward in helping to clarify aspects of their role for them.

Two issues in relation to representatives’ involvement with TPM or with education activities emerged from their interviews. One related to the degree of their contact and involvement with TPM and with schools. The other related to the degree of their knowledge and information about education. Contact with TPM facilitators varied across the group. Seven representatives reported having worked with a TPM facilitator, in particular to organise board of trustees wananga-a-takiwa, the same number of representatives said that they had attended at least one wananga. Two representatives reported having had no contact with TPM facilitators or direct involvement in TPM activities. Similarly, contact with schools varied, with four representatives reporting either regular contact with some schools, availability to school boards if needed, or relaying any school-related issues brought to their attention by schools or community members to TRoTT hui. Three of the representatives said that they would like more contact and/or to work more with the TPM facilitator, as a means to find out about or to get to know the schools in their takiwa.

A clear understanding and knowledge of TPM and TPM activities in their respective takiwa was not evident across all representatives and the desire to know more in order to be more effective as representatives was expressed. Representatives who are unsure about what TPM is about impacts on the extent that they can contribute to and influence directions and decision-making in education. Representatives themselves saw that the degree of educational knowledge and background they had could be an issue unless relevant information was made available. Three representatives who had started relatively later noted a lack of induction information about the roles, structures and staff of TRoTT and TPM, and about appropriate people they might approach for assistance with any educational take in their takiwa.

Around the time of the interviews TRoTT had begun facilitating activities to help inform TRoTT representatives about schooling and education. Representatives identified TRoTT and takiwa as their main sources of support and information. Nearly all described examples of encouragement and practical support received from TRoTT management (e.g. attending takiwa hui to explain TRoTT and TPM; guest speakers from education organisations at TRoTT hui, information educational agencies). Practical support in the way of financial assistance to attend TRoTT hui was also noted. A smaller number of representatives described takiwa forums for discussion, debate and feedback on ideas for improving education.
There were a small number of aspects to their role representatives said that they would like to see improve or develop more. About half of the suggestions related to developing better contact systems:

- with individual marae, community, parents; for reporting back to takiwa
- with TPM so that there was more active involvement in developing projects.

Two were concerned, however, with the amount of time and effort needed to carry out the role effectively and that there appeared to be an expectation that their role would increase in terms of contact with TPM facilitators. Similarly, lack of financial support and recognition for such takiwa representation work was an issue for another representative who believed that the extent to which community input is valued is reflected in the extent to which it is paid for. There was also some frustration expressed that takiwa representation was not yet working effectively to assist and empower communities to achieve their own educational aspirations. That is, it was helping to grow the capabilities of the partnership and the capacity of TRoTT as the Māori partner as opposed to helping takiwa build capacity to participate in and influence education.

**Takiwa, runanga and representation**

There were two types of expectations that representatives from takiwa and runanga organisations referred to in their interviews. One expectation was that representation would facilitate better feedback to the flaxroots of communities, including members that do not necessarily attend takiwa and marae hui. The second was to see Iwi included more clearly in TRoTT as decision-makers rather than information sharers. There was a third expectation that questioned the notion of representation itself.

The expectations that came out of the interviews can be roughly broken into three positions in relation to representation. They reflect that by mid 2002 the form representation and networking took varied across takiwa. They reflect that while the development of TRoTT takiwa representation can be seen as a critical achievement, it is not a straightforward one, it does not look the same and is not evenly effective across the TPM area. Two things tended to distinguish the three positions. One related to distances between the takiwa and TPM and TRoTT’s organisational ‘homes’. The further away a takiwa was, the more likely representatives reported little involvement with TRoTT or TPM, or dissatisfaction with takiwa representation. The other related to the perspective on rangatiratanga that an organisation or runanga might hold.

Five interviewees from takiwa relatively close to TPM offices reflected a focus on how takiwa can be used operationally, that is in concrete, active ways to develop and enhance Māori development, including how takiwa could work to engender more involvement and participation in educational matters. Interviewees included descriptions of takiwa involvement with TPM activities and initiatives involving their takiwa, such as TPM project presentations and discussions at takiwa hui, participation in Board of Trustees Wananga-a-takiwa and so on. Interviewees in this grouping described a working relationship developing with TRoTT that involved useful interaction and information sharing. The interviewees tended to view the TRoTT takiwa representation model as an effective one.

A second smaller grouping of three interviewees reported having no established or what they considered being functional representation with TRoTT at the time of interview. These interviewees wanted to see clearer, more consistent direction and activity coming from the TRoTT partner and from TPM in their takiwa. They also reported relatively little
contact with TPM activities and believed there was little evidence as far as they could see
that the partnership was working in effective ways in their takiwa with runanga,
community or schools. They described how initial discussions had occurred with TPM
partners about possible initiative developments, which had not been followed up in any
concrete way at the time of the interviews. Key factors that they saw affecting the level of
TPM activities in their takiwa at that time included staffing levels compared to the area
size TPM was expected to cover, and the location of TRoTT and TPM offices. Two of
these interviewees reported that there was still some negative hangover from the
information collecting exercise at the runanga or organisational level as well as in schools
they were working with.

The third grouping of four interviewees included one from the above grouping. In this
grouping the approach representatives described their runanga or organisation taking
reflected a particular rangatiratanga position on Māori development, which one described
as ‘with Iwi for Iwi’. This was expressed as a desire for a direct relationship between their
organisation and the Crown. Three interviewees also reported that while their organisation
may want to maintain a relationship with TRoTT, they would prefer a more direct
relationship with TPM in terms of education planning and activities in their takiwa, that
goes beyond being represented in the partnership by TRoTT.

**Evaluative comment**

When we were collecting data on takiwa representation from TRoTT representatives and
trustees it had been a part of TRoTT’s organisation for a relatively short time and like
TPM it was still developing. Takiwa representation was a significant achievement in
broadening TRoTT as an organisation and opening it out to Iwi. At the time the takiwa
representation model had helped to facilitate recognition of the importance of education in
some instances, reinforce the acceptance of its importance in others, across takiwa and Iwi
organisations. It was helping to get education onto the agenda so to speak. Although
uneven, representation was developing assertiveness and emerging leadership; at the time
of interviews at least four representatives had become trustees. It was helping to provide a
wider base and diversity in TRoTT trustees to contribute to partnership development and
governance as members of Kaunihera.

From within the Ministry there was the general view expressed that TRoTT had managed
the start towards takiwa representation well. While, at least initially, not absolutely clear
what the takiwa representatives’ roles were, Ministry representatives saw that the model
had potential to provide wider Māori representation. Ministry also saw takiwa
representation as potentially able to facilitate engagement of schools and families at local
levels, and generate greater understanding about TPM and its initiatives across Te
Taitokerau. Many takiwa representatives did describe working with school and
communities in their takiwa, although levels of engagement with schools ranged from
descriptions of contact with principals and/or board members of particular schools in their
takiwa through to no contact at all.

The roles and responsibilities not being realised in the same way across takiwa in some
instances reflected where a takiwa was at, what it deemed its priorities to be at the time or
where relationships between TPM and the takiwa ‘were at’. In others it reflected the areas
of skills, knowledge and expertise of the representative. At this point of evaluation the
nature of the networking is very uneven – still emergent in some takiwa, while in others it
is more strongly developed.
Representation in itself will not necessarily resolve mandate issues unless it is made clear what the expectations of mandate pertaining to representation are. Having a representative from each takiwa does not automatically bestow TRoTT with a clear mandate or necessarily reinforce an existing one. What it has provided is the development of networks that can enable TRoTT as the partner to outreach into communities, particularly at the takiwa level, thereby effecting the TPM goal and TRoTT’s kaupapa of strengthening te reo Māori.
CHAPTER FOUR
Capacity building, learning and providing benefits in partnership

This chapter examines capacity building, learning and providing benefits in the partnership. Criteria for this research include how capacity changes through the partnership. The development of TPM itself is in the context of government strategic directions, which include reducing disparities and Māori capacity building. Schooling improvement also has a concern to build community capacity. Part of the task for the TPM project ‘Excellence in Education through Unity’ then is to ensure conditions for capacity building to occur. The chapter starts with an analysis of capacity building and descriptions of how TPM is variously viewed by Ministry, TRoTT, and takiwa and Iwi organisations. The dangers of a dependency model of capacity building for the partnership are then discussed.

Researching the implementation and development of a partnership involves more than a focus on its success towards achieving stated partnership goals, and outcomes that it produces. Helen Timperley and Viviane Robinson\textsuperscript{98} describe effective partnerships as ones in which relationships are such that they promote learning. What is also seen as important then is the extent to which learning is a fundamental part of the developing partnership. While links and parallels can be drawn between capacity building, learning is a significant dimension of this partnership in its own right. Three kinds of learning are identified and discussed: learning to work together, learning to work with community and learning to make change with schools.

As described in Chapter Two, an important reason for entering into a partnership is the expectation that it will result in mutual benefits for the partners. Within a Kaupapa Māori approach what the benefits of participation are, who benefits and how they benefit are critical issues.\textsuperscript{99} In a partnership such as TPM where the partners in essence not only represent an organisation but also are representatives for wider groups of takiwa, Iwi and education stakeholders, expectations about who should benefit and what those benefits should look like are complex. Given the nature of partnership, it is expected that the partners themselves do benefit, such as in terms of their capacity and learning. Other expected benefits relate to reasons for entering into partnership and the partnership goal itself: benefits relating to student learning, community involvement in education, and strengthening te reo Māori.

\textit{Data collection methods}

Data analysed in this chapter includes three sets of interviews with 30 participants. The first set was carried out with nine staff members (four employed by TRoTT, five employed by Ministry) at TPM in July 2002. The second set was carried out in July and August 2002 with 11 takiwa and Iwi organisation representatives who were chairs, management or staff members of their respective organisation. All but two organisations had a TRoTT takiwa representative. The final set was carried out with 10 Ministry staff members (four represented the Ministry at Kaunihera) in September 2002. Data was also taken from attendance at Kaunihera hui, documents and minutes.


Capacity building

How might capacity building be viewed within a framework of Kaupapa Māori? The idea of partnerships where each partner seeks to relate with the other in ways that enable access to the level playing field is part of what Graham Smith (1999) describes as key intervention elements that help constitute to ‘Kaupapa Māori’. He is concerned that any Māori development should have ‘flax-roots appeal’. That is, Māori are part of laying the groundwork for future activities. Additionally, problem solving and decision-making is not only about Māori but is by Māori and for Māori, as Māori are integral to those activities. This he would see contributing to the growth and development of an ‘organic Māori’ organisation.

A perusal of Loomis’s research into the Government’s Policy on Māori Development: He Putahitanga Hou uncovers some key points pertaining to capacity building that are worth considering alongside Smith’s Kaupapa Māori framework. Loomis raises several dimensions that have implications for those engaged with the TPM project.

The notion of capacity building is an internationally used political term of development. Capacity building as supported by overseas literature emphasises indigenous autonomy and self-determination, ownership of resources and control over decision-making, which all sit well within a Kaupapa Māori framework. At a global level, Srikantia and Fry (2000) describe partnership development as an essential mechanism for capacity building, which is mirrored in the way TPM is working in Te Taitokerau. Like Srikantia and Fry, TPM can also reflect that partnerships have potential to facilitate capacity building, that is, access to knowledge and skills, effective models and methods of addressing community needs and managing resources, options for organisation, management and governance, strategies for advocacy, and networks. If that is the case then a Kaupapa Māori framework could be seen to be a mechanism for capacity building that TPM has harnessed.

Loomis observes that the focus of capacity building is on strengthening governance, human capital and infrastructure so that indigenous peoples can govern themselves and determine their own path of development. Part of his research into New Zealand government strategies centred on the ‘Closing the gaps’ and ‘Reducing disparities’ policies, developed to address issues such as low achievement levels in schools, especially those of Māori students. His critique of such policies is that they effectively ignored indigenous self-determination in favour of more ‘accountable and sophisticated’ mainstream models, which, he sees, simply meant the improving of mainstream government services, even though funds had been targeted towards Māori provider groups. The danger then for Māori and indigenous groups is that such approaches can subvert the capacity of Māori organisations and instead improve service and business providers.

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Capacity building is about the way people seek to bring about change in their lives and to improve the circumstances in which they live, based on the balance that is necessary to ensure that they can have more equitable access to those resources they need to develop themselves.\textsuperscript{106} The mechanism of partnership being used in the TPM project, if it takes cognisance of dangers such as those pointed out by Loomis, should lead to that kind of capacity building that facilitates the kind of Māori participation in schooling in Te Taitokerau that Smith describes in his Kaupapa Māori framework, and leads to raised achievement levels.

Effective capacity building should also involve partners and community, in this context takiwa and Iwi organisations in particular, in ways that do not foster relationships of dependence. In other words a partner that is in effect providing a project or intervention should not find that the other partner is simply a passive recipient that is unable to fully contribute because of a range of factors. On the other hand, nor should the provider expect to find that its input is rejected because the partner finds that it is irrelevant to them.

Understanding how capacity building might work requires an understanding of relationships between TPM partners as well as their relationships with communities and schools. These relationships are presented in Figure 2 above, which draws on how they have been presented and discussed at Kaunihera.

The struggle over defining the relationship between TRoTT and the Ministry was a constant echo in interviews with the TPM team.\textsuperscript{108} Three different views of ‘who’ TPM was came through interviews. One reflected that TPM is viewed as being the Ministry and TRoTT, who work together to achieve shared goals. The second reflected TPM operating as two separate organisations, Ministry and TRoTT, who work in their own ways to achieve shared goals. The third saw TPM operating as an organisation made up of staff from the two partners, working together to achieve shared goals.

The operational work of TPM through schools plays a pivotal role in how community and partner capacity building processes are positioned in the partnership. Drawn from hui, minutes and interviews data, the following grid in Table 4 shows the range of key attitudes

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Figure2.png}
\caption{A profile of the relationships\textsuperscript{107}}
\end{figure}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
TRoTT & TPM Partnership & MoE \\
\hline
Takiwa Iwi & TPM Operations & Crown Agencies \\
\hline
Schools & BoTs/Principals/Teachers & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{107} Modified from models presented in a discussion document and minutes for 12.12.02 Kaunihera Hui, TPM.
\textsuperscript{108} i.e. interviews with Ministry-employed and TRoTT employed staff at TPM.
of the TPM team about the capacity of each partner to perform, which will influence the expectations that TPM can have of each partner.

### Table 4: Perceptions in TPM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Of TRoTT</th>
<th>Of the Ministry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRoTT has no independent supply of its own</td>
<td>Ministry is responsible for achieving ‘unity’ by a process of capacity building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRoTT is not a creature of the Ministry</td>
<td>Ministry is committed to ensuring that the Māori partner is nurtured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRoTT has its own kaupapa</td>
<td>Ministry is trying to guarantee Iwi Māori partner can ‘operate’ effectively in school communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not realistic to expect the Ministry to fund substantial realms of activity outside the partnership.</td>
<td>Ministry is trying to uphold notions of strengthening people’s capacity to determine their own values and aspirations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The partnership should be the Ministry and TRoTT and collectively we make TPM</td>
<td>Ministry employed staff and TRoTT employed staff are collectively the TPM team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRoTT employees say they are members of TRoTT</td>
<td>Ministry employees say they are members of TPM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Iwi perceptions of TPM

Interviews with representatives from takiwa and Iwi organisations provided information about how, as part of the partnership model, TPM is perceived by Iwi. The following reflects the range of ideas that emerged from the interviews, which have implications for the project and in gauging the capacity building possible:

- Importance of TRoTT and TPM having an inclusive agenda that encompasses whānau, hapu and Iwi
- Māori to take a first-hand role in raising the achievement rates of their children
- Iwi organisations to be involved at the early stages in strategising as to how to improve educational services, not to be regarded as an afterthought
- Expectation that Māori could operate as an independent and skilful partner
- Takiwa/Iwi employed staff to work in education with schools and Māori (c.f. Ministry of TRoTT employed)
- Not confident that the partners’ agendas could be brought together, in that the entities are too different to make their ‘marriage’ work.

### TRoTT perceptions of TPM

As TRoTT is a key partner in the project their views about the relationship need highlighting. Teasing out the interviews with TRoTT staff at TPM provided information about the views they hold on the relationships and the roles they play in all of the developments:

- TRoTT emerged as the group that Ministry would work with and was ‘mandated’ by different Iwi
- Key task for TRoTT during the first year of the project was strengthening takiwa representation
- Space for TRoTT to set its own direction for capacity building
- Autonomous development with te reo Māori as a key element to help address educational and other social issues faced by Māori in Te Taitokerau
- They (TPM) have more avenues and more resources to do what they are doing than TRoTT, who is not being heard.

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109 There are Māori groups in Te Taitokerau who do not accept that TRoTT represents their interests. These groups have made independent representation of their situation.
Ministry perceptions of TPM

The Ministry arguably plays a prominent partnership role in TPM in that the Ministry set the development of education partnership in Te Taitokerau in motion and holds responsibility for funding initiatives and projects that arise out of TPM. What the Ministry has to say about capacity building and how this might be best supported is thus highly significant. The following reflects the range of views coming out of interviews with Ministry staff and demonstrates some major points which impact on the way capacity building is unfolding. Ministry comments show that it has clear ideas about how it wishes to work with Māori:

- Takiwa approach seen as good way of
  - helping community capacity building move along
  - ensuring strong links between community capacity building and school improvement effort
- Gaining more trust from Māori and the ‘wider community’
- Trying to make a difference in communities to promote the government’s goals in education by working with Te Taitokerau communities
- Investing in the capacity and capability of TRoTT so that they can operate as an effective management team in their region
- Investing in the capacity and capability of the Ministry itself to uplift its management performance in serving the Māori learning environment
- Incumbent on the partners to be able to hear each other.

Views of capacity building for takiwa and Iwi

What came through the three sets of interviews are two views of capacity building, which reflect states of independency and dependency. One view is that TRoTT and the community they represent, in this context takiwa and Iwi, need to build their own capacity and in so doing will be able participate and contribute more effectively to improving education in Te Taitokerau. In such a model the partner is independent, is in control of its own destiny, does not have to contest the unequal power relationships that exist, and will gain greater satisfaction towards achieving their goals, including TPM’s. For example, one runanga interviewee saw capacity as a fundamental condition or even pre-condition of any agreements between Māori organisations and government that involved delivery of expected outcomes. This interviewee saw the capacity of any Māori organisation as strategically critical if Iwi were not to be further disadvantaged.

I think that no Iwi, takiwa or hapu agencies or even pan tribal Māori agencies should go anywhere near contracts with the government unless they have negotiated a capacity building contract to start off with. There's too much failure based on people jumping at the contracts that the Ministry of Ed and others put out and, in the end, no result. In fact, Māori organisations are slagged off for not achieving. ... I would suggest that education providers do not go anywhere near those contracts until they have the capacity to do the job properly.

The other view is that the Iwi Māori partner’s capacity is built in order that education will be improved. In this model the partnership is clearly one of dominant and subordinate interests, one partner is dependent on the generosity of the other, as the following Ministry comment indicates:

TRoTT has benefited in a way, which, without some funding they would have struggled to develop some capacity. ... It will be an ongoing debate as to whether that's enough funding. But to build their capacity has actually been of benefit to them...

Given what Loomis argues, the outcome is predictable: that capacity of the dominant partner will increase while the capacity of the dependent other will remain needy. TRoTT
itself indicates the possibility of such a situation as one of its members observed in an interview:

I think one of the other weaknesses is that the capacity and capability of TRoTT needs to be built up as well. And people may say that you've got five workers there but I think TRoTT has a long way to go and the Ministry of Education has to provide the resources to do it.

In trying to reconcile these views the following diagram in Figure 3 below may be useful. What the model reflects is a continuum for capacity building, which an organisation or group may potentially find themselves anywhere along. Going towards the left end, an organisation has a degree of independence and control over its capacity. Going towards the right end, an organisation is more dependent on others’ support and provision of the wherewithal to build its capacity.

Avoiding the dependency model

If it is indeed the intention of Ministry to support capacity building of its partner in TPM and thereby takiwa and Iwi, then issues of resourcing this need to be resolved. These issues include where funding will come from, how the funding will be allocated, who controls the projects and programmes, and whose goals count in the long run. The way the Ministry deals with the matter of capacity building top-up has an effect on the extent that the Māori partner is viewed in the role of dependency.

How might Māori and Ministry partnerships work that can avoid a dependency model? One way is to emphasise the investment side of the process for both partners. That is, both partners have capacity (or at least capability) issues that need to be addressed in order to work effectively in the partnership as the following Ministry comment indicates:

The first part of the partnership is about the capability so that you have a good role management team, good supportive governance. If you under-invest in that side you suffer. You can’t do this kind of work with management teams that don’t have that kind of capability. People have assumed that we [Ministry] have capabilities to go and do work in these partnerships but we don’t ... it is pointless having a strong Iwi capability and a weak Ministry, it’s a waste of time. It puts a lot more pressure on the Iwi to help build our capability so we have to invest in ourselves, and we have under-invested in ourselves.

TPM capacity building activities of both partners come in for some scrutiny. In order to be effective and sustainable, each of the partners in TPM are engaged in innovative mechanisms to change the ways in which they carry out their business that have the potential to exclude others. Instead sustainability should have processes that seek to be inclusive. TRoTT staff, takiwa and interviewees from takiwa and Iwi organisations spoke of the importance of having an inclusive agenda of working together, that encompassed whānau, hapu and Iwi if they are to take a first-hand role in raising the achievement rates of their children, for example:

We certainly have to explore and review that relationship [with TPM] so that we don’t finish up having a sense of competing with each other. Just to make sure that we work in collaboration and that TPM doesn’t feel that we are going out on our own. We also feel that, in working with TPM, we are working toward a common goal.
Ideas of development and capacity building based on Iwi/Māori worldviews or on principles of rangatiratanga, Iwitanga, self-determination, came through in about half of the interviews with takiwa and Iwi organisations. These ideas parallel findings reported by Russell Bishop and Sara Jane Taiakiwai that identified iwi values and identity as the basis for a capacity building model for Māori sustainable development.\(^{110}\) For instance, one runanga interviewee identified cultural values of being Māori, of being from an Iwi, as fundamentally important.

For us, it’s important to promote that sense of belonging, of whanaungatanga, of hapūtanga, of Iwitanga. So that covers, that includes everything, which is about our well-being. So that includes te reo, it includes physical health, it includes housing, and in the end social and economic development. We actually don’t put socio-economics first because we feel that to get it right, we actually have to get the perception of Iwitanga and our own value as Māori right. Get that right, and the rest will start to fall in place.

Capacity building is a complex and layered operation in Te Taitokerau as the partners, Ministry and TRoTT have worked together to develop strategies and mechanism for raising education achievement. There is still a long road ahead to effectively bring balance to the capacities of each of the partners in ways that enhance independence rather than dependence. Māori notions of autonomy were expressed across interviews. Out of such capacity building emerges growing recognition that Iwi Māori can be active participants and contribute to the success of the project. What was overwhelming was the strong recommitment to education that interviewees from takiwa and Iwi organisations emphasised, which in turn raises capacity building challenges for these organisations. From the framework of Smith’s Kaupapa Māori analysis, the possibilities are present for a transformative difference to education in Te Taitokerau, in particular for Māori students who have historically missed out.

Learning in partnership

The kinds of learning described across the three sets of interviews are presented in Figure 4 as three major ‘learning sets’. One set can be broadly described as the Ministry and TRoTT working together in ways that:

- maintain the fundamental integrity of Crown-Māori partnership of acting towards each other reasonably and in utmost good faith
- set up an effective, functional relationship for progressing the partnership goal of raising educational achievement
- is such that each partner is also able to advance their own respective goals that may fall outside of the partnership.

Learning to work together can also help to address contrasting views described in the above section about how the partners come together to constitute TPM operationally.

A second set of learning relates to TPM working with community. A third set is described as learning coming out of TPM working with schools to make change. No set is seen as mutually exclusive; each interacts with the other in the forming a learning whole.

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\(^{110}\) Bishop, R. & Tiakiwai, S. J. (2002), op. cit.
‘Learning to work together’ is seen as a critical task of the partnership, particularly so during the early stages, as one Ministry interviewee put it,

I think probably the most useful thing is that we are learning how to work with Māori. I don’t say that we know how to work with Māori any more than perhaps Māori know how to work with the Crown, you know, but we are learning together. And on the whole we appear to be applying the rules of a family, which is we can have our disagreements but the disagreements don’t fundamentally break the family.

While the Ministry places priority on raising the quality of schooling and student achievement, it acknowledges that account must be taken of broader sociocultural Māori realities and experiences in Te Taitokerau if the task is to be achieved. The Ministry is learning that educational improvement in partnership is not restricted to a ‘schooling’ focus in Te Taitokerau and this has tested its structures and systems. The Ministry has been learning about organisational changes it could make in order to better facilitate progress to TPM’s goals. It has also been learning about how other Crown agencies might best be involved in ways that support its partner TRoTT’s independence to work towards its own goals that might fall outside that of the partnership, and thus to better realise the Treaty relationship.

In learning to work together partners needed to learn about each other and the complexity of the contexts in which each works. When asked about the significant learning that was coming out of TPM, two Ministry interviewees respectively stated:

I think for me it is how complex that project really is given its size, the kinds of demographics up there, the real contrasts in socio-economic levels…. The other thing is the issue of Treaty development. Forestry developments, employment is really critical. It’s really complex.

I think as an organisation we [Ministry] have probably still got learning to do about the full range and complexity of all the different Iwi, hapu Māori community issues in the North. I think we still need guidance about how we work within there.

For Ministry learning about their Māori partner has included learning about how fundamental takiwa, hapu and Iwi are to contemporary Māori organisational frameworks in Te Taitokerau. Such structural relationships are underpinned by values related to Māori whakapapa and whanaungatanga and ways of working that have the power to engender in
this case strong commitment to raising educational outcomes of a mokopuna generation. Many Ministry personnel viewed these organisational relationships as critical ingredients in the partnership in order that the goal focus on increasing Māori participation and influence is realised. One Ministry staff member described the importance of such learning in the following way:

... understanding structures such as takiwa are a critical ingredient to that improvement, of working with whānau and with students ... The passion of some takiwa reps and other people who have been involved have for education of their children, passion for education in general, but more particular for Māori. You know it's really come across quite clearly. I can take you to other steering groups which are of similar governance groups and if you had community people there, whether it would be as board representatives, I don't know that you would see that level of passion... I think that Māori take a view that's wider than just whānau, whereas a board member who is a representative on a steering committee, whilst in general is interested in the educational issues that are being faced by their communities, are not as inclusive of hapu, of Iwi.

However, one TPM team member did have concerns about the danger that Māori knowledge and practices might be re- or mis-interpreted. For example, takiwa was described as not necessarily being understood or utilised in ways that maintained takiwa integrity as contemporarily understood and practised by Māori in Te Taitokerau, but was being ‘translated’ into clustering along the lines of a Ministry model.

I think [the takiwa] approach is good, but to me some people who have come to the project after it was established do not understand how fundamental it is. ... I think it has fallen over a bit. ... So I think that for some people the takiwa has just become another cluster. So what I was hoping we would never have is what we used to have. So now this is the cluster for the board wananga that's called 'takiwa' [compared with] this is the cluster for Te Rito.

For TRoTT, learning to work with the Ministry has meant learning about and how to work with its policies and practices and how to access information and resources that have relevance to their work as partners. TRoTT-employed team members described this as not always being easy, for example;

Some within Ministry knew who the Iwi partners are but some didn’t. And it just happens to be the people that I was sometimes dealing with didn’t have a clue who Iwi partners were because they don’t have anything to do with [Iwi partnerships]. (TRoTT staff member in TPM)

It has also meant learning how to work with Ministry practices at a direct and human level. For the Iwi Māori partner it has been challenging to try and balance being a partner in TPM and being an autonomous entity in its own right that has, as does its Ministry partner, other concerns and agendas that fall outside the goal of the partnership. As one staff member put it,

We are the only Iwi partner that works out of a Ministry building ... which in its way is an advantage ... virtually direct influence into the Ministry. [But sharing space] that makes it really hard too, whereas all the other Iwi partners are independent - they also have their own space. (TRoTT staff member in TPM)

A recognition that they could each learn from the other was professed across interviews. From the Ministry’s point of view, that Iwi partnerships are able to learn from Crown structures is seen as a critical ingredient in developing Iwi educational capacity. Likewise Ministry interviewees believe the organisation is learning valuable information from Iwi.

So I think Iwi partnerships are a really good way of capitalising on the education expertise that's held in the Ministry, and let's face it, there is quite a lot of knowledge in the Ministry about what Māori want in education. But on the other hand we can only look at it universally whereas Iwi look at it from a perspective that is uniquely regional. So, what they can bring to the focus is something that is more specific to the needs of their people, within either Iwi
understanding or regional understanding, with an Iwi perspective that we can never do nationally. But what we can do nationally is to bring together all the international research, with indigenous international research and all the connections we make with that all the time, what we have learnt, what is good professional development, what is good resource development, what we have learnt about curriculum development. In all Iwi partnerships the people at base level are trying to do those things so there's no use re-inventing something that is already there.

Commitment was expressed to making the space in the relationship necessary for learning to occur. Trying to make space to address its own organisational learning needs was seen by TRoTT staff as having had a critical effect on TRoTT decision-making in relation to how TPM operations proceeded at a particular stage of the partnership’s development. One put it this way:

…I think a lot of the direction that TPM is being allowed to take is simply because they've [Ministry side] been allowed to do it…. It's been a conscious [TRoTT] decision that it needed to go in that direction to get to this point where people are starting to see it as successful… It has been a conscious decision to sit back and learn…

Observation of partners learning to work together at management, governance and operational levels reveals that this has not been without its share of mistakes and pitfalls. While only about a third of the Runanga interviewees commented about learning in the partnership, those that did saw learning from practice and making change when something was not working as critical. One TPM team member felt a particular strength of the partnership was that there was the partners’ willingness to try things together and to take joint responsibility where outcomes were less successful and move on from these together.

**Learning to work with community**

As discussed above, Iwi partnerships have helped challenge notions about raising achievement in terms of broadening the focus wider than schools’ needs. The Ministry has also drawn on learning from other kinds of education partnership such as SEMO about the importance of community involvement; for example, one Ministry interviewee stated, …What we are learning out of the work in South Auckland, as much as anything else, is the need to connect with community to make a difference. So you are working with communities because otherwise if you just work with institutions you aren’t going to make the sustainable change that you want.

This research has found the importance of community involvement and participation reflected in many of TPM’s proposed initiatives that we have been aware of during the course of this study. Such initiatives in general explicitly consider how community-school involvement and relationships will be strengthened. Indications from the two initiatives that were being implemented during the research are that both have encouraged community involvement – one at the level of boards of trustees, the other at the level of community as specialist teachers. Mention needs to be made that learning to work with community that is Māori, generally rural, geographically isolated and spread out is different compared to working with community in urban areas. Facilitating community involvement in education is a demanding task for TPM team members in such a context, particularly if it is expected to include working in a hands-on way with whānau that involves them with schools.

There was not a consistently held belief across interviewees that TPM had yet made significant progress in learning how to work effectively with community to increase Māori

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111 These initiatives are discussed in more detail later in the report.
involvement and participation in education. One Ministry interviewee believed that while effort had been put into getting involvement in education issues, at Iwi and takiwa level, more focused work was needed at the level of whānau and schools involvement with each other, saying that:

*After two years I think we need to put more time into our communities, more time into our whānau, the TPM team ... whānau need someone to help them break that barrier to involvement with the school.*

What we have seen across the two years of this research is a shift along a community-school continuum from a relatively strong focus on community during the information collecting processes to an emphasis on the school end of the continuum as initiatives have begun to be developed. There have also been contrasting views about where TPM needed to put its efforts in order to raise Māori student achievement. Emphasis could be placed on schools, this tended to be where staff directly involved in working with schools placed it. Or emphasis could be on community as where TPM should focus for change in achievement, where staff working in community contexts and representatives from Iwi and takiwa organisations were more likely to place it. These differences in views could be understood as either a tension in TPM or, as one TPM team member described, they could be seen as a balancing factor that helps to strengthen TPM’s work.

**Learning to make change in schools**

TPM team members working with schools tended to identify two sorts of learning. One pertained to administrative learning, for example preparing a submission and putting an initiative’s budget together. The other sort of learning related to their assumptions about learning and teaching. One team member described how researching for initiatives had given her access to information that resulted in her learning and questioning what her own preconceptions were about student achievement, such as,

*...one of the major barriers to student achievement is the teacher’s conception as to what that child is able to achieve. It seems unconsciously mostly or consciously in some cases that principals and teachers or whoever seem to think there is a student going to a decile 1, 2 or 3 school, they're low socio-economic and therefore behind the eight ball to begin with. The more we get access to this sort of literature for teachers, then they will have a greater understanding of their impact on student learning.*

Interviewees from takiwa and Iwi organisations varied greatly in terms of their views on how TPM worked with schools to make change in their takiwa. As discussed in the last chapter this reflected whether or to what extent initiative planning or implementation involving a particular takiwa was believed to have occurred. Ministry and TPM interviewees, however, were generally positive about the progress that they believed had been made with regards to working with schools.

There were opportunities in the research to observe TPM team members developing and discussing initiative proposals in school meetings and in Board of Trustees wananga-a-takiwa. The processes observed involved working alongside schools and community members (in the main board members and TRoTT representatives) to identify needs and aspirations, and then work at bringing these together with available information, such as ERO and needs analyses summary reports. TPM team members were observed developing a facilitating information-driven process rather than operating as the ‘expert’, which we see as also likely to facilitate commitment and ownership among school and community members involved in the process.
Benefits provided from partnership

Expectations and concerns were expressed about three areas of benefits. These were:
1. Schools benefiting via the setting up of initiatives
2. Community benefiting through being more educationally informed, involved and influential
3. Benefits pertaining to te reo Māori me ona tikanga via the nature of the TPM partnership itself as well as TPM initiatives.

The concerns expressed were:
- That benefits directly affect Māori students compared with schools
- Lack of flaxroot community participation compared with community organisations’ participation
- For te reo Māori and cultural-related benefits.

Schools benefiting
All interviewed believed schools would benefit as a result of the initiatives being set up through TPM. TPM team members expressed confidence that schools would begin to experience benefits as soon as implementation of planned initiatives began. TRoTT staff of the TPM team additionally saw that schools were likely to be the major beneficiaries because that was where the majority of initiatives were being based and initiative funding went to schools. They also saw schools benefiting from having TPM facilitators available to work directly with them, and from TRoTT’s community-based knowledge and ideas.

A similar view of schools as major beneficiaries was held by half of those interviewed from Iwi and takiwa organisations. Only two who held this view directly commented about how benefits for schools had significance for Māori student achievement, who observed that major issues facing Māori student achievement related to the quality of teachers and appropriateness of teaching methods used in schools. For example, one said, ‘The one who has to learn is not the child but is actually the teacher. The teacher has to learn to teach’.

The 11 interviewees identified two sorts of school-based evidence that would show them that benefits were coming out of initiatives: evidence that underachieving children were ‘catching up’, and evidence that teachers’ professional skills and expertise with students, along with attitudes and expectations of students, were improving.

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112 Some interviewees did discuss how schools might be missing out due to:
- lack of participation in partnership governance, e.g.
  - Schools may be missing out, because it is kind of telling them what we want them to do, compared with having them around the table. They have a right to be involved in the governance, for schools to be part of governance and management of school improvement aspects. (Ministry official)
- geographical location in the northernmost areas of Te Taitokerau, e.g.
  - The partnership needs to get more, try to develop more initiatives in the Far North. There has been a concentration, and that’s where some of the partnership lives, within the mid-north. And in a way it’s good to start in those areas where you have your whānau, the mistakes that you make will be easier to address when you transpose onto another area. But I think it’s time now to move further into the Far North. (Ministry official)

These sentiments were echoed by Runanga interviewees from these areas.
- deciles of schools, e.g.
  - I think one of the challenges we always find in these projects is we get pockets of schools, which because they may be in high decile areas, or because they may be perceived to be successful schools, that they do miss out at times from these projects. (Ministry official)
TPM team members described the development of initiatives to us as involving relatively ambitious targets and accountabilities for student achievement as illustrated below.

I see them benefiting by the initiatives that have been put in place directly in their schools. So principals, teachers involved in those initiatives and ultimately the kids over time.

By schools I mean students... In terms of the projects we have got going... it won't be until eighteen months to two years down the track that you are actually going to see long term benefits occurring for the students.

First of all I think students are going to benefit, I think students are already benefiting but they don't know it ... and the reason why I think that they are going to benefit is that in all our funding provision agreements ... there are targets set and those targets are quite extreme.... The actual increase we are asking for in Māori student achievement in Kaitaia for example is a 20% increase in the first year... it may not be 20% because we set the target high hoping that we would achieve it.

Three TPM team members, however, some questioned how or whether Māori students would benefit from the partnership, with two questioning whether a partnership model that involved partnership with an Iwi Māori organisation rather than directly with schools and their communities was an effective one for realising benefits for students, for example:

Well, it could be said that Māori students should be benefiting, but to me, with the structure and style of the partnership, it's hard to see how students are ever going to benefit from that particular structure.

The third expressed their concern in terms of whose interests appeared to be prioritised in the partnership, the education system’s interests over Māori aspirations:

I think that it [TPM] has been geared for the benefit of the system as opposed to Māori aspirations. That's how my eyes see it. A bit like where do the Māori children actually fit into this one? I think we've got a long way to go yet to actually pick up the original target.

Communities benefiting
Four interviewees from Iwi and takiwa organisations expressed concern that schools were the major beneficiaries, as apart from Board of Trustees Wananga-a-takiwa, they could not see where communities were directly benefiting from initiatives. There was a concern expressed in over half of the Iwi and Takiwa organisation interviews that there had been an observed shift in emphasis away from community since the partnership began, with schools now appearing to be a priority at the expense of community. One put it in this way,

[TPM] used to really challenge the principals and the teachers, really out there challenging them all the time. Now they're sort of making them feel comfortable, keeping them in their comfort zones but you can't just let them stay as they are. Now it is like it is directed to the schools instead of the community, whereas before it was really giving us something real to stand up for, that's what I'm saying.

In contrast TPM team members saw TRoTT’s participation at decision-making levels of the partnership as an instance of community benefiting through involvement and participation in education. However, three were less sure about the degree that community was participating and influencing education at more flaxroots levels. One team member questioned whether TPM was working effectively with Iwi, while another commented that while more community participation and influence was required, just how this could be facilitated was an issue, as below.

I wonder whether the messages are being effectively put out through Iwi and I feel that we don't work with them enough but my job is to be in schools and maybe that's a bit of an unfair comment.
Ko tuku titiro mo nga ahuatanga mo nga hau kainga, the community needs to have more input and I don’t know how we do that, blowed if I know how we do that. But, ko tuku whakaaro in terms of the community and because I focus on Māori, the initiatives need to relate to our community needs.

A fourth TPM team member reflected on how working with communities is not easy and in comparison shorter term gains are more possible through schools.

Te reo Māori benefits
Concern for te reo Māori and cultural-related benefits were identified in TPM team interviews and half of the runanga interviews. TPM team members saw TRoTT’s influence as the Māori partner ensured that the development of initiatives included te reo Māori and in a reciprocal fashion helped TRoTT itself to have more influence. Half of the runanga interviewees identified that they saw te reo Māori as a significant indicator of whether or not Māori were benefiting out of TPM. Two of the Iwi and takiwa organisation interviewees saw partnership benefits pertaining to te reo Māori not only as critical for Māori students and whānau but also as significant for non-Māori and for school staff and boards in Te Taitokerau, as reflected below:

...perhaps part of the exercise [of who should be benefiting] is to explore how our non-Māori population can also in the end feel comfortable about the importance of te reo... But I think at the end of the day what we really want to do is to help our own people and restore our own reo among ourselves.

TRoTT staff in TPM observed that as schools were the locus of initiatives, it was imperative that the initiatives themselves did not focus only on conventional school or ‘mainstream’ academic learning and knowledge only, but also incorporated Māori perspectives about what counts as learning and knowledge. For example, one observed,

I’ve been into some schools and it’s all about numeracy and literacy initiatives ... One of the things I think is happening is kore pea e kītea te ahuatanga o te Māori, ko tenei te raruraru, it is all mainstream ... We know our children have low literacy and numeracy ... I’m not saying it’s a bad programme, it’s an excellent programme. I think it needs more work from a Māori perspective ... literacy and numeracy has to be part of it, but it has to walk side by side with Māori literacy,

...want teachers and trustees to upskill themselves in terms of reo.

Evaluative comment

TPM shows potential for capacity building, learning and providing benefits. Two key issues are emerging at this stage. One involves identifying whose capacity is being built and who is to benefit. While benefits may accrue to all participants, at this point the most obvious are to the partners themselves. Takiwa and Iwi representatives are saying that benefits accruing to them are minimal, in terms of strengthening their abilities to participate in improving education in their communities. The indicators are that capacity building is having a kind of ‘Matthew effect’¹¹³ where those with lesser capacity (community) make least gain. We predict this will continue to be that way unless there is a sharing of control, resources and skills, between the partners themselves, and also with community stakeholders. Such capacity building, however, requires cognisance of the dangers of that process fostering dependency and being assimilative rather than being an opportunity for self-determination.

¹¹³ ‘Them that hath shall receive.’
The nature of TPM as an Iwi partnership to improve education, along with the context provided by government strategic directions, highlight capacity building as an important factor for consideration. TPM has potential as a context for capacity building that facilitates Māori participation in education, and of a kind seen as critical within a Kaupapa Māori framework in order to make change.

Capacity building is a complex and layered operation in Te Taitokerau. With regards to education TPM does face a challenge in effectively bringing balance to the capacities of TRoTT and the Ministry in ways that enhance independence rather than dependence, and in ways that enhance rather than restrict the capacity building of those that TRoTT represents. Out of such capacity building emerges growing recognition that Iwi Māori can be active participants and contribute to the success of the TPM project.

Achieving ‘balance’ is not only a challenge in terms of capacity building; it is a task that is ongoing in the partnership, as reflected in views about what is being learned in the partnership, as well as in views about who is benefiting from the partnership and what those benefits might look like. This is particularly so in terms of community, which is again reflected in views of learning and benefiting. Contrasting views such as those in relation to community could be approached in either of two ways. One approach could be to see differences in views as a tension for TPM, which needs to be resolved by bringing the views together in order to achieve a shared view. The other could be to see these differences in views as an important element in order to help TPM work towards achieving balances, for instance between how community and how schools might benefit across its initiatives.
CHAPTER FIVE

Increasing Māori participation and influence in education

In the next two chapters we expand our examination of the developing partnership to include three initiatives and takiwa education planning in one takiwa. The themes of relationships and clustering are of particular relevance. Two case studies are reported in this chapter in which we have been concerned with the first and second set of criteria for the evaluation: the extent to which TPM’s activities are facilitating Māori communities’ participation and control in education; and the development of mutually empowering relationships.

The first case study focused on Māori members of board of trustees and foregrounds ‘increasing Māori participation and influence in education’ that is an integral part of TPM’s goal to raise Māori achievement. Underlying this strategic goal direction is the assumption that Māori community members are able to make decisions that will result in better educational experiences and outcomes for Māori students. The case study begins with a discussion of a pre-election campaign to encourage Māori community members to stand for boards of trustees and reports on a follow-up of Māori board members in one takiwa after the 2001 board elections. The rest of the section examines the implementation of a programme to support board members of TPM schools, particularly Māori board members.

The second case study focuses on education planning and activities in one takiwa. The section begins with an examination of an attempt to develop a school-based transition initiative involving the takiwa. The focus then turns to takiwa education planning. Communities can also participate in education outside of formal school structures such as boards. Community members can come together to envision what they would like to see happen in their takiwa with regards to education and work towards realising these visions. Initial partnership expectations were that takiwa education planning would involve community and schools working cooperatively to develop an educational plan for their takiwa that included a strong schooling improvement and development emphasis. What transpired in the case study takiwa was development for community education that did not have an explicit focus in schools or on school programmes. Community members mobilising to improve and develop education in their takiwa in such a way reflects a view that to raise Māori student achievement besides improving schools, education development focused on community and whānau also needs to take place. Concern for lifelong learning as well as capacity building in the partners has contributed to reviewing where TPM and Iwi partnerships in general might best sit within the Ministry of Education, as well as the role of government ministries outside of education.

CASE STUDY 1: Boards of Trustees

The notion of partnership has been fundamental to boards of trustees since their inception under ‘Tomorrow’s Schools’.114 Tomorrow’s Schools aimed to establish governance-management partnerships between schools, communities and government. Boards of Trustees elections provide an avenue for individuals, some of whom may happen to be Māori, to seek to be actively involved in decision-making and to influence school policy

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and practices in their children’s schools. The changes of 1989 were expected to enable Māori, along with other sections of a community, to gain more voice in the running of their children’s schools, to participate in its governance and management and to ensure that Māori needs and aspirations were met to exercise greater influence over their children’s education. While schools’ boards of trustees appear to be moving towards being more representative of parents and whānau, historically the proportion of Māori members on the boards of schools in Te Taitokerau has not mirrored the proportion of Māori that make up the school roll. Before the 2001 elections there were still disproportionately low numbers of Māori on boards of trustees in the region.

In Patricia Johnston’s study of Māori board of trustees members (1991) the main reason given for standing for election or for agreeing to be co-opted onto a board was the need for some form of Māori representation. Participants who were the only Māori member of a board had found this very difficult and described coming into conflict with their boards when they tried to represent Māori community wishes, particularly around Māori language programmes in their schools. Johnston proposed that a major reason greater Māori involvement and influence was not being realised was because of the faulty assumption that minority Māori interests would be able to successfully compete against dominant non-Māori interests in the context of boards of trustees. She argued that the nature of board membership was such that boards worked as a collection of individual interests, weakening the representation of collective Māori interests as whānau (hapu, iwi).

### Campaign to increase Māori representation on school boards

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<td>• Possible links between relatively low workshop attendance levels and lack of shared understandings about expectations between TPM and previously contracted community facilitators</td>
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In July 2000 the TPM partners discussed strengthening Māori participation in boards of trustees as a means to increase Māori participation and influence in education. Two ideas were raised at that time: (1) Māori board chairs within takiwa clusters working collectively to strengthen school governance and (2) the involvement of Māori representatives from the takiwa to support school governance. This possible focus on increasing the quantity and quality of Māori board participation was refined in August

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118 The exception being Kura Kaupapa Māori boards.
120 The phrase used in meeting documents and records at the time was ‘to increase Māori authority’.

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2000 to focus on coordination of and contribution to pre-board election support and post-election in-depth training for boards. It was proposed that TPM contribute to and coordinate pre-election support aimed at increasing the percentage of Māori members of boards within the Far North district region to 60% following March 2001 elections, which was part of TPM’s 2001 goals. The need for such a campaign to get Māori parents to vote as well as to stand for the board elections was included. TPM worked with the Far North Rural Education Activities Programme (REAP) to run a campaign to increase Māori representation on school boards of trustees. The pre-election campaign was cooperatively mounted by REAP and TPM and seven workshops were held in November and December 2000. The aims of the workshops were to raise awareness about upcoming elections and to provide information and encouragement to prospective board members.

Data-collecting methods
As the board of trustees election campaign occurred before the research project began, data was gained on the campaign by analysing 2001 interviews with the Kaunihera (five TRoTT trustees and four Ministry representatives) and seven TPM staff and TPM documents, meeting notes and reports pertaining to increasing Māori representation on school board of trustees and to the election campaign. Open-ended interviews were undertaken with the TPM team member and the REAP manager who led the campaign about their views and experiences of the campaign.

One takiwa was chosen in consultation with TPM for inclusion in this part of the boards of trustees’ case study. Following the 2001 board elections the schools in this takiwa were invited by letter to participate. Six out of seven school boards within the takiwa agreed to be involved (three primary, one intermediate, one secondary and one Kura Kaupapa Māori). Māori board members were identified with the help of TPM and schools that, with the board members’ permission, provided contact details. Sixteen of the 21 board members who were identified as Māori were interviewed, 14 were individually interviewed and two co-interviewed between June and September 2001. Three declined interviews and contact could not be established with the remaining two. Nine of those interviewed had previously been on a school board (including three board chairs) and seven were first time board members. Interviews covered participants’:
1. Awareness of and involvement with the pre-election campaign
2. Reasons for standing for election onto boards of trustees
3. Views of the significance of their role as Māori members
4. Knowledge about support available for boards of trustees.

Increasing Māori representation on school boards of trustees
Alongside the concern for greater Māori participation and influence, the focus on increasing Māori representation on boards of trustees reflected other key concerns of TPM, one being the need for school boards to better represent the makeup of their communities, as noted in a Ministry representative’s following comments:

Ministry: I think from a governance role, with their training and elections coming up, there’s an opportunity there to look at ensuring that there is Māori representation on boards of trustees.

It was interesting at the meeting last week in reference to two schools which have Māori populations of over 80%, one primary and one secondary school, and yet both schools have no Māori on their boards.

Interviewer: Is TPM doing things at the moment to address this?

Ministry: Yes the Ministry has a contract with the Far North REAP to promote the board elections along with the New Zealand School Trustees Association. TPM has been involved already in running a series of seminars, which have been attended by interested or prospective
board members, and they’re continuing that through to the board elections. And then post board ensuring that there is appropriate ongoing training for Māori.

Another related concern was with TPM developing good communications with Iwi and good relationships with schools and their boards. A way of raising TPM’s profile was facilitating some noticeable changes in the short term and helping boards become more reflective of their community was seen as such a change. Finding Māori who had good communication skills themselves who would work effectively on boards was also seen as important to developing such relationships, as described by the following Ministry representative.

Interviewer: What areas do you think need immediate attention in the Far North in terms of improving education outcomes for Māori students?
Ministry: I think they [TPM] need to have good communication principles. They need to have good communications with Iwi. They need to have really good planning on how to manage their relationships with schools in general and boards of trustees. Immediately the thing that comes to mind right now is that we must get more Māori on the boards of trustees. There’s an election coming up in April and it’s critical that we have more Māori. In lots of cases they make up 90% of the school population. There might only be one person. It does not reflect the community make-up. So those are the immediate things, and I think we need to start doing a lot of action plans. Start making small quick gains for TPM.

Interviewer: What needs to happen is that immediate action needs to be seen?
Ministry: Basically like pre-election training of board of trustees. Identifying Māori. We’ve got to shoulder tap, at the end of the day we can’t afford to go around and pluck Māori out who don’t have the confidence or skill to talk.

When TPM began REAP had been providing in-depth training support and advice121 to school boards. The manager described how REAP had been contracted for a number of years to provide this to school boards on a one-to-one basis. As a result the staff had both general and local information and knowledge about boards. REAP’s role in the election campaign was to draw on its experience and knowledge and its staff that worked with boards were able to address more technical questions that potential board election candidates might ask at pre-election workshops. The TPM team member described how community facilitators who had collected information from community for the TPM needs analyses exercise were expected to encourage and organise potential board members from the school community to attend workshops. Drawing on the relationships that TPM had tried to build with Iwi and Māori community groups and agencies in the needs analyses exercise reflected a potential to include whānau-hapu-iwi interests in board representation that Johnston had claimed were shut out by the board of trustees model.

Despite publicly advertising the workshops through local media, and expectations that community facilitators would also encourage community members to go, the potential of the campaign was under-realised and attendance across workshops was low.122 Because of the lack of success in getting would-be Māori board candidates to workshops, the second round of intended workshops for the start of 2002 were not held. An alternative strategy was used of targeting information to specific schools and communities and of raising board elections at regularly occurring meetings and hui across Te Taitokerau. However, the lack of attendance at workshops does not necessarily reflect a lack of campaign impact. It is hard to estimate the effect that advertising the workshops and emphasising the importance of Māori representation on school boards had among candidates and voters.

121 In the interview the manager described this as a ‘contract to do the in-depth training with boards, which is working with boards one on one’.
122 Attendance across seven workshops ranged from 0 to 12, nearly ¾ of workshops had less than four. TPM Interim Report: Campaign to Increase Māori Representation on School BOT, 7 December 2000.
While the target of 60% Māori board members was not reached after the election, returns did show an increase from 39% to over 50%.

TPM identified a number of possible reasons for low turnout to workshops. These included: timing at the end of the school year, a very busy time for schools; variability in advertising the workshops across takiwa and reliance on community facilitators to get people to workshops. The expectation that facilitators who carried out the community needs data collection would identify and encourage potential board members to attend the workshops did not appear to have been realised across takiwa. A TPM staff member queried whether community facilitators had developed close knowledge of the communities to the extent that they were able to identify individuals who had board of trustees potential.

Having interviewed whānau we thought they [community facilitators] had a view of who out there would be appropriate to go on to boards of trustees. But when it came to that [Board of Trustees] strategy they weren’t local enough to know. … They didn’t have enough local knowledge to be able to go back and do that. And so when we had the board strategy workshops, that takiwa was one with nil response, which is surprising. And that was because the network that we had, it kind of seemed to disintegrate after the work. It was work that was sub-contracted to a couple of community groups and once the job was done, they went on to do their own thing. That might be a reason for attendance at the board [workshops].

The above suggests the importance of clarifying expectations as relationships are developed. As already noted, the needs analysis exercise was not simply about collecting data that would assist in identifying areas for future initiatives. They were also about putting the partnership into action and the development of relationships between TPM, schools, community, and Iwi and takiwa organisations. The above quote reflects that there were expectations about various group and individual involvement in TPM activities that extended beyond those they were originally contracted and paid for. There were assumptions that the nature of the relationship was not purely task oriented and would be ongoing after contract arrangements for collecting data ceased. These expectations and assumptions may not have been clearly understood or explicitly shared by all parties.

Incoming Māori board members’ awareness of and involvement with the campaign
The campaign workshop in the case-study takiwa had one of the highest turnouts of the seven held. Six of the 16 incoming Māori board members interviewed were aware that there had been a workshop held in their takiwa, three had attended. Two who attended, while they had found it informative and helpful, reported concern that potentially divisive views of school and community relations were expressed in the workshop. They believed that such workshops should support positive relationships across schools’ staff and community and across Māori and non-Māori. The remaining 13 had no idea that workshops had been held and eight indicated that they would have been interested in going, had they known.

Nine of the 16 said that they had had little to no information about boards when they first stood for election. Those who did find out something described getting information (and encouragement to stand) from school staff, whānau members or friends who had been on boards. Board members overall saw workshops before elections to encourage and inform potential board members as a good idea generally, but thought they needed to have been either more effectively publicised or more positive in terms of views expressed.
Reasons for standing for boards
Half of the trustees referred to concerns about representation as a main reason for standing. These encompassed three particular concerns:

- that the number of Māori board members reflect numbers of Māori students in their schools
- that Māori parents’ perspectives, goals and ideas in general are represented in the governance of school and decision-making
- that the needs and interests of particular groups of Māori parents and students (e.g. bilingual unit) are adequately represented.

Another reason given was related to relationships. Four referred to concerns that community and, usually non-Māori, staff needed to develop better relationships with each other. This was seen as critical for increasing Māori parents’ involvement in school programmes and activities. Improving school understandings and awareness of Māori communities and Māori culture and ways of doing things, and the acknowledgement of Treaty principles, were seen as fundamental to community-staff relationships, as was improving communities’ understandings of school. Almost half the board members discussed the need to change the culture and procedures of governance and board practices to be more inclusive of, and familiar and recognisable to, its Māori members from the community. For example, four board members talked about the importance that Māori ways of doing things (e.g. quiet ‘titiro-whakarongo’ listening and looking phase in learning; silence doesn’t mean agreement) are understood within the board context. They believed that lack of understanding could lead to assumptions on the part of other members and school staff that the Māori parent members ‘do nothing’ and ‘say nothing’ on a board.

Concern for good governance was another reason given for standing for election, particularly for the five Kura Kaupapa Māori board members, who were less concerned with issues of representation, relationships and culture. They talked in particular about wanting to support the development of effective governance systems and procedures that placed the children’s learning at the centre, if they could not see the relevance of a governance task in relation to their children’s learning, than they saw little reason to address it. Wanting to ‘make a difference’ was the reason given by four members. These members explained this as either wanting to ensure that specific concerns they had about the schools their children attended were addressed, or wanting to be actively involved in improving their children’s schooling.

Significance of Māori board members
All but one of the Māori board members that we interviewed held similar views to TPM about the importance of Māori board members. They thought Māori board members were potentially more able to work with Māori and make decisions affecting Māori students and their families, although another believed that this also depended on whether individual Māori members initially had stood ‘because they had a particular axe to grind’.

It is important that there are board members who are Māori, although being Māori is not viewed by these Māori board members as sufficient on its own to ensure Māori community educational interests are effectively represented and taken account of. There were indications that at least some of the Māori members we spoke with believed that as Māori members they were in danger of becoming ‘work horses’ for schools in ways that might be about participation, but not necessarily in ways that might influence school programmes. Three of them said that they had felt there was an expectation that they would take hands-on responsibility for non-teaching activities in the school (e.g. ranging from organising
school breakfasts to sorting out behaviour ‘issues’) rather than school governance activities. Johnston’s research had also found Māori members tended to be involved on committees that had relatively little direct influence on the running of the schools or the teaching programmes, they were more likely to be involved in ways that were related to community, fund-raising, or Māori (often disciplinary-related) issues. What is important to note for TPM is that Māori members ideally bring cultural understandings, ways of working, community knowledge, community relationships and networks to the position. But these are not always used in governance-related ways that focus on Māori students’ achievement or communities’ educational aspirations, which is the kind of participation and influence that TPM’s goal and statement ‘excellence in education through unity’ demands.

Support for board members
We asked members about their knowledge of groups that could provide support and training for boards. All but three had some knowledge of a group or groups. The returning members had attended training workshops for board members in the past, but had variously found them ‘too much’, ‘too technical’, ‘too disconnected’. The disconnection with board training voiced by these members is disturbing. The main problem experienced by the Māori board members that Patricia Johnston interviewed was described as not being well informed, particularly in contrast to Pakeha counterparts. In her study Māori board of trustees members commented that it was difficult to participate meaningfully for a variety of information-related reasons including lack of knowledge and understanding of board process. Such experiences can reduce Māori confidence in participating in their children’s schooling. Board training and support should ideally raise board members’ confidence and ability to do their job, not turn them off.

All 16 board members were generally positive about the idea of a board support strategy that would assist networking Māori board members across schools. The views expressed about what ‘board support’ entails were significant for TPM board support developments. One thought it was important to identify how this would help Māori board members to cope and be effective within their own particular board and had this to say:

Building relationships between Māori members for what? How is that going to help the Māori board member when they go back to their board?

There was an expectation that board support would address governance-related issues and areas. There was also a focus across the interviews on support of Māori board members at an individual and/or individual school level. This contrasted with how we saw ‘support’ being developed in the context of the TPM board support programme examined below.

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A board member support programme

Key points:
Board wananga-a-takiwa
- Provide a context of whakawhanaungatanga, tautoko and manaaki\(^{124}\) for board members
- Help develop relationships of board members with other school boards and communities in a takiwa as a network of collegial and cultural support
- Support contrasts with support-related concerns expressed in post-election interviews about ‘knowledge and information’ to do with governance
- Provide a site for school boards, staff and community to identify common areas of need/development across schools, and discussion of possible takiwa-based interventions
- Provide a site to inform and include school boards, staff and community in the development of takiwa initiatives
- Play a role in changing and/or strengthening inter-school relationships in takiwa.
- Need to ensure continued attendance of a high proportion of the targeted group: i.e. Māori board members.

While TPM had been considering coordination of and contribution to both post-election support and in-depth training for boards before the 2001 elections, after the elections it focused more closely on support. This was in response to feelings of isolation and loneliness expressed at pre-election workshops and in part to avoid duplication when the Ministry of Education contracted other organisations for the provision of board training in Te Taitokerau. The focus went on developing the Board of Trustees Wananga-a-Takiwa initiative that would help establish support networks for board members, Māori board members in particular. This initiative was different to later ones that are located in schools and where schools are the fund holders. In this initiative TRoTT is the funding holder and it was planned that it would operate in community marae settings. The programme is also different from arguably more conventional approaches to board support, as rather than focusing on informing and upskilling board members about school governance it aims to build supportive relationships across boards and schools in which they can cooperatively direct educational improvement and development in their takiwa.

At the end of May 2001 a funding provision agreement (FPA) was signed between the Crown and TRoTT for a project to support members of school boards of trustees in the Far North. In TPM’s submission\(^{125}\) for the programme the stated purpose of the project ‘Board of Trustees Wananga-a-takiwa’ was:
- to give confidence to board members in the context of their schools and takiwa
- to enable them to work as school, whānau, hapu, takiwa and Iwi members
- to provide a context in which boards can exchange ideas to raise educational quality in their takiwa, taking cognisance of the role of te reo Māori in Māori education.

The stated expected outcomes of the project are that Māori members elected in 2001 serve a full term, that there is an increase in Māori board members standing for re-election in 2004 and an increase in numbers of Māori board members after those elections. As data collecting for this research was completed at the end of 2002, we cannot evaluate the

\(^{124}\) Relationships reflecting Māori values of family, support, care and hospitality.

\(^{125}\) TPM Board Member Support Submission, 29 May 2001.
extent to which these outcomes have been reached at this point. The submission also stated that TPM’s intention was to hold a wananga-a-takiwa at a marae in each takiwa once a term.\footnote{Ibid, p. 3.} TPM facilitators and TRoTT representatives were to collaboratively organise wananga within their takiwa. It was envisaged that wananga might become the context for the development of takiwa/iwi education plans, the way in which this would occur was expected to vary from takiwa to takiwa.

Wananga began being held in term 2001. In 2002 TPM operated across 11 takiwa and 78 schools with four facilitators\footnote{We have included the KKM cluster coordinator in this figure.} awaiting appointments. The low number of facilitators working on the ground at the beginning of that year was a contributing factor to board wananga not being held in all takiwa each school term. The programme also included wananga-nui for all boards to come together after board elections as a context for recognising the contribution that board members make to schooling. One was held at the end of 2001 with another proposed for after 2004 elections.

**Data collecting methods**

This part of the board of trustees case study examined the development and ongoing implementation of the board wananga-a-takiwa programme; and

1. the development of relationships between school boards, schools and communities
2. the development of working relationships between TRoTT takiwa representatives and TPM team members
3. the significance of the wananga for planning educational initiatives for takiwa.

In consultation with the TPM team, three takiwa were identified for inclusion in this part of the study. Data was collected from interviews, surveys and observations of 2001 and 2002 wananga, including the wananga-nui.\footnote{Between two and five wananga were attended in each of the three takiwa.} Interviews with 23 attendees of three takiwa wananga in term one 2002\footnote{We have included interview data from a takiwa that was not originally identified for inclusion. This was because a board wananga was not held in the third identified takiwa in term one. We were able to contact and interview 23 of 42 participants at term one wananga. Twelve parent/community board members, nine staff board members and two Iwi kaumatua representatives were interviewed. Nine interviewees identified themselves as Māori or as Māori and another ethnic group, nine identified as Pakeha, five gave no ethnic affiliation.} were carried out. The TPM team member leading the Board Member Support programme and TRoTT takiwa representatives were also interviewed. Completed surveys from 36 attendees at the term three wananga of the same year were received.\footnote{Sixty-three surveys were distributed with a stamped addressed envelope to attendees at the end of the wananga, 36 surveys were completed and returned, a 57% return rate. A possible reason for the low return of surveys was that while wananga registers or attendance lists showed there were a number of attendees who were not board members who did not return surveys (e.g. marae whānau, ERO, Team Solutions, community programme leaders), surveys were returned by 19 community board members, six staff board members, nine principals and two project coordinators.}

The findings are discussed in terms of participants’ reasons for attending wananga, involvement of the takiwa community and wānanga as a site for identifying educational issues and developing solutions.

**Reasons for attending wananga**

Part of the purpose of wananga was stated as to give confidence to board members in the context of their schools and takiwa. What this might look like was not elaborated on in the FPA. Examining reasons for attending wananga and the levels of satisfaction with the wananga gives us some information about the ways that attending wananga influenced board members’ confidence. The main reason for attending wananga given in interviews
can be grouped into three sets, the most common reason given related to sharing information and networking with other schools and boards. The second most common reason was to find out about a proposed initiative, the third was because the participant was representing their school as a board member. All but two of the 23 attendees that we interviewed were satisfied with the wananga in their takiwa and had found the wananga relevant and helpful in relation to their reasons for attending. Those two attendees said that the wananga needed to be more structured and pitched at providing governance-related support and information.

In the follow-up survey, the two most often main reasons selected for attending the term three wananga paralleled those of term one. These were firstly ‘to meet board members from other schools’, secondly ‘to find out about TPM activities and initiatives in the takiwa’. The third was ‘to find out more about learning and teaching in schools’ rather than being there to represent their school. Interestingly, the least often selected main reason for attending was ‘to find out more about what is involved in being a board member’. All survey respondents reported that the wananga had been helpful in relation to their reason for attending.

What emerged from both interviews and surveys was that opportunities to interact and arguably build relationships with other boards were very important to the attendees. Ten interviewees viewed a strength of the wananga was that it provided opportunity for information sharing and networking with other schools and boards. They described feeling excited and enthusiastic about understanding better what other schools were doing and about how schools could work together ‘focused on tamariki’ and ‘looking for shared solutions’ to ‘common issues’. Talking about issues with other schools and communities ‘that wouldn’t usually be discussed outside of the school and helping each other’ was an unfamiliar experience for many of the board members interviewed, even though all but four reported having served at least one term on a board of trustees. Survey comments on the best thing about the wananga reflected that being able to meet board members and staff of other schools was still seen as a main strength of the wananga.

Four interviewees said that one of the main reasons that they attended wananga was that they were board members and they saw that wananga provided them with support that would help them be more effective board members. Wananga held in term three did include a more governance-related focus in that a presentation was made about new reporting procedures required from schools and boards required by the Ministry. While surveys identified ‘finding out about what is involved in being a board member’ was the least given main reason for attending the wananga in term three, a third of the survey respondents did report that the best thing about that particular wananga was the presentation.

There were some concerns expressed in the interviews and surveys about attendance. The issue can be seen as less one of representation of schools in that between 60% to 70% of the schools in the three takiwa respectively had at least one representative at most of the wananga held. A third of the interviewees commented that they thought turnout was low at their respective hui and that greater attendance and representation of communities and schools was desirable. This concern was echoed by the TPM facilitator for one of the takiwa who noted while staff numbers were increasing, community numbers weren’t. The takiwa representative for this takiwa reported perceiving a drop in Māori board members

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131 In many of the cases when none of the board members from a particular school were able to attend, it was because there was a prior or competing school activity or engagement; schools often sent through apologies.
across consecutive wananga, while attendance registers for the three takiwa did reflect a drop in Māori board members at the start of 2002. Attendance figures from TPM reflected a 30% of attendance rate of Te Taitokerau board members of which 51% are Māori. Survey responses showed that attendance was still a concern, though to a smaller proportion of attendees who were mainly principals. However, numbers attending wananga were highly variable, for instance attendance at various wananga we attended in one takiwa ranged from less than five to over 30.

Nearly all interview suggestions made about how future wananga could be improved referred to increasing attendance. Interviewees proposed two strategies to increase numbers attending wananga: improving advertising including TPM staff following up boards before the wananga was held; and increasing and publicising TPM’s achievements or outputs. One interviewee put it this way: ‘the movement needs to have more miracles’. Another suggestion for improving wananga was having a more specific purpose such as signing off a proposal. The relatively higher levels of attendance observed at the wananga we attended in the third term, for which an agenda was set that included a governance-related presentation and TPM reporting back on takiwa initiatives, lend support to this suggestion.

**Board wananga and the takiwa community**

Enabling board members to work as school, whānau, hapu, takiwa was an integral aspect of the purpose of wananga. While wananga were set up to support and network board members, they often attracted non-board community members and school staff in these three takiwa. This potentially widened the discussion circle even further outside of individual school gates, which for many interviewed raised the effectiveness of the board wananga to identify and to try to look for solutions to school-related issues. For one TRoTT takiwa representative getting non-board community members from the takiwa to wananga, especially parents, was a critical factor for the board wananga initiative if it was to be able to make a difference to Māori children’s achievement.

I think the secret, I don't know whether the board members can do it, I always believe that if you catch the parents, you'll catch the children. It's no good trying to raise the level of the children without the parents understanding also ... if the board members invite the parents along, get them to attend the board meetings, to have their say. And being able to take it onto the marae, take it onto the marae and to let them see for themselves on the marae that they can speak about these things and then it's no different in the classroom.

The TPM team member who led its development saw having marae as the context as a critical part of the wananga, particularly as a means to get wider community involvement and participation.

... the issue to me is using marae, and by a marae I don't mean four walls, a roof and a kitchen. [It] was really interesting because I wasn’t at the takiwa meeting when they were deciding where to have it. That was quite good in a way. But where they decided to have it, it was the last place I expected it to be. Because to me what had happened was exactly one of the spin-offs that I'd envisaged, it was to say that these places are quite important around here. ... the guy who really put his hand up and said well we'll do it. That's how he saw it, here's a way of getting our family on board, you know. What was interesting with that one was there was actually more non-board people than board people there.

TRoTT takiwa representatives also saw marae as an appropriate context for wananga and that having them on marae was a way of helping to involve takiwa representatives. The wananga provided opportunities to develop takiwa representatives’ knowledge of schooling in the takiwa, and get to know community and board members and school staff. Involvement and participation of TRoTT via the takiwa representative is reflected at the
very least through involvement in some organisational aspects of wananga. Takiwa representatives for two of the takiwa reported that a good working relationship was being formed with the takiwa TPM facilitator, which they saw reflected in the wananga being successful and well run. While involvement with wananga varied across TRoTT takiwa representatives, they were more often at the wananga we attended than not. Reasons for non-attendance that we were made aware of included poor health and over-commitment, which a change in representative helped address in the latter instance.

The marae format came in for special mention in five interviews. Principals in particular commented that whereas other meetings sometimes felt ‘too clinical’ the marae context resulted in more ‘whānau involvement’ and more whānau-like experience. Others believed that it encouraged community participation and gave marae community members a positive role and they ‘enjoyed the participation of the hau kainga’. However, marae were only consistently used as the wananga venue in one takiwa where the TPM facilitator and takiwa representative both held strong views about the importance of marae as the venue as a way of valuing Māori ways of doing things and of including marae community members alongside boards and staff. A combination of schools, marae and takiwa organisation were used as venues in another takiwa, which variously reflected a school or takiwa representative taking responsibility for venue organisation. In the third takiwa wananga were predominantly held in one of the schools.

Survey responses were very interesting in relation to where wananga might be held and to the place of Māori protocols in wananga. For the takiwa where wananga were always held in marae a third of responses said that one way that wananga could be improved related to changing the venue, suggestions ranged from ‘on a school from time to time so that BoTs can see other school environments’; to ‘have the meetings at schools’. A quarter of the responses for the takiwa where nearly all wananga had been held at schools wrote that one way the wananga could be improved was by including Māori tikanga (e.g. karakia) and introductory information about the area the school was in.

From a Kaupapa Māori perspective, holding wananga on marae is an important way of projecting Māori worldviews into schools, as well as projecting ‘schools’ into community. A TRoTT takiwa representative expressed similar sentiments about how he saw the importance of marae to the board wānanga.

> Oh well, for them to understand from the Māori aspect, it is I think, you know, it's a two-way thing. Māori, we have a different understanding of things Pakeha and Pakeha have a different concept of things Māori. So for them to understand where Māori are coming from I think that they need to be filling those little gaps.

> ... you know going there [marae] is great [for Māori board members too]. That they can, a lot of them don't speak in a Pakeha setting, [they're] more comfortable on a marae maybe.

### Identifying issues and developing solutions

Information given in interviews and in surveys indicated that wananga in the three takiwa provided a strong context in which boards could get information and exchange ideas that could help to improve schooling. Access to good, clear information was seen as important by the board representatives of schools and other community members in order to identify issues their schools faced and find possible solutions for them. It was also important to them in their role in informing their schools and communities about issues and to get commitment to solutions, as one board member put it:

> This helps to build and develop stronger linkages in order to take the community with you. If the communities are not on board then schools will get the backlash.
Wananga held in the three takiwa also provided a context for TPM to present ideas about initiatives for consideration and discussion. Participants saw the cooperative generation and development of an idea and proposal with schools, boards and community as a much better approach than what they saw as the more usual practice of Ministry-generated ideas or initiatives being more or less imposed on schools. However, one participant expressed frustration with what she saw as lack of clarity in this approach:

[I found out that] it was still a proposal, I thought it was a done deal ... couldn't get what the hui was for, it wasn't a launch, it wasn't a consultation...

Nearly half of the 23 board members interviewed saw wananga as the place to find out about possible initiatives their respective school and takiwa might become involved with. The above participants came to the wananga on the belief that they would get clear information ‘rather than hearsay’ as one put it, about proposed initiatives. A third of this group were interested in finding out how other boards viewed an initiative and another third wanted to be more directly involved in the development of the initiative.

Confidence that the respective initiative ideas presented and discussed at wananga would be successful and would help schools was very high among attendees that we interviewed. On a scale of 1 to 10, one being little confidence and 10 being high confidence, all rated this as at least a 5, over half rated it between 9 to 10. The main reasons given by the five ‘less confident’ interviewees (ratings of 5 to 7) for their rating grouped around: concern that wider school and community feedback and involvement was needed; scepticism about availability of human resources for the initiative and a related concern that the initiative would result in individual schools losing skilled staff to the initiative; and belief that their current school programme was already effective in the initiative area. The submissions and draft submissions for the respective initiatives examined resource issues and availability. Concern about teachers being taken and ‘lost from local schools’ was a somewhat puzzling view, given that the proposed initiatives could be seen as being premised on any initiative staffing belonging to schools as a group.

The 10 ‘more confident’ interviewees (8–10) about the proposed initiative believed that it was a strong for two main reasons. One was that schools’ underlying needs in relation to the initiative had been identified and confirmed from a number of sources (e.g. through TPM information gathering, at previous board wananga). The second reason was that the initiative would either enable them to deliver a quality programme that the school was currently unable to or strengthen their existing programme. In relation to an initiative for te reo Māori teaching, some of the participants believed that it would lead to much needed change in schools, by recognising and making room for te reo Māori, akonga Māori, wairua Māori and by bringing in more Māori community. There were also some concerns expressed about sustainability ‘continued funding and availability of human resources’ and about the potential for non-Māori to monopolise the initiative, ‘it is imperative that Māori community buy into it and some level of control over it’.

The follow-up survey showed that as the respective takiwa initiatives neared or began implementation confidence was still high. A third of the 36 respondents rated their confidence between 9 and 10 (over half between 8 and 10), all but one reported a level of at least 5. One respondent who was attending their first wananga gave a rating of 3 ‘because none of the ones suggested have ever got off the ground’. Similar concerns reported in one takiwa about the importance of getting community participation in order that its initiative would be as successful as it could be.
There are risks attached to an approach that involves getting a number of schools and communities to identify and own problems in common as a group and then commit to an idea, and to its development into an initiative. One is that it takes considerably more time and effort needed to cooperatively develop an idea and to maintain buy-in across a group. An evaluation of Schools Support in 2001 found that working in a cluster situation tended to take much longer than with an individual school.132 There is also more opportunity for schools to opt out of a proposed initiative as it develops, even when they were actively involved in identifying the issues the initiative seeks to address and secondly in supporting its development. In addition schools and communities that were not included in the initial development can request to be included once they become aware of it. Each of these scenarios, in which wananga played a part, has occurred, with implications for TPM’s planning work and time-lines. What needs to be weighed up against these risks, however, is the extent to which the approach engenders a strong sense of firstly shared ownership among schools and communities that finally participate in the initiative and, secondly, shared commitment to its success and longer-term sustainability.

Evaluative comment

The development of the Board of Trustees Wananga-a-takiwa provides a way of integrating change at the level of school and community. After two years of operation there is evidence that it is delivering on some of its stated purposes. A strength that is emerging is that wananga have provided a context for attending board members, staff and principals and community members to develop relationships reflecting whanaungatanga, tautoko and manaaki. They have provided a context for sharing ideas and information for improving education in schools in a takiwa, as well as for informing and including school boards, staff and community in the development of takiwa initiatives. They appear to be playing a significant role in changing and strengthening inter-school relationships in takiwa. The wananga have also become a forum for TPM to help familiarise school boards and communities with new policies and national schooling requirements, which can raise boards’ readiness to facilitate their implementation.

One of the reasons the wananga programme was set up was to give confidence to boards of trustees; however, ‘giving confidence’ has not revolved around governance duties of board members. What we see has happened is that ‘confidence’ has related to building supportive cooperative relationships with board members and staff from other schools and confidence to interact with wider community. At some of the hui we observed that at least half of those present were not board members.

Cooperative relationships are emerging within and across takiwa boundaries and representatives of schools and communities have come together to consider and to help develop cooperative initiatives. But it is hard to change competitive, ‘individual school’ approaches overnight. Participants from schools in schooling improvement cluster initiatives have reported that even once an initiative is underway, difficulties in inter-school relations can hinder the progress of an initiative.133 In this study three from board wananga attendees that were interviewed did express reservations about developing initiatives across schools in the belief that it might result in their school ‘losing staff and resources’ to servicing such initiatives.

A potential barrier to wananga achieving its stated outcomes is lack of attendance by the groups it specifically targets. Targeting support to Māori board members was identified as a critical element, along with capacity building in the community. Māori involvement and influence is occurring in wananga across at least three other levels besides Māori board members, these being TRoTT takiwa representation, non-board community members, and Māori values and practices. Holding wananga on marae ensures that marae whānau are present, with potential for more active involvement of other community members. Wananga impact on Māori board members has been variable within and across the three takiwa, calling for strategies that ensure a continuing high proportion of Māori board members consistently participate in and benefit from the wananga.

CASE STUDY 2: Takiwa Education Planning and Initiative Development

The second case study focused on a small rural takiwa and the development of a school-centred initiative proposal and a community-centred education plan. The study examined the following three areas:

- The development and implementation of interventions and school-community involvement and relationship management
- The partnership’s role in the process of developing a takiwa education plan
- The process and direction of takiwa education planning.

The takiwa under study is made up of at least six small rural communities, the total population is estimated at less than 3000 and is relatively young, almost a third are under 15 years of age. There are 11 marae and three schools within the takiwa boundaries. The area has a high rate of underemployment, benefit dependency and educational underachievement. Over 60% of the communities’ populations are Māori. The takiwa has maintained a Māori cultural and linguistic resource base to a certain extent; most of its marae are kept ‘warm’ and are regularly used by their whānau for Māori valued activities. Te reo Māori can be heard being spoken across the communities, more likely by community members over the age of 50.

In 2001 a major focus of the case study was on the development of an intervention proposal titled School Transition Environment Project (STEP) aimed at supporting the transition of takiwa students to college. The STEP project submission was never developed to full acceptance stage with the Ministry. In 2001 evaluation activity also included monitoring of takiwa education planning. In 2002 the main evaluation focus was on the development of a takiwa education plan and community education activities that focused on community.

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Developing a transition initiative for the takiwa

**Key issues:**

- Differences in perceptions of the problem – either as academic development and preparedness for college combined with a lack of programme match with primary or differences in student support/pastoral care and social/peer pressures at college
- Low potential numbers of students for the project along with equivocal support from small schools reflected by intentions to retain Year 7 students impacted on the initiative’s viability
- Efficacy of a mentoring model that does not include a clear focus on change in views and practices, of schools in particular, in the context of transitions from small primary schools to college.

The proposed STEP project was envisioned as a mentoring programme for Year 6 children transitioning from the three small schools in the takiwa to the nearest Year 7 to 13 secondary school in a neighbouring takiwa. The project’s main aim was to monitor, evaluate and mentor those students over a four-year period (a two-year period in later submission drafts) commencing in term one, 2002.\(^{135}\) Although not specifically targeting Māori children, student rolls of the three schools were predominantly Māori.

In 2001 TPM presented data gathered by the college that Year 7 and 8 students from the three takiwa schools were consistently showing up in incident reports on disciplinary matters, including drugs and alcohol, violence, non-attendance, non-compliance, theft, vandalism and detentions. When the college compared Year 7 and 8 students from contributing primary schools, students from the three takiwa schools were shown to have had disproportionately higher incidence of total absences, stand-downs and suspensions. Causal links were drawn between:

1. The very small size of each of the primary schools in comparison to the college
2. The nurturing and secure environments of the small schools in comparison to the larger ‘impersonal’ college
3. The large amount of whānau support evident on a daily basis in the small schools in comparison to the college
4. The strong teacher-student relationships in the small schools and the apparent lack of those sorts of relationships on students entering college.

The STEP proposal sought an allocation of funding to be released to a lead school in the takiwa and the establishment of a salaried position of a mentor/liaison person who would work with students and families to:

1. Build ‘strong’ relationships
2. Liaise with parents and teachers
3. Facilitate transitional change with the schools.

It was expected that the mentor would focus on the final six months of primary schooling (Year 6) and then continue to ‘maintain’ a ‘relationship’ with the students over the ensuing 18 months at the College (particularly the first six months). The outcomes expected from the project were that Year 7 and 8 students in 2003 and 2004 would show marked improvement in: Progressive Achievement Testing results; attendance in comparison to national norms; decreased disciplinary action; and that parental interest and involvement in transition would increase with the assistance of the mentor.

Data collecting methods

TPM’s summary reports of the needs analysis for the takiwa schools and the college were analysed, along with drafts of the STEP proposal and submission documents and recent ERO reports for the schools. Six in-depth interviews were conducted with the TPM team member overseeing the development of the STEP project, four principals of the schools involved and with the TRoTT takiwa representative in mid-2001. At the time of these interviews the draft proposal development was identified in TPM’s 2001/2002 strategic framework as an action for improving Māori participation and influence in education, and had been accepted and endorsed in principle by the TRoTT partner.136

The TPM staff member was asked about:
1. the development of the proposal
2. processes used to get involvement and approval from schools, community and partners
3. how the project would help to raise Māori school achievement
4. what needed to happen in order for the project to be successful.

Principals and the TRoTT takiwa representative were asked about:
1. their roles in the project and its development
2. school and community involvement in its development
3. why the project would make a difference for their Māori students
4. what needed to happen in order for the project to be successful
5. their knowledge and involvement in educational planning in the takiwa.

In addition, evaluation team members discussed education and schooling with parents and community in the takiwa at local hui and activities. While the evaluation had intended to collect data by attending meetings at which initiatives and proposals such as STEP were developed or discussed with schools and communities, TPM had asked that new staff have time to become familiar with their work, schools and takiwa and such observations did not occur. The following main themes emerged from the analysis of the interviews:
1. TPM needs analysis exercise
2. Small school environments versus large school environments
3. Structural issues
4. The role and responsibilities of the mentor
5. The process.

1. TPM needs analysis exercise

Summary reports from the needs exercise carried out with schools and communities had not shown transitional issues to be a major concern for the takiwa students. It was only after TPM gave feedback on the results to schools that the principals expressed their concerns to TPM about the problems they had witnessed with past students over a number of years. According to one principal the survey questions did not contemplate transitioning as a potential area of concern. Anecdotal evidence was cited claiming that some students did not want to return to the college following suspensions or stand-downs and all the principals from the primary schools in the takiwa expressed some reluctance to their students going on to the college. One school with bilingual status stated that Year 7 and 8 students would remain at the primary school in 2002. While this was primarily due to the Te Reo Māori component of their bilingual unit and not directly related to any current concerns about students’ ability to transition to secondary, the principal did endorse the concerns of the other principals. He believed that because his students experienced Māori medium education, such issues of transition from primary to secondary could only be

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136 TRoTT meeting minutes, 3 October 2001.
resolved through Māori immersion education. The principal went a step further to suggest the need for wharekura\textsuperscript{137} provisions for his students like his who were learning through te reo Māori.

Takiwa informants (the TRoTT takiwa representative expressed similar sentiments) reported that parents from one school in particular had voiced their concerns about the problems their children were having at the college at board meetings and various community forums. The extent to which the college as opposed to primary school was seen as primarily responsible for the problems that takiwa students were experiencing was not clearly apparent from discussions we had with parents. As one stated:

\begin{center}
Our [primary] school always held themselves up as a great school. If it's so great why do our kids fail when they get to the college? The school claims it is not them therefore it must be the college. Or it must be a combination of both.
\end{center}

The predominant assumption of principals from the takiwa was that Year 6 students were leaving ‘warm, nurturing and supportive’ environments to enter the larger and more ‘impersonal’ environment of the college. A somewhat contrasting assumption from the college was that the small schools were, albeit inadvertently, creating a level of dependency in the children that made the transition to a more secondary school oriented programme challenging.

\section*{2. Small school versus large school environments}

The main theme that emerged from the takiwa school principals’ interviews was that all students, including those most ‘at-risk’,\textsuperscript{138} had done well at primary school but had ‘gone down’ at college. For example, one principal stated that ‘assessment evidence would suggest that they are prepared’ for secondary schooling. Another principal felt that the students were more than adequately prepared for entry to college as illustrated in comments below.

\begin{center}
Some of the programmes offered at college are not up to our level. For example, our music programme is more advanced than theirs is. Our children get bored because they have to start over for the sake of other children who are not as advanced.
\end{center}

Another principal had this to say about his students’ preparedness for college.

\begin{center}
Their work at the little schools, the three little schools are not exemplary but good, average, not causing any problems discipline-wise.
\end{center}

The three schools in the takiwa had been commended for providing sheltered, warm and nurturing environments in their recent ERO reports. In addition, a large amount of whānau and parental support in the schools on a daily basis was accepted as the norm. The teaching staff were viewed as able to consistently provide a one-to-one relationship that enabled them to ‘nip problems in the bud’. Consequently, all three principals saw the problems as stemming from the change of environment. One went further to add that he saw it as mainly ‘a boy problem’. He stated that girls had a slight advantage in maturity particularly at ages 11 to 13 and experienced far fewer serious problems at the college.

The principal of the college did accept the concerns of the small schools and was supportive of the STEP initiative. Since his arrival at the college a few years previously he had attempted to initiate a number of interventions to help ease the transition process for students. For example, he had encouraged past students to visit intending Year 7 students to talk to them about what they could expect at the college and he had discussions with the

\textsuperscript{137} Kura Kaupapa Māori secondary school provision.

\textsuperscript{138} A definition of what constitutes an ‘at-risk’ student in this context was not provided.
principals individually and collectively in an attempt to address some of their concerns. What he viewed as part of the problem were what he saw as positives and negatives about the small school environment. He pointed to the large amount of adult care and supervision (aside from staff) that were present in the schools on a daily basis. On one visit to a school he had noted seven adults plus teachers present for only 13 students. In his view there was potential in such situations for the adults to make decisions for the children that they should be making for themselves. Moreover, he believed that preparation for college was generally lacking in the schools. In support of this he pointed to lower PAT scores that the students generally achieved compared with students from other contributing schools as well as evidence showing students from the takiwa were over-represented in disciplinary action.

3. **Structural issues**

In terms of research on transition from early childhood to school, the SEMO evaluation points to the concepts of continuity and complementarity. Essentially each school structure develops microsystems for curriculum delivery to meet the perceived learning needs of the children in that particular setting. In transition a certain degree of discontinuity is inevitable and possibly desirable for providing the stimulus for learning and development. On the other hand, too great a degree of discontinuity may move some children onto the path of school failure. SEMO points to the need for collaboration between teachers in both settings to provide activities that optimise children’s development and learning across both settings. If the schools absolve themselves from responsibility for creating sufficient continuity between settings to facilitate the transition process, then it becomes the responsibility of the child to do so.\(^{139}\)

What the STEP project aimed at doing was to use mentoring across different school sites to create continuity for children moving from the small primary schools to the relatively larger secondary school. In contrast, what the college principal reported that the college was proposing was to create continuity by modifying its programme in the first two years, thus making aspects of it more similar to intermediate school programmes, and more similar to those the children were leaving. In modifying the Year 7 and 8 programme the college planned to create a base classroom for them away from the main school where they would not be expected to rotate around the school. The aim was for each Year 7 form teacher to take the students for at least 10 hours per week. The college believed that this would help provide the students with the skills and knowledge required to move around the different subject areas and classes in their future years. For the primary principals interviewed this was not seen as sufficient to ensure successful transition for their students. They stated a lot of the problems the children experienced occurred outside of the classroom, one of the major problems being peer pressure by the older students. They hoped that by involving these young students with a mentor that they could be provided with strategies to deal with this sort of influence.

4. **Role and responsibilities of the mentor**

The success of the STEP project was seen to hinge on the appointment of an appropriate person to the role of mentor. There was little practical description given about how the mentor would be able to directly achieve the outcomes expected. It seemed to be a huge task for one person to take on although there was an expectation that this role would be integrated with other support systems already existing in the community. There was little discussion about how the parents would react or interact with the mentor even though

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comments reflected a perception that poor parenting skills were a factor in behaviour and discipline issues. In the main, expectations of the role were that it would develop ‘strong’ relationships with the students from the takiwa, especially those ‘at risk’. What constituted a strong relationship was not strongly defined in the proposal though it did suggest that the role of the mentor was to provide and model three protective factors: caring relationships; positive and high expectations; and encouragement of responsibility and participation: that would buffer ‘risk’ pertaining to transition and adolescent changes. The primary schools’ principals wanted a person in the mentor role who was able to carry on the positive work that they saw they had been doing. They felt the role required a professional attitude, educational knowledge, expectations that the children would achieve and knowledge of the children outside of school. All informants, including the principal of the college, had an expectation that the job would be filled by someone with the expertise that came from within, or was familiar with the community. TRoTT takiwa representatives held a similar point of view that the appointee would need to have already achieved a level of community acceptance and be able to get on with the parents and whänau of the children. It was important to the representative that the community had some input into the selection because in her view neither the community nor school board members had been adequately consulted or involved in the developing of the initiative.

Concerns were expressed about the potential for overlapping with the jobs of others already actively working in this area such as RTLB working with the primary schools and the college guidance counsellor. Both these roles were seen as indispensable in terms of the impact and potential impact they were having for takiwa children in the primary schools and the college. The primary principals stated that they thought the guidance counsellor would be an ideal person for the role of mentor. It was the college principal who pointed out that the counsellor was not only fulfilling an important role for the takiwa children but also for all other students at the school. He stated that he would be averse to losing an invaluable staff member currently addressing the needs of a few hundred children to concentrate on the needs of a handful of students.

5. The process
Each informant was asked to discuss the role they had in developing the STEP project. From the interviews it appears that the idea for STEP was driven predominantly by the principals of the takiwa schools, one school in particular. The TRoTT takiwa had been kept involved and informed. However, there appeared to have been relatively little input from the community, and few board members seemed to have been fully informed or involved. Principals and the takiwa representative expressed frustration with not knowing when or if the proposal would be accepted although the expectation was that the initiative would commence in term one of 2002, which they saw as lack of communication on TPM’s part.

There was also an issue of viability in terms of potential numbers of Year 7 students for the project. In the December 2001 interim report the evaluation team had pointed out the issues discussed above that arose out of the interviews and that in addition it was unclear what numbers of students were going to be involved in the project. Our information from the three schools indicated the possibility that in 2002 only four students would be going to the college from only one of the schools. One school had stated that it would be holding on to its intermediate aged students in cognisance of its bilingual programme. Another school signalled that it wanted to apply for recapitation, but regardless of the possibility of this happening, the school had no potential Year 7 students anyway. In cognisance of this lack of students the proposed project was re-structured to focus on Years 9 and 10 as the
transition years from primary to secondary schooling. According to one of the principals, there would be potential for a mentor to work with the Year 8 children from the takiwa as well; however, this had not been made clear in the proposal nor was it the basis for which the project was developed. By the beginning of 2002 it was evident that the STEP project was unlikely to move beyond the proposal stage. Reasons for this related not only to the perceived viability of the project but also because of possible implications of duplication related to Ministry initiatives such as ‘He Ara Tika’ Mentoring Scheme for secondary schools that had developed outside of TPM.

**Evaluative comment**

The initiative STEP, aimed at facilitating student transition from small primary schools in the case study takiwa to a large college, did not reach a formal submission stage. This was because of problems affecting implementation, in particular the cohort of student participants was very small. Other issues emerged. Another critical challenge in our view was that two of the three small schools involved stated their intention to retain Year 7 students rather than send them on to the college, which in effect did not support the implementation of the project. This reflected a need for more supportive evidence that the implementation of the mentor could adequately address the schools’ stated concerns and help identify and address underlying causes. What the interviews highlighted were wider, more structural issues.

A mentoring model was proposed to address transition problems by working with students and whānau. This model located the problem with students and failed to recognise structural impediments that exist to student transition. This is a deficit model in action. As the STEP proposal developed there was a need to earlier ascertain whether such a mentoring model would indeed be an effective use of resources.

**Takiwa education planning**

Evaluation work in the takiwa case study included a focus on education planning activity. TPM did not have direct involvement in community education initiatives; rather takiwa or Iwi education planning was an anticipated outcome of the information gathering processes that occurred in 2000.\(^{140}\) The role of TRoTT takiwa representatives was expected to include assisting with the facilitation of takiwa education plans. TPM’s early expectation was that takiwa education plans would be developed in consultation and with involvement of schools and other educational providers.\(^{141}\) This contrasts with the direction of education planning work carried out in 2001 and 2002, as described to us by members of the takiwa education working party, now known as the takiwa education team, which had little active involvement with schools.

**Data collecting methods**

A member of the evaluation team attended the initial takiwa education planning hui at a takiwa marae in March 2001 and was a participant-observer at meetings of a resulting working party, held in 2001 and early 2002 after that initial hui. Other hui were also

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\(^{140}\) For example, information sheet for coordinators of takiwa data gathering exercises in 2000 recommends that a hui-a-iwi is held at the completion of the data gathering process to ‘feedback results and discuss development of iwi education plans’.

\(^{141}\) Notes for data gathering coordinators also state that hui-a-iwi are to ‘encourage continuous involvement and participation and shared community/school accountability for lifting the educational achievement of students’.
attended, including eight takiwa hui\(^{142}\) and four TPM board wananga-a-takiwa. In depth structured interviews were carried out with five people involved in the takiwa education working party, in its early stages. The interviews sought information about: involvement in education in the takiwa prior to the working party; aspirations for education in the takiwa; becoming part of the working party; education work the group was doing and outcomes they expected from this work. Interviewees were also asked about community-school relationships and expected outcomes of the working party for these relationships.

Two key informant interviews were carried out with educational workers, one who worked in schools and one who worked in community, and who regularly attended takiwa hui. Neither were members of the initial working party at the time. In addition, evaluation team members had opportunities to discuss education and schooling with parents and community in the takiwa at local hui and activities. Ten community members who had attended at least one workshop facilitated by the education team (five had attended more than one) as part of the takiwa education plan were interviewed about their views on the effects such community education workshops could have:
1. on education in the takiwa
2. on how whänau could support children’s schooling in their takiwa
3. on school-community relationships.

Data was also used from principals’ and TRoTT takiwa representative’s interviews about STEP in which they were also asked about their knowledge of and involvement with educational planning in the takiwa. Three of the four principals were contacted again in early 2002 to follow up on their knowledge of, and involvement in, the takiwa education planning since their interview.\(^ {143}\)

Findings

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Below we examine the development of the takiwa education working party, and the direction that their education planning work took. The direction being taken emphasised

\(^{142}\) Here the term takiwa is used to refer to the notion of takiwa as a collective of marae. In some areas ‘takiwa’ were established and have been operating, some as long as 15 years, as a two-way communication flow between runanga-a-iwi and takiwa. A function of takiwa in this sense is to facilitate communication firstly between marae through the mechanism of takiwa and then from takiwa to runanga.

\(^{143}\) An acting principal was in place in the fourth school.
issues about balance between ‘community’ and ‘school’ as where change needs to be located in order to improve Māori student achievement. One assumption underlying the direction taken was that negative attitudes towards education and learning existing in a community needed to be addressed in order to improve student outcomes.

Two other assumptions expressed by the five members of the initial working party were:

1. that te reo Māori me ona tikanga are critical for Māori educational achievement
2. that community members working directly in and with schools to get changes has not worked well in the past.

The working party took a project approach to educational planning which identified specific projects to focus on. It placed emphasis on community as where change-making efforts needed to be directed. The projects that were described to us by its members included: the establishment of an education trust; the development of a whānau learning centre concept; and the setting up and provision of specific educational workshops in the community. The direction the working party took emphasised developing the capacity within the takiwa communities and the working party itself. It also involved feedback and accountability mechanisms to the takiwa network. We saw the work being carried out as significant in terms of the partnership, particularly in terms of its implications for developing TRoTT’s capacity in education within its takiwa representation.

The major focus of the working party was identified as that of ‘whānau support’, in particular a proposed whānau learning centre that was conceptualised around whānau and community learning needs and aspirations. The working party identified TPM information collection processes, for which two members were community facilitators, as having some bearing on its focus on whānau learning. Members of the working party saw addressing whānau and community learning needs as a critical requisite (even pre-requisite) for whānau participation in Māori students’ learning. Te reo Māori me ona tikanga and whānau well-being are two elements that remained a fundamental base of the working party’s planning and activities during the duration of this study.

Te Timatatanga – setting up the working party

Inspired by work for TPM’s needs analysis exercise with whānau, a takiwa community member approached Te Puni Kokiri (TPK) for funding to develop a strategic plan for the takiwa. A hui was held on the last weekend in April 2001 at a marae in the takiwa to which a number of education based representatives were invited (for example from local schools, an outpost of Northland Polytechnic, TPM, ACE, REAP, NZQA). Information about the hui also went out to the various marae in the takiwa. This first hui was well attended by local (in some cases resident and/or with whakapapa links in the takiwa) principals and teachers and representatives from education agencies in the Te Taitokerau, reflecting a high level of interest. The hui was relatively less well attended by people who lived in the area, although there were several participants who had connections to the takiwa. Key informants raised a tangi and a wedding at two other local marae as possible reasons for a relatively lower number of community members, estimated at 15 to 20. Most of these people were from the marae community, which also affiliates to four or five other nearby marae, with some representation from other marae in the takiwa. Estimates from various

144 Issues reported in the TPM Needs Analysis Summary reports for the takiwa schools included te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in schools. The working party’s focus in contrast has been on te reo Māori and tikanga Māori learning needs in the community.
145 Education Team AGM report to the Takiwa, November 2002.
hui attendees placed the total attendance numbers at about 60, although not all stayed for the entire two days of the hui, at times numbers fell well below this.

One of the more observable outcomes of the hui was the formation of a small takiwa education working party, of which the TRoTT takiwa representative was a key member. Another outcome was a show of commitment from attendees to the notion of strategic educational planning in the takiwa. One hui attendee described ‘raising awareness’ about education in the takiwa as a key outcome of the hui. Another two attendees commented that while good, positive ideas were discussed at the hui, the challenge was to translate these into practical action, for example,

\[\text{We heard ideas but no practicalities. (principal)}\]

\[\text{Generally positive [discussion], but needs to put it into action. (TPM team member)}\]

A community key informant also raised a concern that ‘strategic planning’ had the potential to get in the way of action where she believed it needed to occur, across all levels of schooling.

\[\text{Where to from here? There are not enough people doing, e mahi ana. Instead they are talking and informing. Kahore he take e puta mai ana. Ae Māori tamariki are not performing or learning or listening me era mea katoa. Hei aha te korero, me aha tatou? Kua roa rawa tatou e 'strategic planning' ana? Aroha mai, ko tuku raruraru kei hea nga mahita Māori hei hapai i wa tatou tamariki?}^{146}\]

There was concern also expressed by principals about the relative lack of good clear data available (e.g. in the TPM summary reports of the needs analysis data) to guide strategic planning.

\[\text{Education planning and takiwa}^{147}\]

After the hui the education working party met regularly, usually on a monthly basis until the end of 2001. The makeup of the group has changed over time, while a core group of four to five continued to meet regularly, three to four additional community people often attended. Initial meetings focused on developing an educational strategy for the takiwa. The education team used a number of strategies to try and keep community and schools informed about their work, including the launching of a newsletter publicising education workshops and activities in the takiwa in October 2002. During 2001 and 2002 takiwa hui were kept informed about education planning activities through regular reports from an education team member.

\[\text{We have a meeting every month and yes [----] is always present to report what is happening with her mahi. (Key informant)}\]

The takiwa as a network was described to us as having been formed over a 14-year period and as operating on limited funds. The strength of the takiwa was seen in ongoing and regular communication between marae in the takiwa. The takiwa network enabled the sharing of information and issues impacting on Māori communities and it also provided a platform to identify and to discuss possible solutions to those issues. The most active services within the takiwa at the time were described as being in areas of social services, housing and broadcasting.

\[^{146}\text{ e mahi ana – working; kahore he take e puta mai ana – nothing seems to be coming out of it; me era mea katoa – and all those things; Hei aha te korero, me aha tatou? – Never mind the talking, what must we do? Kua roa rawa tatou e 'strategic planning' ana – we have been strategic planning for a long time. Aroha mai, ko tuku raruraru kei hea nga mahita Māori hei hapai i wa tatou, tamariki? – Excuse me; my problem is where are the Māori teachers to help support us?}\]

\[^{147}\text{ Referred to from here on as the education team.}\]
Members of the education team saw reporting to the takiwa hui about the planning that they were doing as an accountability mechanism. The education team described the process involving the presentation of any activities or recommendations that it wanted to proceed with to the takiwa hui for discussion and support. Part of the education team focus has been to restructure how the takiwa network operates from a portfolio approach to a project style approach.

When the recommendation for a whānau learning centre was presented to the October 2001 takiwa hui, it was accompanied by the suggestion that the takiwa form a legal entity. There had been considerable discussion, particularly in more recent years, of the takiwa network forming as a legal entity. Reasons given for the suggestion at this hui included difficulties facing the education team to move planning forward or apply for funding without legal entity status. The hui agreed that the takiwa should move to form an incorporated society. An incorporated society document was tabled at the November 2001 monthly takiwa hui and was signed by 11 of 15 people present and was then submitted to IRD. In March 2002, the application was approved. Working to establish the incorporated society was seen as a learning experience, and members reported that it created interest in them to look at establishing an incorporated society for their respective marae.

Education planning and schools

There was little evidence of direct involvement of schools or education agencies represented at the initial education planning hui in the education team’s planning work. Principals reported having little direct involvement with education planning following the hui. When asked what they expected to happen, principals did think that there would have been some follow up with schools. One principal who had attended the initial education planning hui reported having met with the takiwa representatives a couple of times since then, that being the level of his involvement with education planning. He had not heard very much about planning work being carried out but he was keen for some interaction between the education team and his school, particularly in relation to the possibility of a homework centre, an idea that he understood the education team had discussed.

Another principal stated that he did not know a lot about the educational planning but indicated that the board wananga-a-takiwa was where he would expect to be informed about it.

He also commented that he thought that the community was being kept informed about and involved in TPM activities by the TRoTT takiwa representative.

General information was presented to school board representatives and other attendees about the ‘whānau learning’ focus of the education team at the Board of Trustees.

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148 Other than support that members of the education team described was coming from Far North REAP through REAP’s role in developing the TRoTT takiwa representative’s facilitation and other skills and some members also being employed in the education sector.
Wananga-a-takiwa. According to TPM staff the whänau learning focus was positively received at the wananga. However, one principal that attended the wananga described the information that was presented as being ‘about hopes and dreams, not a specific programme’. This principal expressed surprise at the apparent lack of follow up and involvement of people working in schools or educational agencies in takiwa education planning, which for this principal raised issues of credibility and effectiveness about the educational planning process.

I was surprised that they talked about an educational plan [at the board wananga] but that there are no educational people that I know about attending [working party meetings]. I thought that it would be important to consult or involve educationalists as they are the ones doing the teaching, working with students.

The education team has drawn together people with different levels and kinds of involvement in education prior to the setting up of the working group. Of the five interviewed, three had been involved in education activities for many years, such as kohanga reo, bilingual schooling, and delivering community ‘second chance’ education programmes. The remaining two described recent involvement in education, one as a facilitator with the TPM information gathering processes, the other as a concerned parent.

The parent had attended an early education team meeting looking for support because she had concerns about her daughter’s education and about the recognition given to Mäori by the school. On voicing those concerns, she was invited to attend education team meetings.

I came to the first meeting out of some concerns about my girl's education, because I've been really concerned, right from the beginning of the year ... and she [TRoTT representative] invited me along to one of the [working party] meetings. ... I basically went to ask for ideas and help, you know to get things changed, and so from there I just kept [going to meetings] and yeah that’s how it got started.

There was little direct involvement with schools in the education planning work of the education team; however, the situation was not straightforward in terms of schools’ contact with its members. All principals described some contact with individual education team members, although this was in terms of their paid employment. For instance, a principal described one education team member as having had a significant role in helping to address the teaching of te reo Mäori in their school.

We have contact with [working party member] because we have had difficulty getting a teacher of Mäori. A cluster group has been set up and [working party member] has helped, and organised a cluster teacher of te reo Mäori, at least for this year.

Community members that are active in community-related planning and development are often likely to ‘wear a number of hats’ and this was the case for the education team. Most had some contact with schools but in roles outside of their takiwa education planning work. It is difficult and arguably sometimes inappropriate to try and tease out exactly what activity belongs to which ‘hat’, as various activities may contribute to each other in ways that are not easily separated out. What is clearly evident from interviews with members is that they did not see a formal role or involvement of the education team with schools as part of their education planning work.

Whakapakari a Whänau
There was a distinct shift from a focus on schools, to a focus on whänau and community in the planning work carried out by the education team in 2001. The very nature of school improvement initiatives points to solutions for increasing Mäori student achievement being centred on schools. The education team members did refer to school-related aspects that they believed needed to be addressed. All spoke about the need to improve te reo Mäori and tikanga Mäori and about incorporating local expertise and knowledge in the school
curriculum, what one described as ‘getting a balance of national Ministry directed and controlled curriculum and locally owned and controlled curriculum’. Interviewees argued the need to integrate Māori teaching and learning styles and incorporate Māori values; however, there was a belief that this was unlikely to occur if the value of Māori ways of doing things, and te reo Māori me nga tikanga Māori was disregarded. Perceived resistance to the needs of Māori is reflected in their interviews, ‘the education system is just not ready, not willing to accept there is another model out there’… ‘the institution (of education) is threatened’. All five expressed frustration with how they saw ‘education’ being viewed as very much based around what schools and the Ministry of Education wanted.

Concerns about how parents and whānau may best be able to support their children’s education resulted in the education team looking more at what whānau needs might be, than to develop its initial focus on how schools could change in order to work better for Māori children. The education team members we interviewed described coming to a view that TPM work and national educational initiatives were focusing on schools in order to improve Māori student achievement. The education team described how they wanted to instead focus on community education and empowerment as a pathway to raising student achievement;

I think at that time [at the start] because my take\textsuperscript{149} was to do with the mainstream, part of that was actually getting in schools and working it out. It seems like a natural progression really and all the work that we’ve done or that was done before and the korero that’s gone on before, it just led us to this point, … restructuring the idea to community....

All our meetings, where we’re at now is a whole different look from what it was when we first started. Because what we got out of the strategy we have used to focus on like: Kura Kaupapa, te Reo Māori classes, stuff all about going to tertiary education, university, polytechs. We sort of focused that way, but now we’ve come away from that, and now we want to focus specifically more on what whānau, hapu actually want. Rather than try and find things that they might be interested in, we’re now going to focus in on what it is they want and see if we can deliver that.

The question is often asked about what can be done to ensure parent, whānau and community participation in schools. However, is it less often asked how educational experiences of parents and whānau impact on their tamariki\textsuperscript{150}, although correlations are found between parents’ levels of schooling success and children’s academic achievement. The education team’s approach reflects the belief that addressing community located issues around learning is a critical component of improving the quality of education for children.

In contrast to working directly with or in schools, the education team members stated that they had chosen to focus on generating solutions for whānau learning as a means of improving the achievement of their tamariki. The interviewees all reported that the education team worked from a view that acknowledged and promoted education and learning as also existing outside schools and formal education institutions:

...it doesn't always have to be around what schools want.

...it will acknowledge the skills in the community and that education doesn't just happen in schools.

\textsuperscript{149} Issue, topic.
\textsuperscript{150} Children.
While TPM did not look unfavourably on community education initiatives that had no explicit connection into schools, there was concern expressed in a May 2001 meeting about its capacity to be involved to any great extent. However, there was also concern that even though TPM was an Iwi partnership that had a primary focus on schooling improvement, it needed to ensure that it was inclusive of community. The challenge was how to balance a strong schooling improvement agenda and community expectations and aspirations that went beyond schooling. The second variation to the FPA between the TPM partners included a strategy to attempt this balance by explicitly including takiwa education planning. The FPA identified the case-study takiwa as a potential pilot site for the development of collaborative protocols between TRoTT and takiwa.\(^\text{151}\) The approval and implementation of a takiwa education plan was a key performance indicator. A TRoTT staff position, kaimahi matauranga,\(^\text{152}\) was set up to work with takiwa on education planning. At the end of 2002 planning work had taken a specific te reo Māori focus and had begun with one takiwa.

Another theme that came through interviews with education team members was the empowerment of communities to make decisions about what they saw as being important for learning and their focus on whānau learning was heavily driven by a desire to address what whānau and hapu in the takiwa wanted in education. Working party members variously made comments about wanting:

- ...to make sure that the takiwa people attain the sort of education they want.
- To empower the community to make their own decisions about what they see as being important for learning.
- ...every descendant of the takiwa to achieve in whatever area of education they choose, and be resourced for that to happen.

Attendance at the monthly takiwa network hui was seen as an important context to determine what sorts of workshops would be appropriate to the needs and desires of the takiwa. The team also used its own meetings as a context to find out about community education needs. For example, an education team meeting held in December 2001 included several new attendees. These people were takiwa and marae representatives and were well known in their communities. This particular meeting was to present components of the educational strategy the team had been developing for discussion, and to seek greater community involvement in the team’s work. The new attendees expressed support for the direction of the education plan and were enthusiastic about the content. A specific role they said they could see themselves supporting was one of whānau support, a role that a number of them had been involved in for many years that was utilised by schools.

*The proposed ‘whānau learning centre’ concept*

A proposal was submitted in mid October 2001 to TPK for the education team to develop a whānau learning centre concept, and funding to establish a business and development plan, a strategic plan and a project plan for establishing a Whānau Learning Centre was approved by TPK at the beginning of 2002. A feasibility study was completed in 2002 and the report was presented to the TRoTT partners and to the takiwa.

The education team’s aims for the whānau learning centre were that it would offer positive learning opportunities within the takiwa, utilising resources already available. One of the

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\(^{151}\) Second Variation to the Funding Provision Agreement between the Minister of Education and Te Reo o te Taitokerau Trust, 22 February 2002.

\(^{152}\) Education worker.
ways members of the education team envisaged the ‘centre’ was as a form of facilitation of wananga, workshops or training in different sites throughout the takiwa, located at local marae, community organisations, trusts, community venues, schools or homes. These workshops and wananga would be established at the request from community and would be available to anyone from within the takiwa.

The education team discussed several potential workshops that the whänau learning centre could facilitate in their 2001 interviews. As te reo Mäori had been identified as a priority need in the takiwa, te reo and tikanga Mäori was seen by the education team to provide the foundation of learning for the whänau learning centre. Several examples of potential workshops were described to us, including te reo Mäori workshops using the Te Ataarangi method of teaching. More specific wananga were envisaged that could be developed to teach Mäori cultural skills and knowledge, such as whaikorero and moteatea, again as defined by community need.

What the education team envisaged as the benefits of such workshops and wananga are reflected in the TRoTT takiwa representative’s description below.

Most people don’t want to go to institutional learning, though involvement in a positive learning environment may encourage them to step into that opportunity at a later stage. It’s about getting whänau interested in learning, interested in their children’s learning. If we can get parents to participate in learning, and in schools, it’s all good. The present state of learning is left to schools, like it must be that schools know, schools know better. It’s about changing attitudes to learning, what schools think is important to learning isn’t necessarily what whänau think is important.

Putting the whänau learning centre concept into practice

Early in 2002 the takiwa education plan was completed and presented to the takiwa and to the TRoTT partners. The whänau learning centre concept then began to be put into practice and the education team described being eager to attract interest in what the whänau learning centre concept could offer by facilitating a few ‘quick hit’ type of workshops that could be useful to communities. For example, a workshop on proposal writing for funding that involved TPK was organised for March 2002. This was the first of a number of workshops facilitated by the education team that they viewed as useful in helping community build its capacity. The education team liased with a Whare Wananga to provide workshops that were also capacity building-oriented.

A number of workshops were run over the 2002 year: Te reo Mäori, Moteatea, Karanga and Whaikorero workshops were run on a takiwa marae and averaged at least 20 participants at each session. A school in the takiwa school offered access to its computer facilities for a beginner computer workshop. While workshops had a primary focus such as computer skills development, they also included other learning opportunities. For instance, the computer workshops also provided te reo Mäori learning opportunities.

Participants that we interviewed commented that they enjoyed learning te reo Mäori without it being the singular focus. The entire group thought that community workshops had a strong to enormous effect on education in the takiwa. The main effects that they identified were to community members’ confidence and motivation to learn and to the value placed on learning. A by-product of the workshops was ‘bridging gaps’ between young and old in the community and between Mäori and Pakeha knowledge about each other: ‘old ones can understand the modern world. Pakeha can understand our ways’.

153 Te Ataarangi is a community-based programme that was established in 1980 to teach te reo Mäori to adults from all walks of life. Te Ataarangi became an incorporated society in 1981.
When describing the kinds of effects that community education workshops could have on how whānau could support children’s schooling in their takiwa and on school-community relationships, workshop participants’ views were similar to those expressed by the education team. All thought that attending community workshops made a difference to how well they could support their children’s schooling. They gave qualitative kinds of differences they believed that attending made. It raised their confidence and motivation to help their children with schooling and made them value schooling and education more. The group also identified specific practical kinds of differences. Three parents said the courses they attended helped them help their children better with their schoolwork, for instance: ‘I can’t help my daughter with maths, good courses like these help me’. Another parent commented that the courses had provided ideas and information about different styles of learning and teaching and that by attending courses, ‘parents can see how students learn and what teaching is all about’.

Although most of the workshops were held on marae and none were directed to school students or staff, the entire group expected that the community education approach that was being taken would have benefits for school-community relationships. Reasons given for this view can be grouped into two sets. One set related to such learning opportunities helping people in the community to feel comfortable about education and raise their confidence to engage and develop a relationship with their children’s schools. The other set of reasons related to people coming to value education highly and raising their aspirations for their children, which can result in parents getting more involved in their children’s education.

**Evaluative comment**

Increasing Māori participation and influence in education across 78 schools, not to mention 10 takiwa and the many communities these encompass in Te Taitokerau, in order to raise student achievement is not an easy undertaking. Different views about where efforts to achieve greater participation and influence should be located do not make the task any easier. A Kaupapa Māori approach would argue Iwi partnerships, by their very nature, demand community participation and influence beyond its application to improving schools to raise student outcomes. It demands educational improvement and development at whānau and community levels as well.

Takiwa education planning that has occurred focused on whānau and community learning rather than on schools as critical for improving Māori students’ learning. School expectations of education planning were that it would include consultation with them and that it would have practical significance for schools. The planning team, however, developed a whānau learning centre concept, in which raising Māori student achievement was seen in relation to changing attitudes and behaviours of parents to schooling through addressing parents’ learning needs. If one takes the view that the goal of education planning was to put education on the community agenda in order to ultimately improve Māori student achievement, then indicators are that what has happened to date is change in a positive direction. Measuring such an impact is likely to be more long term.

The case study also provided an opportunity to look at a way TRoTT takiwa representation is being played out in one takiwa at the level of takiwa education planning. The education planning approach taken in the takiwa focused on education capacity building within the takiwa. The involvement of TRoTT takiwa representation indicates the potential for
partnership capacity building to occur in a takiwa direction compared with directly building the capacity of the respective partners.

The education planning provides a context for reflecting on the significance of whānau and community learning needs in relation to raising school achievement. The whānau learning centre concept as it had developed to the end of 2002 did not have a focus on how whānau could actively and formally contribute to addressing school needs in the takiwa. The significance of the whānau learning centre concept for raising Māori student achievement was seen in relation to changing attitudes and behaviours of parents to their children’s schooling by providing educational experiences aimed at addressing parents’ learning needs. The impact of such an approach to student achievement is likely to be much more long term than more-school focused approaches. The question for the takiwa and the partners at this point is whether such approaches best continue in parallel, or whether there is a point where they might be combined together in such a way that the ‘community’ locus that is fundamental to those education team members doing the work is not overwhelmed.
In this chapter the focus is on two interventions that have developed out of TPM’s facilitation work with schools. Each has significant relevance for the way TPM seeks to raise the quality of education in Te Taitokerau. The first intervention examined is the *North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum Initiative*, which was developed as a strategy for building small schools’ capacity to provide quality education in their communities. The initiative is significant for two reasons:

1. It relates to the effectiveness that a supportive and cooperative school-school relationships model can have to improve education quality compared with a competitive model
2. It relates to valuable knowledge and skills existing in isolated and socio-economically challenged communities that can be tapped to enhance and enrich curriculum and delivery in very small schools.

The second intervention is *Te Reo Itinerant Teachers of Māori (Te RITO Māori)*, which is an integral component of TPM’s developing te reo Māori strategy. TPM signalled the development of Te RITO Māori in 2001 and its development with schools and communities was tracked over 2002. Its implementation began in 2003 after the research ended. The major aim of Te RITO Māori is to address problems mainstream schools face in providing quality te reo Māori programmes, partly through schools clustering together to share the use of and responsibility for resources. The key roles takiwa have to play vis-à-vis the development of this intervention and takiwa local knowledge and local dialect fluency forms part of the tracking that was done.

**INTERVENTION I: North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum Initiative**

The purpose of the North Hokianga initiative is to improve student learning outcomes in information and communications technology, information literacy, te reo Māori and health and physical education and to provide principal mentoring for the three smaller schools that were expected to participate.154

The initiative involves students from smaller rural schools travelling once a week to a larger rural school to spend about an hour on each of the four curriculum areas above. Tutors for the initiative, the majority with ‘limited authority to teach’155 in their respective curriculum area,156 come from the lead school’s community.

The initiative is expected to raise students’ achievement in the curriculum areas and to assist schools to develop and improve in the above curriculum areas. Improvements in student learning are monitored by schools through baseline assessments undertaken in the first term of implementation and subsequent assessments over the year. Another stated outcome of the initiative is that a plan will be prepared for each participating school to sustain and enhance learning and development in ICT, information literacy and te reo Māori curriculum areas. Expected outcomes also include principals of the smaller

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155 The authority to teach in New Zealand classrooms is based on recognised teacher trained qualifications. Those who come in to ‘teach’ special areas, identified by schools and communities as important additions to the curriculum, do so by special provisions being made which do not allow the person engaged to teach beyond the specified area nominated.
156 One of the tutors is a trained teacher.
participating schools demonstrating increased levels of confidence and competency in principalship, with an emphasis on curriculum management.\textsuperscript{157}\n
When the North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum Initiative was being developed it was envisaged that four schools would be participating, three belonging to one takiwa, and the fourth located in a neighbouring takiwa. Three of the schools had rolls less than 30; the fourth school had a roll of about 75. At that time all were decile 1 or 2 schools in rural,\textsuperscript{158} Māori communities, with 76% to 100% Māori rolls.\textsuperscript{159}\n
The Funding Provision Agreement for this initiative was with the largest school that provides curriculum leadership and principal mentoring. Evidence from information collected by TPM and from its recent ERO reports show the school has strengths in developing curriculum programmes, management and governance. The Funding Provision agreement was finalised on 14 September 2001 with the board of the lead school.\textsuperscript{160} Funding was released on 19 September with payment to the lead school made on 23 October.\textsuperscript{161} It was originally envisaged that the initiative would begin in term four 2001 and run for five terms until the end of 2002. At the end of 2001 two of the three small schools had agreed to take part. The initiative proper, however, began to be implemented in the first term 2002 with only one of the three schools travelling to the lead school once a week.

This study examined the processes of negotiating an initiative that involves a mentoring school and principal working with other schools and of its implementation. This study provided an opportunity to examine relationships between schools as a strategy for building small schools’ capacity to provide quality education in their communities. It also provided an opportunity to observe curriculum and management leadership occurring across more than one takiwa.

\textit{Research questions and method}\n
The study of the initiative as it was developed and began implementation was guided by the following questions:

1. How was the negotiation of the initiative carried out and how effective was the outcome?
2. To what extent did schools and communities feel that they were part of the process?
3. What were the initial expectations of schools and communities about the interventions?
4. What changes did schools and communities identify as the initiative was implemented?

We initially planned to collect data on the development and negotiation of the initiative by attending meetings alongside TPM team members at which the idea was developed, presented and explained to schools or communities. The earliest meetings occurred during the first part of 2001 at a time when new team members were beginning and some changes were taking place in the allocation of takiwa to staff. TPM management asked for time for members to become familiar with their work, schools and takiwa. Data on the development and negotiation of the initiative has therefore included discussions with the TPM team member responsible for the initiative’s submission and interviewees’ descriptions and retrospective views about the negotiation process, and analysis of submission drafts.

\textsuperscript{157} Funding Provision Agreement, 25 July 2001.
\textsuperscript{158} The lead school is arguably ‘less’ rural, close to a small township.
\textsuperscript{160} Funding Provision Agreement document.
\textsuperscript{161} Remittance Advice to lead school.
In term four 2001 after the submission had been approved by the Ministry of Education, a researcher attended board meetings with schools with the education facilitator. The fund-holding school expressed an initial reluctance to participate in the TPM evaluation, one reason being that it is a requirement of the funding provision agreement for ERO to evaluate the outcomes of the initiative. The board agreed to be involved in the TPM evaluation at the beginning of 2002. Principals and board members of three schools that were expected to participate in the initiative were interviewed about the proposal development and negotiation processes, and about the initiative’s expected outcomes.

Observations of the initiative being implemented were made in terms one, three and four of 2002. The end of year hakari and performance was also attended. Four sets of interviews were carried out. The first set of interviews with three principals and four board members from the three smaller schools occurred at the end of 2001. The second set of 16 interviews occurred in term one 2002 and involved principals, teachers, tutors, and board members of the two schools that were participating in the initiative at the time. Five interviews with board members, the principal and a community member accompanying students to the initiative of a third school that had begun participating in the initiative were carried out in the third term. Twelve follow-up interviews were carried out with principals, board members and tutors from all three schools in term four. In addition in the same term a focus group was held with the five senior students from the school that had participated for all of 2002.

The first two sets of interviews focused on the following:

- Knowledge and involvement with negotiation, development and initial implementation
- Confidence in the initiative achieving its expected outcomes and what they were looking for to know that this was happening
- Goals and expectations they had with regards to relationships across the schools involved in the initiative.

The final set of interviews focused on:

- The extent that the initiative was achieving its expected outcomes and how they knew this
- How the schools were benefiting from the initiative and any unexpected costs
- What the interviewee thought their school was learning from the initiative
- What they wanted to become ‘regular practice’ in their school and how confident they were that this would happen.

The student focus group discussed what the students had liked about the initiative, what they thought could be improved and how they thought the initiative had helped their own learning and their school. As the initiative had the collection of baseline student assessment data and post-initiative assessment data across the curriculum areas built into

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162 ERO carried out a review of the initiative in November 2002. At the time of writing the draft report of the review had been seen by TPM, however the final report had not yet been released.

163 Feast. While not formally included in the initiative plan proper, the three participating schools organised for each school community to host a hakari during the initiative’s duration, held at the school or local marae. The end of year hakari held at a marae included a performance by each school. It was well attended by all school communities, was an extremely successful event and was indicative of the depth of relationships between the three schools and three communities.

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it, the evaluation did not collect data of this kind, but we did examine whether participants identified any issues pertaining to such data collection.164

Findings

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Developing the initiative

Initiatives find their origins in identified needs, times of crisis or as a response of trying to make the best of a bad situation. The origins for the North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum Initiative emerged partly as a consequence of the lead school seeing little of benefit emerging out of TPM a year after it had been set up. A sore point arose for them after an early proposal they had put to TPM was rejected.165 Early in 2001 the school then wrote to TPM suggesting that curriculum development for smaller schools nearby be advanced. A model for curriculum programmes such as te reo Māori, and ICT and information literacy programmes had already been implemented in their school and the principal and board members believed the model might benefit other schools through such an initiative. A key factor for the lead school was the relatively lower achievement levels they saw in children who came to them from the other schools. Board members had debated, discussed and developed the ideas further in their board meetings and with their

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164 Collecting baseline student assessments for te reo Māori was identified as an issue by the lead school. Problems with (a) getting assistance from education agencies that provide te reo Māori programme support and (b) the lack of te reo Māori assessment procedures have been described. Another issue was that some students had great difficulty with baseline assessments, due to unfamiliarity with such assessment and/or its level of difficulty.

165 Board members and principal reported that TPM response to the first idea included the view that the school was resource-grabbing, which the board had found very insulting.
community. Of major concern for the lead school was the potential impact on its school culture of having children coming in or going out of a school, for two days a week over the period of a year.

While we have only been able to examine its initial development in hindsight, we see the responsibility for the development of the initiative was largely left to one school and its principal, with the other schools having little if any active involvement. The nature of schooling improvement projects means that TPM had no power to compel schools to participate in an initiative and schools and communities are rightfully able to make the final decision. However, the process that negotiates participation should be one that ensures ownership of problems and solutions and abiding commitment to participate.

Negotiating involvement with schools and communities
Staff and boards of the other schools were generally unsure about the initial development of the initiative, which was demonstrated by the non involvement/non-inclusion in the consultation process for the initiative’s development by over half of the board members before the initiative was approved. Principals reported that the TPM facilitator and lead principal first presented the idea to them to see whether they would be interested in such an initiative. Two principals said that they were very interested in their schools taking part when they first heard about the idea. One did describe initial concerns about the potential effect that the initiative might have on their school’s continued existence, saying, ‘I initially had a concern it could turn into an EDI\(^{166}\) in that our numbers are so small.’ The principal also identified resistance from staff and board members to the initiative, who were concerned about the amount of time that would be spent out of school classrooms to travel and participate. This principal’s initial concern vis-à-vis EDI was echoed in the interviews with some of the board members of the lead school. They reported having been initially worried that the initiative might potentially contribute to smaller schools being closed, which they believed would have negative implications not only for the communities of those schools, but also for their own school’s stability in terms of a potential influx of students.

Once the Ministry approved the initiative a process of informing school boards about the initiative proper and formally negotiating their participation was carried out. The TPM facilitator attended a board meeting or arranged to meet with the board of each school and gave a verbal description and written summary of the initiative. Boards were then left to discuss the project and their involvement. Board members reported that staff raised issues around travel and missing school for them to consider in the discussion that followed the facilitator’s presentation and subsequent departure.\(^{167}\)

One school decided at this point not to take part. The schools’ board members said that time spent out of class and travelling were key concerns that influenced the final decision. They thought that travelling and travel sickness would be an issue especially for the younger students. The principal described having reservations about involvement even before the initiative was approved.

\(\text{We were given a proposal by [TPM team member] and [the lead school principal] last year. We weren't involved much in the setting up, not involved at all really. Right from the start our school was very hesitant about our involvement because of the distance and we couldn't really see any benefits for our school.}\)

\(^{166}\) The Education Development Initiative (EDI) is a policy which allows boards to consider closing their school or combining with another school.

\(^{167}\) A research team member attended two of the three presentations to the small schools.
This principal believed that their school was already well-resourced in ICT and information literacy areas and was currently developing its te reo Māori programme. In addition, the principal thought that time spent travelling would impact negatively on their existing programmes. In contrast board members from this school (who were interviewed before the school made a final decision not to participate) reported that they had all expressed support for the initiative at the meeting after the TPM team member’s presentation and departure. The board members said that they believed the initiative could have a strong and positive effect on their children’s learning and on the teaching programmes in their schools. They also saw it benefiting their children’s social development and learning through contact with a wider group of teachers and children, as one member put it:

They will learn from mixing with other kids, about getting to know other kids. They will learn how to behave in their schoolwork and with their teachers. At that school kids listen to their teachers.

When asked who should make the decision about whether the school should participate in the initiative, this school’s board members tended to see it as a staff or management decision, for example one board member said that,

It’s up to the teachers, what the teachers feel about it is important … Teachers should be more involved in making the decision because they will be more involved.

In contrast the school’s principal thought that,

Personally I think that it probably should be the board of trustees. The community will be here forever, but teachers come and go.

When asked the extent to which he thought the board would be able to make a decision he said:

[TPM facilitator] came and talked with them, he’s a very persuasive speaker. He told them that staff will learn skills that they haven’t got. Well we have resigned, so [the board] don’t know what skills new staff will have.

A hui was also held at the lead school for all four schools at which details of each curriculum programme were presented. By the end of the 2001 school year boards of two of the three smaller schools agreed to take part in the initiative.

The degree of commitment or buy-in emerged as an issue in the implementation of this initiative. Firstly, rather than committing to the year-long duration of the initiative, the two schools that had agreed to take part in the initiative at the end of 2001 indicated that they had would decide on a term by term basis whether they would continue with the initiative. One principal described the reasons for this in the following way:

Yeah so the small schools project, I’m quite excited about it. If it doesn’t work - we’re going to trial it for the first term - then I have an ethical responsibility to report to the board that it’s not working and then someone’s got to do something about it. I know it’s not going to be like that, but I am quite clear in telling everybody that’s what’s going to happen...

What we saw reflected in decisions to participate term by term is lack of ownership of problems or issues that the initiative is set up to address and lack of ownership and commitment to the initiative as a solution. We saw this lack of commitment reflected in the decision reached by one board to participate, albeit term by term, proving to be vulnerable to management changes. Internal management issues resulted in a relieving principal being in place in terms one and two of 2002 and the school rescinding its decision to participate at all. TPM and the lead school continued to look at ways to include this school as well as the other school that had decided not to participate in the initiative,
including the possibility of programme tutors travelling to each of the schools. Successful negotiations were carried out with one of the two schools, which started participating in the programme at the start of term three on arrival of their new principal. Non- and part-participation by two schools after the initiative was approved, in the case of one after the board had formally agreed to take part, points to problematic aspects of negotiation. The term-by-term participation by one school, and non-participation by the other that had agreed to take part reflects there was a need to clarify negotiation processes with the schools and to tighten up commitment.

Where responsibility lay to ensure schools’ buy-in and commitment to the initiative emerged as an issue. The lead schools’ board members did not think that it was the role of their board or principal to ‘sell the initiative’ to the other schools. They saw the TPM team members as not prepared to ‘sell’ the initiative to other schools as well, which they believed had impacted on the negotiations with the other schools to take part in the initiative. The TPM team member’s view was that it would not have been appropriate to proceed with schools at a deep negotiation level before the project had been formally approved, particularly given the length of time that the process of developing and getting a submission approved can take.

There appeared to have been little opportunity for TPM and the schools as a group to have meaningful and in-depth dialogue about the initiative and to discuss any problems or concerns before the individual schools respectively reached a final decision. Rather, such discussion usually occurred within each school and then a decision was reported to TPM accompanied by reasons for that decision. While there was still opportunity for TPM to discuss that decision further with principals and boards, which did happen, it made the task of ensuring well-informed commitment and buy-in of schools to the initiative more challenging. It also made space for schools to decide to ‘test the water out’ rather than commit to a solution and thus own the problems or issues that the initiative was set up to address.

A school changing its mind to participate in an initiative has implications for the lead school. TPM initiatives involve groups or clusters of schools. Lead schools are responsible for milestones set out in the FPA of such an initiative. Schools reversing decisions to participate in an initiative creates a ‘headache’ for a lead school responsible for overseeing any resources and staffing needed, let alone for achieving milestones. In this case the lead school principal described the school having committed itself to employing staff needed for two schools participating in curriculum programmes on their school site and to a part release of the principal for mentoring two principals. ‘Unemploying’ staff was not an option, even when a school pulling out meant the initiative only needed to operate one day a week instead of two. Schools cannot be compelled to agree to participate in TPM initiatives; there are also no measures that prevent schools ‘changing their minds’. TPM, however, now has a process that includes schools committing much more formally to the development of an initiative proposal and to participation in the initiative after it has been approved.

Ideally, any staffing and resource implications of initiatives in general need to be addressed by schools in a timely fashion before an initiative starts. The length of time taken from the acceptance of a submission to final formal signing can also impact significantly on schools’ ability to do this effectively. Different views have emerged about the amount of time needed and that was available in the case of this initiative. As stated above, the initiative in its entirety was originally due to start in term four, 2001, which was
TPM’s stated preferred starting time. TPM management believed that the final signing off and funding of the initiative happened in time so that the initiative could start in term four. The principal of the lead school believed that funding was not received in time for the initiative to start then. The principal expressed great frustration about the time taken from the approval to the final signing of the initiative. Another factor also influenced the initiative starting date. A discretionary ERO review was held in one of the participating schools in term four, and there was reluctance on the part of the lead school to start an initiative while this was happening as well as before funding had been received. For TPM management, the delay may have affected the momentum of the initiative, but has not had a major impact on its implementation.

Implementing the initiative
Implementing the initiative began in term one 2002. The two participating schools described how their school communities were informed about the initiative. At the end of 2001 smaller school had publicised it through a school newsletter outlining the initiative and requesting any feedback or questions. The initiative was also described to community members at a regular marae committee hui. The lead school held a hui to inform parents and community about the initiative, which had a relatively small number of attendees.

While attempts to inform the community had occurred, the majority of board members expressed the belief that in the first term parents did not have a clear understanding of the initiative. Members of the travelling small school saw this lack of understanding initially resulting in minimal parental and community involvement and in parent criticism of the initiative. By the end of term one repeated invitations made via school newsletters to parents to observe and participate in the initiative had not proven very effective. One interviewee thought that a meeting had needed to be set up with parents of the travelling school to discuss ‘what we are doing, who are taking the children, that they are community tutors. And get them to recognise talents in the community and that they are an asset to the children’s learning’.

Confidence in the initiative achieving its expected outcomes
Two-thirds of 21 interviewees had high levels of confidence that the initiative would achieve its expected outcomes. On a scale of 1 to 10 they rated their levels of confidence between 7 to 10. Two made the proviso that this was as long as participation in the initiative was kept going throughout the year. The reasons given for lower levels of confidence (between 2 and 6) by the remaining third were that they did not think that: effects could be measured in a year and at such a low level of participation; part of the solution working is about community and school owning a problem, not placing blame; and lack of knowledge about the initiative among parents and community.

Interviewees described what sorts of things that would indicate to them that the initiative would be successful. The most common response was changes in children’s learning and achievement. The next most common thing that would indicate success involved positive changes in behaviour and attitude in classrooms. A third set of common responses focused on social-emotional indicators, e.g. positive changes in children’s confidence in mixing with others and in taking part in the initiative, children from the different schools getting along, and children’s level of happiness. A small number of interviewees (three) referred to evidence of teacher learning or potential tutor learning as indications that the initiative would be successful. Evidence of such learning was identified as participating in programme teaching alongside tutors, seeking curriculum-related information (e.g. about

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168 Of those interviewed in term one and term three from the three participating schools.
resources) and help from tutors and trying out aspects of the programme at their school during the week.

Parental or community involvement was a key indicator of success for six interviewees. This ranged from evidence that parents were helping with initiative homework to identification of potential tutors in the community to come and observe the initiative programmes. There is evidence that historically many rural Māori communities placed high value on their schools.\(^{169}\) Rural communities and rural indigenous communities here and overseas have been shown to view schools as a central focus of community life.\(^{170}\) This community support can be engendered where absent, strengthened and drawn on to support community involvement in rural schools.\(^{171}\) However, such efforts have usually focused on encouraging parent and community involvement in governance and decision-making and as volunteers to support the school and students. The curriculum programme model used in the initiative involved community people with skills and interest in particular curriculum areas as tutors with Limited Authority to teach. While setting up similar programmes using paid community tutors to teach particular curriculum areas is not stated as an expected outcome of the initiative, interview data indicates that the expected outcome of the development of curriculum plans has been interpreted as such by school staff and board members. The employment of community tutors is significant in that it can help a community build capacity not only in an educational sense but also in an economic sense. One identified barrier to improvement in rural schools and communities that face socio-economic challenges as well as education quality issues is that efforts to improve education often do not interconnect with needed environmental and economic improvement efforts.\(^{172}\) There is some international evidence of a direct relationship between employment opportunities\(^{173}\) and the quality of schooling in poorer rural communities and that sustaining any educational change involves changing social forces that contribute to poverty.\(^{174}\) While the initiative does not presume to directly address issues such as these, it does, albeit in a small way, provide employment and up-skilling opportunities for community members. Providing sustainable employment opportunities for community people with particular skills or potential helps keep such skills in the community.\(^{175}\) Such an approach can also provide children with more educational role models from their community, especially if many of their teachers are not ‘locals’.

The involvement of community members is particularly significant in relation to the goal of TPM to raise student/Māori student achievement across all of its dimensions:

- Improving the quality of education
- Access and participation in quality te reo


\(^{174}\) Duncan, C. (1999), op. cit.

\(^{175}\) Carter, C. S. (1999) *Education and development in poor rural communities: An interdisciplinary research agenda*. [ERIC Digest](http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed438154.html) - digests. Carter refers to studies that show a direct relationship between employment opportunities and the quality of schooling in distressed rural communities, which loses its investment in education when insufficient employment opportunities result in more skilled, or educated leaving the area.
• Māori participation and influence in education.

Community tutors, the majority of whom are Māori, teach the curriculum programmes in the initiative in the main. One of the curriculum programmes is Te reo Māori. The community tutors are provided professional support by the school for their programme planning, delivery and assessing. After participating for a term in the initiative, staff and boards of the three schools involved generally felt positive that the implementation of the curriculum programmes had started well and confidence that the initiative would achieve its outcomes was high.

Curriculum development in rural, largely indigenous communities such as those involved in this initiative is seen to set up particular challenges in international literature on schooling improvement involving indigenous peoples. These challenges relate to the place of indigenous knowledge in the curriculum and the role of indigenous people to make decisions about what kinds of indigenous knowledge should be included in the curriculum and who should teach it. The curriculum development and implementation model that was used in this initiative provides opportunities for schools to work with Māori in ways that consider challenges such as those raised above, as well as to employ community members to plan and teach te reo Māori and tikanga curriculum programmes.

Working with other schools: inter-school and inter-community relationships

Underpinning the initiative is the belief that neighbouring schools can effectively work together in very practical and face to face ways to improve the quality of schooling in the area. Principals and board members pointed out that working together as part of a school cluster was not new. What was new for them was moving from a management and governance focus into curriculum, learning and teaching on a practical level that directly involved children and community members. All interviewees viewed the approach being taken as positively influencing relationships between the schools.

A major theme that emerged in terms of relationship building was isolation. Nearly all of those interviewed believed that the initiative helped to address issues pertaining to isolation for teachers, children and community. Principals and teachers saw the initiative as providing opportunities to get to know other teachers and tutors and to develop close, regular practice-related professional relationships and interactions with a much larger group of colleagues. These relationships in turn can provide access to a greater pool of learning and teaching ideas, practices and collegial support than are possible in a small one or two teacher school.

For the children, the initiative was seen by interviewees as expanding their opportunities to develop relationships with a much larger group of teachers and to experience a range of teaching approaches and different learning environments. Board members of the smaller school in particular viewed this as important for their children’s learning and for their ability to adapt to new educational and societal environments in the future; for example, one stated that:

Our kids are going to other kids, to mix in with other kids. It's like a little cliquey group in the community. When they leave school, if they don't succeed outside they come back home. Through this initiative they can learn to handle things outside this environment, and maybe keep up that interaction.

For the communities, there is evidence that the initiative is helping to strengthen inter-school and community relationships in educationally related ways. For example, children, parents and staff have combined to attend and participate in an out of school event held during the weekend. In addition existing inter-community relationships are seen as being strengthened by the initiative. Four interviewees pointed out strong whānau and Iwi links between the participating communities. They saw this as an imperative to working together to help improve schooling in another community, because in reality most of the children belonged to all the communities through whakapapa. They also saw the initiative supporting and enhancing fundamental Māori values of whanaungatanga and awhina.

The initiative was seen as a means of identifying and getting educational benefits out of skills and knowledge contained within a community. There was a strong desire expressed across the small school interviews that more of their communities would come to understand how fundamental local community members were to the initiative in that the lead school tutors came from its community. The employment opportunities provided by the initiative was seen as important for making a difference for a community by about a quarter of interviewees, for example:

It will come down to funding the [tutor] positions. The business is to treat the tutors like professionals and pay them accordingly.

After a term in operation the North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum Initiative, staff and boards of the two schools involved generally felt positive that the implementation of the curriculum programmes had started well. There was confidence that outcomes they would like to see from the initiative were achievable. Learning outcomes were being tracked and assessed as part of the initiative proper. The main challenge identified was how to involve potential community tutors in the initiative who could implement target curriculum programmes on-site at the small schools.

There was also a desire for the initiative to continue into 2003. The lead board expressed concern that the FPA for the initiative covered the school year up to the end of 2002, at which time one of the schools would have participated in the curriculum programmes for only two terms. The board believed that if initiative outcomes of curriculum planning and development and principal mentoring were to be achieved for that school, the initiative needed to continue for at least two terms into 2003.

Another issue raised was the long-term sustainability of programmes developing out of the initiative. Board members believed that a level of additional funding provided by the initiative needed to continue in order to ensure that the programmes that were running at the lead school and that were being set up at other participating schools would be effectively maintained. Board members stated they believed that it was unrealistic to expect schools to fully absorb costs of the curriculum programmes being put into place, once the initiative was completed and funding provided through the FPA ceased.

Achieving the outcomes
At the end of 2002 interviewees from all three schools reported that the initiative was achieving its expected outcomes, even in the case of the school that had only participated for half of the school year. Interviewees identified three main sorts of evidence that showed them this was happening: assessment data, changes in students’ behaviour and the success of principal mentoring.

Follow-up assessments of students had provided them with one sort of evidence. Board members and staff members across the two longest participating schools had seen
assessment results that showed patterns of improvement across the travelling school. Tutors described more qualitative assessment evidence beyond what the test scores showed, for instance:

- Students were able to read and answer questions [in the follow-up assessment], they were able to use library, look for books, find what they needed.

- Our kids are using te reo Māori around the school.

Tutors also pointed to other more qualitative measures such as positive changes in student enthusiasm for learning and in their ability to participate in learning activities. The mentoring principal, however, expressed a level of disappointment that the assessment results didn’t show as dramatic an improvement as wanted, and posited that outcomes from the initiative might have been much further ahead if principalship had been more stable over the year in both schools. Interviewees did not specifically comment on the significance of the positive changes for Māori students; however, the high percentage of Māori students in the smaller schools means that the quantitative and qualitative improvements identified in student learning can be taken as indications that Māori student achievement is being positively effected.

At the time of the follow-up interviews and ICT programme, a te reo Māori programme and a special education programme had been set up and were already running at the longest participating smaller school. The second smaller school reported that work on budgeting, identifying potential tutors in the community and timetabling for possible curriculum programmes to be run in the school had begun. These developments were also seen as clear evidence that the outcomes related to curriculum programming were being realised in one school and were expected to be realised in the other during 2003.

Principals identified the third sort of evidence, which related to principal mentoring. The two smaller schools had had a succession of different relieving principals during the year. A permanent first time principal believed that the principal mentoring outcomes expected from the initiative were being well realised.

- It’s really good working with [••], he’s shown me so much as a new principal. It’s great first principal mentoring, it has been a very personal mentoring and great professional collegiality for a one-teacher school.

At the end of the year the indications were that the initiative would achieve its stated outcomes. Interviewees also identified benefits that they had not been expecting from the initiative.

**Unexpected benefits and costs**

Changes in the initiative brought about by non- and late involvement of two schools gave rise to some unexpected changes for tutors. Interviewees identified positive and negative outcomes resulting from these changes. Board members of the lead school believed that their tutors taking on more of a professional leadership and training role with potential tutors at the two smaller schools had resulted in huge professional development for the leading school’s tutors themselves. While professional development potential of the initiative was expected in terms of raising the smaller schools’ capabilities to provide quality curriculum programmes, corresponding effects on lead tutors was not. In contrast, the changed expectations of tutors across the initiative, which ended up including providing a professional training component, was viewed as an added strain by tutors. Tutors reported that having teachers, parents, professional tutors and researchers observing
them teaching had some negative outcomes on their working conditions by raising the intensity and demands of their jobs.

Another unexpected benefit of the initiative was the inclusion of visiting students into the lead school’s special needs programme leading to the implementation of a special needs programme at one smaller school and development towards setting up a programme at the other. Principals and tutors described the development as having been needs-driven, even though it had not been formally programmed into the initiative. As the special education focus hadn’t been expected it did present an unbudgeted cost to the initiative.

While changes in social behaviour was identified as something that board members and staff at the longest travelling school thought might happen as a result of the initiative, lead school members were surprised at the degree that visiting children’s social interactions with other children and adults changed and how quickly they adapted to different learning culture. Comments were made about the social benefits for students of having contact with a larger group of children and teachers, ‘becoming part of a larger family, a whānau thing’.

As pointed out earlier, the initiative did not identify the employment of community tutors as an aspect of developing and providing quality curriculum programmes in the small schools; however, it has become an integral component. Some of the interviewees from the smaller schools identified community benefits in the form of employment opportunities, using community skills and upskilling community members as things that they hadn’t expected as a result of participating in the initiative. Upskilling parents and community members to be tutors was also viewed as helping to change children’s attitudes to learning, for instance one interviewee commented:

They know community wants to help them learn as children see tutors coming from the community, not strangers, and [so they] will stay.

Learning from the initiative
A key learning identified from the initiative was that schools could work together cooperatively and share skills and knowledge even when some distance apart. Such networking is really important between smaller schools as it provides collegiality, mentoring and professional support even when a school is sole charge or has few teaching staff. Working with another school helped a school use its resources more effectively, for example community tutors described how their school was learning to use space and computer equipment in the school more effectively for te reo Māori and ICT curriculum programmes. Another learning that the lead school identified related to how the te reo Māori programme in their school was contributing to te reo Māori programmes being seen as a ‘normal’ part of its school curriculum, rather than an optional addition.

Board members from the lead school believed that they had learned that the model that they had found worked well for them could work for other even smaller schools. Board members and lead school tutors also described learning that potential tutors could pick up and deliver a programme quickly and effectively when given opportunity to observe it and try it with advice and feedback. Lead tutors travelling to work with tutors-in-training had made it easier for this practice and feedback cycle to occur.

Becoming regular practice
While the lead school expressed the hope that the smaller participating schools would institute the different initiative programmes in their schools there was also a recognition that each school needed to decide what its needs and aspirations are, before programmes were set up using the model. Interviews with members of the smaller schools indicated
that the two schools were thinking about which curriculum areas they might best use the initiative model to develop programmes in their schools. Schools’ current programmes and current resources, areas of student learning needs, staff members’ areas of strength and the identification of potential community tutors were reported as being important factors for consideration in any decisions the schools would make.

Schools were generally confident that programmes in at least two of the curriculum areas would become regular practice in their schools, although the general view was that it could take one or two years to get programmes fully in place. Members of one school were confident as long as changes in management that would occur at the start of 2003 did not affect current plans and programme developments.

Other conditions were identified as important for programmes becoming regular and sustained practice in the schools. Potential and new tutors from the two smaller schools commented that they wanted to keep having regular contact with tutors in other schools in order that they kept getting more knowledge and information for their programme. Continued contact was viewed as a critical opportunity for professional development and support. One board member commented that a school’s direction can change depending on boards and principals, and that there might be a need to write the programme approach into policy to help it survive such changes.

It should not perhaps be unexpected for funding to emerge as an important condition for programme sustainability. Lead school board members believed that a level of additional funding that had been provided by the initiative needed to continue in order to ensure that the programmes that were running and that were being set up at other participating schools would be effectively maintained. At the end of 2002 board members again stated that they thought it was unrealistic to expect schools to fully absorb costs of the curriculum programmes being put into place once the initiative was completed and funding provided through the FPA ceased. The Ministry, however, has continually expressed the view that schools make budget-related decisions about their needs and priorities and the expectation is that moving initiative programmes to ‘regular practice’ involves such decision-making. One way of addressing the differences in these two positions is to programme into initiative development the explicit identification and discussion of long-term funding solutions.

What did students think about the initiative?
The final piece of data collection carried out for this case study involved a discussion with a small group of the senior students who had participated in it for a year. We thought that it was important to find out how the major focus of the initiative, and the partnership, Māori students, had found the experience. The students described feeling a bit ashamed when they first heard about the initiative because ‘our little tiny school was going to their little school to learn’. They described their school having a bit of trouble at the time and they found it ‘a bit hoha because we kept changing principals all the time, we had to keep telling them [lead school students] that we had another new principal’. They also described feeling excited because they didn’t travel far out of their area very often.

The students recognised and appreciated the manaaki extended to them by the lead school from the first day ‘it was cool as – they did a powhiri for us’. Students said that relationships between the schools developed well and while there wasn’t always a huge

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177 Five Year 6 and 7 students, all Māori, participated in the focus group. Informal discussions also occurred with the senior students of the second small school about their views of the initiative during their first term of participation.
amount of social mixing between the schools when they were at the lead school, they had
got to know each other well.

The students were asked what difference the initiative had made to their learning and to
their school.

*It has made things better...*

*It helps us, gives us a break from the same teachers all the time...*

*I like having other people teaching us, look forward to it.*

*It's gonna be scary going to a bigger school [next year at high school] but it's going to be all
right. I'm used to having different teachers now.*

They discussed how they thought the development of the curriculum programmes in their
school and having a larger group of teachers had made a difference to younger students
and for their school’s teachers.

*It kind of controls the kids better, so the teachers don’t get stressed out now....*

*My sister talks Māori every day at my house now, and sings all her Māori songs....*

*A sort of an attitude change. Just the way they [younger students] walk around and talk to
each other, it’s better....*

Students thought that the programmes at the other school had helped the changes in
students’ attitudes to school and to their behaviour but they also thought that their
community had played a role; students put it this way,

*I think it was also our own community, like with all the teachers coming in and helping, our own
parents and that, like yeah. They’re like encouraging us; it’s cool. And like they’re used to us.
Yeah we kept getting teachers that come for a short time. One started to teach us Greek, and
then she leaves.*

*Yeah but they’ve been staying here, not like the beginning of the year, [principals] coming -
leaving - coming - leaving.*

The students saw the community tutor model that had developed out of the initiative as
something that would provide them with a stable staff that they already had a familiarity
and relationships with. They saw these factors as having a positive effect on their learning
and their attitude to schooling.

When asked what would happen after they stopped travelling to the lead school, the
students discussed what they saw happening with the programmes in their school and that
they hoped it would carry on. They believed that students were already benefiting from
having new programmes in their school. They also had some confidence that the new
programmes would continue after the initiative ended.

*They love the computers here too.*

*The all-stars get certificates and pens. And do reading and writing.*

*[ -] is learning heaps. They know what they’re doing now.*

*Some kids that didn’t go there asked if they could go there [special needs programme].*
Yeah most probably [it will carry on] ‘cos we’re used to it now, the system. Yeah we know where we are going now.

Students had some questions of their own, such as: ‘What does the Ministry think of what we’re doing?’ and ‘Who pays for it?’

**Evaluative comment**

Small, low decile schools have not necessarily fared well over the decade of a self-managing, competitive school environment that was expected to challenge schools to improve the quality of education they provided in order to hold on to their share of the student market. Particularly in rural communities where student numbers were relatively small to start with, this environment has resulted in some schools struggling in a downward spiral of falling rolls and decreasing educational quality, exacerbated by conditions that encouraged schools to vie for each other’s students. A related challenge around education quality facing isolated schools is how to provide rich and comprehensive programmes across the school curriculum from often very small staffing pools.

As we move into a more supportive, cooperative educational era, there is opportunity to support schools as they also make ideological shifts in the ways they relate with their neighbouring schools. The North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum Initiative has provided a context that reflects such shifts. The initiative has helped to build learning relationships between schools that have had positive effects on capacities of smaller schools and communities. The circumstances in which this initiative has occurred have been less than optimal. It would not be unreasonable to expect that implementing an initiative that requires a deal of travelling, coordination and community involvement with schools facing severe management issues would be problematic. However, even under these conditions, the participants have viewed the exercise as a largely successful one and are confident that the learning and developments that have occurred will be sustained. While aspects of negotiating participation with schools and boards were problematic, after a year’s implementation the indicators are very positive for student achievement, for school-school relationships and for harnessing community skills and knowledge.
INTERVENTION II: Te RITO Māori

In 2001 this study was focused on TPM activities aimed at developing a te reo Māori strategy. Having signalled the development of Te RITO Māori in 2001, TPM activities in 2002 were primarily directed at developing a te reo Māori initiative, which they called Te RITO Māori (Te Reo: Itinerant Teacher of Māori), aimed at providing quality te reo Māori programmes in mainstream English medium schools.

Te reo Māori is a significant element in terms of the partnership and was identified as a key area for most schools and communities through the needs analysis exercise carried out by TPM at the end of 2000. In focusing on te reo Māori developments the relationships between community and schools were explored as part of the developmental process towards the implementation of a te reo Māori programme. Such a programme was based on the desire of ‘mainstream’ English medium schools to offer quality te reo Māori programmes and on demands of whānau, hapu, and Iwi – community – for te reo Māori in their schools.

Te RITO Māori is a project that aims to provide support to schools teaching through English medium by helping them access what have been called Māori itinerant teaching positions. The purpose of the project was described in the submission as:

i. To raise student achievement in te reo Māori
ii. To improve the quality and teaching of te reo Māori programmes in mainstream schools
iii. To provide training opportunities for mainstream staff in te reo Māori programme planning, delivery and assessment
iv. To strengthen communication links between schools and the Māori community; and
v. To enhance relationships between schools and Māori community. 178

The project is based on a number of key premises, the main ones being:

- Schools that have high numbers of Māori students need to develop and deliver strong te reo Māori programmes to reflect their students’ language and cultural heritage
- Māori students need to be actively participating in the survival of their language and culture
- Te reo Māori resources are available to schools but often staff members are not well equipped to use these without direct support and guidance. So schools need direction, support to plan, deliver and develop te reo Māori curriculum based on local Māori language and knowledge. 179

A draft submission was completed in December 2001 for a four-year project to support the implementation of Te RITO Māori programmes in 15 schools across four takiwa clusters. 180 The final submission was sent to the Ministry of Education’s National Office in mid-July 2002 and the initiative was signed off as approved by mid-August 2002. Implementation was planned to begin in term four, 2002, beginning with employment of teachers, assessment of students’ te reo Māori proficiency and beginning the development

179 Ibid. pp. 4–5.
180 As of June 2002, 14 participating schools were identified for the project. Schools have been grouped into three clusters that involve four takiwa. Two of the clusters include a school from a neighbouring takiwa.
of te reo Māori programmes. As implementation did not start until term one of 2003 we were not able to collect data on the actual commencement of the project.

Research questions and method
Data on the Te Reo Māori Strategy was gathered from examinations of draft submissions, attendance at hui at which the proposed Te Reo Māori Strategy was discussed near the end of 2001. Early in 2002 the then TPM team member leading the strategy’s development was interviewed and we made contact with principals and board members from the takiwa that the strategy proposed to initially focus on. At this time the strategy had not progressed as far as expected.

Data was collected on Te RITO Māori in the following ways:
- Discussions with TPM facilitators who had key roles developing Te RITO Māori and the Te Reo Māori strategy
- Interviews with 11 principals and 19 board members  
- Attendance at board wananga across pilot takiwa for te reo Māori strategy, three takiwa participating in Te RITO Māori and analysis of TPM board wananga reports
- Attendance at meetings of the project management team set up for each of the three takiwa/takiwa clusters
- Analysis of project documents, including draft submissions, correspondence, and milestone reports.

Interviews covered:
1. Reasons why te reo Māori should be taught in ‘mainstream schools’
2. Levels of satisfaction with how te reo Māori was being taught in the school before Te RITO Māori
3. Involvement in developing Te RITO Māori
4. Expectations of te RITO Māori in terms of school-community relationships.

181 Two non-board community members who attended a board wananga-a-takiwa at which Te RITO Māori was discussed were also interviewed.
Findings

Key points:

**Reasons for te reo Māori in Te Tai Tokerau schools**
- High population of Māori and communities where Māori is still spoken
- High proportion of Māori students in Te Tai Tokerau
- Surveys reflect te reo Māori as an important component in schooling
- Need for a strategic approach to retaining and regenerating Māori language that includes formal schooling provisions
- Importance of te reo Māori to national identity
- Achievement and learning needs of Māori and Māori speaking children

**Perceptions on delivery of te reo Māori**
- Lack of Māori language teachers
- Poor quality of Māori language programmes
- Need for adequate and appropriate assessment tools in relation to Māori language delivery
- Issue of where responsibility lies to ensure te reo Māori provision
- Low status of te reo Māori in curriculum

**Expectations of Te RITO Māori**
- Match between expectations and Te RITO Māori intended outcomes
- Strong sustainable te reo Māori programmes
- Increasing students’ and teachers’ te reo Māori fluency

**Schools involvement in developing Te RITO Māori**
- Collaboratively developed with schools in each takiwa/takiwa cluster
- Recognition that cultural enhancement is starting point of pathway to learning

**Commitment and ownership**
- High commitment and ownership reflected from schools

**Community involvement**
- Uneven involvement across takiwa in terms of community on project management team, involvement of TRoTT takiwa representative.

*Reasons for Te reo Māori in Te Taitokerau schools*

Te Taitokerau has a high population of Māori and most areas in the region still have Māori spoken within their communities. However, aside from several more isolated communities and whānau with children in Māori medium classrooms, most speakers of Māori are of kaumatua age. There is a huge gap between this generation, Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa students who arguably make up the bulk of young te reo Māori speakers and Māori students in mainstream English medium classrooms. The need for a strategic approach to retaining and regenerating te reo Māori that includes formal schooling provisions is imperative to the continuation of the language. Up to the present Māori medium options have generally carried the major burden as they struggle to achieve this with a relatively small proportion of the Māori students in Te Taitokerau. Clearly for schooling to successfully support te reo Māori regeneration and ongoing maintenance, mainstream schooling options need to be a part of the efforts.

In 2001 TPM met with schools and Iwi and other key stakeholder groups to discuss a proposed te reo Māori strategy in the geographical boundaries of Te Hiku o te Ika. The strategy evolved initially from analysis of the information collected in 2000, as well as information gained through takiwa board wananga initiatives in 2001. The surveys
generally stated that te reo Māori and tikanga Māori were important components of learning to schools and communities. The initial hui outlined the proposed strategy to the schools concerned. The TPM team member overseeing the strategy discussed the necessity of buy-in from schools, where emphasis was also made on the strategy being developed in collaboration with schools and principals.

Principals and board members were asked what importance they placed on having te reo Māori programmes in their schools. Reasons given in the interviews can be grouped around three themes: the high proportion of Māori students in Te Taitokerau; the importance of te reo Māori to national identity; and achievement and learning needs of Māori and Māori speaking children.

The most common main reasons given for te reo Māori to be taught in school related to the high proportion of Māori students in schools creating a sense of obligation on the part of schools to deliver te reo Māori programmes and the importance of te reo Māori for Māori students’ identity and cultural heritage. The second most common set of reasons given encompassed the importance of te reo Māori to national identity and harmony. The importance of te reo Māori was seen in relation to its status as an official language; or in relation to obligations set up by the Treaty of Waitangi; or as a way of developing respect and harmony between cultures in our nation. The importance of teaching te reo Māori in school for Māori learning needs and school achievement for were the third most stated reasons. Interviewees discussed parent and whānau desire for their children to learn Māori, the learning needs of TKR graduates and other children arriving at school with te reo Māori knowledge. Te reo Māori was seen as an important element of Māori student achievement.

Perceptions on delivery of te reo
A common outcry from schools in the region, however, has been that that there are relatively limited numbers of people to fill positions for teaching te reo Māori me ona tikanga. While it is less commonly stated, the often part-time nature of such positions with limited hours of work offered in a given school can be seen as a further impediment to attaining long-term commitment to such positions. Schools often do what they are able, but in most instances in ways that can be fairly described as piecemeal.

Key factors of concern expressed by the TPM team member facilitating the strategy for te reo Māori in 2001 centred on the unavailability of Māori language teachers and the poor quality of Māori language programmes being delivered in schools in the far north region. The aims of the strategy to improve programme delivery were described as involving: facilitating professional development in the areas of assessment; collating a ‘te reo’ resource database; and supporting community-based development. The biggest challenge outlined involved the use of adequate and appropriate assessment tools in relation to Māori language delivery. Notably, ‘te reo Māori’ as a curriculum subject is not assessed as a rule in mainstream schools. Whether this is primarily a reflection of the value that Māori language as a curriculum subject holds or the relative lack of te reo Māori assessment tools and practices is debatable. Principals’ feedback at the hui reflected general agreement that the situation with regards to te reo Māori provision in mainstream schools needed to improve and to proceed with the strategy.

An issue that did emerge out of discussions of the proposed strategy related to where responsibility to ensure te reo Māori provision lay, with schools or communities. It had been expressed to one school in particular that te reo Māori, in part, was a school
responsibility. One principal discussed how there had been issues around the infrastructure of immersion, bilingual, or Māori specific initiatives, which had in the past often been built on the passion and aims of key staff or community members. The principal noted that if those people go, the initiative tends to fall away and that te reo Māori programmes need to be supported outside of the schools. For this reason the Te Reo Māori strategy was viewed positively in that it targeted school-community links. Increased commitment needs to come from all parties concerned, where the responsibility of providing quality learning experiences does not depend solely on schools as a significant point of delivery, but is viewed as the collective responsibility of Ministry, its agencies, schools and communities.

There was also indication that within the school sector people employed to teach te reo Māori are sometimes viewed as ‘fairly irregular or unreliable’. What did not seem to be taken into account was the low status that is often attributed to te reo Māori as a curriculum subject. This is reflected in such things as the minimal hours committed to Māori language in a school programme. In context, limited hours of work meant being unable to demand ongoing commitment. Working in a te reo Māori teaching role needs to reflect that te reo Māori and Māori participation are of value. An increased commitment to te reo Māori could be reflected by an increase in hours allocated to positions for te reo Māori specific curriculum development and delivery.

In 2001 one focus of the strategy was to develop current teachers with te reo Māori. In terms of responsibilities a further focus of the strategy was that while resources are being developed for the delivery of ‘te reo Māori’, who are best able to deliver te reo Māori programmes to ensure an overall ‘quality learning’ remains a fundamental issue. Addressing this issue will involve an examination of existing services as to how best to strengthen and enhance the delivery of ‘te reo Māori’ in schools. Lack of integration is a commonly raised issue in regard to service delivery. TPM began to try and address this issue late in 2001 and 2002 by hosting a small series of hui for agencies and individuals involved with te reo Māori delivery.

At the start of 2002 we struck difficulties carrying out evaluation activity in relation to Te Reo Māori strategy. Arrangements had been made for a member of the evaluation team to attend planned meetings with boards and Iwi to discuss the strategy, which were postponed or cancelled. We also contacted schools in the takiwa in which the strategy was intended to be piloted to interview principals and board members in the middle of term one, 2002. However, they reported having had little information or involvement with the strategy since the hui in September 2001. Discussion of the strategy that took place at board wananga-a-takiwa together with informal comments to the evaluation team member by attendees reflected frustration among school staff and board members over the lack of movement seen in the strategy’s development and lack of TPM contact with schools about the strategy. Representatives from Iwi organisations in the takiwa also raised the little progress in the Te Reo Māori strategy as an issue during interviews carried out for study one. For instance, one representative reported that it was conducting its own te reo Māori needs analysis to develop a strategic plan for te reo Māori, partly as a response to seeing no forward movement of TPM’s Te Reo Māori strategy. Staffing changes were partly responsible for limited TPM activity on the strategy.

Problems that were expressed by interviewees and at hui in the far north of Te Taitokerau with the strategy were not evident in the development of Te RITO Māori as a te reo Māori initiative that was being developed as a component of the strategy. Evaluation work

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182 This is also stated in some School Needs Analysis reports.
carried out on Te RITO Māori in 2002, reported below, found high levels of confidence, commitment and involvement in the project among principals, board members and community members we interviewed and expressed in board wananga and project management team meetings that we attended.

**Expectations of Te RITO programmes**

For TPM arguably more than anything else there are high stakes involved in getting te reo Māori programming right and costs involved in getting it wrong. There are:

- High stakes for partnership goals in which te reo Māori is a fundamental element
- High stakes for the TRoTT for whom te reo Māori is inherent to its existence
- High stakes for iwi Māori across Te Taitokerau in helping to ensure Iwi language regeneration and maintenance.

And the recognition that:

- There is currently no legislative compulsion at this stage for te reo Māori curriculum in schools,\(^{183}\) so commitment to te reo Māori programmes is philosophical and values based rather than about compliance.

There was a strong match between what interviewees’ understandings and expectations of Te RITO Māori project were and its’ stated approach and expected outcomes.\(^{184}\) When interviewees were asked what they expected from Te RITO Māori, responses focused on teaching and learning of te reo Māori in order to increase students’ and teachers’ access to fluency in te reo Māori. High on the list of expectations were that the project would develop strong, sustainable te reo Māori programmes that raised achievement levels in te reo Māori. For example, one principal was concerned outcomes stayed tied to te reo Māori and were not be left open for interpretation; similarly a board member was looking for school accountability to provide te reo Māori instruction in the project ‘compared with singing waiata for three years’.

Clearly reflected in the interviews and in Te RITO Māori is a valuing of te reo Māori within the curriculum range as an integral element of what success and achievement mean for Māori as an outcome of schooling in Te Taitokerau schools. This compared with Taha Māori approaches of the mid-1980s\(^{185}\) that saw the inclusion of Māori language and culture into schools as a kind of ‘magic bullet’ for improving the school performance of Māori students across mainstream curriculum rather than as important areas for schooling achievement.\(^{186}\)

**Involvement in developing Te RITO Māori**

Te reo Māori as an intervention focus was developed with schools in four takiwa. Takiwa boundaries set up to reflect hapu and Iwi do not necessarily take cognisance of numbers, sizes and spread of schools within them, which have practical implications for intervention

\(^{183}\) Amendments to the Education Act, October 2001 mean that from 2003 schools must have a section in their charter that includes the aim of ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to provide instruction in tikanga Māori and te reo Māori for full-time students whose parents ask for it.

\(^{184}\) Te Pūtahitanga Mātauranga Te R.I.T.O. Māori (Te Reo: Itinerant Teacher of Māori) Submission to Manager Monitoring and Support and Group Manager Smith, Te Pūtahitanga Mātauranga, July 2002, p. 9.


\(^{186}\) Department of Education (1984) Taha Māori: Suggestions for getting Started. Wellington, Department of Education. The stated approach of Taha Māori was ‘…the inclusion of aspects of Māori language and culture in the philosophy, organisation and the content of the school…’ and as strands to existing curriculum areas rather than a curriculum area in its own right.
provisions and resourcing. For logistical reasons including size and relative proximity of schools and so that the scope of itinerant teaching positions would be relatively uniform implementation of Te RITO Māori, schools were grouped together in three clusters that crossed takiwa boundaries. We did not observe much discussion about the significance of crossing takiwa boundaries, other than the re-assertion by schools that even though a school might be operationally clustered out of its takiwa for the initiative, it was still part of that takiwa.

Initial discussions that led to one of the takiwa participating in the development of Te RITO Māori took place at their takiwa board wananga in September 2001. At the wananga attendees collaboratively identified and discussed significant educational needs that they believed their schools and communities were facing. At the following board wananga-a-takiwa held at the end of October 2001 these identified needs were again discussed by attendees and then prioritised to decide on a potential initiative focus. Te reo Māori provision in schools emerged as the first priority need. The wananga also provided a forum to discuss possible ways to address te reo Māori provision, providing TPM information and direction for proposal development. Discussion focused on staffing as the critical factor in providing good te reo Māori programmes. Provision of additional staffing dedicated to teaching te reo Māori and professional development and support for classroom teachers to raise their skill levels in speaking and teaching Māori were discussed as key considerations for programme development. Working from the ideas and concerns that had emerged out of the discussions, TPM began to develop a proposal for te reo Māori programmes in this takiwa. At the board wananga held in terms one and two 2002 TPM presented the Te RITO Māori proposal for discussion. A brief update on where the submission process was up to was also given at the term three wananga.

The initial focus on te reo Māori and participation in Te RITO Māori was more explicitly principal-driven in the second participating takiwa, with principals identifying the provision of high quality and more effective teaching of Māori as a need faced in their schools’ classrooms. The board wananga were not as significant a context for prioritising the need for te reo Māori programmes as was the case in the first takiwa. It was, however, an important forum for introducing the Te RITO Māori proposal and discussing it with boards and community members as it was being developed.

The inclusion of schools from the two remaining takiwa in the project was less straightforward. TPM described discussion of intervention ideas focusing on te reo Māori had taken place in the two takiwa and expressions of interest in the development of a te reo Māori intervention had been received from three schools in those takiwa prior to the team member who had been working with them leaving TPM. These schools plus one other were included in the development of Te RITO Māori as the proposed intervention focus for their takiwa shared similar characteristics. Principals from these takiwa described two varying ways of becoming involved with the project’s development. One principal’s description of the process was similar to that described by TPM. Two other principals said that they were told what was going to happen in Te RITO Māori and asked by TPM if they would like their school to be involved. The schools as a group are not as rural or isolated, as is the case with the two other takiwa clusters. They are geographically more

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188 Field notes taken at Board Wananga held on 31 October 2001.
189 TPM Reports on Board Wananga held on 12 September 2001, 21 March 2002 and field notes taken at Board Wananga held on 5 June 2002.
190 Ibid.
191 The remaining principal declined to be interviewed.
spread out and organising a realistic timetable for the Te RITO Māori teacher to work with the four schools is a challenge for this cluster to address for 2003.

Community involvement
In relation to improving schooling achievement in Te Taitokerau, the TPM partnership seeks to ensure active community participation where communities would share in the decision-making alongside schools and thereby buy in to and undertake the commitment of ownership of an initiative. There was also the expectation, shared by principals and board members, that Te RITO Māori would help foster school-community relationships and bring community members into their schools. Community representation and effective ways to communicate with Māori communities in Te RITO Māori project were raised across board wananga discussions of the project. TPM raised the need to communicate with community and identify how to ensure community membership on project teams. Possible strategies to get community membership on project teams discussed in board wananga-a-takiwa discussions were:

- Seeking advice from Iwi runanga or takiwa agencies about representation
- Representation through Māori board of trustees members.

TRoTT takiwa representatives and community representatives were expected to be included in project management team membership, and the research expected this involvement to be at the level of shared leadership and decision-making, rather than advice or consultation. As project management teams were formed and began to make decisions about project roles and responsibilities, job descriptions and employment in the last two terms of 2002, we did not see processes for putting that Māori community representation into place finalised across all takiwa involved in Te RITO Māori. To expect that Māori involvement to look the same across takiwa participating in this project would be unreasonable, especially given that relationships between runanga, takiwa organisations, community and schools do not look the same and are not at the same stage across the 10 different takiwa identified in the TPM partnership. What we thought was important was that there was community involvement in decision-making, in whatever form that was realistic and appropriate for each takiwa. This involvement needed to be in place and being put into practice as project management teams worked towards implementation and were making important decisions about such things as project roles and responsibilities, job descriptions and employment of personnel. At the end of 2002 this had been only partially achieved.

Commitment and ownership
The development period for Te RITO Māori was a relatively extended one, the development of the project through to approval has spanned at least 10 months, over which time TPM has had to seek and maintain commitment and interest to the project of a range of schools across a rather large geographical area. Principals and board members reported being kept informed about the project’s development but still frustrated about the length of time taken to get it through to being approved. There has been a tension between getting started and providing the programmes in schools on the one hand and strategic planning and ensuring long-term, ongoing commitment that reflects a high value being placed on te reo Māori me ona tikanga on the other. This has meant careful management of expectations and board wananga, facilitator sensitivity and negotiation have been critical factors here. Of the 15 schools that were initially envisaged taking part, 14 schools are still set to participate, reflecting that they still see te reo Māori provision as a high priority need for them, and view Te RITO Māori as a viable solution.
TPM also has had to engender a sense of ownership of the project. Overall commitment and ownership evident, what we find significant is that it is developing very much at the level of takiwa (albeit in the form of re-constituted takiwa) as opposed to at the level of individual schools who happen to be grouped together.

The takiwa-based commitment is also reflected in discussions about the long-term sustainability of the project. Expectations that each school will show commitment to sustaining its te reo Mäori in the long term have been explicitly built into the project. Takiwa project management teams have begun discussing how te reo Mäori programmes might be sustained by the takiwa as a cohesive whole after the FPA for Te RITO project comes to an end.

Thinking about sustainability at a takiwa level came through project management team discussions\(^\text{192}\) about Mäori language factor funding (MLFF) levels that takiwa schools should be applying for. For instance at one of the meetings the TPM facilitator suggested that the project team as opposed to individual schools might want to discuss MLFF in order for the takiwa to develop te reo Mäori provisions that will be lasting. One of the principals stated that it was imperative the takiwa as a whole discuss Mäori language funding levels because in the end the takiwa needed to be self-supporting. In the words of one principal, any Ministry funding that was available for te reo Mäori programmes needed to be used ‘carefully, constructively and collectively’.

**Evaluative comment**

Te reo Mäori is a critical dimension of the partnership goal and is fundamental to TRoTT as the Mäori partner. For the TPM there are high stakes involved in getting te reo Mäori programming right and costs involved in getting it wrong. There are also high stakes for Mäori across Te Taitokerau for Iwi language regeneration and maintenance. The provision of te reo Mäori programmes emerged as a concern in the needs analyses exercise conducted by TPM in 2000. Relatively early in the partnership TPM set about developing an overarching te reo Mäori strategy for the TPM rohe. The logistics of developing the strategy did not progress well during 2001 and we found a level of dissatisfaction and frustration across takiwa in which the strategy was to be piloted. Meanwhile as direct work on the strategy slowed, work began on developing an initiative with the aim to provide more robust te reo Mäori programmes in a small number of takiwa.

Such an initiative arguably requires strong Mäori buy-in and participation of communities because of its focus. The development of Te RITO Mäori drew closely on board wananga-a-takiwa as one means of ensuring Mäori involvement in identifying and discussing the initiative at least at the level of school boards. What was also observed was that school involvement in the development was strong, with principals and staff members being primarily involved. Mäori involvement in the initiative’s development at other levels varied across the three major takiwa that were to participate in the initiative. TRoTT takiwa representation was strongly involved in development work in one takiwa, minimally involved in another and appeared to be rather absent in a third.

When evaluation data collecting finished at the end of 2002, project management teams had begun interviewing and employing staff for Te RITO Mäori and to tease out the operational aspects of the initiative. Schools reported high levels of confidence that the

\(^{192}\) From field notes of Project team meeting attended by school principals or staff representatives, Ministry and TRoTT delegate and TPM team members.
initiative would be successful. In organising staff selection and interview procedures project teams discussed how community would be involved. What we saw was the identification of Māori community members for specific tasks such as assessing fluency in te reo Māori and the local dialect, and for ensuring Māori protocols such as mihimihí and whakatau\textsuperscript{193} would be appropriately carried out.

In conclusion, while we had concerns about what form Māori participation in decision-making would take in the initiative, we are relatively satisfied with the development of Te RITO Māori.

\textsuperscript{193} Welcoming and settling visitors.
CHAPTER SEVEN
Education and Iwi-Crown partnership

Te Pūtahitanga Mātauranga emerged out of serious concerns raised about the quality and standard of education in the Far North region. When the Ministry was investigating how to intervene in education problems facing areas of the north, its schooling improvement projects had moved strongly in a cooperative direction. Schools facing similar challenges were being clustered together to address governance, management, curriculum delivery in their respective schools and their relationships between schools and communities. A partnership approach had evolved where schools, communities and the Ministry worked together to assist schools. The Ministry had also become involved in establishing education partnerships with Iwi groups.

In Te Taitokerau the then Te Runanga o te reo o Te Taitokerau had been working on an explicitly cultural and political agenda. The major focus of this agenda was for the maintenance and regeneration of te reo Māori me ona tikanga. Work was also underway that centred on the development of Māori authority in education in Te Taitokerau. Alongside these agenda were TRoTT’s concerns with the very visible underachievement of Māori students in the rohe.

The decision to address schooling problems and educational underachievement in the north through a partnership between TRoTT representing Iwi, and the Ministry representing the Crown, rose out of these conditions. In this closing chapter we discuss outcomes and challenges that arise out of this approach taken to raise Māori students’ achievement in Te Taitokerau and comment on the extent that they are being addressed.

Raising Māori students’ achievement in partnership

Iwi-Crown education partnerships have been set up to raise Māori students’ achievement and to facilitate greater Māori involvement and participation in education in a particular Iwi rohe. TPM is unique as an Iwi-Crown education partnership. It is the only partnership where there is not one but at least five major Iwi across a large rohe. TPM covers the largest, most complex geographical and socio-economic area, which encompasses more schools with arguably more differing characteristics, of any educational improvement project that has been attempted to date. The findings in this report reflect that this was a formidable undertaking in which both partners have had to work incredibly hard to achieve its partnership goals.

If the partnership had not happened, the Ministry would undoubtedly still have put an educational project in place to improve schooling in the north. TRoTT undoubtedly would have carried on its work that focused on te reo Māori and on Māori students. TRoTT and Ministry entered into partnership because each wanted to improve what was happening in education in Te Taitokerau, and more significantly each believed that this could be better achieved working together than separately. What they have had to work out is: ‘How do we get what we respectively think is important for raising Māori achievement done together?’ As the partnership has proceeded it has tried to ensure that both partners’ perspectives on what is important for Māori student achievement are acknowledged.

Conscious efforts to try and ensure that Māori worldviews, that is Māori values, knowledge and language are evident in the partnership. For instance strategic planning has
been undertaken in settings and ways that draw on practices of hui and made significant space for input from takiwa and Iwi representatives. Initiatives have been developed that focus on the provision of high quality programmes for te reo Māori me ona tikanga.

**Achievements in partnership**

During the two-year period of the evaluation TPM has developed relationships with schools and boards that have involved identifying areas of need and areas for development. Initiatives have been developed that span the entire area covered by the project. By the end of the evaluation period eight specific initiatives or projects had been developed, three had been implemented for at least a year and implementation or work towards implementation had begun in another four.

Community focus has taken different forms across initiatives. The section of the report on board wananga-a-takiwa emphasised a focus on ‘community’ via the board of trustees’ structure and ‘community’ via its aim to locate wananga in community marae with their whānau as a means to increase Māori participation and influence in education. The wananga have also become sites for schools and communities to work together on what needs to happen in order to improve education offered in a takiwa.

The development of Te RITO Māori indicated the extent that TRoTT takiwa representatives might be involved in the planning and setting up of initiatives.

The North Hokianga Small Schools Curriculum initiative to improve that quality of curriculum programmes in a group of rural schools provides a model for cooperative school-school relationships and for getting community directly involved in curriculum development and delivery.

**Education relationships under the Treaty**

While the primary driving force behind Iwi education partnerships is to improve Māori students’ achievement and Māori involvement in education in sustainable ways, they are also sites in which Iwi and Crown are working out what ‘Treaty relationships’ actually means. Education itself becomes a context for understanding and for practising what is needed for Iwi and Crown to have meaningful and effective relationships under the Treaty.

The existence of a Treaty relationship:

- necessarily includes an overall sense of equality and power sharing
- requires commitment and capability to incorporate Māori worldviews
- recognises the significance of Iwi-Crown relationships for improving all areas of national life.

**Education partnerships and capacity building**

In TPM one partner has a great deal of power and resources compared with the other. Acknowledging resource issues so that TRoTT can build its capacity in order to better address the partnership goal, and to pursue aspects of its agenda that fall outside partnership business, may help to balance the unevenness. The struggle is to avoid the fostering of dependency.

Capacity building by the less resourced, less powerful partners extends to those that it represents. One of the challenges for the partnership was ensuring that those it represented had opportunity to participate and contribute to decision-making in the partnership.

Meeting this challenge has involved developing a representation model that brings Iwi and

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194 Three of which were examined in the report.
takiwa people into TRoTT’s operations and into the orbit of TPM decision-making. It has also involved Ministry having to think about roles that its various groups and other Crown agencies might best play in the partnership.

By drawing on representation from takiwa, TRoTT has served to bring a more Iwi face to the partnership. This in itself has raised challenges to facilitate an educational focus and agenda across takiwa and Iwi organisations. Part of this challenge has included engaging Iwi and takiwa with educational agenda. Getting education on the agenda has included supporting and facilitating takiwa education planning.

*Engaging community in education agenda*

The case study looking at education planning in one takiwa shows how education can become part of development agenda for takiwa and Iwi. TRoTT takiwa representation played a significant role in this. What has resulted is an education planning approach that seeks to provide community and whānau education opportunities for adult community members, rather than community working with schools to improve the quality of education they provide. Below we show how the approaches are understood to contribute to raising Māori students’ achievement and how they might interconnect with each other. ‘Power’ and ‘resources’ are again significant factors in how this might happen.

Overall the nature of the partnership calls for a balance between education improvement efforts focused on schools, on te reo Māori and on community. One of the achievements that is reflected in the initiatives coming out of TPM is that taken together they reflect strong attempts to get a balance of focus on community, school and on te reo Māori in order to raise Māori student achievement.
REFERENCES


