LOCAL MĀORI DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES

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Abstract

This article considers the relevance of identity and history for Māori development policy. It explores community-based priorities for socio-economic development in defining "gaps" and compares this with programmes initiated and implemented by government. This article argues that major gaps are historically based and provide clues for present gaps that are measured cross-culturally in, for example, education, health, housing, justice and employment, as well as for some gaps that are not represented in statistical analysis and are inadequately considered in officialdom. Moreover, cultural principles remain fundamental to individual and group identity and, therefore, socio-economic and political survival. Thus, some major gaps are measured internally within the group and are concerned with cultural vitality. However, in order for cultural principles to have proper legitimacy and development programmes to have rigour, it is necessary to consider carefully various shades of meaning and establish which dimensions are applicable to particular gap-closing policies. And while history and identity are essential features of community development policies, it is important that there is a clear relationship between analysis, policy and practice.

INTRODUCTION

"Disparities", "capacity building" and "closing the gaps" are terms that have featured prominently in recent policy discourse, particularly following the Labour Government's priorities in addressing Māori socio-economic concerns. In 1988, the issue of disparities between Māori and non-Māori was also raised by the Royal Commission on Social Policy (RCSP). However, one of the earliest to recognise gaps was Sir Apirana Ngata in 1905. In response to Māori land problems of fragmentation and fractionation of title caused by individualisation, he initiated his incorporation

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schemes in Ngati Porou. Much later, in 1945, development themes underpinned the 1945 Māori Social and Economic Advancement Act. Then, in 1984, "closing the gaps" policies were foreshadowed in the Labour Government's Māori economic summit, outcomes of which informed Māori policy (Levine and Vasil 1985). Even though the Government has officially replaced "closing the gaps" with "social equity" and associated terminologies in policy, the same issues are still fundamental for Māori and other groups.

Māori under-performance continues to be a concern for governments and Māori. Some gaps are widening and other gaps, not represented in statistical analysis, are inadequately considered in officialdom (Te Puni Kōkiri 1999, James Henare Māori Research Centre (JHMRC) 2000). The obvious and central question is: why? One cause is the three-yearly government cycle where a change in government can result in shifts in policy emphasis, if not a curtailment of programmes altogether[2]. This issue cannot be considered lightly. However, the focus of this paper is to consider an equally important factor in government's role in Māori development: the relevance of identity and history. Analysis of a community's cultural and social dynamics will give a clearer, *community* perspective on how present resources and opportunities can be maximised against external pressures. It may be that gaps defined by the community may differ in emphasis and priority from a government perspective.

IDENTITY

It has long been recognised that the lack of secure identity and sense of place in today's tribal realities have contributed toward poor performance for Māori generally (Durie 1998). Economist Horace Belshaw saw, in 1940, the relevance of turangawaewae and identity for urban Māori migrants:

> "The immigrants will be strangers in strange cities forced into adjustment while divorced from the moral and material support of their communities. Until the full implications of this are understood there is no solution to the Māori problem." (quoted in Waitangi Tribunal 1987:129)

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[2] As examples, P.E.P. (Project Employment Programmes), then MACCESS, were popular employment subsidy/training schemes in the 1980s and early 1990s, and have reappeared in various forms since. In education, various national Māori educational authorities have been established, from the Māori Education Foundation to the proposed Manatū Matauranga Māori (*New Zealand Herald* 27 September 2000:A5). Since the Labour-Alliance Government came into office in 1999, the Ministry of Māori Development has a new focus similar to the original Māori Affairs direct-resourcing strategy, where it works with and in community groups, as defined by the capacity-building policy. Te Puni Kōkiri continues monitoring mainstream programmes (see Labour 1999).

Cultural foundations – moral and material – provide security, capacity and incentive for maximising resources generally. They also enable local descent groups to carry out their obligations as tangata whenua (local people, "people of the land"; see the appended glossary for brief definitions of other Māori terms used in this paper). Reedy (in Royal Commission on Social Policy 1988 3:176) similarly emphasised the importance of whanaungatanga, mana whenua and marae as vital elements of Māori identity and, therefore, social functioning. In applying Māori identity principles, Benton noted that, for example, educational performance would improve where such themes were central (RCSP 1988 3:167). Likewise, cultural identity markers are deemed important in programmes for "at-risk youth" (Te Puni Kōkiri 2000a). Kin-based ideologies have general application in defining community members' position relative to non-hapū members (I.H. Kawharu 1975).

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP ASPIRATIONS IN GAP-CLOSING POLICIES?

The protection, promotion and enhancement of a culturally based identity at individual and group level may be encapsulated by the term "rangatiratanga" (see Melbourne 1995, I.H. Kawharu 1989, Walker 1990). The term is multi-faceted and resonates not only with identity, but also cultural ideology, political empowerment and economic development themes (cf. Fitzgerald 1977, Durie 1998, M. Kawharu 1998, I.H. Kawharu 1989, Smith 1999).

The exercise of rangatiratanga depends on a number of factors, including human capacity and willingness (Māori and non-Māori), material resources and, not least, an appropriate framework. Recognition of the Treaty in statute, common law and central and local government policies is an essential prerequisite for Māori to exercise rangatiratanga. Without recognition, opportunity to apply rangatiratanga may be limited. Measuring the extent to which identity issues have been recognised and provided for in policy and practice is important in assessing effect. In contrast to statutory and policy frameworks, the marae still remains a primary context for a tribal group to enhance their rangatiratanga.

Government reports on the status of Māori performance in all major sectors (education, health, housing, economic stability and so on) are largely statistically based. Tabulations and quantitative analyses provide information on demographic and general trends relative to wider New Zealand society and are important for mapping general themes. However, social development policies based on this type of information alone are inadequate. Quantitative data on Māori performance in the major government-defined gap reports on education, health, housing, employment

and justice do not consider relationships between individuals and hapū/iwi or other Māori groups. The relevance to and inter-relationships with Crown policies, of such structures and elements as trust boards, marae, kaumātua, and locally defined (including community) Māori development policies – as well as operational aspects of development programmes – are not generally considered. The purpose of gaps statistics may not be to inquire into these matters, but, if so, then any assertion about "gaps" may well be faulty.

A gaps analysis such as that in the report on *Progress Towards Closing Social and Economic Gaps Between Māori and non-Māori* (Te Puni Kōkiri May 2000b) focuses on individual performance, giving an important, but only partial, interpretation of Māori circumstances (JHMRC 1999). Gaps analysis in these terms could be considered as eurocentric, and similar to the mantra of integration that was popular in the 1950s-1960s where Māori concerns were assessed on an individual basis[3]. Concerning individualism more generally, Durie (1998:288) argues that this preoccupation "...has been costly, and [as a result] the social and economic foundations of the group have been eroded". Many gap-closing, socio-economic development policies must consider the individual in the context of the group, and, where necessary, must also take into account the relationship of relevant Māori organisations to beneficiaries.

How gaps ought to be defined and measured is important. If relying solely on comparison to non-Māori statistics, an assumption could be made that non-Māori attainments and levels of achievement are the norms that Māori groups should strive to equal. In some cases, this may well be so (e.g. to pursue better health performance compared to non-Māori in diabetes and heart disease and obtain higher employment rates in certain geographic areas). However, some may be comfortable with their circumstances, no matter how officialdom may consider otherwise. Achievement according to kin-based criteria may not be fully taken into account in gaps analysis where, for example, kaumātua leadership derives from educative processes that lie outside western traditions. Kaumātua may be considered repositories of kinship principles, but "uneducated" in a non-Māori sense. Other cultural forms of knowledge and values may be needed for a balanced perspective. In development in a bicultural milieu, knowledge and values from both cultures have to be taken into account.

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[3] The Government's "pepper potting" housing programme in the 1950s-1960s is one example. It opposed customary hapū community values by dividing the group, and housing separate families throughout a wider area. Although this is not government policy today, assessment of "gaps" continues to be centred on the individual.

Other gaps, such as those identified by Te Puni Kōkiri in relation to the provision of programmes and services, are worthy of further examination in the processes of policy development, implementation and monitoring, since they provide an indication of how gaps affect individual and group identity (Te Puni Kōkiri 2000c:8f).

Further gaps not considered by officialdom may have greater significance than those more commonly documented. For instance, gaps may exist in a trust board's capacity to manage resources. On the other hand, when considered over a longer time, strategic management of commercial (capitalist) and cultural enterprises may contrast to earlier periods of relative economic stagnation but cultural vitality. A group's lack of an ability to uphold their mana in ritual exchange and hospitality protocols may be their most critical "gap". In these cases, the measurement of gaps is, among other things, more in accordance with local and historical variables, rather than on an inter-ethnic, comparative basis.

HISTORY

MP Tariana Turia's claims of historical suffering by Māori, which were likened to the holocaust, raised the ire of some, but the message she attempted to give was that a broader, historical context needs to be considered (*New Zealand Herald* 31 August 2000). For instance:

> ... the role of history in behaviour was worth examining, particularly in terms of the impact of a significant mass disruption of a culture and the longer term psychological impact. ... it could be argued the effects of the suffering of hapū and iwi could be passed down generations." (quoted in *New Zealand Herald* 31 August 2000).

Numerous reports such as those prepared as evidence for Waitangi Tribunal claims (e.g. Murton 1998, O'Malley 1998) draw attention to the implications of historical events and Crown policies for kin groups. In particular, the Crown's process of individualisation of title, promoted by the Native Land Court has thrown communities into social and economic upheaval, leaving unstable foundations for future development. While the effects of individualisation of title are widely known, the particular effects on groups that have resulted in varying outcomes have not been thoroughly explored in present policies. Treaty settlements address the consequences of past Crown policies and practices, but other government mechanisms in social development generally do not.

While some Māori may not be concerned by the lack of kinship affiliation and cultural awareness, others do suffer a sense of deprivation arising out of historical circumstance. In the Orakei hapū of Ngati Whatua for instance, having lands in what became a vibrant centre of colonialism had a price. Being in a speculators' market, their 700-acre remnant estate soon became a test case for the new 1865 Native Land Act (Waitangi Tribunal 1987:40). Initially the setting up of an inalienable trust estate staved off disintegration. But in 1898 the Native Land Court's individualisation of title catapulted Orakei, like other hapū and iwi, into chaos and uncertainty, causing internal divisions between sellers and non-sellers, poverty, social dislocation and cultural upheaval (see Waitangi Tribunal 1987, I.H. Kawharu 1975, 1977, Walker 1990, Williams 1999). The Waitangi Tribunal described the implications of partition from 1891:

> The partition order was a problem but it was mainly symptomatic of a wider one – the failure of the legislature to provide for tribal ownership. The tribal principle was an essential part of Māori society, and when it was destroyed, Māori society crumbled too.
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> It was after the partitions that those who considered the original thirteen merely trustees had more cause to be concerned. The partitions involved extensive legal and survey costs. Mortgages were registered against the titles. The people were thrust into a new business economy from which they could not retreat. It was now necessary to lease, even if that were opposed, for costs had now to be paid and instalments met. (Waitangi Tribunal 1987:66)

Individuals could now sell and were lured into acquiring new goods (Waitangi Tribunal 1987:119). But financial gains made by the sale of personal shares in land were short term and limited. Only a handful of non-sellers remained but their interests were also soon acquired when they were left in a minority. There was a growing uneasiness within the community and a decline in cultural, social and economic integration. The final blow, in 1951, was the acquisition by the Crown, under the Public Works Act 1928, of marae lands for a "recreation ground", which ultimately saw the destruction of their meeting house and left only a quarter-acre cemetery (Waitangi Tribunal 1987:122). Nothing could have been more damaging to their mana than having the sanctity of their original marae desecrated and to have kaitiakitanga principles and practices annulled as a result. Although a new meeting house was built on Takaparawhau in 1974, it was not theirs to begin with. Title to marae lands did not pass to the hapū until 1991. In the intervening years, a generation had grown up without the experience of a marae-centred community life (Waitangi Tribunal 1987:129).

The importance of understanding the effects of particular events and processes for cultural and economic sustainability cannot be overstated, hence the maxim "walking into the future facing the past". It may be that some "gaps", such as limited educational achievement, low employment and limited housing conditions are symptomatic of deeper causes. Perhaps these causes should be seen as the "gaps", rather than the sorts of outcomes upon which policy analysts and planners tend to focus.

Cultural redress and development, however, will need to take place as a balance to commercial and Treaty settlement investments. Settlement is simply that: it does not provide a strategic cultural and commercial management plan, but rather may be the basis for it. This is the challenge for Orakei: to find a balance between economic, cultural, political and social objectives. The Orakei claim reported on the history of grievances against the Crown and the ensuing Orakei Report (Waitangi Tribunal 1987) paved the way for translation of those events into terms of social and cultural development for the hapū. This is the basis of the Orakei Māori Trust Board's strategic plan written in 1998-99 (as required by the Board's governing Act). But in order to sharpen the relevance of the plan, the Trust Board has to consider beneficiary-defined needs and set them in their historical context.

Not all gaps will be concerned with such analysis. But most will have been caused by multiple factors requiring a multi-dimensional, holistic approach (see also JHMRC 1999). But as Durie (1998:139) notes, policies have been:

> ... sectoral and cross-sectional; they have been orientated to a particular sector such as health or education or employment and have presumed that Māori is a definable measure. In statistical terms it might be, but the cultural parameters, at least as they apply to diverse situations for contemporary Māori, have yet to be analysed.

The Minister of Māori Affairs' recent comments on the importance of a holistic approach across government agencies in their services, and the need for cultural criteria to address a range of problems (Te Puni Kōkiri 2000d:3), is thus worthy of further consideration.

FROM THE GENERAL TO THE PARTICULAR

General programmes such as kura kaupapa and kōhanga reo have made important contributions to the retention and development of Māori language. Their success, however, is not due solely to their generic curriculum, but also to the way local values

and practices have been included. For instance, the use of existing social networks of the kinship system, whānau involvement in their children's learning, and the customary manaakitanga principle are essential features contributing toward effective outcomes (Tangere 1997, Pere 1994, Hohepa 1993, Reedy 1990). It is noteworthy that Labour's Māori development manifesto (Labour 1999) acknowledges "iwi, hapū, whānau" dimensions, and the "capacity-building" programme seems to provide scope for community-based initiatives[4]. It has not always been so.

Past policies have treated Māori as a homogeneous grouping with the result that local community patterns and dynamics have become obscured (JHMRC 2000:26,30). Indeed, official commentary and policy direction still capture the diverse Māori needs under the broader category "Māori", although it may be argued that an inclusive approach does signal governmental commitment towards Māori generally. However, particular development priorities, including understanding the relevance of the Treaty for development, still need careful collaboration between the Crown and the local community if their goals are to be achieved. Developing partnerships between representative Māori groups and the Crown on the basis of Treaty-defined rights and obligations is certainly one proven way of retaining unique local interests and needs[5]. In the case of the northern region Māori co-Purchasing Organisation, or "MAPO", while there are similarities between pan-tribal and kin-group priorities, they nevertheless differ in emphasis, as do priorities within the groups themselves. It is also important to have a clear perspective of what "cultural" entails, including terms such as rangatiratanga, manaaki and kaitiakitanga, since there are different historical contexts and dimensions. Policies cannot be sound where there are ambiguities in the concepts and terms used to justify the policies.

CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Māori terms such as "tangata whenua", "mana", "rangatiratanga" and "kaitiakitanga" find common currency in policy, but values, rights and responsibilities imbedded within those terms are often less understood. Concepts are often familiar, but where

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[4] Community-based programmes are operated by Māori service providers in health, education, justice and housing (Te Puni Kōkiri 2000c), which cannot be explored in sufficient detail in this paper. However, it may be said that many such programmes are important ways of fulfilling Article Three guarantees, if not also protecting rangatiratanga guaranteed by Article Two of the Treaty. Waipareira and Manukau Urban Māori Authorities provide a range of services, while health clinics such as those at Orakei and Awataha Marae on the North Shore provide specific services. See also footnote 5.

[5] Memorandums of Understanding are being developed between the Ministry of Health and Tainui, Ngati Whatua and Taitokerau iwi, and arise out of existing co-purchasing partnerships ("MAPO") between the Crown and each respective Māori Treaty partner.

application changes over time, due to changes in resources, priorities, skills or other circumstance, customary values may become obscured. New ways of ascribing meaning and use may have been developed. It may not, therefore, be entirely useful to have "tikanga" in, for example, strategic plans, even though legislation may direct such practice. Policies could be seen by Māori to be tokenist, or worse, flawed judgements could be made in legal and lore terms where there is insufficient understanding.

For instance, in recent years kaitiakitanga has seen a range of interpretation. From a customary perspective, kaitiakitanga is the exclusive preserve of mana whenua groups and, depending on context, meanings extend beyond guardianship and include management of human, material and non-material resources (M. Kawharu 1998, 1999). Rangatiratanga (customary authority, discussed further below) is the necessary over-arching framework within which kaitiakitanga operates. Thus, when a council considered it had, and upheld, kaitiakitanga responsibilities (Rural Management Ltd v Banks Peninsula District Council [1994] NZRMA 412), this contrasted with customary principles. Other Māori groups, such as Waipareira Trust in West Auckland, may exercise an important dimension of kaitiakitanga over their beneficiaries, but the principles guiding operation are somewhat modified from that applied within the kin group.

The term "tangata whenua" has also found wide interpretation, blurring the boundaries of what are, and who has, associated responsibilities and rights. Despite numerous reports, papers and hui considering a wide range of tangata whenua issues, territorial local and regional authorities have often struggled to have clear policies for determining what "tangata whenua" means and how best practice in relation to addressing their interests can be applied. (See also Nuttall and Ritchie 1995 for discussion on tangata whenua and Treaty issues in planning documents.) Often, they prefer to take an inclusive approach and consult with all Māori groups claiming this status, thereby blurring the distinction between tribal groups existing prior to, and in, 1840, and those of various persuasions that have become established since then (see also Auckland City Council 2001).

Use rights are subject to the right to allocate (cf. Commission on Tangata Whenua Consultation in Auckland 1998). Allocation was exercised by the leaders of the group holding political dominion (mana whenua) over the land and was primarily made to members of the group. However, for political reasons (e.g. to cement an alliance), use rights were occasionally allocated externally to other groups. Claimants presenting evidence to the Native Land Court frequently spoke of local groups giving neighbours access to fishing grounds or gifting lands for temporary crop use (Orakei Minute Book

1868). All claims to the Native Land Court and the Waitangi Tribunal are premised on describing how mana whenua was acquired and how settlement has preserved such rights, thus defining the status of a group as "tangata whenua". Failure, therefore, to distinguish between rights to allocate and rights to use land may compromise the status of tangata whenua. Interpretations like "people of the land" do not say enough about what tangata whenua actually means.

With opportunities provided by, for example, the Resource Management Act 1991, it has become politically expedient to be tangata whenua to participate in resource management and affirm associated rights in the process (M. Kawharu 1998, Solomon and Schofield 1992). Participation in committees established by councils (e.g. the Auckland City Council Tangata Whenua Consultative Committee, the Waitakere City Council Te Taumata Runanga, or other "standing" committees) can be considered by Māori groups as political forums to assert their status vis-à-vis other groups. The basis for their mana may be site specific or general over a wider area, but some groups may argue the latter without clear justification. There are different forms of mana even if they are subsumed under the all-encompassing term "tangata whenua". Challenges by different resource management groups within an iwi may also further complicate representation issues. However, sanctions are not necessarily clear in either law or lore terms for those who ignore tikanga (lore).

In addition, councils are not legally obliged to consider cross-claims over the status of tangata whenua, yet they are required by the Resource Management Act 1991 to protect kaitiakitanga and take into account Treaty principles (M. Kawharu 1998). Failure to address conflicting claims has resulted in compromises for exercising kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga (for example, see Commission on Tangata Whenua Consultation in Auckland 1998).

Rangatiratanga is no less a complex term. Beyond literal interpretations of "chieftainship" or "trusteeship", debates arise concerning its wider meanings and practice. Limited understandings and, perhaps, political pressure to promote social policies acceptable to a wider society may further compromise practice. For instance, pressure on the Government to change emphasis in gaps policy (see *New Zealand Herald* 26 October 2000:A1, 20 November 2000:A5) has not helped in determining specifically how rangatiratanga ought to be considered within the policy.

Notwithstanding the different priorities of Māori groups in interpreting and exercising their rangatiratanga, all Māori groups share similar socio-economic concerns. These lurch between catching those who have already "fallen through the system",

minimising offending of others "at risk", and pursuing general "self-determination" aspirations (I.H. Kawharu 1989, Walker 1990, cf. Cox 1993, Durie 1994, 1998, Melbourne 1995, Fleras and Spoonley 1999).

The exercise of rangatiratanga is not restricted to environmental resources as emphasised by, for example, the Waitangi Tribunal in the Te Reo case and the Waipareira Report (Waitangi Tribunal 1989, 1998). Māori health, for example, can be considered within a Treaty framework where the promotion of social, cultural and physical well-being is central to the maintenance of rangatiratanga (Durie 1994). The issue becomes complex in considering how rangatiratanga objectives in health ought to be met in governance and executive terms. For instance, in relation to the present health bill, some Māori advocates such as MP John Tamihere prefer general Māori rather than specific mana whenua representation on district health boards (Hansard 23 November 2000). Other views, however, take mana whenua representation on the health boards to be a key way of recognising rangatiratanga (Hansard 14 November 2000) and, at the same time, allowing local groups to exercise their responsibilities in addressing other health concerns of Māori living within their area (rohe) (cf. Memorandums of Understanding noted above, Pita 1998).

CONCLUSIONS

In order for some gaps to be closed, detailed analysis of social, cultural and economic needs at community level is required. Analysis should include close examination of particular histories of kin groups and the implications for growth. This would include developing "ground up" policies to complement, if not replace, generic policies. Many long-standing disparities cannot be considered in a historical vacuum. Major gaps may be historically based and provide clues for present gaps that are measured cross-culturally.

Although all Māori kin communities have endured similar experiences vis-à-vis the Crown and in the marketplace, responses differ in scale and emphasis, hence varying statistics in health, education, employment and so on. The corollary of understanding dimensions of rangatiratanga at local community level is that consideration may then be given to priorities for determining which gaps matter and what action ought to be taken. An internal sociocultural "audit" will also define community and service provider capacity to cope with development. And while development is proactive, it is necessary to be cognisant of particular Māori needs, especially if people are happy with their circumstances. Defining the particular requires an examination of other gaps not considered in official social statistics, including those measurable according to criteria defined internally within the group.

Cultural principles remain fundamental to individual and group-based development and identity. But in order for cultural principles to have proper legitimacy and development programmes to have rigour, it is necessary to consider carefully various shades of meaning and establish which dimensions are applicable to particular gap-closing policies. This is the challenge for both non-Māori and Māori who are involved in policy design, ratification and implementation. At all accounts, a clear relationship between analysis, policy and practice is essential.

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GLOSSARY

hapū	sub-tribe
hui	meeting
iwi	tribe
kaitiakitanga	guardianship
kaumātua	elder
kōhanga reo	Māori preschool, "language nest"
kura kaupapa	Māori school
mana	authority, integrity, charisma
mana whenua	trusteeship of land
manaaki	to show hospitality, caring, respect
manaakitanga	hospitality
marae	meeting area of whānau or iwi
rangatiratanga	sovereignty
tangata whenua	local people, "people of the land"

tikanga	custom, legal obligations and conditions
whānau	family or extended family, including aunts, uncles and cousins
whanaungatanga	kinship