

January 2009

**“Good Intentions”
An Assessment of the Statement of Government
Intentions for an Improved Community-Government
Relationship**

Report by the Association of Non-Governmental Organisations of Aotearoa

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Foreword

"Kotahi te kohao o te ngira e kuhuna ai te miro ma, te miro pango, te miro wheno. I muri, kia mau ki te aroha, ki te ture, ki te whakapono."

"Through the eye of the needle pass the white threads, the black threads, and the red threads. Afterwards, looking to the past as you progress, hold firmly to your love, the law, and your faith."

This whakatauki was gifted by the late Tamehana Tai Rakena of Tainui to individual leaders in the disability and then wider community sector to support us in our work. It originated with Potatau Te Wherowhero, the first Maori King, who, at the birth of the Kingitanga movement, spoke of strength and beauty through both unity and diversity, by alluding to the beauty and the strength of the woven tukutuku. Individual threads are weak, but the process of weaving makes a strong fabric. Individual colours tell no story, but woven together they become beautiful, and can tell a story.

ANGOA, the Association of Non-Governmental Organisations in Aotearoa, is a unique network of organisations from across the range of NGOs in Aotearoa New Zealand, including national, regional and local groups. Our member organisations are active in the areas of health, education, international development, volunteering, human rights, welfare and social services, the arts, the environment, youth, women, ethnicity, culture and heritage.

One of the ways our core purpose, Strengthening the Community and Voluntary Sector in Aotearoa New Zealand, is expressed is in the community roundtable and research forums we provide for members of the Sector to meet together to increase their information base, on the Sector and on current issues. Opportunities for collaboration and for innovation develop in and evolve from these forums, as diverse groups recognise the issues they have in common.

Working with Government on strengthening the relationship between Government and the Sector is also a focus for ANGOA. We welcomed the Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship in 2001 as an acknowledgement of the potential for significant positive change in government-sector relationships and have noted with interest, in ANGOA forums, any indication of the Statement's impact. We have also been keen to document any outcomes in a more formal survey, having long had concerns about the lack of research both on the Sector and on the impact of changes in government policies.

When representatives of the diversity of organisations across the Tangata Whenua, Community and Voluntary Sector met at the government-community sector forum in Wellington in June 2007, there was a strong call from the community sector that it was now time the Statement of Government Intentions moved from being just "good intentions" to become a formal basis for action and accountability and a reflection of genuine partnership.

The extent of our 'official' knowledge of the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector is very much greater now than it was when the Statement of Government Intent was released. Data from the VAVA report indicate that for every dollar invested by government in the sector, there is a \$3-5 return. Data from Statistics New Zealand's Non-profit Institutions Satellite Account: 2004 inform us that there were 97,000 non-profit institutions in this country to which over one million volunteers contributed more than 270 million hours of unpaid labour. Even though only 10% of those organisations had paid staff, they employed 105,340 people. In other words, our assertion that the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector is integral to the nation of Aotearoa New Zealand, and to the nation's well-being, is based on fact.

In mid-2008, the then Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector, Ruth Dyson, made funding available to ANGOA for the review of the Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship. The economic environment prevailing then was rather better than the circumstances in which we now find ourselves. This makes it even more important that the Recommendations which have emerged from the review of the Statement are eminently implementable; they build on structures and processes that are already in place. They do not require radical structural change or vast amounts of money. What they do require is good will and government recognition of the role of the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector in all our communities, and the role we will be required to play – are already playing – in addressing the fallout from the current and worsening economic situation.

The relationship between government and the community sector, as expressed in the Statement, should be an enduring partnership, transcending changes of government. Before the 2008 election, ANGOA welcomed the statements of commitment to the community sector, which included those from the National, Maori, and United Future parties; we eagerly anticipate the uptake of the recommendations that follow, as enacting those commitments.

For our communities to flourish, we need to enter a new phase of relationship between the government, and the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector. We need, simultaneously, to be diverse, holding on to what makes us each unique and different, and to work together on our shared vision. Then we will be weaving a strong and beautiful "fabric of society", a strong and beautiful tukutuku.

Recommendations

This review has found that from the perspective of the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector, the *Statement of Government Intentions* has continued value as an affirmation of government's recognition of trust and respect as the essential underpinning of its relationship with the community and voluntary sector.

1. The Government note the value of having such a statement of government intentions and formalise the way in which it is implemented by individual government agencies, by including it in the Chief Executives' accountability documents.

The relationships of government with the many voluntary and community organisations that have a Maori kaupapa in any form cannot be disentangled from the general nature of government relations with Maori.

2. The recommendation in the Report of the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party (2001) to establish a Treaty of Waitangi Commission to consider the Crown/iwi relationship should be addressed in dialogue, by government with iwi and hapu and with the sector as a whole.

Government has few levers to influence the extent of coordination across government agencies in many matters that are of genuine and significant importance to it, the tangata whenua and community and the voluntary sector. A routine process for monitoring and evaluating processes, strategies and managerial practices could be readily established, for periodical application by government agencies, as well as by organisations in the community and voluntary sector who wish to build knowledge of ways to continuously improve practice.

3. The Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector works with ANGOA and other national and umbrella bodies representing the diversity of the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector to collaborate with government in developing an evaluation process for government agencies.

4. The Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector be given the role of managing an annual survey of government agencies as part of the evaluation process.

Government agencies have the potential to achieve considerably improved relationships with and outcomes from the community and voluntary sector through the designation of a high level management role responsible for their relationships with the sector. The role should be designed to build continuity and integration (ideally, the same person retained in the role, if the person proves to have the relationship skills). The obligations and resources required for nation-wide contacts

will need to be recognised when developing the person specifications for the position.

5. Government agencies with significant relationships with the community and voluntary sector be asked to consider the appointment of a senior executive of the agency to the role of prime contact with organisations and leaders in the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector.

Locating the Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector, as a small, low-level unit, within the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) has proved problematic. There are no “levers” within government to achieve a “whole of government” approach and OCVS has had neither the status, nor the resources to address the New Zealand public sector’s lack of capacity for collaboration and coordination across agencies and departments. It needs to be situated where it can exercise some leverage across the whole of government.

In addition, the location within MSD has reinforced, in the minds of the public as well as government, a very narrow understanding of the sector as charities delivering social services to the needy. The crucial role the Tangata Whenua, Community and Voluntary Sector plays in the wider community, in relation (for example) to the environment, emergency services, sports, arts and culture, conservation, recreation, international development etc., and particularly its role in advocacy, is ignored.

6. A process be developed for routine monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the Office of Community and Voluntary Sector, to provide baseline data for a periodic review of the Office; the review should include consideration of the impact on its effectiveness of its resources and location.

The spirit and intent of the Statement of Government Intentions should be reflected in all major policies and programmes that involve the community and voluntary sector. The implementation of new programmes should be an opportunity to bring whole-of-government practice closer to that which is best reflected in the Statement.

7. Ministers note that all community sector initiatives can reinforce the aims of the Statement of Government Intention, enhancing the cohesiveness of public sector relationships with the community and voluntary sector. The Pathways to Partnerships programme, for example, provides a significant opportunity to do this.

The full potential of managing for outcomes has yet to be realised, because of the fragmented responsibilities of agencies. The partial adoption of managing for outcomes has slowed the shift away from inconsistent approaches by individual agencies, despite the recognised potential benefits to government and the sector.

8. A range of vehicles like _ Pathways to Partnerships should be adopted by government agencies to help managing for outcomes more effectively across those agencies.

The NGO sector is often richly informed about the characteristics and position of individuals and households, through the depth and breadth of engagement. This provides an opportunity to ensure that policy meets the huge variety of circumstances in which people live.

9. Ministers and government agencies recognise the value of the information and insights of the community and voluntary sector and its potential contribution in policy development and in evaluation studies of programmes.

Community and voluntary sector organisations are generally built to reflect the aspirations of their community, and these are usually expressed in the organisation's constitution or other founding document. Government agencies should recognise that the constitution of the organisation generates the prime obligations for governance in the community and voluntary sector, and not the expectations of the funders or part-funders of services.

The initial responses of government agencies to the contractual environment resulted in an intensity of accountability processes that far exceeded that which would apply in a normal commercial context. Although there is much variation in the experiences and responses of government agencies, considerable learning has occurred since. That learning enables a greater emphasis to be placed on trust and managing compliance costs.

10. The government agencies responsible for the community and voluntary sector further improve the ways in which funding allocations can be made simpler within the broader constraints brought about by public sector obligations of accountability.

There is a complex web of relationships between agencies and the sector, involving myriads of transactions. The ombudsman concept has provided good models for dispute resolution in cases where there is much public concern that resolving disputes can have a disproportionate cost on individuals, given the overwhelming power of the service provider.

11. The Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector should work with the sector and the Ombudsman's Office to establish a Disputes Resolution service in respect to all agencies having a relationship with the sector.

The information that the community and voluntary sector accumulates through local and regional experiences is both unique, and of considerable value in policy evaluation. To benefit fully from this information, a small, professionally resourced and adequately funded NGO focused on the experiences of the sector, fully independent of government, could bring together the extensive and rich information that community organisations gather through their activities. To be fully effective in this particular role, any such NGO would research and publish information from NGO experiences that had relevance to public issues of concern. (e.g. Tangata Whenua Community and Voluntary Sector Research Centre). It would have the Treaty of Waitangi as its foundation.

12. A sector-wide research and information service in the form of an independent NGO focussed on this work should be supported and resourced.

The recent analytical and statistical studies by Statistics New Zealand and the John Hopkins Comparative Study richly inform our understanding of the scope, scale and value of the community and voluntary sector. Such analysis enables the impact of policy to be assessed at a national level, complementing the institutional responses

that are often more visible. The studies enable us to assess both the strengths and vulnerabilities of the community and voluntary sector as we enter a period of extraordinary demographic change, within the context of increased inequalities resulting from globalisation, complexity in household forms and living arrangements, and growing diversity of communities. This initiative can be developed, building on informal initiatives, which continue to be the mainstay of innovation in quantitative studies of the form and nature of the sector.

13. Statistics New Zealand needs to be supported to work with the sector to extend and update the initial work it has published, and research into the community sector should be recognised as of significant merit in the grant allocation processes of funding bodies.

The relationship between government in its many forms and the great variety of community and voluntary organisations has a major influence on the scale, adaptability and spirit of those in the community who bring an extraordinary motivation to their engagement on matters of community concern that are beyond the reach or capacity of governments. Many actions influence that relationship, often with unintended consequences.

14. Ministers should fund a second review within three years, of the relationship between government and the community and voluntary sector.

To implement these recommendations in a meaningful way, on-going high level engagement needs to occur between the government and the community sector. Precedent exists in forums such as the Prime Ministerial/ Local Government Forum.

15. The Prime Minister should work with the Sector to establish a Prime Ministerial/Community Sector Forum to provide a mechanism to discuss strategic issues that face our communities and community organisations and to move the Government/Sector relationship to one of engagement.

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Preface

This Assessment of the *Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship* (“the Statement”) looks at the interaction between government and community organisations. The assessment has sought to:

- build a better understanding of the impact of the Statement
- determine the practices, processes and strategies that have been behind the progress that the Statement was intended to inspire, and
- develop insights into how those can be applied across government.

The tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector (“the community sector”) in New Zealand has increasingly been the subject of thoughtful study, and this review is set in the context of recent insights and findings.

The Statement is discussed in Appendix 1. The Terms of Reference and the service level agreement for the assessment of the Statement are included in Appendices 2 and 3. Appendix 4 describes the assessment methodology and process. That process involved several perspectives on the nature of government relations with community sector organisations. Focus groups were held in Wellington, Auckland (two) and Christchurch.

Several leaders of the very large and cross sectoral organisations met with the assessment team. Experiences, insights and expectations of the leaders of some 15 government agencies were obtained from short interviews, including ten with Chief Executives, with the remainder usually at Deputy Chief Executive Level. Interviews were also held with Māori both in leadership positions and from community sector organisations. The review team commissioned a review of recent studies, and benefited from several recent reports including the recently published *New Zealand Non-Profit Sector in Comparative Perspective (2008)*.

In such a short study of a very broad area, it is to be expected that the views of the review team have played a part in the focus of the study, the selection of material, and judgements about the appropriate way to draw on more subjective material. The review team hopes that the breadth of contact it has had and the team’s interactions will have added some balance where its judgments needed to be challenged.

The team has sought to draw on failures and successes, and a well-informed understanding of what is possible given the way government is organised in New Zealand. The purpose of this is to highlight further steps to ensure that the engagement that government has with community organisations reinforces, sustains and amplifies the contributions of tangata whenua, community and voluntary organisations in New Zealand.

New Zealand governments take on huge responsibilities for the welfare and development of their peoples, often with programmes and processes that presume an homogeneity of circumstance, understanding or need that does not recognise the whole gamut of ways in which we are different. How this diversity is responded to can have a huge impact on both the cost and effectiveness of programmes, and their interconnections. The contribution of the community and voluntary sector is significant in raising the effectiveness of programmes through information, personal support and representation, and also in enabling the impact of public policy on

individuals to reflect a degree of diversity in situations that cost-efficient, simplified public sector processes have difficulty recognising. As society in New Zealand has grown and become more varied, it is therefore no surprise that the scale and nature of the arrangements between the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector and government has grown considerably over the last two decades.

There is a huge variety of institutional arrangements within the community sector. For a large share of government agencies, their purpose necessitates working with the community sector in all its arrangements. The fragmented nature of the state sector with its narrow accountability focus, extensive autonomy, and limited central leadership has few levers to bring about any significant coherence across the public sector in its community relationships. The community sector bears the cost of this state sector fragmentation, in the cost of relationship management, contract management and general provision for uncertainty.

The nature and vitality of the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector is a critical outcome of the condition of society and the valuing of citizens. New Zealand's community sector organisations have adapted over the last two decades to the (often restrictive ways) that the government has managed its relationships with them. There has been an evolution of sector-wide organisations that have the capacity to advocate about community sector policy and relationships, but these have tended to be only partly accountable, without a broad-based mandate.

This review has focused on a way forward for both the sector and the government.

A Project Seeding Grant was received by ANGOA from the J.R. MacKenzie Trust Inc.

Introduction

The *Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community–Government Relationship* (“the Statement”) was signed in December 2001 by the then Prime Minister (Hon Helen Clark) and the then Minister responsible for the Community and Voluntary Sector (Hon. S. Maharey).

Purpose of the Statement

The Statement reflected the aspirations of Ministers of the new Labour-led coalition government, in response to widespread dissatisfaction among NGOs. The Deakin Commission in the United Kingdom had previously reported on the voluntary sector there, proposing a form of partnership agreement between government and voluntary organisations. The then Minister of Social Development in New Zealand stated that he “realised that the contract model hurt the community and voluntary sector” (Maharey, 2000).

The Statement was to give the community sector a clear *signal* that these new Ministers understood the need to significantly change the approach embedded from the late 1980s which can be perceived as the “commodification” of the services of the community sector that underpinned relationships. Such a forceful Statement had the potential to give the leaders of government agencies, and other public bodies involved in relationships with the community sector, a clear focus and direction for leading this change.

Applying the Statement

The Government attempted to define how it wanted to conduct its relationship with the community sector, through the Statement. What it did not do was to determine what that relationship was to become, and how it was to get there. For Māori organisations, the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi have given huge emphasis to the relationship with the Crown although there is still much work to do in terms of moving beyond the rhetoric of partnership. The significance of the Statement was reinforced at its introduction by the personal leadership of the then Prime Minister.

The Statement was only one manifestation of the government’s response, and as a consequence, it is difficult to disentangle or distinguish the impact of the Statement from other influences. Much earlier, there had been wider recognition that the purchase of services through contracts had culminated in high compliance costs, inter-agency competition, and some erosion of the charitable and voluntary ethos. Some government agencies had already begun to place more emphasis on their relationship with the community in the contracts and the formal arrangements they established.

An Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector (OCVS) was opened within the Ministry of Social Development in September 2003. Its role is to “address overarching issues affecting the community and voluntary sector, and to raise the profile of the sector within government” (OCVS website, 2009). OCVS works with government agencies to encourage and support them to use good practice in their work with the community and voluntary sector.

The recent report, *The New Zealand Non-profit Sector in Comparative Perspective* (Sanders and others, 2008) categorises community organisations into *expressive* (which includes culture, recreation, civic activism and advocacy activities) and *human service* organisations. The huge diversity of size is visible in the recent reports of Statistics New Zealand. The number of community organisations and the size of the economic value of equivalent activity by paid and voluntary members of organisations make New Zealand one of the OECD countries with the largest voluntary sectors. Not surprisingly, we are comparatively smaller in health and education, where our public systems are comparatively among the strongest. It is also important to note that New Zealand has one of the highest levels of dependencies on private philanthropy, compared to the level of government funding.

This intensity and breadth of interaction with government, alongside the extraordinarily high autonomy that government agencies have on operational matters, means that it is very difficult to establish institutional or whole-of-government processes that would give practical effect to the intentions behind the Statement. On the contrary, some of the consequences of government's various approaches have been to redefine the very nature of some community and voluntary organisations, and their relationship with those they seek to serve in the community.

An important insight developed during the course of the review is that the fundamental nature of public sector organisation and leadership roles in New Zealand will always constrain putting in place whole-of-government approaches to advancing an improved community-government relationship. This is, in part, because the transactions that underpin the relationship depend on cohesiveness at all three levels: strategic, managerial and operational.

The transactions with government involving the community and voluntary organisations relate not only to the way personal relationships are conducted; they bring a plethora of standard practices, rules and processes that result from the expectations and commitments that have a common origin but become translated in different operating contexts. Where small, but frustrating differences in rules and practice exist, the authority for any number of idiosyncratic twists to their form may have originated from the same legislation, Treasury instruction, or Cabinet direction. Where risk aversion has been heightened, such a focus on process can drive out the concern for the outcomes on the community, reducing innovation and learning.

Increased capacity of some agencies to apply the Statement

Recognition of the constraints on system-wide initiatives should be seen in the context of examples of good practices identified by the review team. Consultation for this review included: focus groups; interviews with Chief Executives or their senior executives in some 15 government agencies; interviews with leaders in a selection of very large community organisations; or was otherwise seen from recent work. Although limited in scope, the capacity for leadership of relations with the community sector on a whole-of-government basis has been strengthened by the Treasury Guidelines of 2003, and the Auditor-General's principles of 2006.

The State Services Commission (SSC) has a leadership role related to e-Government initiatives in community participation, although the potential contribution is limited by a narrower brief. The review team found that there was no obvious evidence that the efforts of the Treasury, Audit New Zealand, and SCC have lessened the diversity of government agency approaches. They have strengthened the capacity of those, however, who have sought change of the sort expected by the Statement, when they have known about them.

Leading up to the launch of the Statement in 2001, there was a groundswell of community concern about the narrowness of the government's conduct of its relations with the community sector. The practical effect of the Statement has been to highlight the pathway that government agencies were expected to pursue.

Given that the diversity in the way government agencies have responded remains at a significantly high level, it is understandable that community and government could each perceive the consequent change quite differently, and this is reflected in both the common themes and vast differences in outlook the review team has observed when recognising the shifts that have taken place. Also observed was a varied recognition of this across government agencies, depending on the sector, and to some extent on the engagement of individual government agency Chief Executives.

Much of the tension in the relationship between the community sector and government is seen as resulting from the shift, across government, from grants to contracts. This shift occurred during the 1990s at the same time as there was a huge increase in the amount of government-funded service delivery in the community sector. This increase in the level of activity may well have been associated with a growth in contracting, whatever the main policy and practice of the time.

What has been of the greatest consequence was the particularly intrusive manner with which government agencies and organisations of the New Zealand government established and managed contracts, in adopting approaches that were unlikely to increase the quality of the service, or the integrity of the contracting process. Most certainly, the approaches were unlikely to have increased value (as reflected in the overall effectiveness of the services) for money (the value of the contract) in the long run. The detailed specification and codification of outputs and detailed, standardised oversight of governance grossly oversimplified the nature and variability of the relationships individuals have with organisations helping them, and there has often been a significant lag in recognising shifts in what people sought help for. For Māori, many organisations found themselves locked into state dependency rather than the autonomy and independence they were seeking. (Durie, 2005).

Whole-of-government standards in applying the Statement

Existing variability in practice across government agencies may well be a major cause of the many unnecessary compliance costs on the community sector. The Statement, or any similar initiative, is unlikely to bring about an increase in the consistency of policies or practices across any two or more public sector organisations.

The improvements that some departments have achieved on their own initiative shows that there is much potential to further simplify the rules, processes, and standards relating to improved community-government relationships. There may not be many whole-of-government standards that are needed, but if a small set of standards were adopted, (including standards determined by Māori) across government, then it may help reduce the excess of compliance costs government imposes on community organisations that work with it in its endeavours to provide services to communities. Even if there were to be a will to adopt a whole of government approach to simplifying rules, processes and standards, the levers for this do not exist within public sector organisations themselves.

Inter-agency collaboration can be richly informed and stimulated, and this is usually seen when such collaboration is essential to resolving issues which depend on confidence in the political process, or on Ministers. It is not possible to describe the community sector as homogeneous in any way, but there are a mix of examples within the New Zealand government of good relationships with community organisations, including Maori and Iwi/hapu. Government's relationship with the community sector involves an amount of resources each year estimated to be comparable to some ten percent of the nation's annual wealth generation. There is a notable deficiency in public sector leadership through the lack of a vehicle for actively promoting common practices among Chief Executives in this area. The public sector also appears to lack any common appreciation of the contribution the sector makes to New Zealand's wealth generation as well as its critical role in social, cultural and environmental well being.

The role of the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector in influencing whole-of-government responses

The most effective influence on inter-agency collaboration may well come from the community sector itself, and that influence is currently diluted by the paucity of ways of organising the collective influence of such a naturally fragmented sector. As the collective influence of the sector develops further, then it can compellingly advance information at strategic, managerial, and operational levels, to focus on areas where action would bring huge benefits. Despite their size, even the very large community sector organisations seem to bring influence in an ad hoc way in this regard and they have much to gain in collaborating in sector-wide initiatives to heighten inter-agency collaboration. Of note is also the past and present efforts by Māori, iwi and hapū organisations with many Government agencies which have culminated in many insights, lessons and challenges from which learning could come.

A profile of community organisations

The recent report by Sanders and others (2008) outlined the shifting scale of the community sector in New Zealand, its changing makeup, and its resource base. Of most significance in setting the context for evaluating the findings of this review, the report notes:

1. For the year to March 2004, the community sector contributed 4.9 percent of the wealth created in New Zealand, as measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP). A similar amount was contributed by the value of volunteer work that is not included in GDP as currently.
2. The hours put into the activities of community organisations by people who work either for payment or voluntarily in the community sector is equivalent to over 200,000 full time people. About 2/3^{rds} of this is volunteer work. Some 1.7 million positions are filled by over one million volunteers. (Some 46 percent of volunteers are involved in more than one organisation).
3. Given the country's size, New Zealand has the seventh largest non-profit sector workforce in the world, with an unusually high share (67 percent) of the workforce provided by volunteers.
4. New Zealand has a much higher share of volunteers (49 percent) involved in "expressive" organisations, compared with service organisations. Some of this comes about by the small share of education and health services provided outside of government in New Zealand.
5. The volunteer mix differs in the "expressive" activities, where 57 percent of volunteer activity is concentrated, but just 31 percent of paid staff.
6. Direct government support contributes some 25 percent of the income of the sector, much lower than the average (36 percent) of the Anglo countries as a group. Fees from the community contribute 55 percent, and philanthropy some 20 percent. By comparison with other countries, the philanthropy contribution in New Zealand is high, but this may reflect unique national approaches, in particular community, energy, and gaming machine trusts.

Non-government organisations are associated with a major share of the interactions that occur daily between citizens and organisations. At many stages of a person's life course, it is NGO services that dominate. A separate report, *Maui Aroha, Māori Perspectives on Volunteering and Cultural Obligations (2007)* shows that volunteering for Māori is based significantly upon the notion of whānaungātanga (kinship) and the benefits, both for individuals and the wider community, derived from contributing to the common good. Statistics from the 2001 Census reveal that Māori had higher participation rates in voluntary work with some 21.2% participating in this activity compared with 12.68% of non-Māori (Statistics New Zealand, 2001).

The historical relationship of government with community organisations

Community and voluntary efforts have always existed in New Zealand to support others in need, advocate around issues, improve the environment, and create community recreational opportunities.

For Maori, for example, giving time to community and voluntary work has always been an expectation and a responsibility of members of the community, rather than a choice to be taken or added on to other work (OCVS, 2007). It is performed in accordance with the principles of tikanga to maintain mana and rangatiratanga rather than for financial or personal reward. Mahi aroha is the term used translating to the concept of voluntary work.

Voluntary organisations developed with colonisation and have depended on government funding since the earliest parliaments (Munford and Sanders, 2001; Suggate, 1995; and Tennant 2001, in Cribb, 2006). In 1885, for example, voluntary welfare received statutory recognition through the introduction of the Hospitals and Charitable Institutions Act.

State involvement in welfare became more pervasive during and after the first and second world wars in developed countries. In New Zealand, the expansion of the welfare state under the 1935 Labour government changed little until the 1970s, reflecting a period up until that time of high employment and relative affluence. The state took responsibility for welfare from cradle to grave and provided state-funded and regulated services. Funding for community and voluntary services was allocated according to the strength of ministerial relationships with favoured organisations (Tennant and others, 2006). In a background paper prepared for the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services, Garth Nowland-Foreman (1995) noted that in these times the emphasis was on whether or not the organisation was considered “worthy”.

1. A contract culture

In the late 1980s, New Zealand introduced government determined contracts with service providers in the community. Monitoring was undertaken according to rigid specifications and measurable outputs. The 2008 (Sanders and others) report notes that:

“The basis of government funding to the [community] sector was already moving from direct grants to contractual arrangements whereby organisations undertook to supply specific services on behalf of government”. “However, from the late 1980s purchase-of –service contracts became the dominant mechanism for government funding of the non-profit sector, most of these contracts being renewable, short term, partial and the result, in many cases, of hard bargaining on the part of state agencies”.

Cribb (2006) notes that the theory informing government contracts with community and voluntary organisations, provided a poor trust relationship with ‘agents’ who were in this case, the community and voluntary sector. Others note that:

- *“The use of contracts increased enormously the power of government to determine what voluntary agencies did, resulting in a sense of resentment and lack of trust” (Dalley and Tennant, 2004), and*

- “*These issues are not simply about funding relationships but rather are an expression of a perceived, long term threat to the ability of organisations within the sector to serve our communities and to remain viable as not-for-profit, non-governmental, community based and values led organisations*” (Hanley, 2006:3).

Cribb describes New Zealand’s approach in the 1980s to a contractual system as a ‘hard accountability’ system, elements of which include hierarchical control, exacting performance management, tightly defined outputs, regular reporting and rigorous external monitoring. She comments:

“The problem does not lie in the use of contracts, but rather in the relationships and practices used to generate them and monitor the performance of the contracted organisation” (2006: xiv preface).

From the 1984 Hui Taumata or Decade of Māori Development emerged four themes including greater Māori participation in the delivery of services and this resulted in a notable increase in the number of Māori providers (Durie, 2005). However sometimes this contractual arrangement compromised the kaupapa of the organisation which threatened the ongoing viability of the programme. (OCVS, 2007)

The current relationship of government with community organisations

The 2001 *Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship* was developed in the context of:

- Overall, an emerging evolution in approaches to relationship management away from the dominance of detailed and comprehensive contracting seen in the late 1980s. The nature of this evolution has been obscured by the great variation in this change across government agencies.
- Continual growth by the community in advocacy and in alternative sources of information for public affairs. This has changed the visibility and nature of the community sector, and also continually adds to the tension between collaboration and challenge to government that may have reached new heights after the 1990s.
- A slow emergence of strong common focal points in both government and the community sector for recognising and managing relationships.
- A gradual but partial shift in the hard financial contracts focused on detailed output specifications that shaped the relationship between many community organisations and the government from the late 1980s.
- The lack of a mechanism specific to the community and voluntary sector for the resolution of disputes between government agencies and community organisations. A formal process would have the potential to address poor relationships and help resolve resentment between the parties. The

Ombudsman's office provides a process of last resort and its role would be enhanced with such a process.

There was, and remains, a serious legacy of limited capacity to recognise, manage and advance the trust needed to underpin relationships of all sorts.

The governance of community organisations is less structured and less mechanistic than has been judged necessary for public sector organisations. The absence of mechanisms that equate to those required for public sector organisations can lead to a false presumption about the quality of governance that is possible outside the public sector. This has led to attempts to replicate within even small community organisations forms of governance that lack relevance and whose compliance costs can be quite debilitating.

Where community organisations have expanded, and require or develop more formalised governance arrangements, it is not clear that those preferred for public sector organisations are the most effective for other sectors. Yet, for those in public sector organisations, the model they work under may be perceived as a gold standard of some sort. Further, government agencies have consistently failed to recognise the basic legal difference between themselves and non-governmental organisations, most of which are established under the Incorporated Societies Act, the Charitable Trusts Act or one of the Acts relating to Maori community organisations. Under these pieces of legislation, and under the founding constitution of the NGOs, the primary accountability of both governance and management is to their members or their service recipients - not to a government agency with whom they may subsequently establish a funding contract. Such founding documents are generally written as an expression of the aspirations of the community from which they spring, and need to be seen alongside any funding contract which covers only part of the service cost. Because of this, government departments have frequently characterised NGO governance as having confused or unclear priorities.

In 2004, the OCVS consulted government agencies to ascertain what progress they felt they had made with their sector relationships. At the same time, a government-wide initiative to make *outcomes* central to planning was starting. This initiative, called Managing for Outcomes, was led by the Treasury, State Services Commission, Government agency of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Te Puni Kōkiri. It sought to focus government's attention on the importance of strategic alliances with others, including the community and voluntary sector. The OCVS's 2004 consultation summarised the changes then as uneven, noting that:

- *“Many government agencies did not have a strategic approach to the community-government relationship driven from the top. In particular, OCVS did not find widespread reference to the explicit commitments made in the Statement of Government Intentions. Importantly, where government agency response was strong, the strategic response was driven by ‘champions’ at senior management level.*
- *There was evidence that regional and field staff were often not well informed about the community-government relationship work and, in particular, the Statement of Government Intentions (even though frontline staff were the ones working in ‘the relationship’).*
- *Some agencies had limited awareness of the potential for strong relationships with the sector to assist them to achieve their policy outcomes.*

- *Government agency commitment to working with Māori organisations in the context of the community-government relationship was not clearly articulated”.*

Pathways to Partnership was announced by Ministers in 2008 after this review was initiated. Its intended focus on some 870 organisations, whose activities are increasingly interlinked with services provided by the Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Justice, could provide a highly visible opportunity for Ministers to act in ways that build and sustain trust with the community sector. Given the mix of organisations involved, ways of collaborating that have whole- of-government implications, could evolve.

The articulated expectations placed on enhancing the relationships of those involved in the *Pathways to Partnership* initiative comes alongside simpler ways of addressing concerns of accountability. The implications of this span government’s relations with the larger tangata whenua and community and voluntary sector organisations. Both Ministers and the sector will have high expectations from such a well-resourced initiative.

High levels of collaboration across the community sector can bring gains, perhaps now of greatest significance where this leads to the development of common practices, shared investments and pooling of resources to build a critical mass of capacity such as statistics and information management. Existing arrangements provide little support for such initiatives.

This sort of investment needs to be given a high priority in government grant allocation, to accelerate the momentum that the sector has been able to generate itself in achieving a very necessary but difficult institutionalisation and early visibility within the sector itself of such collaboration. The very nature of the community sector requires persistent and determined leadership, alongside a high degree of trust, for common sector-wide processes and resources to be sustained and nourished, particularly so for Māori who place high value on relationship-building.

The great variation in the quality of the relationships of the public sector with the community and voluntary sector stems from the point in the relationship at which fundamental policy is discussed. Were agencies to consult effectively at the stages of development of policy (including changing the nature of the arrangements by which services are obtained), then each individual contract or arrangement for service provision would be concluded in the context of the outcome of that discussion. If consultation at the point of policy development were poor, then each distinct contractual negotiation risks becoming a separate re-litigation of concern. This is true not only about a policy change, but also about the very nature of the government agency approach to consultation. A potential weakness of *Pathways to Partnership* is that it has been directed from one government agency, the Ministry of Social Development. Greater engagement of the 870 NGOs involved in the decision-making at policy development has the potential to generate a more successful outcome.

Where organisations exist that coordinate the community and voluntary sector thinking and are focal points for public sector engagement about policy change, such problems are potentially reduced. In the absence of such co-ordinating bodies,

consultation with the largest organisations in the community and voluntary sector may be seen as a substitute.

However co-ordinating bodies have the advantage of generally bringing together highly experienced and competent leaders able to provide a broad perspective on issues.

What is unique about community organisations in New Zealand

Community and voluntary sector organisations represent collections of citizens that have formed not only because they have recognised significant gaps or inadequacies, but also because they see that they can organise remedies in a manner that is more complete, more reliable and engages more people than if they acted individually.

Consumer and policy advocacy, service information, services and support are usually necessary concomitants to public sector programmes that the community and voluntary sector provides. This is most apparent with programmes that have redistributive policies and goals. The effectiveness of public programmes that have redistributive foundations is dependent not only on the processes associated with the programme itself, but also on the much less tangible and greatly variable capacity of citizens to draw on information, representation, transport and communication that other citizens have, in order to make effective use of the service or facility. Community organisations can play a key role in ensuring the fairness of the relationship and associated transactions between government agencies and citizens.

The contribution of the community and voluntary sector is significant in raising the effectiveness of public programmes through information, personal support and representation, and also in enabling the impact of public policy on individuals to reflect a degree of diversity in situations that cost-efficient, simplified public sector processes have difficulty recognising. As society in New Zealand has grown and become more varied, it is therefore no surprise that the scale and nature of the arrangements between the community and voluntary sector and government has grown considerably over the last two decades. In a good many public programmes, the “front line” is the community and voluntary sector, so that the scope and effectiveness that government seeks can be affected by the quality of the relationship that exists across government.

At many stages of the life course of most people, direct contact with helping organisations and services, including medical and other health services, is much more likely to be with organisations that are not government agencies. A selection of organisations has been analysed below, to highlight the breadth and depth of such engagement.

The funding application processes often truncate or ignore the very richness of the community sector contribution, and the immense trust between citizens and community organisations that is neither codified nor codifiable.

At all life stages Tangata Whenua, Community and Voluntary Sector organisations provide support, enable all people to have a voice and coordinate services, advocacy and policy development locally, regionally and nationally. The table below provides a very small sample of the many thousands of organisations in Aotearoa

New Zealand which constitute this vital social network, in order to highlight its breadth and focus.

Table: From Birth To Death: Tangata Whenua Community and Voluntary Sector Organisations

Life Stages	Supporting	Having A voice	Cooperating: Locally	Cooperating: National / International
Birth	Pregnancy Help Inc Plunket Birthright La Leche League NZ Māori Womens Welfare League	Child Poverty Action Coalition Pacific Society for Reproductive Health		Save the Children Fund
Infants'	Akoteu Nasaleti Trust Baby Sitting Club	Parent To Parent NZ Inc		UNICEF
Pre School	Toy Library Kindergarten Association Te Kohanga Reo Māori Womens Welfare League		Ma Te Reo Trust	Te Kohanga Reo National Trust
Children	Out Of School Care Family Start	He Waka Tapu		
Youth	Aronui Ko Huiarau Trust Board Zeal Ngatittoa Sea Scouts NZ Assoc of Adolescent Health & Development	Citizens Advocacy Auckland Inc Action for Children and Youth Aotearoa	Volunteering Auckland	YWCA

	<p>Kapa haka groups</p> <p>Waka ama groups</p> <p>Marae youth groups</p>			
Young Adults	<p>ESOL Home Tutors WEA</p>	<p>NZ Bikers Against Drunk Drivers</p> <p>NZ Union of Students Assoc.</p> <p>Primal Youth</p>	<p>Te Whare Awhina Community Services Centre</p>	<p>Greenpeace</p>
Working Age	<p>Machine Knitting Club</p> <p>Mahi Co. NZ</p> <p>Silverworks NZ Ltd. Arts Access Aotearoa</p> <p>Te Kaiawhina Ahumahi</p> <p>Arahura Charitable Trust</p>	<p>Disabled Persons Assembly</p> <p>Rural Women NZ</p> <p>People's Advocacy Trust</p> <p>Forest & Bird Society</p> <p>NZ Federation of Ethnic Councils</p> <p>NZ Society of Authors (PEN)</p>	<p>Porirua Council of Social Services</p> <p>Residents' Association</p> <p>Mokai Kainga Maori Centre</p> <p>The International Muslim Association of NZ</p> <p>Community Enterprise Network (NZ) Trust</p>	<p>Council For International Development</p> <p>Maori Women's Welfare League Inc.</p> <p>Amnesty International</p>
Retirement Years	<p>Age Concern</p> <p>SeniorNet Kapiti Inc.</p> <p>Marae</p> <p>Kaumatua Groups</p>	<p>Senior Citizens Associations</p>		
Elderly	<p>Meals On Wheels</p> <p>Abbeyfield NZ Inc.</p> <p>Chinese Senior Community Inc.</p> <p>Marae</p> <p>Kaumatua Groups</p>	<p>Grey Power</p> <p>Te Ropu Kaumatua o Waipareira</p> <p>Kaumatua groups generally</p>		
Death	<p>Amitabhe Hospice Service Trust</p> <p>Mary Potter Hospice</p>	<p>Marae</p> <p>Kaumatua groups</p>		

	Lifeline Skylight			
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Note: This selection of Tangata Whenua and Community and Voluntary Organisations was prepared by Pat Hanley for this review

Assessing community organisation experiences of what changes are happening, through Focus groups and Interviews

Questions arising from the extensive literature review formed the basis of interview schedules developed for a series of focus groups with NGO representatives, and a range of key informant interviews. The questions were tested with a pilot focus group in Wellington, and subsequently modified. These open-ended questions and prompts yielded in-depth discussions about peoples' experiences, perceptions and opinions.

Four focus groups were held, and interviews have been conducted with key informants in Auckland and Christchurch.

1. Wellington (trial) – seven participants.
2. Christchurch - ten participants.
3. Auckland 1 – nine participants
4. Auckland 2 – six participants

Participants for the Wellington and Christchurch focus groups comprised attendees at the ANGOA roundtable meetings in September and October. Participants for the Auckland focus groups comprised those who responded to an Auckland-wide email invitation to NGOs. More NGO representatives accepted invitations than were able to attend on the day. Key informants were selected for their ability, involvement in the SOGI and overview of the issues.

A less formal discussion was also held at Kokiri Marae in Lower Hutt with leaders involved with a number of local tangata whenua organisations. Similarly discussions were held with Maori and Pacific leaders in Hamilton and South Auckland.

Culture and function

In the view of the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector, relationship-building and an improved culture of government means a greater level of respect, trust and understanding of community sector principles and practice across an agency. Respect would be evidenced by public servants listening, working to understand, acting on consultative advice, and responding to communications in a timely manner. Knowledge and understandings of tikanga Māori is also seen as imperative.

NGOs reported to the review team that indeed some agencies were working hard to improve their understanding of the sector. In the main, these agencies tended not to be involved with the contract negotiations, but instead to call on NGOs for consultation, advice, and, sometimes, engagement in decision-making. The Department of Internal Affairs is a good example of the positive relationship that can be achieved between the community and an individual government agency.

“The Department of Internal Affairs has always been the part of government that has specialised in community development in the old fashioned sense of the word”

“There is a culture within the Department of Internal Affairs which understands Strengthening Communities. So that created a cultural bridge for us to enable us to have conversations that we were unable to have with [another agency]” (reference, date).

In his study, Geoff Mavromatis (2008) found that the further the agency was from the community, the weaker the relationship. This could not be concluded from the review team’s findings. The Ministry of Social Development is reported to have made significant improvements in the way it negotiates contracts and supports and works alongside community organisations. However, NGOs also report that the slowness of the agency to return communications or follow up on discussions is difficult for the organisation concerned:

”We write to them, it takes about two years to get them to understand [yet] the staff turnover is about every six month’s” (reference, date).

“It took five months to have that meeting [six weeks ago]. We told him our concerns and he agreed to follow it up. We still haven’t heard” (reference, date).

The culture of government agencies is very different from the culture of community and voluntary organisations. Conceptual definitions and understandings are also different when tikanga Māori is involved and requires an understanding of Te Ao Māori. There is a widely held belief within the community sector that within government there are many individuals who have a high degree of empathy with community organisations, despite the culture or practices of their organisations. Sector organisations understand the constraints on these government officials. They are appreciative of their efforts, and see them as vital to making progress.

“Always the shining individual and there are a number, trying to do good despite the difficulties with the machinery of government”.

“On that personal level, a lovely service ethic, that’s why they do their job. But if they were honest they should say it’s not working I should get out. The officials are constrained”.

“Innovation often struggles unless you have someone in government who understands”.

“[The agency] is constantly going through change management, so [we are] constantly making new relationships with new staff and you have to lay out the stuff all the time”.

That community government relationships seem to be enhanced so much by the specific commitment of a variety of individuals whose personal approach enables systems (generally perceived as unfriendly) to function, suggests that there is considerable potential for developing strong and effective relationships with sector organisations.

Whole of government approach

The 2003 Treasury Guidelines for Contracting with Non-Government Agencies for Services Sought by the Crown emphasise the importance of agencies linking with

each other in order to minimise compliance costs and doubling up of contracted services, and suggest integrated contracts. In practice, 'joined-up' government agencies have impacted both positively and negatively on NGOs.

These guidelines had a positive impact in terms of creating a space for engagement with non-funding units thereby strengthening the relationship with the whole agency. They have also strengthened the ability of NGOs to advocate.

“NZAID has become a vehicle of MFAT having relationships with the sector. I see this as a positive model for other government agencies, in separating funding and diplomacy as two different functions. As a consequence we were able to challenge what MFAT was doing”.

However, in some instances, the whole-of-government approach seems poorly managed. The internal disharmony that can result when two government cultures clash, creates barriers to communication and heightened risk aversion:

“They have grouped a few organisations together and called them the MSD Ministry of Social Development). But in all those sectors you still have people working in different agencies they have never been able to integrate”.

“Communities have to go through several points of entry and government agencies don't communicate internally”.

“Intra-government, not being able to talk to itself properly, and this is reflected in a risk averse approach with us”.

”When I do spend time around these people, the level of inter-Ministry rivalry and disharmony is palpable. Which isn't good for our relationships with government if they've not got their own ducks in a reasonable semblance of order”.

As government has increasingly placed emphasis on being joined-up, this has often been reflected in a growth in numbers of government personnel, rather than a streamlined government presence at community sector meetings.

From the perceptions of the community sector, the government commitment to “give priority to breaking down 'silos' and establishing coordinated, inter-sectoral policies and programmes” has not been realised. The sector seems to have experienced little benefit from this initiative.

The Treaty of Waitangi

There seems to be general agreement that the Treaty should run parallel to all the commitments set out in the Statement. However, some review participants expressed concern at the way they were 'made to fit with the government' (rather than a government-level respect and accommodation of Maori ways and needs). There is a danger with trying to fit cultural concepts for indigenous and Pacific peoples into a western policy framework. And the question needs to be asked as to how such values can be sustained and supported in a contemporary policy process. Those involved in policy development need to undergo professional development to align their professional decision-making with Māori and Pacific ways of seeing and

understanding. In this way policy makers can endeavour to make western policy frameworks fit Māori or Pacific frameworks. (Morrison and Vaioleti, 2008)

A retreat from the Treaty since 2001 is perceived to have impacted on public sector risk aversion. Respondents cited the 2004 Orewa speech, calling for an end to "race-based" policies, and the later removal of the Closing the Gaps policy and of Treaty clauses from health and disability contracts as examples of this.

"We had a community-government forum...There was funding in the budget and had been approved by the Cabinet the year before but the Minister refused – the Treaty was the problem. In my experience, the bureaucrats will go so far but that's it. As they think the Minister is comfortable with. The Ministers are running a bit scared since the Orewa speeches".

"The Community Employment Group within the Ministry of Labour was an agency that was particularly effective in working with Maori and Pacific peoples' organisations. However when it ran into trouble, the so called Hip-Hop affair, it was axed. No attempt was made by the Minister to defend the agency. This was widely seen within the sector as verging on racism. It was among the most innovative government agencies and therefore took risks which other government agencies wouldn't go near. Innovation requires risks but this is not acceptable in the current environment".

Many Māori organisations want to see more substantive acknowledgement and commitment to the Treaty relationship, noting that *"there is an increasing tendency to invisibilise Treaty of Waitangi issues and other issues relevant to Māori and replace it with terms of equity and diversity. Attention to issues impacting on Pacific peoples are treated in similar fashion"*. (Morrison and Vaioleti, 2008). Internal capacities of institutions still need developing to address Māori and Pacific educational advancement. The current Ka Hikitia Strategy put out by the Ministry of Education (2008) states that everyone shares responsibility for Māori educational success and that the Ministry itself needs to step up its system performance for Māori. The priorities for action are:

- Strong leadership
- More confident people working closely with Māori
- Increased accountability for outcomes
- Using and acting on evidence of what makes the greatest difference for Māori.

Participation in decision-making

The government's commitment to "sharing good practice, guidelines, and training" first appeared in the "good practice" and "good funding" websites established by the OCVS. Few participants in the review of the Statement, however, had visited these sites and some were unaware that they existed. Sector estimates of levels of engagement with different agencies showed that, on average, involvement in government decision-making:

- took up 10 percent or less of participatory activities
- around 10 percent was at the level of consultative advice (being asked for input on specific issues), and

- between 10 percent and 90 percent of sector involvement with government decision-making involved participation from a greater distance (such as making submissions, offering opinions, and commenting on developed policy).

Most NGO participation in decision-making, therefore, is at the level of advice. NGOs also reported, however, that particular government agencies or divisions within agencies were often very consultative. These included the Ministry of Social Development and in particular, Children, Young Persons and their Families; the Families Commission; the Department of Internal Affairs; NZAID; the Ministry for the Environment; the Tertiary Education Commission; Te Puni Kokiri; and the Ministry of Health.

Overall, however, the comments are inconclusive. Where some organisations had had very frustrating experiences with particular agencies, others had found the same agencies to be very helpful. Consultation was reported to be increasing:

“I think there has been a surge in the number of pockets within government that are trying to draw in community views and consult with us. It seems to me there have been quite a lot of public servants genuinely attempting to engage more and to hear community views”.

As suggested earlier, levels of participation may be influenced by the function of the relationship between the parties (funding and/or advice). Certainly, reports of good relationships and higher levels of participation are more generally associated with non-contractual relationships.

“The Department of Internal Affairs’ fantastic friendly, available people... The first person you talk to will have the answer or they will sort it out. I’ve never had such good service - so you don’t get frustrated. And also they do training”.

The concerns of the Ministry of Social Development to raise participation may be found in an OCVS report on agency engagement entitled *More Than Talk* (December, 2008). This was written in consultation with other government agencies and a reference group comprising members of the community and voluntary sector

Many Māori viewed their input as essential if Māori perspectives were to be considered at all, although personal time and resources were often stretched. The failure of government to acknowledge the costs to NGOs of consultation is a common concern across the sector. Some NGOs are happy with their level of input into government, and appreciated their ability to sit on government consultation bodies. These NGOs saw engagement at the level of advice as a significant and empowering achievement:

”Because we work with a lot of community groups, voluntary groups across the board on literacy, we sit on advisory committees, [government agency] we make sure we run it”.

”In order to get our message across, we are quite active in the [X] network. And we have community people sitting on these government groups”.

We actually have to be at the table otherwise there is no acknowledgement sometimes that we even exist.

It was difficult, however, for NGOs to be certain of the impact of their advice on policy development, as there was usually no feedback from the agency. Examples of estimated influence on policy were cited including: the second mental health policy; the government monitoring of poker machines; the government decision not to invest in companies involved in arms manufacture and cluster munitions; and the development of the National Disability Strategy.

Inclusion and control

Some in the community and voluntary sector were less convinced that the government approach to participation was as inclusive or sincere as it seemed. They pointed to the low level of participation generally available to them. According to Simon-Kumar (2008), a prominent feature of contemporary public policy in New Zealand is the emphasis on practices that emphasise relationship building, such as, consulting and networking with stakeholders, building partnerships. Relational policymaking, by seeking citizen participation into state decision-making, is considered to be particularly beneficial to marginalised groups; these practices are an important vehicle for the inclusion of minority voices into policy and a means for achieving equity within the State. (Simon-Kumar cited in Morrison and Vaiolenti, 2008)

"A bureaucratic approach to participation means getting invited to more meetings. It doesn't necessarily mean that I have more input".

"I get invited to do many things. It feels like somebody's got a box to tick".

"You are welcome to make submissions [but that] is not engagement...What I look for in meetings with Ministers is establishing a sense that we have common ground and whether we can work together".

Many experienced a "top-down" approach of agencies towards the sector. This was disappointing given that many officials seemed to have little or no knowledge of the organisation or sector. The requirement to be informed seemed to be directed only at NGOs. Organisational representatives also felt that the lack of feedback they commonly experienced was disrespectful:

"Right from beginning we managed to develop contacts with the Prime Minister and Cabinet – the government was unprepared and we tried to help, we had meetings at the Beehive, they participated in our monthly teleconferences and sweet words but nothing came out of that...you have put a lot of work into it, briefing papers, submissions. Not once did we have any feedback. Our contact changed every eighteen months or thereabouts, the new contact did not make any comment, no institutional memory, so we had to start again. We have been treated with a culture of contempt".

"We have been involved in child development studies and have been asked by [X] to give input into programmes...exactly the same, we did papers, presentations, nothing came out of it".

Others talked about how controlled or 'stage managed' they had felt by particular agencies:

“We had a group of government, local government and community organisations and we wanted a lot of control of how it was going to be run and we kept coming up against central government bureaucrats...We went ahead with the day but there was a huge amount of disappointment and some anger at the community end in particular about how stage managed it was”.

Community and voluntary organisations discussed how, instead of what they called “micro-managing” practice, agencies might work with them by including them in agency training that NGOs could not afford on their own:

”They are running internal training for their workers, someone from America. It’s a much simpler model. It’s about bringing us along, if we know that that’s what they are wanting to purchase, we need to be in the same waka”.

It seems that a raised level of trust and co-operation between government agencies and the sector, would bring about more open communication and information-sharing as well as the ability of the sector to set its own boundaries on government involvement

Sector capacity issues

Some NGOs attribute their success in (for instance) gaining seats on agency advisory boards and committees, to the strength and long experience of a key person in their own organisation. This suggests that the commitment of individuals within NGOs is as important to engagement as the commitment of individuals within agencies.

The capacity to provide effective advice to government agencies was raised as an issue for NGOs. It was considered important that NGOs build and maintain the capacity to respond to invitations to consult with government, as this would strengthen their influence. Questions were raised about organisational capacity to engage at high levels:

“... if we are not on those [advisory board] groups our voices are not heard, but it’s also about us having the people, capacity to go on those groups”.

According to one organisation, the ability to build capacity within community and voluntary organisations is hampered by the difficulty of retaining staff and volunteers over long periods. When people leave, the relationships they were building with government officials have to be rebuilt.

The financial capacity of NGOs to meet the costs (such as travel and time) of engagement was also raised as an issue. NGO representatives were concerned at agencies’ expectation that the sector should meet these costs from their already stretched resources. Although they generally had no allowance in their contracts to attend meetings and workshops, this engagement was vital. Comments around the costs of engagement include:

”[They run] huge quality assurance workshops they think they are supporting, but a lot of community education providers get no funding whatsoever so can’t go to these”.

”There’s still an expectation that there are people in the community who really love giving up their time to do that so they are often not well resourced”.

Funding

Many community and voluntary sector organisations are small and have limited resources, yet spend a considerable amount of their time and organisational capacity pursuing short term grants to tackle problems that take years to address. This time away from community and voluntary work weakens the sector. As a result of the way that they are funded by government agencies, NGOs have relied increasingly on non-government sources of funding, such as community and philanthropic trusts, personal donations, and payments and fees for service (Robinson and Hanley, 2002 in Tennant et al., 2006).

Sector representatives who did rely on government funding, were generally appreciative that “once you get into government funding rounds it doesn’t normally drop off”. To this extent they seemed to feel secure once a funding relationship had been built up.

A lack of understanding of how volunteering can be different for Maori can have implications for funding agencies, where the tendency is towards a one-size-fits-all approach. Oliver and others highlight:

“...a risk in government officials expecting Maori and Non-Maori voluntary action to be perceived and occur in the same way. What is common to one group may seem strange, counter intuitive or simply wrong to another. (2007: 39)”.

Some NGOs supporting initiatives for Maori reported a better agency understanding of their perspectives and an increased flexibility among agencies. These NGOs appreciated, for instance, the increased flexibility of Te Puni Kokiri and the Tertiary Education Commission around compliance issues and a willingness to recognise intangible outcomes:

There were comments from NGOs who found that on-line applications could provide a useful way for making applications:

“The Department of Internal Affairs’ on-line application has been a huge plus. It will hold information till you can go back to it. And they are not so cumbersome”.

Some reported being treated with disregard because they were able to survive late payments. Other organisations provided examples of how controlled and ignored they felt in their relationship with funding agencies or government agencies, and how vulnerable they were when funding was delayed:

“When we sent in our annual report they lost our report we didn’t hear anything till February. They later found it and totally acknowledged that it was their fault. There was nothing left in the budget to pay the contract - someone had to work without salary for a whole year, which they did, the consolation prize was that they offered us fifty thousand for the next year, but we had to do the same amount of work for that funding (so didn’t gain back what we had lost)”.

In other instances, contracts were rolled over without negotiation, and this caused some anxiety for NGOs in terms of their accountability:

”The Ministry of Health are good in the way they do contracting, except it has been really hard to amend the service specs because of shortage of time. They say let’s roll it over and in the end because of shortage of time we say OK but really in an ideal world we would want to negotiate service specs because we feel that what we’re buying and what we’re delivering need talking about, about how we can get better, people could save money by reporting in a different way. They have not been particularly open about that”.

”I am three months behind getting a contract now, that is supposed to have been in place by 1st July...So we are left using reserves to pay. Do I have something in writing that I am getting this contract? Or do I can this service? So they give me something, months ago I asked for a meeting. They have got no idea what we are doing. I would like to negotiate what they are buying and what they are getting for their money. They are actually disinterested”.

Some organisations also reported a related issue, where agencies encouraged organisations to sign contracts that were overly-demanding, hinting that the organisation would not be required to fulfil more difficult aspects. This practice caused great concern.

Public sector experiences of changes that are happening

Interviews were conducted by the review team with a range of very senior managers in the public sector, many of whom were Chief Executives. The interviews sought information not only about government agency experiences, but also insights into government agency relationships with the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector, and implications for the future.

There exists now a huge variety of relationships between government and the community sector. The review team's assessment is very similar to that of the OCVS review conducted in 2004. Both pieces of work have found an emerging trend involving a shift away from the way in which contracts had become the significant defining element during the 1990s in government relationships with individual community organisations. That shift at a governmental level, however, has not yet been formalised in a way that brings about significant commonalities in the form or extent of change that agencies and community organisations experience. In the absence of such a whole-of-government shift, the influences of most significance on the extent and form of change appear to be:

- The extent to which agencies are partners in cross-agency relationships, such as family violence
- the recency of experiences within specific public institutions of some form of public or political difficulty with contractual situations
- the enduring nature of the community organisations involved in the relationship
- the leadership contribution and experiences of individual Ministers and Chief Executives
- the leadership capacity within community sector organisations
- the particular ways in which the change has been led within organisations
- the expanding collective capacity of the community sector to highlight and challenge practices that result in disproportionately high compliance costs to community organisations
- the incapacity of most public sector organisations to effectively manage through central-managed processes (common to commercial contracts) the scale and complexity of contracts they have established in a genuinely constructive manner,
- strong recognition now (seen in the Treasury advice to government agencies in their relations with the community) of the inability of complex and punitive contracts to encapsulate the unique motivation and richness of information that community organisations can have about their communities, and the contribution they bring to their visibility and voice

- the changing expectations upon Maori in their continuing relations with the government
- the success of Maori in developing holistic services, with quality outcomes and moving towards a potential based and future focussed approach (Te Puni Kokiri website, 2009).
- the visibility with which some top-level community-government engagements take place, most particularly Treaty settlements

The dominance and intensity of the contractual approaches adopted from the 1980s meant that contracts and contract management had rapidly become highly standardised, leaving little room for judgment, and, therefore, mechanising the fundamental relationships of government with the community sector.

As government has sought to move past this contractual straightjacket, it has had to grapple iteratively with a multiplicity of variations on these earlier practices. Many of the practices reinforced the reliance on contracts. The autonomy of government agencies and institutions also contributed to great variety in the ways that were embodied in standard practices. Initiatives to bring some consistency to how the community sector relates to government will need to span strategic, managerial and operational processes, and much of this consistency cannot arise from how government agencies and agencies operate at present.

As well as the rather mechanistic contracts that are prevalent across government agencies, there is now a huge variety of approaches to contracting. There are, for example, the relationship-dominated output-focused contracts of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Different again is the Ministry of Social Development's focus on assessing outcomes rather than outputs, involving transferring the management and oversight of contracts to local staff. *Pathways to Partnership* is the culmination of this shift in MSD. Te Puni Kokiri has adopted a similar approach. The developments within these particular Ministries provide a rich mix of answers to what government as a whole needs to do to give practical effect to the intentions of Ministers articulated in the *Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship*.

Common elements of these approaches are:

1. movement from annual renewal of contacts to multi-year terms
2. identifying relevant outcome-based performance measures
3. limiting reporting obligations on governance matters (including the provision of annual reports)
4. within-year reporting, with feedback
5. local staff from government agencies leading the engagement in contract negotiation and oversight
6. collective agreement on the setting of standards and processes

7. sole responsibility for performance monitoring of multi-agency agreements resting with one lead government agency, and
8. regular engagement with leaders of community organisations at the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive levels of government agencies.

The community-government relationship

The tension between the collaboration necessary for effective service provision to individuals and their families, and the potentially combative nature of advocacy varies with the nature of the subject, the communities of interest, and perhaps personalities and experiences of those involved. This has been reflected in:

- continued adaptation of institutional forms within the community sector to optimise potential success in state contract arrangements, with their preference for nation-wide bodies, and some separation of advocacy and information from service provision
- occasional developments in cross-organisational links and bodies in the voluntary sector, including single purpose committees and bodies, for example:
 - Tangata Whenua Community and Voluntary Sector Research Centre with over 300 organisations including tertiary institutions participating.
 - ComVoices, a collaboration of 19 organisations to enhance media relationships
 - Community Central involving organisations using the web as a shared resource base
- Some successful approaches to organisational collaboration and commonality of practice across government agencies. Where this has occurred, it has involved:
 - simplification of contracts, depending on the scale of activity and extent of past relationships with the provider
 - local management of relationships and contracts
 - regular Chief Executive or other senior executive contact with the sector leaders
 - training of government agency staff in contract management, on a broad scale
 - role of relationship manager with community sector recognised in posts
 - willingness to include intangible outcomes especially in relation to outcomes determined by Māori
 - working in true partnership with Māori/iwi
 - willingness to learn from successful experiences of other government agencies (Justice and MSD)

- responsibility for monitoring left to the lead contract agency
- contracting agency giving leadership to exchanges of good practice across community organisations in similar situations
- contract management being interactive, and regular feedback focused on continuous improvement and learning
- no requirement to provide information not directly related to the contract.
- willingness to vary contracts as situations change, or experiences increase
- strengthening the evidence base for managing contracts in the face of reducing compliance costs. (detail does not mean control).

Focal points for further progress in managing the tension between government and community organisations

Further progress necessitates some change across government, to respond to the issues below:

- failure of some government agencies to collaborate around building a consistent, trusting, open, respectful and robust relationship with the NGO sector;
- failure of some agencies to involve the community sector in policy development and evaluation, thereby increasing the problems in policy implementation and heightening the policy tensions at the time of contract specification for programme delivery;
- undervaluing of the unique information resources that community organisations gain through their relationships within the community; this is especially visible in services such as food banks, and budget advice;
- failure of many agencies to truly embrace the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and an understanding of tikanga Māori
- unnecessary compliance costs on community organisations including unduly onerous legal processes relating to contracting and contract periods which are for a period which is too short, generally where central oversight is extensive or ignorant of local delivery
- community organisations having to tolerate a huge number of small variations in basic processes and standard practices adopted by individual government agencies, often citing different interpretations of the same Treasury or Audit instructions. Examples are mileage rates or wage rates. Because the issue seems small from a government perspective, and central authority in government is minimal on operational issues, little is initiated to standardise cross-government approaches, and
- failure to engage on concerns or make information transparent when it influences the government agency view of the service provided, or the organisation.
- Contract management needing to be relational so there is not necessarily much difference between those who are 'relationship managers' and those who are 'contract managers'. The two are so intertwined that they need to be the same - involving senior people with experience and clout. A contract should just be about capturing the relationship - what each party will do, why, and agreed standards etc.

Some progress involves both government and the community sector, to reduce:

- frequent changes in personnel in both government and the community sector

- poor induction and training for new government sector staff with the responsibility for the sector, and
- limited migration of people between the government and NGO sectors as a means of building respect for each other.

Some progress necessitates change in the community sector, as outlined below:

- greater advantage could be taken of the size and scope of the community sector through pooling resources to publish objective information about the level and scope of community sector services. That information could lead to rich insights into the nature of New Zealand society and the impact of changes in well-being. Community organisations have information that signals change in our society well before many official measures, and on matters which are often difficult to find out about otherwise.
- increasing build-up of managerial skills within the community sector
- decreasing the turnover of key people in relationships, which means that agreements made in discussion may not be able to be upheld later, and
- community organisations avoiding commencing engagement with a government agency with a general critique of government failures outside the brief of government agency representatives.

Change is ongoing

We have an incomplete understanding of the evolution of the sector, and perspectives on how its nature and relationships with government might be evolving, partly because of: the complexity of society, government fragmentation of people-focused services, and the limited nature and capacity of single programme solutions.

The past evolutionary path of innovation in support services from voluntary to state service has been well documented. This path changed but did not halt over a decade ago, as contracting for social services grew rapidly. More recently, some complex and comprehensive arrangements in which the voluntary sector has a very high involvement have been preferred by the state. This is because of the perceived significance of the impact on the performance of interventions, with less emphasis on their comparative immediate cost per target person. Making a sustained reduction to family violence has been one strong example of this type of this shift. Another example is prisoner rehabilitation.

The growth of the sector has seen skill levels increase among paid staff, volunteers and governance volunteers. This has contributed to more informed advocacy, greater understanding of policy and a reduced tolerance for unworkable programmes and initiatives .

There have been many influences on the continuing rise in advocacy and information, with environment, consumer affairs, health, animal and human rights and disability among most prominent focal points. These influences may be strengthening, and perhaps bring further uncertainty and tension to the government-community relationship.

Treasury and Audit New Zealand fiscal management and audit requirements can discourage the development of a range and variety of arrangements. What is clear is that practice requires more than articulation of standards.

What is much less apparent is the need for critical gatekeepers (such as lawyers and finance officers) to be well-skilled in how financial arrangements fit relationships that are strongly founded on trust. A focus on case law that supports the development of arrangements based on trust would accelerate the learning here.

Community organisations can find themselves in a highly dysfunctional relationship with a government agency, for which no fair resolution seems possible. Few community organisations, however, have the resources to pursue matters through the courts. An alternative is for all government agencies to establish a disputes resolution process as part of good practice and to use the Office of the Ombudsman for disputes resolution.

Examples of evolving practice

- where joint arrangements exist to fund activities, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage ensures that only one party oversees contract compliance. In addition, the Ministry found that exposing its thinking to the organisations involved, as information was gathered and understanding developed, brought a greater degree of trust to relationships, however naturally difficult they were
- the Ministry of Social Development manages its community relationships and contracts through regional and local managers, reducing the contract compliance costs and increasing the value of informal information in evaluation compared to performance measures
- the Ministry of Education has sought to empower and support schools in their community relationships, instead of developing separate links
- The Ministry of Education has a number of government and iwi partnerships which are working to the mutual satisfaction of both parties
- The Department of Conservation and iwi jointly manage of resources e.g. the Rotorua lakes
- the Ministry of Education also has a range of contracts, from a one page contract, which are primarily focused on the relationship with the Ministry. Reporting is simple, every three months, and involves feedback, and
- the Ministry of Health has a six-monthly sector roundtable, with the Minister as a regular speaker and the Director General and senior staff as

participants, thereby confirming in a practical way the statements made by the Ministry regarding its recognition of the importance of the sector.

- The Office of Disability Issues maintains strong working relationships with key disability organisations as a basis for the development and evaluation of the government's Disability policies.

A place for personal leadership

The capacity of government agencies to move towards good practice seems to be highly dependent on the impetus provided by the Chief Executive. Systemic change was found to necessitate many elements of change, including:

- selecting people with aptitude and the capacity to develop skills
- sustaining people in posts long enough for relationships to be mutually beneficial
- periodic interaction at highest levels: with the Chief Executive or the Minister
- the establishment of Māori and Pacific advisory groups
- the capacity to exchange experiences and practices
- training of all in decision-making or advisory roles
- development of communication tools for sharing information that both government and the sector have in common, across government agencies and the entire NGO sector
- support for the development of accountability standards that enables the community groups to set out their results and achievements in such a way that government agencies learn more about them and their value to their users and to society
- support for development of community sector leaders
- coherence in systems across the government agency, and conformance with wider public sector standards where they exist, and
- training in contract management should be one part of training in relationship management
- awareness of diverse governance arrangements within the tangata whenua community and voluntary sectors
- awareness of expectations placed on financial and legal officers
- appointing relationship managers with clearly defined responsibilities.

Path ahead

In 2001, the Report of the Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party had an overarching recommendation for the Government to establish a high level, highly mandated body such as a Treaty of Waitangi Commission to consider the Crown/iwi relationship. One of the immediate goals for such a Commission would be to consider issues such as direct Crown funding to iwi/Māori health and social service providers, enabling Māori to determine their own needs, service responses and accountability measures. This recommendation however was not enacted but ought to be reconsidered.

We can expect further development and assessment of government- community relationships, including new statements and policies or major programmes (for example Pathways to Partnership). These will influence expectations and delineate aspirations.

With the new Government elected from November 2008, it is likely that there will be further development and assessment of government - community relationships, including new statements and policies or major programmes. All will influence expectations and delineate aspirations. For example, a recent initiative led by the Ministry of Social Development is Pathways to Partnership.

As long as the NGOs need to build up trust and respect in order to continue to influence the setting of aspirations for community-government relations, then there are particular milestones which would highlight the achievement of change. These are discussed below.

1. Government's partnership with the community and voluntary sector is recognised as being key to achieve governments goals and a better NZ.
2. The community and voluntary sector would have strengthened the value of the information that it accumulates through local and regional experiences. The most likely means of doing this is through the collective support of a small, professionally resourced and adequately funded NGO, fully independent of government. An NGO of this sort (e.g. Tangata Whenua Community and Voluntary Sector Research Centre) would undertake research, and bring together the extensive and rich information that community organisations gather through their activities. Such an NGO would have no advocacy role, but would publish information from NGO experiences that had relevance to public issues of concern. It would have the Treaty of Waitangi as its foundation.
3. Amongst a great variety of continually changing NGOs, there would be a significant, evolving but entrenched base of well established NGOs, who brought a high measure of authority and trust to their work and their insights into society.
4. A high degree of collaboration would be found among NGOs that work on common social concerns, or within a common community. The way that the government conducts its relationships across community organisations would generally heighten such collaboration, rather than dilute it. The collaboration

might influence some amalgamation of NGOs, as well as an ever increasing level of collaboration in common services and expertise.

5. The Crown/Iwi and Crown/Māori relationship will produce quality outcomes and high achievement which is consistent with Māori aspirations
6. There would be a regular exchange of staff between government and community organisations, and a growing number of people who can walk in both worlds. Public programmes would be evaluated by the information that community sector partners can provide, and the development of policy would be informed by the experiences and judgement of those whose engagement on a day-to-day basis with citizens dominates the support enabled by public funding and private endeavour.
7. The relationships would reflect a maturity that all partners bring, in their awareness of the commitments and contributions made, and the particular nature of the enabling institutions and the obligations that flow from them. The self determination of the sector would be accepted by the government, but recognised by the sector itself as bringing complexity and uncertainty which may need to be offset in other ways.
8. The extraordinary scale of the relationships that NGOs have with people in the community throughout their life course would be recognised through the ways that they would play a significant part in the information base used to develop policy and make judgements about the nature, evolution and quality of initiatives and services and their delivery, particularly adding to the understanding we have of their impact on the people they are focused on.
9. The scale of the NGO sector would be recognised in the cost incurred by the sector in obtaining resources, and in the way that high cost infrastructure and professional services were shared across the sector.
10. The relationship between government and the community sector would be recognised as a national asset, and the maintenance and development of the relationship a matter of importance to community and government leaders
11. Advocacy would be respected as an essential means of exposing policy or programme failures or shortcomings, giving voice to the most marginalised and identifying emerging issues and concerns.

Conclusion

The tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector in New Zealand contributes significantly to economic, social and cultural well-being of New Zealanders. The scale, breadth and variety of engagement highlight an extraordinary richness in our society, underpinning the trust and respect that is essential for economic efficiency, social cohesion, family formation and community relations. There is a lot we know about and do for others without intrusion or regimentation.

The special attributes of the community sector include its extra-ordinary motivation, a willingness to give voice, and opportunity for engagement, in matters that involve

trust, aspirations and fears of people. In areas of significant change, the community and voluntary sector can bring resilience where uncertainty prevails. For example, some 25 percent of health sector activity is through NGOs.

The community sector has a mix of combative and collaborative faces, uniquely juxtaposed in ways that often seem threatening to those whose see their role as ensuring “no surprises”, and wishing for no unseemly challenge to the received wisdom of the day. That mix varies by organisation, reflecting personality, experiences and aspirations, as well as a different lens on the great variability of concerns people have.

The advocacy positions of the community sector cannot be separated from the delivery of services or custodial activities, yet they often seem to surprise or give offence to those who expect gratitude on account of having a place in the chain distributing public funds throughout the community. The government agencies who have reconciled themselves to this combination of relationships seem more likely to have relationships that include contracts rather than have relationships set by the community and voluntary organisations.

Government too has a variety of faces. Ministers with deep concern are often unable to influence quite simple government agency processes that demean or aggravate, regardless of how limited the processes are in assuring the quality of spending and accountability. Government appears to lack the levers for dealing with community organisations with one face, process or obligation.

Ironically, just as the community sector would like a greater commonality in relationship management across government agencies, DHBs and other public sector agencies see benefits from greater collaboration within the community sector. Examples exist of small towns having several community and voluntary sector organisations doing almost the same work, yet funded by different government agencies following several different processes.

Government funding arrangements have often ignored concerns fundamental to effective relationships with a rigidity of contract formation and specification. The funding arrangements have had somewhat perverse effects, as a focus on national contracts has encouraged the reshaping of many organisations in the community and voluntary sector.

On the other hand, the uncoordinated nature of the contract arrangements among government agencies has meant that in many areas and locations the processes involved in the competition for funds has diluted pressures to collaborate and combine. This fragmentation of activities has steered commercial and community sector bodies to compete.

The fragmentation has diluted the capacity of the community and voluntary sector to react to emerging concerns. It has transferred a good share of community and voluntary sector activity into government relations and short term contract management, at a level of control which can be quite inefficient. This can impede employment arrangements (short-term contracts reduce the certainty of longer-term employment) and asset management as well as long term planning. Most particularly, the limited resources available for the governance of organisations becomes further stretched, and less able to focus on wider strategic issues facing organisations as the context evolves.

A further concern is that the high transaction costs are a reflection of a low trust culture.

The past decade has seen continual change in the government's relationships with the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector. There has been little oversight at a whole-of-government level of this evolution, which has often been stimulated by new leadership or programmes in government agencies. The impact of this uncoordinated change on small community sector organisations can be significant. Small and large organisations have had to be able to regularly assess how to react through the scope and scale of their organisations, their capacity to invest and assure quality, and their capacity to assure redress. Where governance is already stretched, the absence of any cohesiveness in the relationships of government as a whole to the community sector may well have impeded rather than stimulated the responsiveness of the sector.

The achievement of cross-agency consistency could also be enhanced by the establishment of a common disputes resolution process enabling NGOs to refer unresolved disputes to the Ombudsman's Office. If such a process were established and if the outcomes of disputes were able to be publically assessed, cross-agency practices could be improved. Given that government has required the banking and insurance, electricity and gas and the telecommunications industries to establish free and independent disputes resolutions services, it seems that the same discipline ought to be applied to government agencies in their dealings with the community sector.

In the current system of public sector organisation in New Zealand, achieving cross-agency consistency of practice is more likely to result from an intensive focus on exchanges of good practice at executive, managerial and operational levels across organisations. This might be complemented by adherence to an evaluation framework for self-assessment by both public sector bodies and their Ministers, or by those within the community sector with whom they have relationships of high intensity. Such a framework would bring transparency to the expectations on government agencies, as well as a coherent focus for the continued challenge faced in community-government relations, and accountability in their management.

Terms of reference for the assessment of the Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship

Purpose of the Association of Non-Government agency's (ANGOA) Assessment of the Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship

To determine, from the perspective of the tangata whenua and the community and voluntary sector:

- the extent to which public service staff demonstrate "a good understanding of the values, governance arrangements and working realities" (SOGI) of the sector and
- the extent to which public service staff have implemented the six "government commitments" and further,
- the next steps in achieving "an improved community- government relationship".

Which will therefore:

- *"enable mutual interests to be achieved through co-operation, respecting the independence of community, voluntary and iwi/Māori organisations*
- *recognise and respect the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi*
- *demonstrate effective two way communication*
- *involve leadership within the community sector and from government ministers*
- *acknowledge and support the positive role played by umbrella, national and strategic collective bodies*
- *embrace innovation and creativity*
- *respect and recognise cultural diversity are founded on public accountability and appropriately flexible good practice."*

Statement of Government Intent, 2001

ANGOA will employ a three member Leadership Team led by Len Cook, former Chief Government Statistician, to carry out the Assessment. The Leadership Team will include one person who is of tangata whenua descent. All members of the Leadership Team will have a sound understanding of the machinery of government and familiarity with the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector. The Leadership Team will prepare a report for ANGOA and the Government setting out the findings of the Assessment.

The Assessment will utilize facilitated, focused discussions with sector leaders and key informants from across the sector as the critical aspect of the Assessment. Focused discussions will be held in a range of communities

A literature review will be undertaken and analysed from the perspective of issues identified from within the sector. This will be supplemented by information and views obtained through recent forums and workshops at which the SOGI has been discussed within the sector.

The Assessment will include a questionnaire to be circulated throughout the tangata whenua, community and voluntary sector networks to enable a wide range of interested individuals and organisations to participate in the Assessment. As the survey is not intended to be entirely representative of sector voices, the survey results will be regarded as a supplementary rather than primary source for the Assessment.

The results of the focused discussions, literature review analysis and survey findings will be provided to the Leadership Team who will then prepare their report and recommendations.

ANGOA's National Coordinating Committee will be responsible for all aspects of the Assessment including selection of all staff and consultants, approval of a project work plan, provision of progress reports and financial management and administration. The Committee will also be responsible for reporting to government as required during the project and the provision of a final, approved report to government and the sector.

Ministry of Education – one page agreement for services

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tahuhu o te Matauranga

AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES

1. **Purpose of Agreement** – the parties acknowledge the purpose of the Agreement is to provide the following services:

- Purpose/Outcome
- Roles
- Timeline
- Cost (hourly, maximum hours fixed cost)
- Reports (if necessary)

The Provider shall provide the services to a standard acceptable to the Ministry. The Provider shall comply with the Ministry's behaviour standards as reflected in the Ministry's Code of Conduct and the Ministry's security requirements, health and safety policies and procedures, and protected disclosures policy.

2. **Payments** – Payments will be made within 20 working days following acceptance by the Ministry of satisfactory delivery of the services and receipt by the Ministry of an invoice. The Ministry reserves the right to make part payments when the delivery of services is unsatisfactory

3. **Disputes** – Both parties shall take all reasonable steps to resolve any dispute that may arise in connection with this Agreement. If the dispute remains unresolved after discussion or mediation, then the dispute must be submitted to arbitration in accordance with the Arbitration Act 1996.

4. **Confidentiality** – All information relating to or arising out of this Agreement should be kept confidential.

5. **Intellectual Property** – All intellectual property rights (including copyright) in all works and material produced under this agreement ("new works") shall remain the property of the Ministry. The contractor shall respect the intellectual property rights of others (including the Ministry) while performing under this agreement.

6. **Monitoring and Evaluation** – While the Ministry will be the final decision-maker regarding the quality of the Services, the quality of these Services will be discussed between both parties.

7. **Variation** – The Parties may by mutual agreement in writing vary this Agreement and any such variation will then form part of this Agreement.

8. **Termination** – Either party may terminate this Agreement on giving the other party written notice of termination.

Signed this day of 20 by [insert Name and Title] Ministry of Education

Signed this day of 20 by for and on behalf of the [insert name of Provider] by [insert Name and title] Appendix 3

Methodology

Overview

This assessment presents and interprets comments made during four forums held with people who self-selected to contribute to this review. The comments are not presented because they can summarise all the views held within the community and voluntary sector, but because the comments separately and together draw attention to existing concerns of some significance. They often pinpoint an aspect of a concern already seen in existing reviews, or bring another perspective to it. Such comments are inevitably selected somewhat subjectively, and this is modified by the consistency of the questioning process and the completeness of recording process. The questions used in the forums are listed in the report. The groups represented by the forum members have not been analysed in order to compare this with the population of voluntary sector organisations.

Key informant interviews

In fifteen public sector organisations, interviews were held with senior executives, usually the Chief Executive. Government agencies direct only part of the relationships that involve government and the community sector. Many involve District Health Boards, schools, agencies such as the Tertiary Education Commission and SPARC. Local government has many relationships. The findings of this assessment may well apply to these sorts of bodies, but they should also be specifically included in any future study.

Web-based study

A web-based survey of people in community organisations, selected from a list of those bodies was carried out. The response rate was poor, but not atypical of what is possible in this sort of study. As with the forums, although the results cannot be said to represent the population of people in community organisations, the issues, concerns and insights reflect views within the sector of some significance.

Forums

Four focus groups were held in 2008 (as listed below), and interviews were subsequently conducted with four key informants in Auckland and Christchurch.

- 9. Wellington (trial) – seven participants.
- 10. Christchurch - ten participants.
- 11. Auckland 1 – nine participants
- 12. Auckland 2 – six participants

Questions arising from the literature review formed the basis of interview schedules developed for a series of focus groups with NGO representatives, and a range of key informant interviews. The questions were tested with a pilot focus group in Wellington, and subsequently modified. These open-ended questions and prompts are yielding in-depth discussions about people's experiences, perceptions, and opinions.

Participants of the Wellington and Christchurch focus groups comprised attendees at the ANGOA Roundtable meetings in September and October 2008. Participants of the Auckland focus groups comprised those who responded to an Auckland-wide

email invitation to NGOs. More NGO representatives accepted invitations and were able to attend on the day. Key informants were selected for their ability, their involvement in the Statement of Government Intentions, and their overview of the issues. Both focus groups and key informant interviews are ongoing.

References

A comprehensive review of the community sector was carried out for ANGOA by Dr Chris Holland; it is available on the ANGOA website: www.angoa.org.nz. The references in this report are listed in that review:

Christine Holland. Report on the ANGOA Focus Groups. October, 2008 (unpublished).

Two major contributions to information on the Sector were published by the Committee for the Study of the New Zealand Non-profit sector and the Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector in 2008:

Margaret Tennant, Mike O'Brien and Jackie Sanders. *The History of the Non-profit Sector in New Zealand*. Wellington: Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector, 2008.

Jackie Sanders, Mike O'Brien, Margaret Tennant, S.Wojciech Sokolowski and Lester M. Salamon. *The New Zealand Non-profit sector in Comparative Perspective*. Wellington: Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector, 2008.

Discussion of the value added by tangata whenua, community and voluntary organisations was sourced from:

The *VAVA Counting for More* report, which is available on the NZ Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisation's website at: www.nzfvwo.org.nz/files/VAVA2_Summary-Report.pdf, together with the full report and project methodology at the following URL:

www.nzfvwo.org.nz/files/VAVAreport_full.pdf.