

**Integrated Service Delivery and  
Regional Co-ordination:  
A Literature Review**

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## 1. Introduction

On 17 December 2001, Cabinet noted [CAB Min (01) 39/14] that the Ministerial Advisory Group on the Review of the Centre had identified three main areas for attention in relation to the current public management system:

- achieving better integrated, citizen-focused service delivery, particularly where complex social problems are dealt with by multiple agencies, making sure the system is focused on the results that citizens and governments want in terms of outcomes and services;
- addressing fragmentation and improving alignment, particularly through a stronger emphasis on outcomes; developing more effective, higher trust means of working together, harnessing technology, and re-examining the large number of agencies and votes and the tendency to emphasise vertical accountabilities rather than whole-of-government interests; and
- enhancing the people and culture of the State sector, particularly building a strong and unifying sense of values, staff and management development, and meaningful opportunities for collective engagement in organisational decisions.

To respond to these issues, Cabinet agreed to several streams of work, including a series of initiatives to improve the integration of service delivery. One of these initiatives is the Regional Co-ordination workstream, which aims to promote Integrated Service Delivery by enhancing and building on successful regional co-ordination and collaboration models between central government and local government, community agencies and Māori.

The Regional Co-ordination project is made up of two components, a *Literature Review* and qualitative research with stakeholders involved in Regional Co-ordination.

### 1.1 Objectives

The aim of the *Literature Review* is to synthesise New Zealand and international literature which:

- explores and defines concepts related to Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination, including such concepts as collaboration, whole of government, joined-up government, inter-sectoral collaboration, inter-agency co-operation and partnership;
- identifies the types of issues (or desired outcomes) that provide the impetus for Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination;
- explores the evidence that Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination improve outcomes for people;
- explores the evidence that Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination meet the needs, interests and priorities of Māori; and

- identifies key success factors or general principles for the operation of Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination.

## 1.2 Methodology

Literature was sourced from:

- material supplied by the Ministry of Social Development;
- a search of the Internet;
- material held by the author; and
- a search of databases undertaken by staff at the MSD Information Centre. The databases used were:

Information Centre Catalogue, National Bibliographic Database, Social Science Index, Sociological Abstracts, Econ Lit, Social Work Abstracts, Australian Family and Society Abstracts, and Index New Zealand.

Search terms used in various combinations were:

Inter-agency  
Inter-sectoral  
Inter-departmental  
Multi-organisational  
Cross-cutting  
Cross-sectoral  
Integrated  
Joined-up  
Joint provision  
Joint services  
Multidisciplinary  
Whole of government  
Interorganisational-relations  
Collaboration  
Partnership.

In the *Social Sciences Index* the subject term Inter-organisational-relations was used in combination with: (human-services\* or network-analysis\* or social-networks\* or public-admin\* or child-welfare\* or public-service\* or public-policy\* or local-government\*). Where necessary, searches were limited to material published since 1995.

Most of the literature comes from New Zealand, England and Europe, with smaller amounts from Australia, the United States and Canada. The literature is particularly strong on Integrated Service Delivery and partnership arrangements, usually for service delivery as opposed to planning. It is relatively strong on area-based

initiatives, which again focus on service or programme delivery, but weak on Regional Co-ordination, which does not appear to be a common strategy for either strategic planning or improving service delivery, other than in the form of location-based initiatives. The literature reviewed here focuses strongly on the social services, with modest contributions from the economic and environment sectors. Additional specialist literature searches would be needed to explore the economic and environment sectors in more detail.

This review has been able to draw on several earlier literature reviews, which address specific aspects of the topic. The findings of those reviews have been incorporated into this document without going back to the original sources.

### **1.2.1 The structure of the report**

The report is in seven chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Concepts and definitions
3. Rationales for Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination
4. Evidence that Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination improve outcomes
5. Outcomes for Māori
6. General principles that underpin integrated services and Regional Co-ordination
7. Conclusion

A bibliography is included at the end of the report.

## 2. Concepts and definitions

This chapter reviews the terms and concepts used most often in relation to Regional Co-ordination and integrated social service delivery. The concepts fall into three categories – those concerned with an overall perspective; those concerned with service delivery to individuals and/or their families or to particular groups of people; and those concerned with initiatives focusing on particular locations. In this chapter, the first are called ‘overview concepts’, the second are called ‘service-related concepts’, while the third are called ‘location-related concepts’.

The overview concepts discussed most often are ‘whole of government’, ‘joint working’ or ‘joined-up’ government and inter-sectoral action. Service-related concepts discussed here are: networks, partnerships and inter-agency collaboration, co-ordination and co-operation, Integrated Service Delivery, and delivery mechanisms such as wraparound services, one-stop shops and co-ordinated case management. The location-related concepts that occur most often in the literature are: area-based initiatives; regional development and regional partnerships; and, to a much lesser extent, Regional Co-ordination.

### 2.1 Overview concepts

Overview concepts describe a perspective or approach that can apply to policy, planning and service delivery. However, in most statements the emphasis appears to be on service delivery, with less focus on policy development or strategic planning.

#### 2.1.1 ‘Whole of government’, ‘joint working’ or ‘joined-up’ government

‘Joint working’ and ‘joined-up’ government are broad terms that can refer to joint working across government departments, and/or between the centre and the regions, or they can refer to central government working with the community and voluntary sector or private organisations as well as with local government.

In a report to the House of Commons in Britain, the Comptroller and Auditor General (2001) describes ‘joint working’ or ‘joined-up’ government as:

*The bringing together of a number of public, private and voluntary sector bodies to work across organisational boundaries towards a common goal.*

He notes that ‘joint working’ can involve one or more of the following:

- realigning organisational boundaries – bringing together the whole or parts of two or more organisations to create a new organisation;
- formal partnership – working together by contract, protocol or framework agreement; and/or

- informal partnerships – working together by liaison, consultation or unwritten mutual agreement.

A Cabinet Office paper (Cabinet Office 2001) adds three more options for 'joined-up' working:

- engaging with and involving the public – this might involve joint consultation activities, a shared focus on the customer and a shared customer interface;
- different ways of working with technology and people, which would mean changing and sharing culture and values, making information more accessible to both service providers and the customer; and/or
- accountability and incentives, which can be achieved through policy design, regulation/deregulation and through performance measures and shared outcomes.

The term 'whole of government' generally refers to government agencies working together to establish co-ordinated, inter-sectoral policies and programmes. Two examples of the use of this term in New Zealand are the *Statement of Government Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship* and the *Ministry of Economic Development Briefing to Incoming Ministers 2002* (MED 2002). The latter includes the following statements:

*The promotion of economic growth, and of wider sustainable development, requires a genuinely 'whole of government' approach... MED has been given a leadership role in the implementation of GIF [Growth and Innovation Framework], and also has a wider role in helping to co-ordinate the work of the different departments that impact on business activity in New Zealand. [MED 002:9]*

It is of note that the briefing refers to work with Ministers across the spectrum of 'trade, tourism, research and innovation, and industry and regional development'. There is no mention of the Department of Labour or the social service agencies, including the Ministries of Social Development, Education, Health and Justice, which suggests that the term 'whole of government' is something of a misnomer. The term 'inter-sectoral action' might be more appropriate.

While references to 'whole of government' activity often refer to policy development, references to 'joint working' and 'joined-up' government typically emphasise structures and contractual or organisational arrangements for service delivery, rather than shared involvement in policy-making. Clark (2002) takes up this point, and makes an important distinction between 'joined-up government' and 'joined-up policy'. According to Clark:

*‘Joined-up government’ can be seen as an attempt to enhance structural integration, however ‘joined-up policy’ implies a stronger emphasis on political integration and consensus. Clearly the two are linked and, certainly, the implicit intention of ‘joined-up government’ is that it will lead to more coherent policy-making and implementation (ie political as well as structural) across government as a whole. However, the emphasis remains strongly structural and managerial, and questions remain as to whether or not political integration can be secured with or without ‘joined-up government’ mechanisms. [Clark 2002:107]*

Others support Clark’s view. Australian academic Meredith Edwards (2002) is among those who argue that while governments have given considerable attention to integrating service delivery, they have paid much less attention to the issues in which non-government players might be involved in policy development, and at what stage or stages that should occur. She believes that governments cannot remain as firmly in control of the policy decision-making process as they have in the past and *at the same time* continue to move toward a more facilitative or enabling role:

*The mood is clearly toward non-government players wanting a greater direct involvement in public policy-making. [Edwards 2002:52]*

A recent OECD publication (OECD 2001) makes a similar point, arguing that engaging citizens in policy-making is part of good governance and a sound investment.

*Active participation is regarded as a relationship based on partnership with government, in which citizens actively engage in defining the process and content of policy-making. It acknowledges equal standing for citizens in setting the agenda, proposing policy options and shaping the policy dialogue – although the responsibility for the final decision or policy formulation rests with the government. [OECD 2001:12]*

The paper concludes that where citizens are well-informed and actively consulted, policy decisions and their implementation will be improved.

### **2.1.2 Inter-sectoral action**

Inter-sectoral action is a similarly broad concept. It refers more to *who* should work together than *how* that might be done, and has been particularly promoted by the health sector. Once again, the emphasis appears to be on programmes and services rather than on policy development or strategic planning. The term came to prominence in WHO technical discussions in the early 1950s, and has been re-emphasised in subsequent conferences and papers. The World Health Organization’s Constitution itself states that the Organization shall:

*Promote, in cooperation with other specialized agencies, where necessary, the improvement of nutrition, housing, sanitation, recreation, economic or working conditions and other aspects of environmental hygiene. [WHO 1997]*

The definition of inter-sectoral action on health accepted at the WHO 1997 International Conference on Inter-sectoral Action For Health extends across the social, economic and environmental sectors:

*[Inter-sectoral action is] a recognised relationship between part or parts of the health sector with part or parts of another sector which has been formed to take action on an issue or to achieve health outcomes (or intermediate health outcomes) in a way that is more effective, efficient or sustainable than could be achieved by the health sector working alone. [WHO 1997:3]*

Maskill and Hodges (2001) explicate this definition further in their review of literature on the topic. They note that inter-sectoral action can include: health promotion activities such as community development; community participation, where programmes draw on communities' knowledge, expertise and activities; and advocacy. It can also involve service delivery, such as shared management of the health-related problems of a particular person or cross-referral.

## **2.2 Service-related concepts**

Writers generally distinguish between concepts on the basis of structure, strategic-level policy planning, and operational matters including authority, risk, resources and accountability. Even then there is still some overlap or difference in perception, particularly in relation to collaboration and partnership.

### **2.2.1 Networks**

Networks are often informal arrangements, where participants come together as equals for their shared benefit. They may exist at the governmental level or among community groups. Their structure is usually loose; they often have little authority, and participation in a network usually involves little commitment of resources beyond time, and low levels of risk and accountability. They are frequently used at the strategic policy or planning level. For example, two United States writers offer definitions of networks, with a particular focus on policy networks:

*Networks are structures of interdependence involving multiple organisations or parts thereof, where one unit is not merely the formal subordinate of the others in some large hierarchical arrangement. Networks exhibit some structural stability but extend beyond formally established linkages and policy-legitimated ties. [O'Toole 1997:45]*

*[Networks are] social structures that permit inter-organisational interactions of exchange, concerted action and joint production... For the public manager,*

*such network structures can be formal or informal, and they are typically inter-sectoral, intergovernmental, and based functionally in a specific policy or policy area. [Agranoff and McGuire 1999:20]*

Edwards (2002) suggests that setting up networks around common policy or research or other interests could encourage more integrated government. Agranoff and McGuire (1999) believe that when relationships among network members are established, goals are agreed upon, and operations are fruitful for all concerned, the wide spectrum of expertise and perspectives that comprise a network offers great potential for flexibility and adaptation. They also acknowledge that government agencies can be involved in a number of networks simultaneously. The form and content of such networks can vary depending on the policy area, the specific task to be accomplished and the instruments used to achieve the policy goal. Networks can be vertical and based in traditional intergovernmental links, or horizontal and based in collaboration to establish basic policy strategies and projects.

The concept has already been adopted in New Zealand with the proposal for a joint social sector network involving the Ministries of Health, Education and Social Development to examine how the agencies can maximise outcomes in those areas where the agencies overlap.

### **2.2.2 Collaboration**

The terms 'collaboration' and 'partnership' are often used interchangeably, but in this report they are treated separately. Collaboration is defined more broadly than partnership. Collaboration is always voluntary and rarely includes a contractual arrangement. Agencies may collaborate for planning and policy development, or to facilitate the delivery of services. Bardach (1998) is one of those who favours a broad definition of collaboration, defining it as:

*Any joint activity by two or more agencies that is intended to increase public value by their working together rather than separately. [Bardach 1998:8]*

He adds that the nature of the work agencies do together can be quite varied and it may be intermittent or ongoing. He also acknowledges that there is an inescapable element of subjectivity in deciding what constitutes public value.

O'Looney (1997) makes an additional point in relation to the distinction between 'collaboration' and 'service integration'. He believes that the confusion over terminology sometimes masks confusion in the rationale behind the impetus for change. In his view:

*Although in common usage there is considerable overlap in these terms, analytically speaking, collaboration refers to partnership formation that is*

*believed to bring about change, while service integration refers to specific changes believed to make the system more efficient, effective, and comprehensive. [O’Looney 1997:32]*

### 2.2.3 Partnership

Definitions of partnership can refer to a formal arrangement between two or more groups to carry out a particular task, or to a legal contract between two parties, usually to deliver a specific service. Partnerships for strategic policy or planning purposes appear to be less common.

The Health Canada definition below is an example both of a broad approach, and of the overlap between the terms ‘collaboration’ and ‘partnership’. Health Canada describes a partnership as:

*A voluntary collaboration between two or more parties that agree to work co-operatively towards shared objectives and in which there is:*

- *shared authority for, and responsibility and management of the work*
- *joint investment of resources (eg time, work, funding, material, expertise, information)*
- *shared liability or risk-taking and accountability for the partnered project*
- *collaboration on common causes*
- *mutual benefits, often referred to as ‘win-win’ situations. [Health Canada 1996:2]*

Erhardt’s (2000) definition, in his review of models of community-government partnerships, is an example of the narrower approach:

*Partnership is where a contractual arrangement of some kind exists, with shared commitment to achieving agreed objectives, focused effort in a particular locality, and shared responsibility and active participation by partner agencies. It does not include a simple funding arrangement whereby government provides funding to a community group but has no other significant role. [Erhardt 2000:5]*

In contrast, Robinson (1999), in his edited collection of papers on the practice and theory of partnerships, focuses not so much on the structural aspect of partnerships as on the relationships that are established through them. In his view:

*Partnership as a concept sits alongside the emerging social capital paradigm in stressing the relationships that connect people and organisations rather than the unique qualities of different forms of organisation and structure. [Robinson 1999:1]*

Although Erhardt refers to a locality, others believe that partnerships need not necessarily be confined to a particular geographical area. They can be regional, national or international in scale. Torjman (1999) contends that partnerships have both inherent strengths and weaknesses. She sees the positive aspects arising from holistic approaches, additional resources, shared responsibility and alternatives to conflict, with the weaknesses relating to public sector divestiture, power imbalances and ethical issues.

#### 2.2.4 Co-ordination and co-operation

The literature identifies two other forms of collective working, which are less structured than partnerships. They are co-ordination and co-operation. Most writers (Stoke and Tyler 1997, Taylor 2000, Walter and Petr 2000) agree with the definitions proposed for these two concepts by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE 1998) in Britain:

***Co-ordination** is characterised by less formal relationships and understanding of compatible missions [than partnerships]. Some planning and division of roles are required, and communication times are established. Authority still rests with the individual organisations, but there is some increased risk to all participants. Resources are available to participants and rewards are mutually acknowledged.*

***Co-operation** is characterised by informal relationships that exist without any commonly defined mission, structure or planning effort. Information is shared as needed, and authority is retained by each organisation so there is virtually no risk. Resources are separate, as are rewards. [DfEE 1998:14]*

#### 2.2.5 Integrated Service Delivery

Integrated Service Delivery is a mechanism for delivering services. It can refer to vertical integration involving central and local government agencies, NGOs and community and voluntary groups, or horizontal integration across government departments, or a combination of the two. Integrated Service Delivery generally involves some form of multi-agency case management or co-ordinated delivery around a particular issue or need. It does not necessarily include the development of integrated policy to inform service delivery, although as discussed above, many argue that it should. Nor does it necessarily require integration across geographic regions or across the economic and environmental sectors, although it may do so.

A paper by the State Services Commission (1999) summarises the array of perspectives on Integrated Service Delivery that appears in the literature. These range from integration of electronic services to integration for better policy co-ordination, integration to better meet client demand and integration to cut costs by sharing corporate services. The paper notes that while the nature and extent of integration can vary considerably, the basis for integration is usually

shared desired outcomes and/or efficiency gains.

Examples of Integrated Service Delivery arrangements include 'wraparound service provision', 'one-stop shops', and 'co-ordinated case management'. These terms describe provision at the 'front-line' in the communities where agencies operate and where their clients live.

The term 'wraparound services' is sometimes used to describe a case management approach that provides individualised services for children and their families. The common features of wraparound services include: flexible funding; interagency care co-ordinated by an interdisciplinary team whose members have the authority to access resources; a child, family and community-based approach; and the provision of unconditional care. A strengths-based needs assessment usually forms the basis for development of an individualised service package purchased with flexible dollars. A resource co-ordinator or case manager is responsible for the co-ordination of the project (Sultmann and Testro 2001, Warren 2000).

'One-stop shops' have been described as 'a place where a number of services are provided by local, provincial and national government', and, in one South African example, by 'parastatal' organisations, non-government organisations, business and community groups. The South African example also provides access to the Internet, community banking, craft shops, women's clubs and food programmes (GCIS 2001).

Co-ordinated case management usually describes a form of service delivery where one agency takes responsibility for co-ordinating the work of all the agencies working with an individual or family. The New Zealand *Strengthening Families* initiative is an example of this approach, which can also be adopted by groups of health and/or education and other professionals working informally and without a formal arrangement.

## **2.3 Location-related concepts**

Learning from location-related concepts is problematic. Countries have different political and administrative arrangements; they have different geographies, different population densities and different population histories and composition. What they tend to have in common are areas or locations where economic development, social cohesion and quality of life are less advanced than in the country as a whole. A number of strategies have been developed to address the needs of deprived or less successful areas.

### **2.3.1 Area-based initiatives**

The most discussed concept relating to location is that of the area-based initiative (ABI), which has flourished in the densely populated, geographically compact but

administratively diverse countries of Europe. Area-based initiatives or neighbourhood renewal programmes are a response to the perceived increase in 'social exclusion'. They almost always target very small areas, sometimes as small as a single housing estate or a suburb, and aim to address social issues 'by promoting innovation in the preparation, packaging and delivery of services to improve service delivery and ultimately outcomes for residents' (Parkinson 1998).

### **2.3.2 Regional development and regional partnership programmes**

Broader concepts, like regional development and regional partnership programmes, have been more prominent in the newer, less densely populated countries like Australia and New Zealand. Regional development initiatives generally focus on boosting the economy of a region as a whole, typically through infrastructural change, improving regional governance and/or project grants. These terms rarely describe initiatives to improve social service delivery.

An example in New Zealand is the Regional Partnerships Programme supported by Industry NZ, which provides 'guidance and funding to assist regions to identify and develop sustainable, economic growth strategies and put those strategies into action' (Industry NZ 2002). Industry NZ also supports business clusters, in which 'similar businesses meet, network and co-operate, often leading to successes far greater than any of them could achieve alone' (Industry NZ 2002).

Regional Social Development strategies that take this approach focus on collaboration around social rather than economic development (but recognise that components of economic development such as job creation play a significant part in creating a healthy community). The Ministry of Social Development is currently pursuing such an initiative, with the aim of improving outcomes for people by enhancing and building on successful Regional Co-ordination models between central and local government, non-governmental organisations and Māori.

### **2.3.3 Regional Co-ordination**

Regional Co-ordination is rarely defined in the literature as a separate concept, partly because Regional Co-ordination itself may take several forms, and partly because the idea of what constitutes a 'region' varies.

In the context of this report, the term can refer to co-ordination between:

- the central and regional arms of government agencies;
- government agencies at a regional level;
- central and local government at a regional level; and
- between central and local government and the community at a regional level.

Regional Co-ordination can encompass co-ordination of policy development,

planning and service delivery. Activities associated with Regional Co-ordination might include realigning administrative boundaries so that central government agencies operate from consistent boundaries. At present, at least one government department has different regions for different parts of its service<sup>1</sup>, and every department defines its own regions to suit its core business. Central and local government, NGOs, community and voluntary groups and the private sector might work together to develop policy and engage in strategic planning for a particular area, or they could develop and co-ordinate services within that area.

As a British paper (Cabinet Office 2000) notes:

*[In] the developed world, there is a huge variety of different splits of functions and relationships between central, regional and local governments. There is certainly no clear pattern to what level of responsibilities should be devolved to different levels and how complete the process of devolution should be.*  
[Cabinet Office 2000:4]

Two other factors complicate Regional Co-ordination in New Zealand. One is the relationship of iwi or tribal boundaries to other boundaries – government agency regional boundaries may be able to be changed but iwi boundaries cannot. The other is the variation in the willingness of local territorial authorities to engage in collaborative or co-ordinated activity, either with the community or with central government agencies. The Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party Report (2001) notes that among its contributors:

*Opinion was strongly divided about the potential for local government to be further involved as a catalyst, facilitator, co-ordinator or advocate at the local community level. While some councils are actively pursuing a collaborative approach with their communities, many are not.* [CVSWP 2001: 11]

## 2.4 Conclusion

The concepts relating to integrated service provision and Regional Co-ordination fall into three broad groups – those concerned with an overview, those relating to services targeting people and those relating to initiatives targeting people through changing some circumstance in the area where they live. Despite there being some references in the literature to improving policy and strategic planning through a ‘whole of government’ approach, the main focus in these overview concepts is on delivering services and increasing efficiency.

In the service-related area, arrangements range from formal or informal networks,

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1 Department of Corrections has different regions for its Prison Service and for its Community Probation Service. These regions differ from Police regions and from Department for Courts regions.

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which may engage in policy development, planning and information exchange but are rarely engaged in service delivery, to collaboration and partnerships, with the latter sometimes involving a contractual arrangement between two or more parties, to co-ordination and co-operation between agencies. At the delivery end of the spectrum, there are a number of possibilities including case management, wraparound services and one-stop shops. These arrangements can occur at the local level without the intervention of government, and their support by government, without agency involvement in planning and policy development, is not usually enough on its own to constitute 'joint working'.

Location-related concepts tend to be poorly defined in the literature, and the concept of Regional Co-ordination is rarely used. Location-related activities can include strictly local arrangements, and sub-national or national arrangements that may or may not involve both central and local government and/or community agencies. They are usually used in relation to economic development rather than in relation to the co-ordination and delivery of social services.

The plethora of terms used to describe the various activities associated with 'holistic' government and Integrated Service Delivery can lead to confusion. It is important in discussion to be clear about what concepts are being used in any given context and how they are defined. An additional point to note is that in the international literature, location-related concepts are applied in political, administrative and geographic contexts that are very different to New Zealand.

### **3. Rationales for Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination**

This chapter describes issues that have provided the impetus for Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination in New Zealand and internationally, and the outcomes that integration and co-ordination seek to achieve. While joined-up government has the potential to encompass policy development, strategic planning and service delivery, as noted above, the literature in the social services area is heavily weighted towards Integrated Service Delivery.

#### **3.1 Objectives of integrated service provision and regional co-ordination**

##### **3.1.1 The motivation for change**

Proposals to enhance service integration and Regional Co-ordination are not new. Clark (2002) refers to initiatives in Britain dating back to 1968, and in a 1984 paper American commentator Mudd (cited in Crawford 1997) identifies two 'institution-alised gaps' as the product of historic developments that have prioritised specialisation and institutional autonomy. The first is a co-ordination problem whereby gaps exist among the increasingly specialised but inter-related administrative agencies; the second is a responsiveness problem, whereby gaps exist between the actions of those agencies and the preferences of those serviced. Government reforms have also been driven by the identification of 'intractable social issues that cannot be resolved in isolation' and the search for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

In New Zealand, representatives of both the public and community sectors believed that interagency collaboration and co-ordination reduced over the late 1980s and early 1990s, largely due to state sector reforms in the 1980s. Petrie (1999) refers to the influence of both the State Sector Act (1988) and the Public Finance Act (1989) in encouraging state agencies to focus on their 'core business'. As a result, state agencies tended to leave out issues on the periphery or on boundaries with other agencies, because it was hard to specify them in an output description or accountability arrangement. Other factors which reduced the effectiveness of service delivery included:

- having no one at the centre with an overview;
- an increase in competition between agencies;
- funding pressures;
- a tendency to shift responsibilities to other agencies, withdraw from collaboration, or want payment for attendance; and

- the use of the Privacy Act 1993, either deliberately or out of ignorance, to limit the exchange of information across agencies (Petrie 1999).

Similar views were expressed in other New Zealand reports (Robinson 1997, CVSWP 2001) and by Clark (2002) in England.

In response to these various pressures, the New Zealand Cabinet agreed in December 2001 to a significant change in the way departments manage their business. The change requires departments to adopt a more strategic and 'outcome' focused approach to planning, management and reporting, while still remaining accountable for the delivery of outputs. The Government has also responded to recommendations from the community and voluntary sector and has produced a *Statement of Intentions for an Improved Community-Government Relationship*. In it, government expresses a commitment to the 'whole of government' approach, including government agencies giving priority to working together, breaking down 'silos' and establishing co-ordinated, inter-sectoral policies and programmes. The Statement also notes that government agencies and the community sector will work together to develop and improve consultation processes through sharing good practice, guidelines, workshops and training.

In summary, the current desire by the New Zealand government to achieve 'better integrated, citizen-focused service delivery' can be seen as part of an international trend, with similar initiatives in Australia, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States. There is a new agenda for governments:

*At its heart is the idea and the goal of ever more holistic government, built as much from the bottom up as from the top down. [cited in Wilkinson and Appelbee 1999:1]*

Specific rationales for the changes that have emerged from the new approach are discussed in more detail below.

### **3.1.2 Rationales for change**

According to the OECD (2001a:5), the underlying rationale for change is to improve governance, that is, 'how society collectively addresses and solves its problems and meets its needs'. Rationales for changes in the way services are delivered are most explicit in the area of the social services, whereas rationales relating to strategic planning and policy development appear to be most explicit in the area of economic, and particularly regional, development.

#### **Policy**

Rationales for change in the policy area come from both central and local government and the community and voluntary sector, with the momentum for change being stronger from the community than the government sector. Most

proponents for change agree that the aims are to broaden the range of views that are taken into account in developing policy and to align government policies more closely with citizens' preferences and priorities (Pierre 1998). The community sector supports such change as a way to incorporate their expertise and experience at the policy development phase rather than having to deliver services into which they have had little input (CVSWP 2001).

The Community and Voluntary Sector Working Party (CVSWP 2001), for example, acknowledged a shift in central government attitudes in its report but continued to press for a society where the three sectors of government (including local government), business and the community operate effectively together. It particularly stressed the need for central government to involve community organisations in strategic planning, policy development and inter-agency policies and practices. Sherri Torjman from the Caledon Institute of Social Policy in Canada supports this call for greater community involvement:

*The voluntary sector and partnerships in particular can complement public policy with an 'on the ground' approach that develops local and immediate solutions to economic, social and environmental problems. Partnerships are not likely to, and should not replace traditional regulatory processes, eg in the environmental field. [Torjman 1999:9]*

Several countries, including Britain, Europe and New Zealand, have also identified the need to address relationships between the regions and the centre. The Cabinet Office (2000) in Britain, for example, identified a need for better integration, better ways of ensuring that government service delivery is fitted to local circumstances, and better understanding of local and regional issues in the design of national policy. It suggested that the government's future aim should be to move to a situation in which:

- *local and regional players have clear roles in delivering well-run strategies for their communities, focusing on locally owned outcomes and taking account of central government priorities*
- *individual Ministers are able to use integrated central and regional structures to deliver their own programmes better and with greater clarity of purpose*
- *central government is able to engage with local players not just on specific programmes but across the board, with a good understanding of local successes and failures*
- *central government is fully sensitive to the local and regional dimension in creating new policies. [Cabinet Office 2000:4]*

In her review of public sector governance, Edwards (2002) warns that little work has been done to explore the issues for which it is appropriate to bring non-government players into the policy process, or at what stage that should happen. She also

refers to the need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various participants, and what accountability regime should be in place when non-government agencies are brought into the decision-making process.

### **Strategic planning**

Rationales for seeking greater community and private sector involvement in strategic planning generally stem from a desire by government, or a particular region, to promote economic activity. Almost all the literature refers to non-government or local government involvement in planning at a local or regional level rather than on a national scale. Pike (2000), for example, refers to the focus in Britain on:

*A widened partnership between public, private and community interests, a renewed role for local authorities in close harmony with central government in strategy-building and sectoral and spatial integration. Partnerships were established to achieve local co-ordination and value for money. [Pike 2000:90]*

In New Zealand, the Ministry of Economic Development sees 'partnerships between central government, local and regional stakeholders, and businesses' as a useful strategy to promote private sector investment, increase productive employment and generate higher revenues and incomes.

Increasing community participation in strategic planning is also seen as an opportunity to manage the 'confusing profusion of new domestic and community social welfare and economic development programmes... and the restless building up and tearing down of administrative structures and programmes' (Sabel 1996).

In a recent report, the Community-Government Relationship Steering Group (CGRSG 2002) highlighted the importance of developing better co-ordination, networking and communication mechanisms between community, voluntary, iwi and Māori organisations at both local and national levels. It argued that because of the diversity of the community sector:

*Co-ordination and communication mechanisms need to be supported at multiple levels:*

- *at the level of a range of umbrella organisations so that they are able to work together and to represent their voices to government on particular issues*
- *at local and regional levels where government and sector relationships are important but take a different shape than at a national level*
- *opportunities to meet across different sectors to identify and collaborate on common issues for strategic development.*

*Each level is important and communication between the various levels is needed to provide effective links. [CGRSG 2002:6]*

## Service delivery

The literature identifies four organisationally-driven rationales for inter-agency collaboration in service delivery. They are that:

- inter-agency collaboration has the potential to improve outcomes and services for all actual or potential service users;
- inter-agency collaboration can reduce duplication and overlap of services, and increase efficiency, cost saving and the 'cost-benefit' balance;
- inter-agency collaboration can build collaboration between services to respond to an identified problem; and
- inter-agency collaboration is concerned with a more integrated casework approach to address the perceived inadequacies of individuals and/or their families (Stokes and Tyler 1997).

Many initiatives for change to service delivery arrangements draw on more than one of these rationales, either explicitly or implicitly, with the rationale/s for a particular initiative being based on a set of assumptions that frames the defined objectives and measures of success. Thus:

*If the assumption behind [a] process is that service delivery is inefficient and too costly, the expected outcomes would include greater satisfaction of the service user with service provision efficiency, as well as savings or lowered expenses for the service providers. On the other hand, if the assumption behind the process is that services are fragmented and 'top down', then the expected outcomes would be increased control of services by the participants and a more holistic and integrated approach to service issues. [Stokes and Tyler 1997:19]*

If much of the impetus for change has stemmed from government and other agencies' frustration at their lack of success in dealing with difficult social problems, the frustration of community and voluntary groups and the public at their inability to access high quality, modern, responsive services is also a significant factor. As Kruk and Bastaja (2002) observe:

*Rapid technological changes and increased community expectations have been catalysts for reform initiatives aimed at delivering innovative, flexible, value for money services, increased efficiencies and better outcomes for clients. [Kruk and Bastaja 2002:62]*

### 3.1.3 Outcomes sought by governments

Government papers rarely discuss outcomes that might arise from increased participation in policy development separately from those that might be achieved through improved service delivery. Instead, government reports focus almost

equally on outcomes of 'efficiency, effectiveness and equity', that is, on improving outcomes for consumers by reducing fragmentation and overlap, while saving money at the same time (Comptroller and Auditor General 2001, Premier's Department 2000, SSC 1999, United States General Accounting Office 2000, Williamson 1999). There is also some reference in government publications to community development as a desirable outcome in itself, particularly in relation to location-based initiatives, but this has less prominence than cost saving or improving outcomes for individuals.

A typical example of the improved service delivery and cost-effectiveness outcomes sought by government are those described in a paper by the Comptroller and Auditor General in Britain (2001). This summarises the benefits of 'joined-up government' as:

- *taking a wider view so that departments' activities make a contribution to cross-cutting programmes for client groups such as the elderly and children*
- *tackling intractable social issues such as drug abuse, rough sleeping, juvenile crime and inner city regeneration by promoting the design of programmes which are better interconnected and mutually supportive thus increasing their chances of success*
- *improving delivery, promoting innovation and improving cost effectiveness by removing overlaps and realising economies of scale.* [Comptroller and Auditor General in Britain 2001: 2]

Most of the government references to enhancing community capacity refer to economic development. For example, the Ministry of Economic Development (2002:7) refers to providing assistance to regions in order to 'facilitate the development of regional strategies, build regional capability and support major regional initiatives'. A similar Australian initiative, the NSW Regional Co-ordination Program, aims to enhance government responses to issues impacting on rural and regional communities.

*Outcomes have ranged from enhanced models of service delivery and community development through to agency savings through resource sharing.* [Premier's Department 2000]

### **3.1.4 Outcomes sought by other sectors**

Governments are not the only agencies to promote collaboration or integrated services. Community and voluntary agencies have been actively promoting a stronger partnership with government for some time. Their agenda, however, does not entirely match that of government, in that it focuses more strongly on community development and social justice and pays less attention to efficiency and cost-effectiveness. In its most recent report, the Community-Government Relationship Steering Group (2002) believes that improved community-government

relationships should lead to:

- better service delivery;
- more self-reliant communities;
- enhanced citizenship; and
- tino rangatiratanga.

Health professionals, youth agencies and other social service workers have frequently adopted or promoted collaborative approaches, usually based on the belief that this will improve case management. For example, a study of agencies working with high-risk gang youth in the United States notes that:

*Youth practitioners have recommended increased communication and co-operation across agencies and service providers regarding specific client cases as a method to improve the service system. [Evidence suggests that] case-level collaboration between agencies contributes to decreased placement changes and decreased probability of incarceration. [Okamoto 2001:6]*

Many such initiatives are location-specific. For example, in Australia, a group of practitioners and researchers interested in health promotion and heart health set up a consortium to improve heart health outcomes for the Ballarat community and developed an integrated health promotion to that end. A review of the project found that while the consortium was able to produce some effective publicity, its work had had little effect on the practices of constituent agencies, nor did its experience feed back into policy or strategic planning at any wider level.

### **3.2 Conclusion**

The need to improve the way in which society addresses its problems is behind the pursuit for improved service delivery and greater Regional Co-ordination. The main thrust of recent changes has been towards greater involvement of the community and voluntary sector, service providers and other agencies in policy development, strategic planning and service delivery.

The least developed area appears to be that of policy development, where the community and voluntary sector and provider agencies are actively seeking greater participation. Most parties, including government, agree on the rationale for such change, ie that it would enable a wider range of views and experiences to be taken into account and increase the likelihood that government policies will align more closely with people's priorities. However, a number of issues need to be addressed before participation will work effectively. These include the need for good co-ordination among participants, clear lines of responsibility, sensitivity to local and regional differences, agreed objectives, and transparent accountability arrangements.

## *Literature Review*

The rationale for more co-ordinated strategic planning generally relates to encouraging economic development rather than to improving social service planning and delivery. While some see better co-ordination in the social service area as an opportunity to improve efficiency as well as outcomes for consumers, this only appears to be happening on a small scale, rather than as a usual practice.

Rationales for Integrated Service Delivery generally envisage enhanced effectiveness for consumers while at the same time making cost savings. This double agenda, which is favoured by central governments rather than by community groups, has some risks in that it may lead to confusion over the objectives of particular initiatives, and what might constitute a measure of success. This view supports community and voluntary groups' and local agencies' view that they should have more say in the development of policies leading to changes in service delivery arrangements, so that mutual understanding and buy-in are increased.

## 4. Evidence that Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination improve outcomes

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter draws together findings and comment on the processes and outcomes of participatory policy development, Regional Co-ordination, Integrated Service Delivery and location-related initiatives. The objectives of these different activities vary but in each case, the benefits may accrue to individuals and their families/whānau, communities, organisations or to the system as a whole, although, as discussed below, there is evidence that the lessons gained from particular initiatives rarely link back into mainstream policy development and planning.

Benefits can include 'hard' outcomes, such as increased employment, reduced offending, better educational achievement or improved health; 'soft' outcomes such as changes in clients' behaviour or attitudes; improved relationships between service providers and/or other agencies; increased community involvement in decision-making and planning; cost savings in service delivery; and more effective processes, policy development and planning at the national level.

Evidence of the success of initiatives in achieving all or any of these benefits is difficult to find, particularly in the social services area. The lack of evidence can be attributed to several factors:

- It is difficult to attribute 'hard' outcomes to collaborative processes or specific programmes.
- Improved relationships between agencies may or may not lead to improved outcomes for individuals and/or their families/whānau.
- The views of recipients of services on the value of having an integrated service are rarely sought.
- Initiatives are usually evaluated before outcomes can realistically be expected.
- Evaluations or reviews often focus on process rather than on 'hard' outcomes, and on individual projects rather than on the organisational structure that supports them.
- Few evaluations include a cost-benefit analysis.
- Increased community involvement in a single initiative may be short-lived and have no further consequences or implications (Parkinson 1998, Erhardt 2000, McDonald et al 2001).

As discussed in the previous chapter, there is also the issue of who defines the objectives, outcomes and success criteria for a particular initiative.

A major finding of the literature is that regardless of the type of initiative, the benefits are often limited to the particular project at hand. As the OECD (2001a) reports, partner organisations will often participate in the development of projects that meet their needs, but interest in pursuing co-operation often decreases once objectives are met. When central government involvement is limited, which is more likely to happen when partnerships are initiated by non-government agencies or initiated regionally, public services learn few lessons to help improve their methods of working with disadvantaged people and areas.

Finally, expectations of what partnerships or integrated services can achieve need to be realistic. As the OECD points out, partnerships in the social services and other areas are usually only responsible for a tiny part of the overall government budget:

*Although emphasis is often given to partnerships' activities of implementing programmes and delivering services, the expenses incurred by these activities are insignificant compared to those of their main partners in related policy fields. [OECD 2001a:5]*

This chapter begins with a review of initiatives that seek to improve policy development, and then considers location-related initiatives. It then summarises work relating to Integrated Service Delivery, including the *Strengthening Families* initiative. It is important to note that many of the initiatives discussed in this chapter occur in different geographic, political and administrative settings, and evaluation findings may not be directly applicable to the New Zealand context.

## **4.2 Initiatives to improve policy development**

Tools for engaging a wider range of agencies in planning and policy development include networks, taskforces and partnerships (Agranoff and McGuire 1999, Bogason 1998, Pike 2000, Wilkinson and Appelbee 1999).

### **4.2.1 Networks**

Network structures occur when individuals in public, private and community agencies realise that working independently is not enough to solve a particular problem or issue. Networks can include government and non-government participants, or they can be limited to government departments, as is the case in New Zealand with the proposed joint social sector network involving the Ministries of Health, Education and Social Development. This network will examine how these three Ministries can maximise outcomes in those areas where they overlap.

Several writers believe that network analysis has lagged behind other types of inter-organisational analysis, which may explain why there are relatively few evaluations of social policy networks in the literature. The discussion below focuses on process

rather than outcomes, and draws on the work of Agranoff and McGuire (1999), who have studied networks relating to city involvement in economic development. They note that although there is little literature on outcomes, there are some examples of networks, particularly in the area of economic development, that suggest that networks can be effective and add 'public value' (Bardach 1998). This occurs when managers demonstrate skill at jointly solving problems, and when activities lead to entities being able to agree on a course of action, the policy technology to be employed, and methods of financing.

Agranoff and McGuire (1999) and Wilkinson and Appelbee (1999) identify a number of managerial skills that they believe contribute to effective network management. These are:

- the ability to tap the skills, knowledge, and resources of others;
- the ability to engender purposeful action among participants;
- the development of trust, particularly in relation to mutual obligation and expectation; and
- understanding the work that participants do and the context in which they operate.

Other factors that are important for successful networking at the policy level include:

- recognition of the legal obligations of the organisations involved;
- being aware of the political implications of the issue;
- solving technical aspects like obtaining a common and shared information base; and
- recognition that some issues have a limited range of solutions because of attitudes or decisions taken in the past, and because of financial, time and other constraints (Bogason 1998).

Wilkinson and Appelbee (1999) conclude that there is no one template for partnerships or networks in policy formulation and policy-making. Instead, they argue that networks need to be flexible and varied in form and appropriate to the task at hand. Accountability issues also need to be clarified.

#### **4.2.2 Taskforces**

Taskforces are another tool for policy development and strategic planning, although at present they are generally used as a tool for promoting local economic development. According to Pike (2000), the taskforce has re-emerged as a mechanism in the context of the current emphasis on including stakeholders in 'joined-up' approaches to 'cross-cutting' issues. The characteristics of the taskforce model comprise:

## Literature Review

- multi-agency involvement;
- selective and invited membership;
- a temporary but sometimes indeterminate period of operation;
- non-statutory status;
- specific, targeted purposes;
- flexible and rapid response operation; and
- working across a range of inter-related levels (eg employer, sector and/or territory).

Pike claims that the model appears able to work in both proactive and developmental or reactive and regenerative modes, and membership of the taskforce makes it possible to align central, local and regional interests. In a study of economic development taskforces in the north-east region of England, he found that the taskforces were effective:

- in being able to mobilise specialist interests rapidly;
- in enabling participants to see the 'bigger picture';
- when participants understood each other's role and could avoid duplication and overlap;
- when leaders or facilitators were able to engender enthusiasm amongst participants; and
- when local knowledge was able to diagnose the problem, assess policy alternatives and follow through on implementation and evaluation.

On the negative side, Pike warns that in a situation of recurrent economic development, taskforces can be seen as a 'firefighting' approach to concerns that lack a more strategic and planned dimension. Lack of resourcing may limit their effectiveness and accountability issues need to be resolved. Questions of which member organisations or participants have a legitimate claim to leadership and strategy may also arise.

In an Australian initiative, the New South Wales government brought together key stakeholders in forest management in what was called the *Helping Trees and Jobs Live Together* initiative (Premier's Department 2000). The authors claim that the project 'turned around decades of forest conflict and helped arrest the decline of regional communities'. The process identified workable outcomes, reached consensus and established a basis for joint participation. It replaced piecemeal policy with a coherent and accountable system of reforms based on ecologically sustainable forest management.

### 4.2.3 Partnerships

Partnerships occur in a variety of contexts, which can include policy development and planning, as well as service delivery.

A recent report (OECD 2001a) considered the governance aspect of partnerships in seven countries. It noted that partnerships were originally established in specific areas facing severe problems associated with economic restructuring, but this has changed.

*Today, partnerships address a broader range of issues (eg sustainable development, quality of life) and they [can be] set up within networks that often cover all parts of the country. [OECD 2001a:3]*

The paper refers to examples such as Ireland and Austria, where a series of individual partnerships can be linked in a supportive network through which the government seeks the co-operation of partners from the private and community sectors and NGOs in the pursuit of various objectives, from stimulating economic development to promoting social cohesion. In other cases, partnerships have a direct relationship with government. The report suggests that, in either arrangement, most of the partnerships had little input at the policy development phase but did have some input into planning at the regional level.

The report concludes that improving governance should be considered the partnerships' main contribution, although the extent of this contribution can be hard to assess.

Partnerships consistently carried out three main actions in all the countries surveyed:

- They stimulated the use of government measures that were in line with local priorities.
- They assisted partners from the public sector to target measures better to local needs.
- They combined the effects of various programmes and local initiatives in order to optimise their impact.

The main challenges they faced were:

- inconsistencies in the national policy framework and weak vertical co-ordination;
- a narrow approach to policy implementation taken by public services seeking to maximise efficiency in service delivery; and
- weaknesses in accountability due to blurred lines of responsibility.

On the negative side, the report found that the benefits from partnerships often remained geographically limited and focused on specific issues, with little transfer of knowledge or expertise to a wider constituency (OECD 2001a:6).

### 4.3 Location-related initiatives

Location-related initiatives include area-based initiatives, economic development programmes, taskforces and partnerships. These initiatives share common problems in relation to evaluation and review. Most comprise a range of policies and activities aimed at enhancing economic development or reducing social exclusion. Evaluators agree that it is difficult to disentangle the effects of different policies, or to attribute outcomes either to particular interventions or to the initiative as a whole.

They also agree that projects are usually evaluated too early, before outcomes are likely to be measurable. The comment by the Ministry of Economic Development (2002) is typical:

*Results from these policies and programmes, if they can be measured reliably, will take at least three to five years to be seen. [MED 2002:8]*

However, after undertaking a broad evaluation and review of its programmes and initiatives, the Ministry in 2001/02 concluded that:

*Government facilitation of partnerships and networking within regions and sectors, and cultural change (by promoting the development of an enterprise and business culture) have the potential to deliver benefits beyond individual firms and individual regions. [MED 2002:8]*

Few evaluations attempt to measure whether initiatives have been successful in achieving '**hard**' **outcomes**, which are often in the areas of:

- economic development;
- job creation;
- reduced poverty;
- improved health;
- improved educational achievement;
- racial integration;
- increased community capacity; and
- environmental improvements (Parkinson 1998).

It can be easier to measure '**soft**' **outcomes**, such as the impact of initiatives on relationships. Williamson (1999), for example, believes that experience from the

Irish Local Development initiative suggests that the area-based approach adds value and promotes local development in ways that are not available to mainstream agencies acting in isolation. The added value arises because:

- local involvement generates voluntary commitment;
- partnership of local groups, statutory agencies and private interests increases co-ordination and the effectiveness of policy;
- information and consultation improve the design of national policy; and
- the co-ordination of individuals, enterprises and groups encourages the identification of new opportunities for economic activity.

Successful location-related initiatives can also lead to benefits for the **community**. This can occur through a commitment to long-term community development (Williamson 1999) as well as through greater collaboration and community participation in decision-making (Kruk and Bastaja 2002). These benefits can be difficult to assess.

Benefits can accrue to **agencies** in the form of enhanced models of service delivery and agency savings through resource sharing, as well as increasing the government's capacity to respond to regional issues in a timely and co-ordinated manner (Premier's Department 2000).

#### **4.3.1 Examples of location-related initiatives**

##### **Area-based initiatives**

A summary of a two-year research project on collaboration and co-ordination in area-based initiatives (ABIs) (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2002) came to nine key conclusions. These are:

- the continuing stream of initiatives represents an ongoing load on local capacity;
- most ABIs represent a distraction from mainstreaming rather than a contribution to new ways of thinking about and responding to core problems in mainstream services;
- the drift apart of the economic and social agendas as a consequence of the respective roles of Government Offices and Regional Development Agencies is a cause for major concern at the local level (see below for more discussion of Government Offices);
- partnership working is complex and depends in part on the vision, skills and behaviour of key individuals;
- the time needed for developing new ways of working should not be underestimated;
- encouragement, support and time should be devoted to effective networking;

- more attention should be given to removing the obstacles and increasing the incentives for joint working;
- evaluation is focused mainly on individual ABIs rather than on examination of the effectiveness and impact of cross-cutting working; and
- there are inadequate mechanisms for ensuring that successful initiatives continue.

### **Partnerships**

Some community-government partnerships are location-based; others are service-based. The literature suggests that location-related partnerships have a strong operational focus with relatively little input into strategic planning (Allen, 2001, Cabinet Office 2000, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2002).

Erhardt (2000) concludes that such partnerships can be used successfully to achieve some welfare goals, particularly those aiming to strengthen families and improve childhood outcomes, but they are less successful in creating opportunities for work, largely due to the fact that the factors driving unemployment are often less able to be influenced by local and often short-term initiatives. Their strengths lie in their ability to:

- build on existing networks and improve links between formal and informal networks;
- promote innovation through involving new actors and seeking new solutions;
- pool resources including knowledge, skills and money;
- share risks (eg cost) and benefits (eg publicity);
- provide strategic direction – developing a common perspective among different interests;
- increase interest and obtain political support;
- improve service delivery by tailoring mainstream services to meet local needs better; and
- improve outcomes, eg through improved local service provision; increased local job creation; and improved family and parenting skills and childhood outcomes.

The literature also identifies some negative aspects of community-government partnerships, particularly for the community-voluntary sector, whose representatives can feel like unequal partners with a limited role, or disadvantaged in discussion on the detail of agreements by their funding dependence on government (Craig 1999, CVSWP 2001). Both Sabel (1996) and Williamson (1999) express concern that politicians may not continue to tolerate the degree of influence on policy and on the allocation of resources currently possessed by unelected leaders of community and voluntary organisations.

Difficulties in measuring the effectiveness of partnerships are not limited to those involving government agencies. In a discussion of health partnerships, McDonald et al (2001) refer to a general lack of rigorous and systematic studies, and discrepancies among those that do exist. They draw attention to the lack of appropriate performance indicators:

*One major review of published studies concluded quite unequivocally that partnerships to promote health across different sectors and disciplines do work effectively... By contrast, others argue that there is little evidence of effectiveness or that inter-sectoral health-related actions fail more often than they succeed. One reason for the discrepancies is the absence of a sophisticated set of indicators to capture the community and organisational-level impact of health promotion activities. [McDonald et al 2001:75]*

Their study of a local health consortium focused on the consortium's organisational structure, which was formed by a network of professionals in response to an identified health issue. Its strength lay in the individual commitment, intensive networking, and shared responsibility for outcomes. The weakness of this approach was that individual members did not have the capacity to make decisions on behalf of the agencies they represented, which meant that the consortium had little impact on its member agencies. Nor was there any evidence that the experience gained through the consortium had any effect on policy development or planning in a wider setting.

### **Regional development programmes**

Regional development programmes are aimed at developing a region's long-term economic performance through improving regional governance, increasing the focus on strategic thinking, and, in some cases, making grants for particular projects.

In New Zealand, Industry NZ has developed the Regional Partnership Programme through which it works in partnership with regional stakeholders and provides financial support for the development of strategies, grants for projects and assistance with capacity and capability building. Schollmann and Dalziel (unpublished) conclude that in Tairāwhiti, the programme has led to improved co-operation between different parties, including iwi, local government, community and business representatives, and a heightened appreciation of benefits of working together.

The NSW government has also been active in developing regional initiatives, mainly in the area of economic development and environmental management. Under the Regional Co-ordination Program (RCP), which began in 1994 and has since been extended, regional co-ordinators lead and support projects that have 'demonstrable benefit for communities'. The NSW government claims that the programme has achieved greater collaboration and community participation,

particularly in the area of natural resource management (Kruk and Bastaja 2002).

In one initiative, the government convened a steering committee to oversee the development of a plan for funding regionally-focused natural resource management projects. Agencies represented include the Departments of Planning, Land and Water Conservation, Agriculture, Fisheries, National Parks and Wildlife Services, Environmental Protection Agency and Treasury. As a result of this process, the government claims that proposals for funding are better co-ordinated, agencies have a better understanding of the needs of others, regional strategies have been promoted, and partnerships with the community and business have been strengthened. Increasingly, traditional bureaucratic boundaries are redrawn to better meet the needs of the community.

### **Taskforces**

The Tairawhiti Development Taskforce is a New Zealand example of an initiative for economic development. It was a forerunner to the Regional Partnership Programme in Tairawhiti. The taskforce was initiated by two local mayors, and included politicians and community representatives among its membership. It was a short-term (six-month) initiative, and identified one of its key roles as 'to engage with Government to ensure that its social and economic programmes work in Tairawhiti'.

### **Regional Co-ordination**

A study by the Performance and Innovation Unit in England (Cabinet Office 2000) examined the way in which central government works with local authorities, local business and the voluntary sector. It focused particularly on issues that cut across the responsibilities of different government departments. The study was triggered by:

- the establishment of a large number of area-based initiatives or zones targeting particular local areas; and
- the establishment of Regional Development Agencies and designated Regional Chambers.

The study found that although there was widespread support for policies and programmes directed at improving local levels of service, local agencies believed that there were too many government initiatives, which led to confusion; not enough co-ordination; and too much time spent on negotiating the system, rather than delivering services. The report concluded that in England, the tiers of central government that impact on the regional level are highly fragmented, not able to deal with cross-cutting issues well, and generally without sufficient influence over central policy design and implementation.

In moving towards a solution, the report identified four new roles for central government at regional level, besides its traditional executive and inspection

functions. The roles are:

- planning and prioritisation across the region;
- the delivery of central government programmes at a regional and local level;
- the provision of funding to local players; and
- support to and oversight of local performance on strategic issues.

In order to fulfil these roles, central government needs to provide:

- a single focus for all central government's regional networks;
- clarity over the respective roles of those in the regional tier;
- sufficient influence for the regional tier in headquarters policy discussions; and
- mechanisms to co-ordinate and integrate government programmes and policies implemented at regional level or locally.

The report proposes strengthening Government Offices in the regions, giving them more discretion on how to achieve results and more accountability for the delivery of cross-cutting outcomes. Government Offices for the Regions were established in 1994 to bring together the regional services of four departments (Environment, Transport, Employment, and Trade and Industry). The Departments of Environment and Transport subsequently merged and the Government Offices are now managed by the three parent departments jointly. The Offices represent the departments at the regional level and deliver the programmes of individual departments.

#### **A cautionary note**

One of the perceived difficulties with area-based initiatives is that they place emphasis on places rather than people. Joshi (2001) is among those who believe that area-based initiatives in the social services cannot substitute for policies targeted on individuals. She believes that the degree to which area-based initiatives can effectively complement individual-based policies depends on:

- the concentration of the target group in the target areas;
- the degree of mobility in target areas;
- the site-specificity of services;
- the economies of scale that can be achieved in clustered interventions; and
- the degree to which the community can be mobilised to participate in activities.

#### **4.4 Service-related initiatives**

Reviews or evaluations of integrated service-based initiatives have tended to focus on front-line projects such as one-stop shops, wraparound services and examples of co-ordinated case management. The results of such evaluations have been

inconclusive at best, particularly in relation to the effect of integration. As a result, only a few small-scale evaluations are referred to in this report. A comment by Glisson and Hemmelgarn (1997) explains the situation and summarises the views expressed by others:

*Many states in the US have experimented with organisational strategies for improving children's service systems, for example inter-organisational co-ordination of services among child welfare, juvenile justice, education and mental health systems. This is based on the belief that the relatively low cost of improving services co-ordination among these systems will ensure that each child receives the most appropriate services, regardless of which system has first contact with the child. It is assumed that more appropriate services will result in better outcomes for children. To date, results of evaluations have been disappointing providing little or no evidence that inter-organisational services or other innovative organisational configurations significantly improve service outcomes for children. [Glisson and Hemmelgarn 1997: 402]*

Both O'Looney (1997) and Morrison (2001) agree. O'Looney asserts that there is still doubt among agency administrators as to whether collaboration will in fact lead to re-engineered service delivery systems. This is due in part to the belief that the rewards of collaboration may not exceed the effort required to maintain links and in part to the suspicion that 'many of the functions performed by collaboratives may have only tangential effects on the lives of troubled families'.

Glisson and Hemmelgarn's (1997) report on an innovative pilot programme in Tennessee, in which autonomous case management teams co-ordinated services from multiple systems to children entering state custody, found that:

- improvements for children in psychosocial functioning were significantly greater for children served by offices with more positive climates; and
- improved service quality (as measured by indicators such as availability, responsiveness, comprehensiveness and continuity) did not translate into significantly more positive outcomes.

The authors conclude that this is because effective children's services require non-routinised, individualised service decisions that are tailored to each child, which may not fit predetermined criteria for service quality.

#### **4.4.1 *Strengthening Families***

*Strengthening Families* is the flagship initiative for Integrated Service Delivery in New Zealand. At this stage, comment on it generally focuses on organisational aspects rather than on outcomes for end users. Evaluations of various components of the initiative, such as *Family Start*, are currently under way. This section summarises three different viewpoints on *Strengthening Families* – the record of the

initiative prepared by Murray Petrie (1999) for the Department of Social Welfare; a conference paper prepared by John Angus, Senior Manager, *Strengthening Families* (Angus 1999), and an article by Peter Walker from the University of Otago (Walker 2001).

The *Strengthening Families* initiative gathered strength in early 1997 with three streams of work identified in the Budget:

- a local collaboration stream aimed at improving outcomes for families at risk through effective local interagency collaboration in service delivery and resource allocation;
- co-ordination at the national level of policy, funding and purchasing across health, welfare and education; and
- improving the ability of families to resolve difficulties and problems, with a focus on family responsibilities and good parenting.

Those interviewed for the Petrie report were generally optimistic about the sustainability of the *Strengthening Families* approach, but identified a number of risks that need to be managed. These include the risk of a loss of focus and the lack of hard evidence to date that *Strengthening Families* is actually impacting on the ultimate social outcomes of concern. **Māori** also identified a need for approaches that are appropriate and responsive to their needs. Petrie concludes that it will take 10 years to see any difference. He acknowledges that even then there will be difficulties in measurement, given that the programme adopts a case management approach and aggregating case-by-case information is difficult.

On the positive side, he believes that there have been a number of improvements in the delivery of services, including:

- the practice of case conferencing;
- a cultural shift to a partnership model where each sector accepts mutual responsibility for the wellbeing of an individual child;
- improved ease in getting interagency meetings in an area;
- potential for collaborative planning at local level; and
- participants agreeing to provide critically important resources.

He cites positive aspects of the programme as:

- its appeal to common sense;
- being in line with participants' professional training;
- its formalisation into written protocols;
- its focus on joint outcomes;

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- effort put into training local workers; and
- its strong endorsement at central government level.

Angus (1999) focuses on the factors that were important in building the *Strengthening Families* structure. He sees these as:

- leadership;
- finding the common ground;
- putting time into building formal and informal relationships;
- developing greater understanding of each other's patch; and
- building on achievements.

He also proposes four ways to measure progress and keep a collaborative initiative like *Strengthening Families* focused on positive outcomes:

1. Use common outcomes as the glue holding initiatives together.

*In Strengthening Families the phrase 'better outcomes for children' has become a sort of mantra for those involved, infiltrating policy, purchase and service provision levels. It provides a common purpose for the disparate groups involved in this strategy, even crossing such traditionally great divides as that between health and welfare services, or between schools and the statutory social services sector. [Angus 1999: 8]*

2. Focus on a new process, clearly related to the outcome, which is identified with the strategy. For the *Strengthening Families* strategy that has been family-focused collaborative case management.
3. Measure the progress of the collaboration itself; that is, the extent to which new attitudes, behaviours and processes are in place.
4. Measure the impact of the collaboration on 'public value'; that is, the effect of collaborative endeavours in achieving the outcomes being sought.

In a more recent report, Walker (2001) considers *Strengthening Families* within the framework of organisational development. His study is based on interviews with management committee members in three South Island locations and while it supports some of the positive conclusions drawn by Petrie and Angus, it is generally more critical of the *Strengthening Families* initiative.

Walker describes the process of setting up the management groups and reports respondents' comments that:

*When the management groups met to draft the protocols for their region and undertake the initial work, lack of trust between the agencies hampered progress. Over time trust has increased in the management groups but only amongst the remaining members which tend to be dominated by state representatives. Thus, from an initial vision of a fully representative integrated forum a state agency directed programme has developed. [Walker 2001:8]*

Respondents also considered that the goals of *Strengthening Families* were 'top down' and driven by government agencies, with the result that third sector groups were unwilling to be involved. This was especially apparent at the case management level where third sector providers were overlooked in favour of government agencies. Further, as there are no resources to support the programme, the work undertaken is primarily focused on reactive case management.

Walker concludes that the strengths of the initiative are:

- a shift to more collaborative practice;
- moving the focus so that the interests of the child are paramount; and
- improved communication lines between agencies.

He also identified a number of risks, which are discussed below.

#### **4.4.2 Risks to Integrated Service Delivery initiatives**

Risks to the success of Integrated Service Delivery initiatives include intra-agency cultures and structures, lack of skills and resources, and political processes. Walker's review of *Strengthening Families* identifies several weaknesses in that initiative including:

- lack of resources;
- inability to attract a wider representation, notably from third sector organisations and from Māori and Pacific organisations;
- an imbalance of skills within the initiative, which led to mistrust, especially by representatives of the state sector towards third sector organisations; and
- the perception both within and outside management committees that *Strengthening Families* is a Wellington-conceived and -driven initiative lacking real local input.

Other lessons from initiatives that seek to co-ordinate child welfare work include:

- the need to take account of the strengths and weaknesses of individual and inter-agency cultures and capacities;
- the importance of directing and managing the change process;

- defining changes in thresholds for intervention and service delivery at an inter-agency level; and
- having high quality research and good data (Morrison 2001).

At a broader level, initiatives can suffer from failings in 'the essential infrastructure of policy, practice and process'. In a report on an Australian social housing initiative that proposed working across government departments and programmes, and across the government and community sectors, Schindeler (2001) describes the problems that the initiative faced. These stemmed from:

- lack of congruence between government goals and policies;
- lack of consistency between policy and operational objectives;
- lack of mechanisms for systemic responses to these incongruences;
- initial lack of interest by key government departments to resolve these incongruences; and
- the complexity of the networks which need to be negotiated to build inter-organisational collaborative capacity.

## **4.5 Conclusion**

This chapter draws together some of the evidence and issues relating to outcomes of policy-related, area-based and Integrated Service Delivery initiatives. Although each different type of initiative has its own issues, they share a number of common elements.

First, there is little evidence that co-ordination, collaboration or integration in themselves improve outcomes for individuals and/or their families/whānau. What benefits there are tend to accrue to participating agencies in the form of improved processes, better relationships and a clearer sense of direction. In some cases, communities may become stronger through participating in regional initiatives, but to date there is no evidence that the lessons learned from individual initiatives feed back into the system as a whole. At the wider level, power structures and non-collaborative modes of operating remain.

The lack of definitive evidence of the outcomes of co-ordination can in part be attributed to the way in which information is collected. Very few evaluations focus on 'hard' outcomes for individual consumers or regions, that is, on things like improvements in health, or on employment, education and income levels. This is partly because it can be very difficult to attribute changes in these measures to a particular intervention or policy and partly because evaluations are usually undertaken long before such changes can reasonably be expected.

Evaluations that focus on process have generally been more favourable, although most acknowledge that there is no evidence that improved processes and

relationships among agencies and individuals lead to better outcomes for clients.

A third issue is that it is not always clear what should be measured in an evaluation; that is, what the key objective or objectives of the initiative are and who has the authority to define them. Efficiency and cost-saving are regularly cited by government as possible benefits of co-ordination and integration, but these aspects are rarely included in evaluations, presumably because of difficulties in measurement. Other agencies may have different priorities that also need to be evaluated.

The literature suggests that there are few examples of participatory policy development at the national as opposed to the regional or local level, other than through consultation. Legality and accountability issues go a considerable way towards explaining this lack, but there is pressure from both the regional arms of central government and the community and voluntary sector and other stakeholders to have more input into national policy development, partly so that better use can be made of their knowledge, skills and experience. If this is to happen, accountability matters will need to be clarified.

A common theme in evaluations and reviews is the recognition of the need for trust and respect among participating parties as well as understanding of the roles various participants play. This extends to a need to recognise power imbalances, particularly between central government and the community and voluntary sector. Community and voluntary agencies that take part in collaborative initiatives with government are also accountable to their local community, yet they may have little say in how services are developed or delivered.

Resourcing is another concern, with many initiatives either not being funded at all, as with *Strengthening Families*, or being funded only for the short-term as pilots. Participating agencies in collaborative initiatives may pool their resources to facilitate the collaboration. Those groups that have few resources over and above their operating needs may have little incentive to take part in co-operative ventures.

The literature indicates that Regional Co-ordination is much more developed in the economic and environmental fields than in the area of social policy and social services. While the term 'whole of government' is often used in relation to economic development initiatives, the 'whole' rarely extends to including social service agencies.

## 5. Outcomes for Māori

Information on outcomes for Māori of Integrated Service Delivery and Regional Co-ordination is extremely limited. The focus of discussion by Māori is on the Māori relationship with the Crown as a Treaty partner, and on the need to build capacity in the community, voluntary, non-government and local government sectors.

### 5.1 Māori as Treaty partner

The status of Māori as Treaty partners with the Crown underpins all initiatives in which Māori are participants.

In its report, the Community-Government Relationship Steering Group (CGRSG 2002) stressed the importance of resolving political and constitutional issues relating to the Iwi-Crown Treaty relationship. The report identified the need for government and other agencies to recognise diverse Māori realities rather than having a 'one size fits all' definition.

The Steering Group (Māori) found goodwill on the part of both the Crown and iwi in finding ways to work more effectively together but noted that government agencies' approach to Māori issues 'lacks overall consistency, and there is a clear lack of delineation between iwi and Māori by the government'. There is also little understanding of the distinctions between the terms Māori, iwi, hapū, mana whenua and tangata whenua when engaging with iwi and Māori. The report reminds readers that because of their particular relationship with the Crown, Māori and iwi community and voluntary groups are not a subset of the sector. They may choose different pathways to other organisations and this will need to be taken into account in establishing collaborative initiatives.

### 5.2 Capacity-building for Māori

Two reports have addressed issues relating to capacity-building for Māori. One is *He Waka Kotuia*, the report of the Community-Government Relationship Steering Group (CGRSG 2002) referred to above; the other is a report on a government programme of capacity-building for Māori (Searle et al 2001).

The CGRSG report proposes that an Action Group (Māori) be set up to, among other things, work with Te Puni Kōkiri to develop state sector capacity to engage effectively with iwi and Māori organisations. The report also recognises that further development of relationships and increased networking at a local level for Māori and iwi community and voluntary groups would strengthen their capacity (CGRSG 2002:10).

Searle et al (2001) note that the government programme for capacity-building includes interagency collaboration at national and regional level to ensure sharing

of information, strategising and delivering a 'consistent whole of government approach' to capacity-building.

Formative evaluations of Regional Interagency Forums (RIFs) and the Senior Officials' Group (SOG) have been completed. The RIFs sought to promote collaboration on capacity-building at the regional level. The evaluation of RIFs identified enthusiasm for the RIF model and the development of good relationships in some regions, and support for the inclusion of a wide range of agencies. It also recognised that there had been some experimentation with different models, such as subgroups for planning.

At the national level, participants thought that SOG fulfilled a useful role in bringing agencies together, enabling them to speak with a collective voice and facilitating greater connection between agencies, Ministers and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The SOG also allowed policy ministries to get a better feel for activity 'on the ground' and was useful when practical matters needed to be addressed.

The overview report identified a number of areas that need further work, both in the regions and nationally. These were:

- improved leadership;
- better resourcing;
- clarifying objectives;
- increasing efficiency through the use of subgroups and less regular, but larger, meetings;
- improving interaction between RIFs and SOG through improved communication, meetings between representatives of the two groups, a newsletter and possibly a website;
- improving information management;
- reviewing the relationship of RIFs to other regional interagency activities;
- increasing ownership of interagency collaboration by Chief Executives;
- supporting national and regional Māori organisations to develop capacity-building; and
- clarifying the concept of capacity-building and its relationship to other concepts and activities in community development and public administration.

### **5.3 Māori and Integrated Service Delivery**

Māori input into service development, particularly with collaborative initiatives, appears to be limited.

Both Petrie (1999) and Walker (2001) reported concern among respondents that Māori had limited input into the *Strengthening Families* initiative, and there was poor representation of Māori groups on management committees. Whakatipu Whānau Māori, an interdepartmental group of Māori officials from a range of central government agencies, was formed to look at ways in which *Strengthening Families* could better respond to the needs of Māori families. It is not clear what impact this initiative has had to date.

The Wraparound pilot project in South Auckland provided tailored individualised services and support for young people at risk through case management. An evaluation of the project (CRESA 2000) reported positive outcomes for the young people who received services but also recorded some criticism of the project:

*The main criticism focused on a perceived unwillingness on the part of Wraparound to communicate and collaborate with other agencies and services, and the turnover of Wraparound case managers. [CRESA 2000:7]*

## **5.4 Conclusion**

Overall, the amount of information on outcomes for Māori from collaborative initiatives is limited. The main emphasis at this stage is on developing the capacity of Māori organisations and of the government sector in working with Māori so that partnerships can be more fruitful. More research on the involvement of Māori in Regional Co-ordination and Integrated Service Delivery would be beneficial.

## **6. General principles that underpin integrated services and Regional Co-ordination**

This chapter identifies principles that underpin collaborative initiatives and Integrated Service Delivery arrangements. It includes a brief section on principles relating to policy development and strategic planning, although literature in these areas is relatively sparse.

### **6.1 Principles for policy development**

Collaborative policy development is most likely to be successful when:

- participants share a common language and set of principles;
- there is mutual understanding of the value frameworks of participating agencies, organisations and sectors;
- there is mutual appreciation of the roles, skills and expertise of participants;
- the goals and expectations of each sector are clarified;
- respective responsibilities and processes are agreed and accountability issues clarified;
- the legal obligations of participating organisations are recognised and taken into account;
- the political implications of the issue are acknowledged;
- financial, time and other constraints are taken into account;
- assumptions about the impact of policy are explicit and well-founded; and
- the implications of policies within a wider setting are acknowledged.

### **6.2 Principles for strategic planning and Regional Co-ordination**

Regional Co-ordination may be across government departments or it may include central and local government agencies, non-government agencies, the private sector and community and voluntary groups.

Co-ordination across central and regional government is likely to be successful when:

- there is clarity over the respective roles of central and regional tiers of government;
- the regions have sufficient input into national policy discussions;
- there are sufficient feedback loops from service delivery back to policy;
- there are clear lines of responsibility and accountability for cross-cutting programmes;

- procedures, data and information systems are aligned; and
- mechanisms to co-ordinate and integrate government programmes and policies at the regional level are in place.

According to Schollmann and Dalziel (unpublished), key principles for strategic planning at the regional level are:

- an approach based on making the most of what the region has rather than being solely a vehicle for transfers from prosperous regions to less prosperous regions;
- engagement with the local community that allows and facilitates the development of local strategies to respond to local opportunities, and that integrates social, environmental and economic concerns;
- a ‘whole of government’ response where the activities of central government are integrated into regional strategies together with local players; and
- providing Māori and Pacific peoples with opportunities to control their own development and to achieve their objectives.

Roles for central government have focused on facilitation and support of the development of local economic development strategies, building capacity, developing the regional infrastructure, and co-ordinating policy and service delivery across agencies.

### **6.3 Principles for area-based initiatives**

Area-based initiatives such as regional development programmes or programmes targeted at particular locations need to embrace the principles listed below for Integrated Service Delivery. Reports such as those by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (2002) and Taylor (2000) add the following points:

- every successful local intervention has to be based within the context of unique local circumstances;
- where political boundaries are long established and shared at least in part, it is easier to create the basis for collaboration at a strategic level;
- new initiatives need to recognise that areas are marked by the history of previous initiatives; and
- links are facilitated by having a culture of established networks.

### **6.4 Principles for Integrated Service Delivery**

The rationales for becoming involved in Integrated Service Delivery may influence the weight different parties give to the various principles set out below. From the government perspective a high degree of integration makes sense when:

- a set of preconditions is met (ie there is a clear role for government and common objectives or joint providers for the services);
- the current arrangements can be improved (in terms of efficiency, equity and other policy objectives);
- the timing is right;
- the option is practically feasible; and
- a full cost-benefit analysis confirms the decision to integrate services (State Services Commission 1999).

From the community and voluntary sector perspective, Integrated Service Delivery will be appropriate when:

- delivery agencies and central government are committed to a common outcome;
- the nature of the service itself suits a collaborative approach;
- the benefits of collaboration outweigh the effort and resources required to participate; and
- the relative roles of participants in regard to service design, funding, implementation, quality control and risk management are clear.

Regardless of what the impetus for participation is, the literature generally agrees that the following principles need to be adhered to<sup>2</sup>:

1. All partners agree on the necessity for inter-sectoral action, and:
  - have a shared definition of problems and opportunities and a shared vision of common outcomes;
  - agree they should work together;
  - give their full support to the action and accept it as part of their core business;
  - put time into building formal and informal structural relationships;
  - the initiative presents a situation where all partners benefit; and
  - the initiative is consistent with the socio-cultural beliefs, current concerns and attitudes of the community, including their priorities for action.
2. Support exists in the wider community, including having:
  - high level political support;
  - an appropriate legislative environment; and

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2 The summary of principles draws on the work of a range of writers, but its layout is based on the summary relating to the health sector included in Maskill and Hodges (2001).

- an organisational environment that is efficient, accountable, and transparent.
3. Capacity exists to carry through the planned initiative, including having:
- strong leadership from senior members of partner organisations and wide-spread support among all levels of staff;
  - partners with enough time and resources to participate;
  - the power to make decisions at the local rather than the national level;
  - existing community organisations involved;
  - representation from the target population;
  - buy-in from the local Māori community; and
  - assured long-term funding so that infrastructures are built and projects have time to work.
4. Relationships enabling action are defined and developed, and there is:
- trust and respect between partners;
  - a culture of inclusiveness, representativeness, accessibility, fairness and integrity;
  - recognition of the roles and personalities of individuals; and
  - a system in place to enable relationships to be reviewed regularly and renegotiated if necessary.
5. Agreed actions are planned and implemented and:
- strategies and action plans are agreed and put in writing;
  - a manageable number of activities are undertaken as work goes on to build community and organisational structures;
  - outcomes are monitored; and
  - partners share accountability for successes and failures.

(Angus 1999, Bardach 1998, CGRSG 2002, Comptroller and Auditor-General 2001, Erhardt 2000, Maskill and Hodges 2001, Parkinson 1998, World Health Organization 1997)

## **6.5 Risks and barriers to successful service integration**

A number of writers have identified risks and barriers that may affect the success of community-government partnerships, area-based initiatives and Regional Co-ordination (Erhardt 2000, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit 2002, Stokes and Tyler 1997). These include:

- lack of shared agendas;
- mandated collaboration (that is collaboration required by others and enforced by an external agency), which is often resented, and is likely to be only partially observed;
- exclusion of any significant stakeholder from the collaborative process;
- overload resulting from a continuing stream of new initiatives;
- differing protocols, structures, systems, cultures and values of individual agencies;
- tight timeframes – working in collaboration is much more difficult and time-consuming than working alone; time is needed to develop effective new ways to work in partnership and build capacity;
- competition for funding;
- lack of management of the change process;
- disillusionment among communities if expectations are raised and not met;
- problems by government partners in adapting to the needs of community partners;
- government limiting community input to service delivery rather than extending community input to broader policy issues;
- differences in status and perceived power among agencies;
- difficulty in reconciling the government partners' need for formal accountability with the need to share power with the community partners;
- community partners not being accountable to the community itself, thereby depriving the partnership of its democratic legitimacy; and
- lack of high quality research and evaluation.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

There is considerable agreement on the key principles that should underlie any collaborative or integrated service initiative. They focus on relationships between organisations and individuals, the need for clarity in roles, responsibilities and objectives, and the need for commitment, resources and accountability.

## 7. Conclusion

The literature reviewed in this report presents a somewhat confused picture. It identifies international moves towards shared policy development and planning across government departments and more co-ordination and integration of services at national, regional and local levels. At the same time, there is as yet little clear evidence that such moves improve outcomes for individuals, agencies or communities.

One reason for this may be that Regional Co-ordination and planning are more developed in the economic and environmental sectors than in the social sector. Despite calls for a 'whole of government' approach, cross-fertilisation between the sectors appears to be limited. In New Zealand, the potential for Regional Co-ordination is complicated by the lack of alignment of regional boundaries both within and between government departments, and between central and local government and other service agencies. Iwi boundaries add to the complexity.

The literature is not strong on Regional Co-ordination in the social sector, and the link between integrated services and Regional Co-ordination is poorly developed. The experiences gained through local initiatives rarely translate into practice in a broader context. There is, however, growing recognition that this needs to happen. An English proposal offers a possible model for New Zealand. The proposal is to expand regional Government Offices, which currently service the environmental, transport and economic sectors, to include all central government's regional networks. Adoption of a similar model could improve planning and service delivery at the local and regional level in New Zealand and address communities' desire to have a single focus for central government services in the regions. It would also provide an opportunity for greater participation by local government and non-government agencies and the community and voluntary sector in planning, policy development and service delivery.

Government agendas for Regional Co-ordination and Integrated Service Delivery typically seek improved outcomes for individuals and/or their families/whānau as well as cost savings through removing overlaps and achieving economies of scale. Other outcomes can include improved relationships between agencies and increased community capacity. The literature agrees that it is important for all the partners in a collaborative initiative to agree on its objectives and on the outcomes to be measured. It is generally acknowledged that the more involvement parties have in developing strategies and delivering interventions, the more committed they are likely to be to achieving agreed outcomes.

A common theme in the literature is the difficulty in evaluating the effectiveness of collaborative planning, policy development and service delivery. The time it takes to develop and support collaborative partnerships means that evaluations take longer to do, and a large number of different types of outcomes or impacts may need to be

considered. The relative importance of different types of outcomes needs to be acknowledged and discussed. An obvious gap in the evaluation literature is any cost-benefit analysis in relation to Integrated Service Delivery and other collaborative initiatives, even though efficiency and cost saving are a major driver for government. Designing such evaluations presents a challenge.

It is clear from the literature that collaborative arrangements, of which Regional Co-ordination and Integrated Service Delivery are two examples, are still developing. It is unlikely that one single model will suit all regions or all the different types of issues that need to be addressed. The development of good practice principles, informed by experience in different sectors, can provide a useful basis for moving forward.



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