

**Tumanawa:**  
**Transformation through travel**  
Developing country experiences for young offenders

**PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

Ka Pai Kaiti Trust

[www.kapaikaiti.com](http://www.kapaikaiti.com)

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## **1. Executive summary**

Travel can be transformative for anyone, at any age and at any stage in their life. Getting a taste of another country, a different culture, with a different way of looking at the world can be a hugely rewarding experience. For some people, a trip will change everything; when they return home life will never be the same again.

But this report is not about the merits of travel in general or about a trip to any particular country. On the contrary, it is concerned with a very specific area: exploring overseas travel opportunities for young offenders, or those at risk of offending, that are likely to have a positive impact on their lives and personal development. The aim is to provide useful background and practical information to aid the Ka Pai Kaiti Trust as it looks to develop a pilot programme in Gisborne.

For its conclusions and recommendations this report draws on an analysis of documents and other outputs and a limited number of interviews with people working with young offenders in Gisborne and organisations currently providing 'transformative' experiences in developing countries.

Young offending is clearly a problem in Gisborne, consists largely of 'dishonesty' offences and occurs at a rate which exceeds the Aotearoa/New Zealand national average. The overwhelming majority of offences are perpetrated by young men who self-identify as Maori.

The reasons for youth offending in Gisborne are complex, multilayered and comprise a range of factors including long-term structural patterns of social and economic change and their impact on family/whanau life and more immediate factors, such as a lack of educational, employment and positive social opportunities for young people.

There are a range of services aimed at reducing youth offending and aiding personal development in Gisborne but there is a lack of hard data to clearly demonstrate which approaches are most effective. However, there is a consensus amongst those interviewed for this report, backed up by other recent research, that holistic programmes that engage both young people and their families are more successful than ones that do not.

There are a large number of existing programmes for young people that involve a transformative experience in a developing country. Rather than attempt to research them all, this report provides a snapshot of provision with a special emphasis on programmes likely to be relevant to young offenders.

Overseas experiences are grouped into three broad types: employment opportunities, structured challenges and unstructured interactions with one or more brief case studies providing an example programme for each. Overseas employment opportunities are seen as inappropriate for young offenders, due to their lack of useful skills for developing country communities, but both structured challenges and

unstructured interactions are credible ‘transformative’ experiences that could work for them.

For reasons of cost efficiency and utilising experience and capacity built up over many years, existing providers should be used as far as possible. Creating a new programme from scratch should be seen as a last resort.

All effective overseas experience share a number of common components that can be broadly grouped into three categories: before, during, and after the overseas experience. An example framework (see page 19) for the Transformation Through Travel programme outlines these.

Any experience set in a developing country poses challenges different to those for activities taking place at home. There are additional risks in working with young offenders and special consideration needs to be given to their particular needs. A risk assessment table (see page 21) sets out these individual risks and mitigation strategies in detail.

A good evaluation of any pilot is essential to demonstrate its effectiveness and potential to be scaled up. An evaluation of the Transformation Through Travel pilot programme should aim to gather data from different time periods and compare data from programme participants with data drawn from a control group.

This report concludes with eight major recommendations for taking forward the Transformation Through Travel programme.

#### **Note on terms used**

The term ‘**young offenders**’ is used as shorthand for all young people below the age of 17 who have committed a criminal offence and who have been identified as ‘young offenders’ by professionals working in the youth sector, regardless of whether they have been formally prosecuted and convicted.

## 2. Methodology

This scoping report draws on three main sources: analysis of documents and other outputs, including websites<sup>1</sup>, three semi-structured interviews with people involved in working with young offenders in the Gisborne area, one semi-structured interview with someone with experience of young offenders outside the Gisborne area, and three semi-structured interviews with representatives of organisations currently providing 'transformative' experiences in developing countries.<sup>2</sup> Given time and resource constraints a decision was taken not to conduct new primary research with young offenders themselves, although several of the secondary sources cited do contain their views. For similar reasons existing and potential host communities in developing countries were not contacted as part of this research. However, their views and perspectives are critical to the effective execution of any successful overseas experience.

The Gisborne-based interviewees were identified by the Ka Pai Kaiti Trust to provide the author with useful information and perspectives on working with young offenders. The representatives of organisations currently providing 'transformative' experiences were identified by the author, through a mixture of recommendations, web-based searches and pre-existing knowledge. Whilst not exhaustive, the organisations interviewed comprise a range of those involved in providing a variety of overseas experiences for people, not limited to young offenders, based in New Zealand and the UK.

Originally this research was to include Australia and attempts were made to contact organisations based there. Unfortunately the lack of information gained from these exchanges made it impossible to include that country fully in this report.

There is always a risk with any research exercise involving only a sample of those involved that their views are not representative of the wider group. Ideally, every organisation working with young offenders in Gisborne and every organisation providing 'transformative' overseas experiences would have been interviewed but this was not practical to do so given the time and resources devoted to this scoping report. Further research may be useful but the author believes the information provided is likely to be generally representative of the views and expertise in the stakeholder sectors of youth justice, youth development and community development.

A copy of the questions used in the semi-structured interviews can be found in the Appendix to this report.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Appendix for a full list of documents and outputs considered by this scoping report.

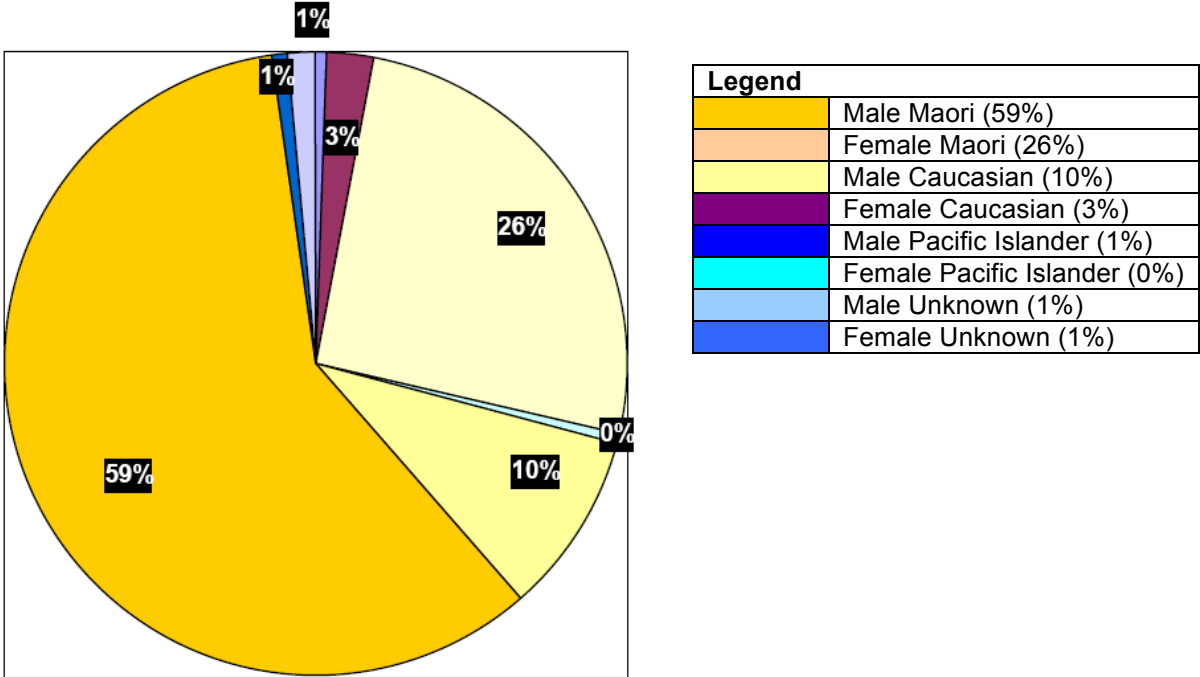
<sup>2</sup> See the Appendix for a full list of those interviewed for this scoping report.

### 3. Context

#### The extent of youth offending in the Gisborne area

Both the official statistics and the results of interviews with those working with young offenders in Gisborne paint a strong and coherent picture: youth offending is a problem, largely consists of ‘dishonesty’ offences such as shop-lifting and burglary, is higher than the Aotearoa/New Zealand national average, and is perpetrated overwhelmingly by young men who self-identify as Maori.

Gisborne offenders 14-16 years old (2000-2007), by ethnicity and gender



Source: NZ Police<sup>3</sup>

More recent data suggests that if anything, these trends are even more pronounced with the official youth justice system and support services dealing with around 95% Maori and around 90% male.<sup>4</sup> In terms of volume, “per capita we’re up there at the top of the scale,” according to Rewi Joyce of Child Youth & Family Services (CYF).<sup>5</sup>

Gisborne CYF have worked with 143 offenders in the past fiscal year (about 5% of the Youth Population).<sup>6</sup> Around 50-80 Gisborne young people go through the Youth Court process each year.<sup>7</sup> One in ten Ngati Porou (the largest iwi or tribal group in Gisborne) rangatahi/youth living in Kaiti appear before the youth court each year.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Graphs taken from Whakapūmau Taonga: Kaiti Youth Development and Offending Reduction Strategy 2010-2015, page 32.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Rewi Joyce (Child, Youth & Family Services).

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Rewi Joyce (Child, Youth & Family Services).

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Rewi Joyce (Child, Youth & Family Services).

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Meredith Akuhata-Brown (Te Ora Hou Te Tairawhiti).

<sup>8</sup> Whakapūmau Taonga: Kaiti Youth Development and Offending Reduction Strategy 2010-2015, page 12.

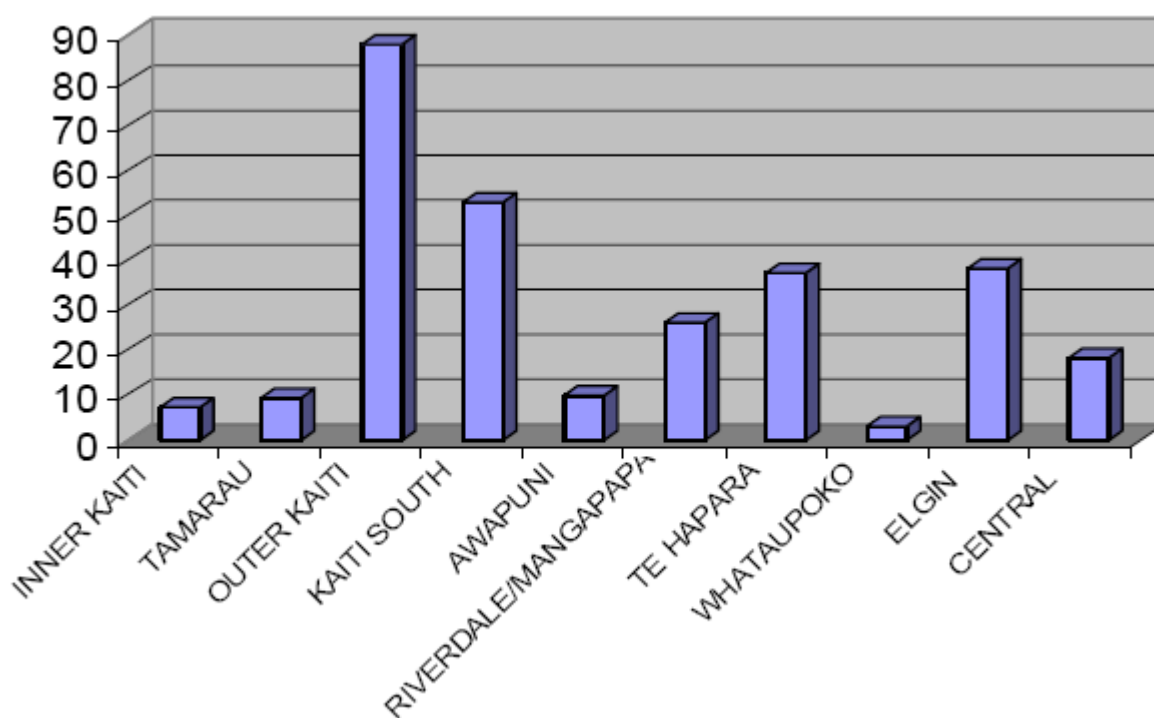
Anecdotally, in Kaiti police have said that, “about nine families give them 90% of the work”.<sup>9</sup>

### The geography of youth offending in Gisborne

Official data suggests that there is a higher level of offending by young people from the Outer Kaiti and Kaiti South areas. Kaiti accounts for over 50% of Youth Court clients in Gisborne but only has 30% of 14-16 year olds living in Gisborne.<sup>10</sup>

However, CYF report that there is a, “general spread across the town” in terms of the origins of young offenders who are referred to them.<sup>11</sup>

Gisborne Youth Court 2006-2008, by neighbourhood



Source: Ministry of Justice<sup>12</sup>

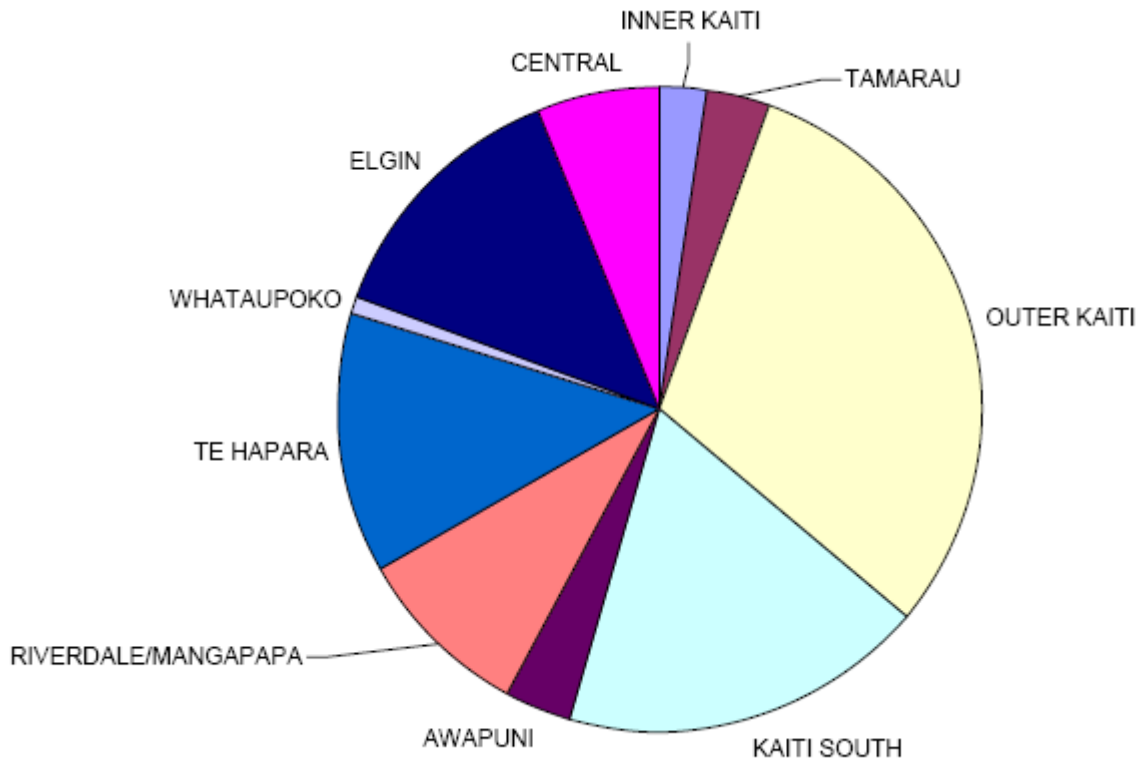
<sup>9</sup> Interview with Jason Akuhata-Brown (Te Ora Hou).

<sup>10</sup> Whakapūmau Taonga: Kaiti Youth Development and Offending Reduction Strategy 2010-2015, page 12.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Rewi Joyce (Child, Youth & Family Services).

<sup>12</sup> Graph taken from Whakapūmau Taonga: Kaiti Youth Development and Offending Reduction Strategy 2010-2015, page 31.

## Gisborne Youth Court Clients 2006-2008



Source: Ministry of Justice<sup>13</sup>

### Why young people in Gisborne offend

The reasons why young people in Gisborne commit criminal offences are complex, multilayered and are not the primary focus of this report. However, it is fair to say that there are a range of factors from long-term structural patterns of social and economic change and their impact on family/whanau life and support systems<sup>14</sup> and more immediate factors of a lack of educational, employment and positive social opportunities for young people. As Meredith Akuhata-Brown puts it, “criminal activity is [often] based on boredom – there’s not a lot to do on a rainy day. Clubs and sports cost money and a large proportion of our youth can’t do that”.<sup>15</sup> A similar sentiment is expressed by a young offender interviewed for a study looking at the effectiveness of Gisborne Rangatahi Court: “Rangatahi [Youths] need something that keep them going out every day. Something that won’t make them bored.”<sup>16</sup>

### Current provision for young offenders and those at risk of offending

There is some debate between those involved in the youth sector as to exactly how much provision there is for young offenders in the Gisborne area.

<sup>13</sup> Graph taken from Whakapūmau Taonga: Kaiti Youth Development and Offending Reduction Strategy 2010-2015, page 31.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Jason Akuhata-Brown (Te Ora Hou).

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Meredith Akuhata-Brown (Te Ora Hou Te Tairawhiti).

<sup>16</sup> Cited in Kaitiaki Research and Evaluation Limited, Gisborne Rangatahi Court: Improving Outcomes for Young Offenders - An Exploratory Study, 2010, page 9.



There are a range of services ranging from mentoring to parenting programmes, drug and alcohol counselling, and alternative education.<sup>17</sup> However, it has been argued that there are a lack of options besides school or alternative education for those under 16 years of age.<sup>18</sup>

## Successful approaches

There appears to be a lack of hard data, or long-term studies, that show what works when dealing with young offenders in Gisborne. Nevertheless it seems that there is consensus amongst the youth sector as to the types of programmes that are most likely to lead to positive outcomes in terms of personal development and reducing re-offending.

There is consensus amongst the interviewees working in Gisborne that involving the wider family or whanau is crucial. As Rewi Joyce puts it, “Programmes that work with families and young people at the same time, that address the home environment as well” are more likely to be successful.<sup>19</sup> This is also supported by recent research.<sup>20</sup>

Programmes that take a holistic approach to a young person’s strengths, weaknesses and identity are seen as the best, enabling them to fix and, “reconnect to ‘broken worlds’ – home, school, community, mates” as Meredith Akuhata-Brown describes it.<sup>21</sup>

There is also agreement in relevant recent literature and the local youth sector that due to the high proportion of young offenders self-identifying as Maori, successful programmes also have a ‘cultural component’ to them.<sup>22</sup> This can include tracing a young person’s genealogy/whakapapa and helping him to understand his Maori identity. Jason Akuhata-Brown argues that, “a connection to family is a good start for belonging”.<sup>23</sup>

A common foundation underpinning all successful work with young offenders is that programmes need to be long-term and assured of funding for the long-term. As Meredith Akuhata-Brown put it, “You can’t work with a youth on a short-term contract”.<sup>24</sup> A similar point was made by Jeffrey Rahari: “The medication for 16 is 17 – within one year you can see a difference, maturity. So there’s no quick fix”.<sup>25</sup> This reality is not always recognised by funders and funding processes.

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<sup>17</sup> Interview with Rewi Joyce (Child, Youth & Family Services).

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Jason Akuhata-Brown (Te Ora Hou).

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Rewi Joyce (Child, Youth & Family Services).

<sup>20</sup> See, for example: Kaitiaki Research and Evaluation Limited, Gisborne Rangatahi Court: Improving Outcomes for Young Offenders - An Exploratory Study, 2010, page 1 and C Dowden and D A Andrews, Does Family Intervention Work for Delinquents? Results of a Meta-Analysis, Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice, July 2003: pages 327-342.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Meredith Akuhata-Brown (Te Ora Hou Te Tairawhiti).

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Rewi Joyce (Child, Youth & Family Services); L Nathan et al, Maaramatanga: Understanding what works to reduce offending by young Maori, prepared the Ministry of Justice, February 2008.; Kaitiaki Research and Evaluation Limited, Gisborne Rangatahi Court: Improving Outcomes for Young Offenders - An Exploratory Study, 2010,

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Jason Akuhata-Brown (Te Ora Hou).

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Meredith Akuhata-Brown (Te Ora Hou Te Tairawhiti).

<sup>25</sup> Interview with Jeffrey Rahari (ex Challenge 2000).

## 4. The case for an overseas ‘transformative’ programme

### Why overseas?

A number of those who commented on an earlier draft of this report made the obvious point: why does ‘transformation’ have to take place overseas in a developing country? The answer is that it does not and that of course there are programmes that aid young offenders’ personal development without them leaving the country (this is not the focus of this report). In many cases the personal circumstances of the young offender and the risks involved to an organisation will make an overseas experience prohibitive. But it is equally true that the opportunities for transformation can be greater and the impact for the individual participant longer-lasting in an overseas programme.

There are three major opportunities that an experience overseas in a developing country offer that an experience at home cannot:

- A chance to experience and understand an ‘alien’ culture in an unfamiliar environment. Being exposed to life in another country can indeed ‘broaden the mind’. Jeffrey Rahari argues that, “anything to do with an exchange of culture is getting young people to think outside the norm. This is more so for young people at risk”.<sup>26</sup>
- A chance to temporarily discard a damaged personal identity. Leaving the home community, the site of ‘trouble’ and spend time in a fresh place can help break bad habits.
- A chance to reflect and compare life in different communities. Regardless of whether this is ascribed by participants to ‘luck’, ‘history’ or ‘socio-economic forces’ it can spur participants to seize the opportunities that they do have back home.

Recent research by the UK think tank Demos into the benefits of overseas volunteering for participants found that:

- A large proportion of participants (more than 80%) reported increased self-confidence, self-reliance, motivation, increased communication, team-working and leadership skills.
- A majority felt that volunteering had increased their aspirations in terms of education and a career.
- The benefits were “particularly large” for recipients of a means-tested bursary i.e. those from poorer backgrounds.<sup>27</sup>

With a programme executed appropriately there is no good reason why young offenders should not also benefit from overseas experiences in developing countries. Indeed, a programme that enables this to happen could provoke some surprising results. As Jeffrey Rahari puts it, “If you always do what you’ve always done you’ll

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Jeffrey Rahari (ex Challenge 2000).

<sup>27</sup> J Birdwell, Service International, Demos, 2011, pages 10 and 11:

[http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Service\\_International-web.pdf?1311850342](http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Service_International-web.pdf?1311850342)

always get what you've always got – so outside of the norm you'll get a different result altogether".<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Interview with Jeffrey Rahari (ex Challenge 2000).

## 5. Existing ‘transformative’ programmes

### Introduction

In a number of developed countries there are a large number of programmes for young people that involve a ‘transformative’ experience in a developing country. For example, a 2004 UK Government-commissioned review of the gap year sector identified more than 800 organisations offering overseas volunteering placements in 200 countries.<sup>29</sup> More recently, a review conducted by the think tank Demos identified 85 “specialist Gap year providers” in the UK which, in total, “place over 50,000 participants in over 90 countries”.<sup>30</sup>

This report makes no attempt to research them all. Instead it provides a snapshot of provision in two countries: Aotearoa/New Zealand and the United Kingdom that is deemed to be most relevant to the Ka Pai Kaiti Trust’s aspirations for a Transformative Through Travel programme in Gisborne. In this selection a key consideration was whether a programme was likely to be appropriate for young offenders.

### What is a ‘transformative’ overseas experience?

There are a number of ways to look at this but this report is concerned with the impact on the individual participant in a programme. ‘Transformation’ is never as simple as a change from ‘bad’ to ‘good’ or from ‘closed’ to ‘open’. But for an experience to be considered transformative it does have to have a positive impact on the individual, to facilitate a new way of looking at things and mean something for the participant beyond the duration of the trip.

### Participant characteristics

There is little academic research into the types of people who have taken part in the types of overseas experiences outlined above. However, the UK Government-commissioned review found that gap year participants (overseas experiences are not confined to gap years) were predominantly white, female, and from relatively affluent ‘middle-class’ backgrounds.<sup>31</sup> In contrast, an IPPR evaluation commissioned by Raleigh International looked specifically at Raleigh’s work with disadvantaged young people over twenty-five years.<sup>32</sup> Although not explicitly concerned with young offenders it is clear that young offenders have taken part in Raleigh programmes. For example, “43 per cent of survey respondents said that their willingness to engage in

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<sup>29</sup> A Jones, Review of Gap Year Provision, DfES Research Report 555, 2004, page 15 : <http://www.rgs.org/NR/rdonlyres/3147D7BD-5359-4387-BAC9-CEC80EC7D85F/0/AndrewJonesforDfES2003.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> J Birdwell, Service International, Demos, 2011, page 9: [http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Service\\_International-web.pdf?1311850342](http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Service_International-web.pdf?1311850342)

<sup>31</sup> A Jones, Review of Gap Year Provision, DfES Research Report 555, 2004, page 12: <http://www.rgs.org/NR/rdonlyres/3147D7BD-5359-4387-BAC9-CEC80EC7D85F/0/AndrewJonesforDfES2003.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> IPPR, Rallying together: a research study of Raleigh’s work with disadvantaged young people, 2009: <http://www.raleighinternational.org/files/ippr%20FULL%20Raleigh%20with%20front%20cover.pdf>

risky behaviour such as drug taking or crime decreased as a result of taking part in Raleigh.”<sup>33</sup>

On the basis of this limited research it seems reasonable to assume that few young offenders have taken part in UK-based programmes, even if this is not the case in New Zealand.

### **Existing programmes for young offenders**

We can be reasonably confident that there are no Aotearoa/New Zealand-based organisations providing overseas experiences in developing countries for young offenders in with any degree of regularity or scale. Certainly none of the major international development charities or non-governmental organisations in Aotearoa/New Zealand are involved in such an initiative.

However, there are a number of organisations undertaking ad hoc initiatives in this area.

Te Ora Hou Aotearoa is a national faith-based network of Maori youth and community organisations that has a history of facilitating overseas travel for young people involved with its programmes around the country. Previous trips have included visits to communities in Burma, Thailand, the Philippines, Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Nepal and other Pacific and Asian countries. These are usually ad hoc visits organised between Te Ora Hou staff/volunteers and contacts in the host country. There is no on-going programme but an ongoing commitment within the organisation has provided these travel opportunities for a significant number of ‘at risk’ young people, both male and female and mostly Maori. One formal evaluation shows evidence of positive benefits from an exchange trip involving single mothers from Fiji and Aotearoa/New Zealand.<sup>34</sup>

We cannot be certain about UK provision given the large size and complexity of the international development sector. But there is at least one organisation (discussed later) that offers opportunities to young offenders, as part of providing opportunities to all young people.

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<sup>33</sup> IPPR, Rallying together: a research study of Raleigh’s work with disadvantaged young people, 2009, page 28: <http://www.raleighinternational.org/files/ippr%20FULL%20Raleigh%20with%20front%20cover.pdf> and Interview with Brandon Charleston (Raleigh International).

<sup>34</sup> Amorangi Ki Mua, Final evaluation report of the teenage parents education development project, June 2006.

## Classifying different overseas experiences in developing countries

There is no definitive way of categorising different types of overseas experiences and there is always likely to be some overlap between the different categories. This report groups programmes into three broad types, designed to aid understanding and discussion:

- **Employment opportunities** – structured work-style placements.
- **Structured challenges** – structured physical activities.
- **Unstructured interactions** – periods of time spent in a host community to experience daily life as it is for the people living there.

### 1. Employment opportunities

These are probably the easiest experiences to understand for the outsider. They are usually designed as regular jobs and are either voluntary or with local rates of pay. There is a broad range of organisations providing overseas opportunities in this area, ranging from the gap year-type experience for 18 year olds to a post-retirement work placement for a skilled professional.

**Te Tuao Tawahi/Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA)** specialise in connecting skilled Aotearoa/New Zealand volunteers with partner organisations in developing countries. The assignments are demand-driven by the needs of the developing country organisation and the placements are long-term – usually around two years.

In the tension between ‘international development’ benefitting the developing country community and ‘personal development’ benefitting the individual participant VSA are clear that they exist to assist international development more than they are there to promote personal development.

This is also the view of **Mahitahi Catholic Overseas Volunteers** who specialise in shorter-term placements of up to three months. Christina Reymer of Mahitahi explains the partner-driven nature of this, from the drawing up of the job description to the selection of the individual concerned. For example, “the partner has a look at the CV before the volunteer is sent”.<sup>35</sup>

While there are exceptions, overseas work placements are most likely to benefit the host community if they are undertaken by experienced, skilled professionals dedicated to spending a considerable amount of time overseas. They are also more likely to benefit the host community if the work, and indeed the programme, has been initiated by the host community themselves.

#### **Costs**

VSA encourages each participant to fundraise at least NZ\$2,000 before beginning an assignment.<sup>36</sup>

Mahitahi does not require its volunteers to fundraise, although it does encourage the volunteer’s community or parish to make a donation.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Christina Reymer (Mahitahi).

<sup>36</sup> VSA website: <http://www.vsa.org.nz/faq/>

<sup>37</sup> Email exchange with Christina Reymer (Mahitahi).

## Relevance for young offenders

Given the demands of employment opportunities, in most circumstances they would be inappropriate for young offenders. More because they are 'young' than because they are an 'offender' young offenders are unlikely to have the skills and experience to really benefit the host community.

A VSA partner put it like this, "We have enough young untrained people – don't send us yours".<sup>38</sup>

## 2. Structured challenges

There are a broad range of these on offer, usually featuring a physical 'test' of some kind, such as a trek or bike ride. They range from what might be termed a short 'enhanced holiday' aimed at physically fit people of any age, often associated with raising money for a charity, to a more tailored and longer length programme for a specific group of people.

In contrast to the employment opportunity-type placement 'personal development' benefitting the individual participant is the driving force behind this type of activity. For the 'enhanced holidays' the impact on the developing country is likely to be little different to that of a regular holiday – bringing in extra resources that are likely to be unevenly distributed, with all the other opportunities and problems that tourism brings.

**Raleigh International** provide a longer-length structured challenge for young people aged 17-24 (over 24 year olds can take part as volunteer managers). Unusually they explicitly set out to work with a diverse group of young people, including young offenders. The standard programme lasts ten weeks and consists of:

- A 1 week orientation phase in country.
- 3 weeks spent working on a community project.
- 3 weeks spent working on an environmental project.
- 3 weeks spent on an 'adventure' trek.<sup>39</sup>

Raleigh have a three-pronged policy of diversity, service and challenge, underpinned by facilitation, mentoring and support. Brandon Charleston describes this as:

- "Diversity – people from all around the world, people from Australia, New Zealand and the host country, such as Malaysia, as well as the UK. And diversity of background – ranging from well-to-do kids to those from more disadvantaged backgrounds.
- "Service – young people want to do something worthwhile, of high value and high meaning, give something to others for the greater good.
- "Challenge – that they stretch themselves. For some this will be to lead a team of peers; others will want to build self-confidence; learn new things or stay off cigarettes for the programme duration".<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> As recounted in an interview with Peter Swain (VSA).

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Brandon Charleston (Raleigh International).

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Brandon Charleston (Raleigh International).

In 2008 Raleigh commissioned the think tank IPPR to undertake a review of its work with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds over a 25 year period. IPPR grouped its findings according to 'personal development', 'global citizenship and cross-cultural awareness', and 'civic participation' and found that participants were overwhelmingly positive about their experience with Raleigh, particularly in terms of personal development.<sup>41</sup>

#### **Costs<sup>42</sup>**

Raleigh has a two-tier system for fundraising:

- Regular participants are required to fundraise approximately £3,000 (NZ\$6,000) for a 10-week expedition. This can be paid in any way.
- Financially-constrained participants can apply for a bursary. If accepted they reduce their fundraising target to approximately £2,000 (NZ\$4,000).

### **Relevance for young offenders**

A structured challenge of the kind offered by Raleigh International could work for young offenders in Gisborne. Given that Raleigh have years of experience working with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, including young offenders their programme is particularly relevant and worthy of further detailed consideration. Anecdotally Raleigh report that their programme does result in reduced reoffending rates for the young offenders taking part.<sup>43</sup>

However, the type of structured challenge offered by Raleigh does pose some difficult questions for the Ka Pai Kaiti Trust to answer. In the discussion above (see Context) concerning successful approaches there was consensus among those working in the youth sector in Gisborne that the involvement of family/whanau members was an important precondition of success. Yet Raleigh's programme design does not include young people having a family member alongside. Raleigh's core approach can be seen as a rite of passage. There is separation from the known world, challenge and mentoring; returning home. Raleigh's formula of diversity, service and challenge is a different programme than those incorporating family members within the journey directly. However, pre-departure and re-entry support programmes could be designed to meet the family involvement requirements.<sup>44</sup>

### **3. Unstructured interactions**

Unstructured interactions with people from developing countries clearly form part of both the experiences associated with employment opportunities and structured challenges. But in neither of the two typologies above are they the primary purpose of the experience. Unstructured interactions, often called 'immersions', are time-bound activities where the objective is to spend time living with a host community to

<sup>41</sup> IPPR, Rallying together: a research study of Raleigh's work with disadvantaged young people, 2009:

<http://www.raleighinternational.org/files/ippr%20FULL%20Raleigh%20with%20front%20cover.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> Raleigh International website: <http://www.raleighinternational.org/our-expeditions/aged-17-24/how-much-will-it-cost> and <http://www.raleighinternational.org/our-expeditions/aged-17-24/how-much-will-it-cost/raleigh-bursary-award>

<sup>43</sup> Email exchange with Brandon Charleston (Raleigh International).

<sup>44</sup> Interview with Brandon Charleston (Raleigh International).



experience life from their perspective as far as possible. They often include an element of home stay – living with a family from a developing country – and spending time taking part in the regular activities of people from the host community be they work or play. The idea is that by actually experiencing life in a developing country community participants will gain new insight and perspective into their own lives and relationships as well as greater understanding of others.

**ActionAid** is one of a number of international development NGOs who run an immersions programme. Primarily aimed at professionals working for government aid agencies, ActionAid’s immersions are designed, “to test assumptions, to develop new perspectives, and to strengthen commitment to the challenge of poverty eradication. Immersions help to put a face to poverty”.<sup>45</sup>

ActionAid’s immersions normally last five days, including a day of in-country preparation, three days living in the host community, and a day of review and reflection. Where English is not the first language of the community, as is the case in most marginalised communities in the developing world, each participant is assigned an interpreter fluent in the local language. The approach is flexible and informal and unstructured in the sense that there is no prescription set for how the three days living in the host community should be spent.<sup>46</sup>

In ActionAid’s experience there are three critical elements for a successful experience:

- Trained immersion facilitators – to help participants to understand whether their personal objectives are achievable and how they might be achieved.
- Broad participation – with participants drawn from several different types of organisation: “different perspectives can lead to deeper learning”.
- Good interpretation – because the interpreter has enormous power in determining the extent of interaction between the overseas participants and the host community.<sup>47</sup>

### **Costs<sup>48</sup>**

ActionAid charge £500 (approximately NZ\$1,000) per participant. This does not include airfares, insurance or accommodation outside of the three-day immersion.

Other organisations offer similar types of unstructured interactions. **Servants to Asia’s Urban Poor’s** ‘Discovery Teams’ programme offers short-term home-stays, lasting one to four weeks, in squatter communities in Manila in the Philippines. A 2005 evaluation concluded that, “participating... has acted as a catalyst for change in most [participants’] lives”.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>45</sup> ActionAid, Immersions: making poverty personal:

[http://www.actionaid.org.uk/content/documents/immersions\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org.uk/content/documents/immersions_brochure.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> S Ruparel, Immersions in ActionAid, IIED, 2007: <http://pubs.iied.org/G02877.html>

<sup>47</sup> S Ruparel, Immersions in ActionAid, IIED, 2007: <http://pubs.iied.org/G02877.html>

<sup>48</sup> Email exchange with Sonya Ruparel (ActionAid).

<sup>49</sup> M Shearer, Catalyst for Change or Empty Exchange? Evaluating the impact of short term home-stays in Manila squatter communities on participating New Zealanders, 2005.

## **Relevance for young offenders**

An unstructured interaction could work for young offenders and their families/whanau, offering a change to build personal relationships with people living in extreme poverty and to understand how they cope with poverty and injustice. An immersion would provide them with an overseas experience with significant transformative potential and one in which both the young person and the family/whanau member could take part without it changing the nature of the experience. The biggest challenge would be in adapting a programme designed for a different context and for a different type of participant into an activity appropriate for young offenders.

## **Conclusions**

From this brief, 'snapshot' investigation of existing 'transformative' programmes, it seems fairly clear that employment opportunities, such as those offered by VSA, are not appropriate for young offenders. Yet both structured challenges and unstructured interactions have significant potential to aid the personal development of young offenders and offer them a credible 'transformative' experience.

Given the importance of family/whanau involvement, as discussed in section three, it is worth considering how family/whanau members might participate in such a programme, however it is formulated. There are two main options:

- Full participation – where the family/whanau member undertakes exactly the same experience as the young offender, including the overseas component.
- Partial participation – where the family/whanau member does not go overseas but does help their young person with preparation for the trip, including fundraising, orientation and follow-up support.

Much depends on the type of programme ultimately chosen.

## **Using an existing provider or developing a new programme?**

If an effective overseas programme that meets Ka Pai Kaiti's objectives already exists then it should be used. Creating a new programme from scratch is resource-intensive and difficult and should only be attempted if there is no suitable option available. This report suggests that both the Raleigh International-type of structured challenge and the ActionAid-type of unstructured interaction could meet most of Ka Pai Kaiti's needs, although modifications to the execution of both programmes may need to be made. A third option is that a hybrid, using elements of an existing programme with some Ka Pai Kaiti additions, be created. In any event, the Transformative Through Travel programme will need to be carefully integrated with other existing youth offending initiatives and ongoing programmes in Gisborne.

## 6. Components of an effective experience

### Introduction

A crucial pre-requisite of success is the prior and informed consent of the host community. Jeffrey Rahari explains how this might be obtained in the Pacific Islands: “Any programme in the Pacific needs to have the elders in the community involved. The moment an elder is involved respect is automatically there. When they give instructions there will be more respect existing between that person and the community at large – they will know the elders have given the go ahead”<sup>50</sup>.

All effective and well-organised overseas experiences share a number of common components which any new initiative need to carefully consider. Broadly these can be grouped into three categories:

- Before the overseas experience
- During the overseas experience
- After the overseas experience

Each element is important and cannot be overlooked. An example framework for the Transformation Through Travel programme is provided below.

### Before the overseas experience

Activity	Purpose	Who is involved
Application process	To understand the young person's (and their family/whanau member's) motivations for this experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member
Selection process	To determine the young person's suitability for the experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representatives
Medical checks (including vaccinations)	To ensure that participants are physically fit to undertake this programme and inoculated against common diseases	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member <input type="checkbox"/> Doctor
Police checks	To ensure that there is no legal reason why a person cannot travel (e.g. pending court case, serious offending record that may block entry to other countries)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representatives <input type="checkbox"/> Police/Ministry of Justice <input type="checkbox"/> Child, Youth & Family Services
Interview with psychologist/councillor	To determine the young person's (and family/whanau member's) mental fitness to undertake this programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychologist/councillor <input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member
Briefing programme	To ensure that participants fully understand what is involved, including information about the host country and community, and to meet other participants	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member <input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representatives
Code of conduct drawn up (involving participants to some extent)	To ensure that expectations of appropriate behaviour are agreed ahead of the trip	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member <input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representatives

<sup>50</sup> Interview with Jeffrey Rahari (ex Challenge 2000).

Interview with pilot programme evaluator	To track young person's progress (personal development, offending) (1 of 3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person
Immigration documentation	To ensure legal entry into the destination country	<input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representatives
Flights	To get to and from the destination country	<input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representatives
Accommodation	To ensure that a suitable place to stay is available	<input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representatives

### During the overseas experience

Activity	Purpose	Who is involved
In country briefing	To ensure everyone's roles and expectations are discussed	<input type="checkbox"/> Host community representative <input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representative <input type="checkbox"/> Interpreters (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member
Relevant activities	To ensure both hosts and visitors benefit from the experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Host community representative <input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representative <input type="checkbox"/> Interpreters (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member
Debriefing/reflection exercise	To give space for everyone to reflect on the experience, what it meant for them and how they feel about returning home	<input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representative <input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member

### After the overseas experience

Activity	Purpose	Who is involved
Interview with psychologist/councillor	To assess young person's (and family/whanau member's) well-being	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychologist/councillor <input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member
Interview with pilot programme evaluator within two weeks of returning	To track young person's progress (personal development, offending) (2 of 3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member <input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representative
Presentation back to the Kaiti community of the young person's experience	To involve the wider community in the experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family member/whanau
Interview with pilot programme evaluator six months after the overseas trip	To track young person's progress (personal development, offending) (3 of 3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member <input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representative <input type="checkbox"/> Other professional (e.g. social worker, teacher etc)
Support network upon return	To provide the young person with a space to share their experiences with others who understand	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member <input type="checkbox"/> Friends <input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representatives
Follow up and ongoing relationships with the host community	To maintain links and build understanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Host community representative <input type="checkbox"/> Ka Pai Kaiti representative

## 7. Risk assessment and mitigation

### Introduction

Any experience set in a developing country poses challenges. The nature and degree of risks in an overseas experience can be significantly different from an activity taking place at home. There are increased medical risks associated with new environments – illness, disease, injury – and a need for crisis management planning: for example if a participant breaks their leg on a remote project it is unlikely that an ambulance would be able to arrive within ten minutes.<sup>51</sup> Working with young offenders provides a further set of challenges and special consideration needs to be given to their particular needs.

This risk assessment table sets out the most likely risks in chronological order: before the overseas experience, during the overseas experience, and after the overseas experience. The severity of the risk and the mitigation strategies are listed for each.

### Before the overseas experience

Risk	Likelihood	Impact level	Mitigation strategies
Family/whanau pulls out of the programme	LOW	HIGH	Careful selection of participants; alternative participants identified as part of programme.

### During the overseas experience

Risk	Likelihood	Impact level	Mitigation strategies
<b>Young person</b>			
Young person's expectations are not met	MEDIUM	LOW	Clear understanding on the programme's content reached in advance of trip.
Young person refuses to engage in community activities	LOW	MEDIUM	Clear understanding on the programme's content reached in advance of trip.
Young person engages in inappropriate behaviour	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Code of conduct agreed in advance of trip.
Young person takes part in criminal activity	MEDIUM	HIGH	Close supervision, clear agreement about what is acceptable and what is not, what the consequences of offending overseas are likely to be, and confidence the young person is committed to appropriate behaviour
Young person uses drugs or alcohol	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Careful screening of any dependency issues before selection.
Young person engages in a sexual relationship with a local	LOW	MEDIUM	Careful briefing about consequences and confidence the young person is committed to appropriate behaviour

<sup>51</sup> Email exchange with Brandon Charleston (Raleigh International).

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact level</b>	<b>Mitigation strategies</b>
<b><i>Family/whanau member</i></b>			
Family/whanau member behaves inappropriately	LOW	MEDIUM	Clear agreement about what is acceptable and what is not, what the consequences of offending overseas are likely to be, and confidence the young person is committed to appropriate behaviour
Family/whanau member feels their authority over their young person is undermined	LOW	MEDIUM	Clear agreement in advance of the trip as to lines of authority reached between family/whanau member and Ka Pai Kaiti representative.
<b><i>Host community</i></b>			
Host community's expectations are not met	LOW	MEDIUM	Expectations agreed in writing in advance of trip.
Host community is 'overrun' by young people	LOW	MEDIUM	Numbers of young people are kept deliberately low.
Host community feels that NZ young offenders are a negative influence on local youth	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Agreement in advance on the purpose and content of the programme.

### **After the overseas experience**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact level</b>	<b>Mitigation strategies</b>
Young person returns to old habits upon return	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Involvement and commitment of the family/whanau member agreed at every stage.
Young person is depressed or feels low upon return	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	Clear plan agreed in advance of trip for next steps. Support network created.
Young person is unable to process their experience in a constructive way	LOW	LOW	Focused re-entry process to help unpack the experience at regular intervals with an experienced support person or group. Counselling available if necessary.

## 8. Evaluation guidelines

### Introduction

A good evaluation of any pilot programme is essential to demonstrate its effectiveness and potential to be scaled up. The Transformation Through Travel programme is designed to help reduce offending and aid personal development and should be assessed on those terms.

There are two major elements to conducting a meaningful evaluation. Using both will enhance its credibility and relevance:

- An evaluation over time – using data gathered from different points in the programme, most obviously ‘before’ and ‘after’ the overseas experience but also from points after significant time has elapsed.
- A comparison against a control group – comparing data gathered from young offenders who did and those who did not participate in the Transformation Through Travel programme.

For greater consistency this report recommends using the same evaluation team throughout all stages of the evaluation process.

### Before the overseas experience

Activity	Purpose	Who is involved
Individual interviews with pilot programme evaluator	To track young person’s progress (1 of 3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member
Individual interviews with pilot programme evaluator	To measure young person’s progress against the control group	<input type="checkbox"/> Control group
Review of offending record	To establish an individual baseline from which to measure progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person

### After the overseas experience

Activity	Purpose	Who is involved
Individual interviews with pilot programme evaluator within 2 weeks of returning	To track young person’s progress (2 of 3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member
Individual interviews with pilot programme evaluator	To measure young person’s progress against the control group	<input type="checkbox"/> Control group
Individual interviews with pilot programme evaluator 6 months after the overseas trip	To track young person’s progress (3 of 3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person <input type="checkbox"/> Family/whanau member
Individual interviews with pilot programme evaluator	To measure young person’s progress against the control group	<input type="checkbox"/> Control group
Review of offending record	To monitor progress against the baseline	<input type="checkbox"/> Young person

Interviews could be semi-structured or use the life history<sup>52</sup> methodology but would be undertaken by a professional evaluator.

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<sup>52</sup> “A life history interview differs from the more frequently used semi-structured interview in that it puts greater emphasis on eliciting personal narratives, that is asking the interviewee to narrate the story of his or her life in all its dimensions” - IPPR, Rallying together: a research study of Raleigh’s work with disadvantaged young people, 2009, page 63:  
<http://www.raleighinternational.org/files/ippr%20FULL%20Raleigh%20with%20front%20cover.pdf>



## 9. Conclusion and recommendations

This report has examined a range of relevant issues for the design and executive of a Transformation Through Travel programme. The major recommendations are:

- Further research be undertaken into 'what works' for young offenders in Gisborne. There is a particular responsibility on funders, including government agencies, to provide resources for effective programme evaluation. The lack of hard data or long-term studies means that there is a danger of relying on intuition or personal experience alone when designing effective interventions. If Transformation Through Travel was determined to have alignment with what is known about effective interventions, the way in which it relates to any other services and programmes the young offenders and their families are part of would need to be considered carefully.
- Overseas employment opportunities are not an appropriate 'transformative' experience for young offenders and should not be pursued when developing the Transformation Through Travel programme.
- Both 'structured challenges' and 'unstructured interactions' have significant potential to aid the personal development of young offenders and offer them a credible 'transformative' experience.
- Existing providers of overseas experiences should be used as far as possible. Developing a new programme from scratch should only be considered as a last resort.
- Careful consideration needs to be given to the design of all stages – before and after, as well as during, an overseas experience – for it to be successful and have a transformative impact.
- There are considerable risks relating to any overseas experience and these are heightened when working with young offenders. However, they are not insurmountable and given careful preparation and consideration they can be effectively mitigated.
- A good evaluation of the Transformation Through Travel pilot is critical to demonstrate success and learn lessons. The best evaluation would use data gathered over time as well as a comparison against a control group.
- Significant resources will be necessary to take this project to the execution stage, including consultation with the young people concerned and the host community, whichever approach is chosen.

# Appendix

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- Pedram Pirnia (Council for International Development)
- Peter Swain (VSA)
- Rewi Joyce (Child, Youth & Family Services)
- Sonya Ruparel (ActionAid International)
- Susan Harris Rimmer (Australian Council for International Development)
- Virginia Sarah (Fred Hollows Foundation Australia)

## **List of interviewees**

- Brandon Charleston (Raleigh International)
- Christina Reymer (Mahitahi)
- Jason Akuhata-Brown (Te Ora Hou)
- Jeffrey Rahari (ex Challenge 2000)
- Meredith Akuhata-Brown (Te Ora Hou Te Tairawhiti)
- Peter Swain (VSA)
- Rewi Joyce (Child, Youth & Family Services)

## **Questions asked in semi-structured interviews**

### **Interviews with people involved in working with young offenders in the Gisborne area**

#### Introduction

- Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of this project – “To complete further research and development of the Tumanawa Transformation Through Travel Project.”.
- This semi-structured interview will last for approximately 30 minutes.
- Some questions may be less relevant to you – don’t worry: this is fine.
- I will be making notes of your answers as we talk.

- I will assume that I can quote or cite your opinion unless you indicate that a particular answer is confidential, in which case I may use it without attribution e.g. 'one interviewee said...'
  - For each of your answers please give specific examples where possible.
  - Any questions?
1. About you and your job.
  2. The extent and nature of young offending in Kaiti/Gisborne.
  3. Current provision for young offenders and those at risk of offending in Kaiti/Gisborne.
  4. What you consider to be the most successful programmes (whether in Kaiti/Gisborne or elsewhere) dealing with young offenders.
  5. What you think might be some of the challenges associated with organising a programme to take young offenders to developing countries.
  6. Anything else you think is relevant

### **Interviews with representatives of organisations currently providing 'transformative' experiences**

#### Introduction

- Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of this project – "To complete further research and development of the Tumanawa Transformation Through Travel Project."
  - This semi-structured interview will last for approximately 30 minutes.
  - Some questions may be less relevant to you – don't worry: this is fine.
  - I will be making notes of your answers as we talk.
  - I will assume that I can quote or cite your opinion unless you indicate that a particular answer is confidential, in which case I may use it without attribution e.g. 'one interviewee said...'
  - For each of your answers please give specific examples where possible.
  - Any questions?
1. About you and your job/organisation.
  2. How an overseas experience with your organisation works for everyone concerned: the volunteer, the staff and project partners.
  3. What you think are the key components of an effective experience (for everyone concerned).
  4. What you think might be some of the risks of taking young offenders for an overseas experience and how these might be overcome.
  5. Your views on whether it would be better to work with an existing provider or develop an experience independently.
  6. Anything else you think is relevant.

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VSA website: <http://www.vsa.org.nz>

Whakapūmau Taonga: Kaiti Youth Development and Offending Reduction Strategy 2010-2015.

## **Terms of reference for this report:**

"To complete further research and development of the Tumanawa Transformation Through Travel Project."