

# *Community Action Project for the Reduction of Gambling-Related Harm in the Waikato Area: Phase 2*

By  
Andrea Elliott-Hohepa  
Naina Watene

Research & Development Unit  
Te Runanga o Kirikiriroa Trust Inc

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This report documents the key findings from Phase Two of the Community Action Project for the Reduction of Gambling-Related Harm in the Waikato Area.

## ***Background***

In December 2002, the Research and Development Unit (RDU) of Te Runanga O Kirikiriroa Trust Inc (the 'Runanga'), began work on this project. The establishment of key networks with organisations already working in the area, and key community organisations was the first step. The training of community research assistants was the next step, followed by the organisation and facilitation of focus groups in these communities. Data analysis took place, followed by the completion of a final report identifying key areas of focus for the next phase of this project.

RDU were successful in securing further funding to conduct Phase Two of the gambling project. This phase centred on 3 key focus areas: media and resource development, responsiveness to communities and structural and environmental determinants. Work on this phase formally commenced in November 2003, ending with the completion of this report.

## ***Public Health Goals***

Underpinning both phases of this gambling project have been three broad public health goals. They include the need to:

- *Promote* increased knowledge, responsible choices and community participation in relation to gambling issues and the minimization/resolution of gambling problems by individuals, tangata whenua, communities and industry;
- *Protect* all groups from gambling-related harm, including a refinement of approaches for population groups, through responsible gambling policies, community support programmes and public safety approaches;
- *Prevent* gambling-related problems in individuals and groups through public awareness, early identification of problems and the provision of information, counseling and other interventions.

## ***Aims and Objectives***

The aims and objectives of this phase are the same ones used in the initial phase. The reason for this is because they were very broad in scope and therefore a range of developments could occur, while also ensuring consistency by the utilisation of such aims and objectives throughout both phases of this project. The aims of this project were to.

- Work for the reduction of gambling-related harms in Waikato communities, through the stimulation, initiation and coordination of activities that would result in an understanding of the harmful impact of gambling activities in the Waikato, and the development of coordinated community approaches that would contribute to building resilience to gambling problems and harm in individuals, families, whanau and Waikato communities; and,

- In particular, the Research and Development Unit of Te Runanga O Kirikiriroa would work and engage with the Waikato communities to prepare these communities to ‘take ownership’ of the project so that gambling issues could be addressed and resolved from local perspectives.

In order to fully address these aims, a number of specific objectives to assist with the effective and efficient completion of this project were identified. The key objectives were to:

- Collaborate with a range of stakeholders who have an interest and involvement in gambling issues;
- Work together with the stakeholders to identify the health, social service and economic issues associated with gambling and problem gambling issues in the Waikato area; and,
- Collaborate with the community to consider and establish the most effective coordinating mechanisms to deliver services targeting gambling issues in the Waikato area.

## ***Key Focus Areas***

As mentioned above, this phase has focused on three key areas. While each of these areas is the focus of specific sections in this report, a brief description is provided below.

### ***Media & Resource Development***

This area was the key focus for this phase, as a direct result of the findings in Phase One. The establishment of an educational short course (also known as GRIP) culminating in participants producing a community resource, the creation and airplay of radio messages, as well as the production of a newsletter were all features of this area.

### ***Responsiveness to Communities***

Responsiveness to communities centred mainly around ensuring that the data collected in Phase One from communities was acted on in this phase. This primarily revolved around media and resource development for those communities that we had already worked with, The extension of focus groups into two further Waikato communities, establishing links with these communities through local organisations, the training of a research assistant and conducting focus groups in those areas to ascertain their specific areas of focus was completed. A key feature of this section included a Memorandum of Understanding between the Runanga and the Multicultural Services Trust, to complete the ethnic community approach. Ongoing collaboration, working alongside communities and a community action/development focus were central to this particular area.

### ***Structural & Environmental Determinants***

Participating in the submission process at local and national level, supporting communities with their submissions, the opportunity to present to the Gambling Commission, participation in a range of groups and committees at local and national level including being part of an advisory group regarding the evaluation of the socio-economic impact of gambling in New Zealand project run by Shore / Whariki, were features of this area.

## ***Research Methodologies***

The primary research methodologies utilized throughout Phase Two of the project were the kaupapa Maori research approach, key components of the qualitative approach, and the quantitative approach.

## ***Data Collection Methods***

Data collection for this project occurred in a variety of ways. This was due largely to the three key focus areas described above, and the necessity of obtaining different information for each area. Use of focus group information, evaluation of the GRIP course, use of a telephone survey and ongoing networking, collaboration, consultation and involvement with local communities and agencies were all forms of data collection methods utilised for this project.

## ***Key Findings***

The following are the key findings from Phase Two of the project.

### ***Media & Resource Development***

Based on evaluation of the GRIP course, participants felt their knowledge of gambling issues had increased, that all sessions were useful, particularly the session regarding history of Maori and gambling, and that course organization, content and facilitation ranged from very good to excellent. Two thirds of those participants that conducted the evaluation also suggested the establishment of a further course and/or roll-out of the GRIP project to other communities.

In terms of the analysis of the Digipoll information regarding the effectiveness of the three radio messages, there are a number of findings that have become evident. Firstly, that the radio stations that were selected to air these messages, were also the predominant radio stations listened to. This indicates that the selection of stations based on demographic data from Radio Network, were appropriate for these messages, in ensuring the widest coverage across the Waikato community. Also significant however, were the large number of Maori participants that listened to the local Maori radio station. Recall of messages was low unless prompted, however this may be an indication of the messages only running on radio stations for a short period of time (9 months). One message in particular, stood out as being an effective message – this was the conversation between a young child ‘Sally’ and her school teacher. While it is heartening to see that one of the three messages was considered as being effective, it is also interesting to note that this is the first message that was aired and therefore had the longest period of airplay. In terms of general information regarding gambling, participants were asked questions such as the types of gambling activities that they most frequently participated in, and amounts spent on gambling activities in a 12 month period. The most common activities in descending order were Lotto, Raffles, Fundraising and the use of Pokie Machines. The average amount spent on gambling activities was between \$100 - \$199 per year.

A newsletter was produced on a bi-monthly basis entitled ‘News, Views and Gambling Issues’. It was produced as a way to ensure efficient information dissemination of Phase Two of the project to those collaborators, organizations, agencies, Maori community groups and other representatives that were part of the initial phase. Feedback was generally positive around this newsletter and it was seen as a more time-effective way of disseminating information rather than individually meeting with all of the groups.

### ***Responsiveness to Communities***

Focus group information was very similar to information collated and analysed from the four previous focus groups in the last phase. This indicates that generally groups can identify a wide range of gambling types, that participants can generally speak about a range of experiences, that reasons vary and that strategies continue to focus on education, increased promotion of ‘safe gambling’ messages and the importance of community involvement and whanau support.

In terms of information unique to the Te Kuiti and Thames focus groups, this included:

### ***Te Kuiti Focus Group Findings***

Te Kuiti have been the only focus group in the two phases to identify types of gambling alongside gender. For example, that housie, card games and pokie machines were seen as gambling types played mainly by women, while men participated in horse races, TAB and activities such as two-up. While all participants could speak about either their own past experiences or that of their whanau, in the same manner as previous focus groups, Te Kuiti was the only group to relay experiences observed while working in the areas of truancy and the entertainment industry. Te Kuiti was also the only group to have a participant from an international indigenous community who spoke about the effects of casinos on reservations and the impact this was having on culture. Reasons for gambling were generally the same as for other groups, although depression was specifically mentioned. Strategies to reduce gambling harm were similar to previous groups with the exception of the use of advertising on the new Maori television station and utilising a campaign similar to the quit smoking campaign (with a high profile gambler who had quit) as another potential strategy.

### ***Thames Focus Group Findings***

Thames have been the only community to mention fishing competitions as a form of gambling activity. While it may not generally be seen as a gambling activity, it may be indicative of their geographical location and prevalence of such an activity. Winning money was seen as the primary reason for gambling, and pokie machines was clearly identified as the major problem in the local area.

A local directory regarding gambling treatment and counselling services, and strategies around advertising, community involvement and education were cited. The new Maori television station was also mentioned, indicating that communities see this channel as a worthwhile medium to transmit information.

The ethnic community approach included the creation of resources specific to some Hamilton ethnic communities, an emphasis on international students and liaison in a number of areas. As a result of this approach and other work currently being done by the Multicultural Services Trust, it has become clear that further work is required from a broader approach. The full report can be found in Appendix One.

Establishing further networks throughout communities, ongoing collaboration and support has continued to occur. This is a key strength of this project overall, and will continue to occur

### ***Structural & Environmental Determinants***

Submissions were presented to Hamilton City Council this year regarding the local gambling venue policy. RDU also completed a submission to the Ministry of Health regarding the draft national and strategic plans to address harm minimisation of gambling. Key areas included concern regarding the omission of the Treaty of Waitangi, no mention of the Waikato area regarding the proposed public health budget and concern regarding the proposed funding levy rates. RDU were also invited to present to the Gambling Commission where these same issues were raised. Finally, RDU supported a local community with their submission to their district council regarding the gambling venue policy in Ngaruawahia.

In terms of ongoing awareness regarding gambling issues from a local and national context at a sector level, RDU are on a range of groups. These include the Gambling Liaison Agency Meeting (GLAM), the SkyCity Riverside Casino Problem Gambling Liaison Agency Meetings, and Te Herenga Waka o te Ora Whanau. We are also a member of the advisory group to the Whariki/SORE socio-economic impact gambling project.

What is clear from this area, is that further emphasis will need to be given to this section in the next phase of this project.

### ***Limitations Of the Project***

The major limitation to this project has been the timeframe. As a result, the ability to conduct three GRIP courses instead of just the one for example, could not be done in the restricted timeframe. Towards the latter part of the project, the change of funder and different document requirements also became a limitation.

### ***Recommendations***

As a result of the key findings of Phase Two, a number of recommendations have become evident. These are outlined under the key focus areas.

From the key findings of the evaluation of the GRIP course, it is recommended that:

- the GRIP course be offered to all other Waikato communities involved in the gambling project;
- the creation of a community resource continue to be the key outcome of GRIP;
- appropriate funding and resourcing of the GRIP course continue;
- that eventual regional and national roll-out occur of the GRIP project; and,
- a future follow-up short course be developed and offered to further inform and build on community knowledge regarding gambling issues.

From the findings of the Digipoll telephone survey, it is recommended that:

- further indepth analysis occur of the full results of the survey, as the analysis carried out thus far is of preliminary results only and does not go into detail regarding some areas;
- radio messages extend to airplay on Radio Tainui, given the percentage of respondents who cited this and other iwi radio stations as the main station listened to. This also ensures greater coverage of Maori communities; and,
- airing of the three radio messages continue into Phase Three of the gambling project, which will allow for a comparative survey to be conducted with the current survey results.

Based on newsletter development, it is recommended that:

- the newsletter continue to be published on a bi-monthly basis to ensure the dissemination of information pertinent to the gambling project, and to inform all groups of the progress and future direction of the project.

Based on the two new focus groups it is recommended that:

- the strategies identified by the focus groups continue to demonstrate a clear need for improving current policy and increasing information and resources regarding the issues of gambling;

- based on the consistent findings from both groups, the current media and resource development activities of Phase Two continue across these areas;
- communities continue to be involved in all future planning and development of strategies and resources specific to their communities, and across the Waikato region;
- appropriate levels of funding be provided for communities to continue with community development strategies such as those identified by the focus groups, into the future;
- all of the strategies identified by these focus groups, including the groups from Phase One, begin to inform and become part of the overall communications strategy of the Ministry of Health;
- overall work continue in the area of reducing gambling-related harm for communities in the Waikato area well into the future. This will ensure that a community action and community driven focus on reducing gambling-related harm continues to occur.

Based on information from the ethnic community approach, it is recommended that:

- the development and dissemination of resources to ethnic communities continue to occur;
- that the ethnic community approach is supported to provide any other strategies, as identified by those communities;
- funding is provided to further support the ethnic community approach;
- Memoranda of Understanding be achieved with other communities and groups, where appropriate, to enable them to begin their own development of strategies and resources.

To ensure ongoing collaboration and networking, it is recommended that:

- ongoing working relationships continue to occur with Waikato communities to ensure that a community driven and community action approach to reduce gambling-related harm, continues to occur into the future;
- ongoing collaborations and involvement continues to occur at all levels, including continued involvement in local gambling forums; and,
- continued involvement in gambling issues at both local and national government levels through involvement in submission processes and lobbying local issues, has ensured that the project provides clear information to improve and further inform current policy and advice.

To further enhance the structural and environmental determinants focus area, it is recommended that:

- this be the specific focus of the next phase of this contract;
- involvement in submission processes at both local and national levels continues to occur; and,
- negotiations continue with the Ministry of Health to ensure the continuity of the gambling project into the future, and to secure further funding to allow the development of further areas of investigation to occur.