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**Sāmoa National Human Development Report: Sustainable Livelihoods in a Changing Sāmoa.**

**Edited by Asofou So'o, Unasa F. Va'a, Telesia Lafotanoa.**

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# **Sāmoa National Human Development Report 2006**

**Sustainable livelihoods in a changing Sāmoa**

**National  
University of  
Sāmoa**

**May 2006**

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*Institute of Higher Education*  
*Institute of Technology*



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# Foreword

Although the practice of researching and writing human development reports is not new, the process involved in producing the present document is. This is the first time a human development report has been written and put together by the people themselves who are being reported upon. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) office in Apia and the Government of Sāmoa agreed that the people of Sāmoa would be responsible for writing their own human development report, a task that was thereafter delegated by the government to the National University of Sāmoa (NUS).

Previously the preparation and publication of human development reports have been the prerogative of UNDP. The practice has always been that a UNDP Office would write the human development report of a country or of a region.

Consigning to the country itself the writing and the publishing of its human development report serves two purposes. First, because the people understand the needs of their own society better than 'outsiders', they are better placed from the personal experience to assess their current state of human development and what needs to be done to improve their lot. Second, because they themselves are researching and writing the report, there would be a keen sense of ownership associated with the document. And because they feel that the report is theirs, they are more likely to closely follow and critique reactions to the Report's findings and the implementation of the recommendations. Conversely, there is always the possibility that a report written by a people about themselves could be too inward looking and gloss over or leave out critical issues that they may consider too painful or embarrassing to reveal to outsiders. The writers of the present report are only human but I am confident that they have done their best to keep their emotions in check when discussing such issues to ensure that a balanced assessment is achieved. To do otherwise would detract from the value of the document.

The UNDP initiative to see that these human development reports are produced periodically is

greatly appreciated. For Sāmoa, a report of this nature gives the government and the people of Sāmoa an opportunity to see where the country is and where it is heading in terms of its human development needs. A human development report gives indices or yardsticks by which to measure the various components of a people's human development. This document is no different. It gives not only a snapshot of the development status of Sāmoa at this point in time, but it also includes the writers' views and opinions of where their country is heading. It, therefore, helps the government plan its strategy for the on-going advancement of its people's welfare in both the immediate and foreseeable future.

On behalf of the Government of the people of Sāmoa, I would like to thank the UNDP Apia Office for its financial support that has enabled the publication of this very important document. The Government of Sāmoa has maintained and will continue to maintain its cordial and cooperative relationship with UNDP.

This report will certainly be of great value to both the Government of Sāmoa and its people.

(Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi)  
Prime Minister

# Foreword

**“The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people’s choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and can change over time. People often value achievements that do not show up at all, or not immediately, in income or growth figures: greater access to knowledge, better nutrition and health services, more secure livelihoods, security against crime and physical violence, satisfying leisure hours, political and cultural freedoms and sense of participation in community activities. The objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives.” *Mahbub ul Haq***

Sāmoa’s first National Human Development Report, *Sustainable Livelihoods in a Changing Sāmoa*, explores a number of pertinent aspects of Sāmoan life in an attempt to reveal the complexity of its social, political, economic and cultural dynamics along with the challenges these pose for Sāmoans in attaining long, healthy and creative lives. Fundamental to the process is obtaining a clear understanding of the different elements that affect people’s lives and how these need to change in order to support human development in relation to the NHDR theme.

In 1962 Sāmoa’s act of self-determination for independence was fully supported by the United Nations and successive Sāmoan governments have since set sound development goals, until today Sāmoa is internationally touted as one of the most stable economic and governance Island States in the Pacific Region. The country has demonstrated a remarkable resilience against economic shocks and it has maintained a strong hold on its cultural heritage. The *fa’aSāmoa* is the invisible resin that thus far is keeping Sāmoan society intact and its governing systems functional, a fact that has also set it apart from its contemporary Pacific Island neighbours, many of which are struggling to retain their dwindling populations and eroding cultural identities.

The changes that the country has experienced over the past forty-three years have however come at a high cost to the discerning eye. The principal objective of the National Human Development Report (NHDR) is to raise public awareness, trigger debate and action on critical human development concerns. NHDRs also contribute significantly to strengthening national statistical and ana-

lytical capacity, and constitute a major vehicle for the realization of the goals set by the international community at the Millennium Summit. It is hoped that Sāmoa’s NHDR will be seen in this role in the present and years to come.

Human development is about much more than the rise or fall of national incomes. It is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. People are the real wealth of nations. Development is thus about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value. And it is thus about much more than economic growth, which is only a means—if a very important one—of enlarging people’s choices so as to sustain livelihoods.

In March 2006, the UN Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC) will review Sāmoa’s status in relation to its graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status. Economic growth has been steady and increasing over the past decade, and social and other indicators are favorable giving rise to a popular expectation that it would graduate. A graduation from LDC status will be an outward sign that the apron strings have finally been cut and Sāmoa is expected to become recognized, for all intents and purposes, as an equal with other developing nations. However, as highlighted in the NHDR there is no easy sailing ahead considering a number of worrying trends such as the hardship figures provided by the Household Income and Expenditure Surveys, the significant challenges posed by urban migration to traditional leadership and land tenure systems, environmental degradation, as well as the inability of the Sāmoan economy to provide sufficient paid em-



ployment to the majority of its potential labor force. In order to achieve long, healthy and creative lives there needs to be sufficient variety and quality of choices for the ever-increasing number of school leavers. The government's *Strategy for the Development of Sāmoa (SDS), 2005-2007*, aims to enhance opportunities for all. Support to private sector growth is vital for this to occur and as a stimulus for further economic expansion and ability to enhance its performance in international trade. The latter is particularly important in relation to the country's aspirations for accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the more liberalized trading environment that the country has been operating under in recent years.

Fundamental to enlarging choices is building human capabilities —the range of things that people can do or be in life. The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Without these, many choices are simply not available, and many opportunities in life remain inaccessible

This way of looking at development, often forgotten in the immediate concern with accumulating commodities and financial wealth, is not new. Philosophers, economists and political leaders have long emphasized human well-being as the purpose, the end, of development. As Aristotle said in ancient Greece, "Wealth is evidently not the good we are seeking, for it is merely useful for the sake of something else."

In seeking that something else, human development shares a common vision with human rights. The goal is human freedom. And in pursuing capabilities and realizing rights, this freedom is vital. People must be free to exercise their choices and to participate in decision-making that affects their lives. Human development and human rights are mutually reinforcing, helping to secure the well-being and dignity of all people, building self-respect and the respect of others.

These essential principles of human development are nothing new to Sāmoan ethos and are imbedded in the government's vision for the country's future development. What will be challenging is not losing that vision and those principles as the country is forced to deal with emerging issues that come with social change hastened along inevitably by the many inroads of globalization. Strong people-centered macroeconomic policies will be the foundation for meeting these challenges and the achievement of the eight Millennium Development Goals will be an important yardstick to monitor this development.

UNDP invited the Institute of Sāmoan Studies at the NUS to undertake the compilation of Sāmoa's first NHDR in hopes that it would contribute to building the capacity of NUS to serve as an intellectual gathering point for the study of human development.

Soifua.

Joyce Yu

UNDP Resident Representative, Apia

# Acknowledgements

The Sāmoa UNDP Multi-Country Office signed an agreement with the Sāmoan government enabling the government to write its own Human Development Report (HDR). This is a departure from existing UNDP practices where it has always been part and parcel of its work to write human development reports of countries for countries. It is a welcomed and appropriate change of practice as it has given the Sāmoans the responsibility of writing about their own people, analyzing existing conditions and pointing out ways to improve the situation of their own people.

After signing the agreement with UNDP, the government handed over the responsibility of writing the first Sāmoa HDR to The National University of Sāmoa (NUS) under the guidance of a Steering Committee (SC) comprising of chief executive officers (or their nominees) of key government ministries, state-owned enterprises and representatives of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The director of the Centre for Sāmoan Studies, whose section is the research arm of NUS, took the lead role in coordinating the compilation of the report.

The SC endorsed three community workshops to ascertain the public's views on important issues to be included in the report. Two workshops would be held in Upolu. The other workshop would be held in the bigger island of Savai'i for its resident community. Attempts were made to make sure those invited to the workshops would be fairly representative of a general community view. The idea of community workshops was important in that it would not only give the community representatives the opportunity to discuss issues relating to the local community at that level, but it was also important that the workshop participants would feel that they own this report when it comes out.

The community responses gathered in the three workshops were incorporated into the writers' chapters. Brief summaries of these chapters make up the executive summary section of the report. More de-

tailed and elaborate discussion of points in the executive summary is given in the corresponding chapters.

The publication of this report would not have been possible without the support and cooperation of several people, all of whom are acknowledged here. The initiative of both the Sāmoa UNDP Multi-Country Office and the Government of Sāmoa to have this report written by the Sāmoans themselves is a great gesture and foresight, paving the way for the preparation of similar reports in the future. Members of the Steering Committee are busy people with obligations to their primary jobs in their respective ministries. However, they made time available to attend meetings and contribute to the formulation of ideas in the report. The views of the public that were shared so willingly and unreservedly with the writers in the community workshops were invaluable and have contributed immensely to the final shape of the report. To the writers who bring together in their respective sections of the report their own experiences, the views of the public and comments in published and unpublished reports, *fa'amälö lava*. They include Gatoloaifa'aana Tilianamua Afamasaga, Unasa Felise Va'a, Sifuiva Reupena Muagututi'a, Fiu Elisara, Fepa'i Koria, Fulisia Pitauö-'Aiavao, Fa'amoetaulaoa Wood Salele, Sonny Lameta and Le'apai Asofou So'o. Unasa Felise Va'a and Telesia Lafotanoa's help in the editing of the final drafts of the report are also acknowledged with gratitude. Fa'ato'ia Malele was the coordinator of the project until he left in May 2005. Thereafter Juliet Boon took over that role so efficiently. Without the efficient work of Fa'ato'ia and Juliet, this report would never have been completed. The comments on the draft by members of the Steering Committee and the designated local readers Ali'imuumua Esekia Solofa and Ruta Sinclair greatly improved the quality of the report. Last but not least, to everyone who contributed in various ways to the compilation of this report, *fa'afetai tele* for your support and cooperation.

#### ABBREVIATIONS [A–L]

ACT	Action by Churches Together
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADB-ESP	Asian Development Bank - Education Sector Project
BEN	Beautiful Expressions of Nature
CCCJS	Congregational Christian Church of Jesus in Sāmoa
CCCS	Congregational Christian Church of Sāmoa
CCS	Catholic Church of Sāmoa
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination and Discrimination Against Women
DBS	Development Bank of Sāmoa
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Commission
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EFA	Education for All
EPC	Electrical Power Corporation
EPI	Expanded Programme of Immunization
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FoE	Faculty of Education
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GER	Gross Enrolment Rates
GNP	Gross National Product
GoS	Government of Sāmoa
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HEAPS	Health Education and Promotion Section
HIES	Household Income Expenditure Survey
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poverty Countries
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HPI	Human Poverty Index
HSRP	Health Sector Reform Programme
IDA	International Development Agencies
ICHS	Integrated Community Health Services
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
IT	Information Technology
LDC	Least Developing Country

**ABBREVIATIONS [M-R]**

MCS	Methodist Church of Sāmoa
MCSL	Marist Centre for Specialized Learning
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MESC	Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture
MYSC	Ministry of Youths, Sports and Culture
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MoH	Ministry of Health
NCC	National Council of Churches
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases
NCECES	National Council of Early Childhood Education of Samoa
NER	Net Enrolment Rates
NPF	National Provident Fund
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NZAID	New Zealand Assistance International Development
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OLSSI	O Le Si'osi'omaga Society Incorporate
PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
PCP	Palliative Care Programme
PEMP	Primary Education Materials Projects
PICTA	Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement
PPTA	Post Primary Teachers' Association
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
RH/FP-/SH	Reproductive Health/Family Planning/Sexual Health

**ABBREVIATIONS [S-Y]**

SAF	Structural Adjustment Facility
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SBEC	Small Business Enterprise Centre
SC	Steering Committee
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist
SDS	Strategy for the Development of Sāmoa
SES	Sāmoa Economic Strategies
SNN	Sāmoa Nutrition Survey
SPARTECA	South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement
SPBDF	South Pacific Business Development Foundation
SPELL test	South Pacific Education Literacy Level test
SQA	Sāmoa Qualifications Authority
SAT	Sāmoan Tālā (Currency)
STD/AIDS	Sexually Transmitted Disease/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
SUNGO	Sāmoa Umbrella of Non-Governmental Organizations
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendants
TH	Traditional Healers
UN	United Nation
UNAIDS	United Nation Aids
UNCTAD	United Nations Commission on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Family Planning Association
UNITEC	University Technical Institute (NZ)
UNO	United Nation Organization
US\$	United States Dollar
USA	United States of America
USP	University of the South Pacific
WIBF	Women in Business Foundation
WTO	World Trade Organization
YMCA	Young Men Christian Association
YWAM	Youth With a Mission



The concept of human development is intended to put emphasis on the development of the human being. To measure the extent of human development the quantitative concept of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was initially used. It measures how much a person earns for a living annually in relation to what he/she spends, to determine the extent to which a person's condition has improved or otherwise. However, over the past years the GDP concept became too focused on the economic aspect of the human being and that other equally important human aspects such as education and health were ignored. The GDP concept was consequently considered too narrow an instrument for measuring human development.

THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (HDI) was introduced to address the limitation of the GDP to fully reflect all elements of human development and to redirect focus on the total person as the central emphasis of human development. The HDI concept combines the quantitative measurements of the GDP with those of education and health. Statistical analyses of figures compiled by the ministries of education and health in their daily work can be used to calculate the extent to which the education and health aspects of a person have changed over a specified period of time. Therefore, the HDI concept is an improvement on the original GDP concept.

However, despite the improvement of the instrument for measuring human development from the GDP to the HDI, the latter still does not include other equally important aspects of being human such as culture, religion, governance and so forth. As stated in the *Global Human Development Report 2004*, 'allowing people full cultural expression is an important development end in itself'.<sup>1</sup> The difficulty with these aspects of human development is that they cannot be quantitatively measured. In order to gauge the extent of development in those other aspects of human develop-

ment in the Sāmoan context, chapters are included in this report on culture, governance, and religion. They give a qualitative assessment of the situation in Sāmoa and how the conditions described and analysed could be improved upon in order to have sustainable livelihood in a changing Sāmoa. Most importantly, the inclusion of additional chapters in this report is an attempt to understand human development in Sāmoa, to take into account all aspects of being human in order to understand how the human condition could be improved upon progressively.

The notion of an all-embracing concept of human development keeps expanding with that view in mind. Against that backdrop, the United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP) has gone further and define **human development** as a process that enlarges people's choices by increasing their capabilities.

No matter how rich or poor a country is, there are three essential conditions that people need to have in order to have a good range of lifetime opportunities. They include leading long and healthy lives, being knowledgeable, and having access to the resources necessary for a decent standard of living.



If people are to lead satisfying and productive lives they also need political, economic and social opportunities to be creative and productive, and to enjoy self-respect, empowerment and a sense of belonging to a community. Increasing incomes is an important way to expand people's choices, but it is not the only one.<sup>2</sup>

Human development is connected to various global issues such as:

- *Human rights*: These include civil and political rights, as well as social, cultural and economic rights, particularly those identified in the United Nation (UN) sponsored international conventions.
- *Collective wellbeing*: Individual and collective wellbeing are connected. Strong social cohesion and an equitable distribution of the benefits of progress contribute to human development.
- *Equity*: Human development promotes equity in regard to wealth and income and also access to basic opportunities, such as education, adequate living conditions and good health.
- *Sustainability*: Sustainability means meeting the needs of present generations without limiting those of future generations, such as by destroying natural resources. Enlarging people's choices today should not be at the cost of people tomorrow.

The theme of this report is *Sustainable livelihoods in a Changing Sāmoa*. Sustainable livelihoods refer to ways of earning a living that are secure and do not deplete the resources that people depend upon. Not all types of jobs or livelihoods necessarily enrich the community, promote human development, or use resources in environmentally or socially sustainable ways. In this small island state, already experiencing environmental degradation, resource-based livelihoods such as agriculture have clear limits to growth. The most sustainable form of livelihood in Sāmoa has been traditional village subsistence agriculture and fisheries. Yet while this has a lower environmental impact than commercial agriculture for export, it does not produce the foreign exchange necessary to support a modern society. Furthermore, in a global marketplace, countries like Sāmoa can at-

tract businesses that are interested most in cheap labour and move on when they find an even cheaper source. Throughout the Pacific, there is considerable interest from 'industries' that want to dump dangerous wastes or engage in activities like gambling, money laundering, or the sex trade that are potentially harmful. Fortunately, Sāmoa has safeguards in place against these unsustainable livelihoods.<sup>3</sup>

There is an important difference here between the terms 'employment' and 'livelihoods' and how they are generally used:

- '*Employment*' is generally used to mean a person's primary, or main, job. The term 'creating employment' is often seen as increasing the number of paid jobs, where a person is formally employed for most of his or her day and receives a wage in cash. 'Self-employment' generally means something similar: that a person has their own enterprise or business to which they give most of their working day and from which they receive a cash or non-cash income. 'Unemployment' means that a person has no such job and, usually, no such income, unless provided by some insurance or government benefit. Used in this way, 'employment' describes fairly well the nature of work in the industrialized countries, where most employment statistics were first developed.
- '*Livelihoods*' is a wider concept, one that better reflects the reality of work outside of the industrialized countries. In developing countries, households often get their livelihood from a variety of sources, of which formally defined 'work' is only one. Sāmoa, like all other Pacific island countries, has a large traditional economy that provides a considerable degree of food security and is deeply bound together with the maintenance of Sāmoan village society, culture and identity. The true value of this traditional economy is difficult to quantify using conventional statistics. Most attempts to do so have concluded that the traditional sector provides the true strength of Sāmoa.

The promise of formal sector jobs sometimes draws attention away from the repercussions that commercial ventures can have on other forms of livelihood, particularly those in the 'traditional' or informal sectors. The likelihood in Sāmoa that labour force growth could outstrip formal sector jobs, together with the vulnerability of the physi-

cal environment, reinforces the need to sustain the semi-subsistence and informal sectors as an important source of livelihood. Strengthening the social structure of Sāmoa is bound up in a fundamental way with the challenges of sustaining livelihoods and addressing inequalities. These are critical issues for Sāmoa and will be central to future human development trends in the country.<sup>4</sup>

The phrase in the theme “**A changing Sāmoa**” directs attention to a society that is in a constant state of flux as a result of both internal and external factors. The latter include the influence of migration, education, trade, religion and, more recently, accelerated globalization brought about by advanced information technology. Internal factors include competition for limited local resources, the existence of traditional structures and associated values, and changes brought about by the dynamics associated with continuous adapting to local conditions for survival. Thus, **sustainable livelihoods in a changing Sāmoa** means ways of earning a living that are secure and do not deplete the local resources that the Sāmoans depend upon, in a country that is constantly changing. This conceptual distinction between external (global) and internal (local) factors that give rise to changes also implies a tension between the same sets of factors. For example, modern strategies put in place to guide and improve economic growth and poverty alleviation could at the same time impact negatively on traditional values.<sup>5</sup>

Human development is about improving people's lives. More than increasing incomes or national wealth, it aims to expand the capability of people to live long healthy and creative lives, to acquire knowledge, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living, and to enjoy dignity, self-respect, and the respect of others.<sup>6</sup> Human development is first and foremost about allowing people to lead the kind of life they choose – and providing them with the tools and opportunities to make those choices. In recent years the *Human Development Report* has argued strongly that this is as much a question of politics as economics – from protecting human rights to deepening democracy. Unless people who are poor and marginalized – who more often than not are members of religious or ethnic minorities or migrants –

can influence political action at local and national levels, they are unlikely to get equitable access to jobs, schools, hospitals, justice, security and other basic services.<sup>7</sup>

In line with the notion of human development embracing all aspects of being human, a gathering of world leaders at the Millennium Summit in September 2000 issued the Millennium Declaration that affirmed global, collective support towards lifting the lives of many from the dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty. A set of clear, time-bound objectives; the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was established.<sup>8</sup> Since 2000, the Sāmoan government had indicated its commitment to the attainment of the MDGs in its national policies, plans and resource allocation. To assess the extent of developments towards the attainment of the MDGs in Sāmoa a series of national MDGs workshops were funded by the UN in collaboration with the Government of Sāmoa and Sāmoa Umbrella of Non-Governmental Organizations (SUNGO) and conducted by *O le Si'osi'omaga Society* in March and April 2004. A summary report of these workshops is one of the chapters in this report.

In line also with the drive towards the attainment of the MDGs, although not intended exclusively for that purpose, are the government policies stipulated in its current development plan entitled *Strategy for the Development of Sāmoa (SDS) 2005–2007* whose theme is “Enhancing people's choices”. The developmental policies stated in this document not only highlights the key sectors to be developed but also the target goals associated with each of those sectors. These key sectors and their associated target goals are either discussed or reflected in the chapters in this report.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Human Development Report 2004: Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World, UNDP, p v.

<sup>2</sup> UNDP, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Draft Sāmoa National Human Development Report, 2003, p 6.

<sup>4</sup> Draft Sāmoa National Human Development Report, 2003, p 7.

<sup>5</sup> Thailand Human Development Report 2003, UNDP, p iii.

<sup>6</sup> Thailand Human Development Report 2003, UNDP, p x.

<sup>7</sup> Human Development Report 2004: Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World, UNDP, p v.

<sup>8</sup> Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of Sāmoa, Government of Sāmoa, Millennium Development Goals: First Progress Report 2004, p 2.

SĀMOA, LIKE ALL OTHER PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES, HAS A LARGE TRADITIONAL ECONOMY THAT PROVIDES A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE OF FOOD SECURITY AND IS DEEPLY BOUND TOGETHER WITH THE MAINTENANCE OF SĀMOAN VILLAGE SOCIETY, CULTURE AND IDENTITY.

[THIS TRADITIONAL SECTOR PROVIDES THE TRUE STRENGTH OF SĀMOA]







### THE ISLAND GROUP

Sāmoa is a group of volcanic islands which extends for 225 miles on an east-west line in the central Pacific in an area bounded by latitudes 13 degrees and 15 degrees south, and longitudes 168 degrees and 173 degrees west.<sup>1</sup> The eastern group of islands, comprising the islands of Ta'ū, Olosega, 'Ofu and Tutuila form the unincorporated territory of American Sāmoa, while the western group comprising Upolu, Savai'i, Manono and Apolima form the Independent State of Sāmoa. The people of these islands have a homogeneous language and culture and any variations in such are hardly recognizable to be of any significance.

### POPULATION

Sāmoa's population of 176,710 represents a 10 per cent increase since the last census in 1991. Fifty-two per cent are males and 48 are females. The annual growth rate is 1 per cent. Twenty-two per cent of the population live in the Apia Urban Area, 29.8 per cent in North West Upolu (an increase of 35 per cent since 1991), 23.7 per cent in the Rest of Upolu (which includes Manono and Apolima Islands) and 24.0 per cent in Savai'i.<sup>2</sup> Together with the Apia Urban Area, North-West Upolu is now home to 51.8 per cent of Sāmoans. The growth rate since 1991, from highest to lowest, are 2.6 per cent (North West Upolu), 1.3 per cent (Apia Urban Area), 0.2 per cent (rest of Upolu) and Savai'i (whose growth rate has declined from 0.4 per cent in 1991 to -0.5 per cent in 2001).<sup>3</sup> The highest portion of the population, 54.7 per cent, are those aged 15 to 64, followed by the age group 0-14 (40.7 per cent) and 65 and over (4.5 per cent).<sup>4</sup> Of the total population in 2001, 99 per cent identified themselves as Sāmoans, the other 1 per cent were non-Sāmoans.

#### APIA URBAN POPULATION

Sāmoa's population of 176,710 represents a 10 per cent increase since the last census in 1991. Together with the Apia Urban Area, North-West Upolu is now home to 51.8% of Sāmoans. 99 per cent are Sāmoans, the other 1 per cent are non-Sāmoans.



## ECONOMY

Compared to the steady growth in GDP, foreign aid inflows have been quite steady averaging 11.9 per cent of GDP annually for the eight years 1995 to 2002. Government external debt, on the other hand, averaged 72.6 per cent with the latest figures showing a decline to 54 per cent, while foreign remittances averaged 21.0 per cent. Overall, these figures show that the economy overall has maintained a healthy balance between domestic production and growth and these provide major fuels of economic activity. The census 2001 data also shows that foreign aid, government overseas borrowings and foreign remittances are the main resources that fuel the local economy. The total combined value of foreign aid, government external debt and foreign remittances have consistently exceeded GDP in the six-year period between 1995 and 2001. Of all the active persons 15 years and over, 95 per cent were reported as employed and 5 per cent were unemployed. The latter consisted of a little over 2,600 persons seeking paid employment at the time of the 2001 Census. About 88 per cent of the unemployed population comprised young adults aged 15 to 34 with 58 per cent in the age group 15-24 alone.

## RELIGION

The 2001 census records the number of religious denominations from the biggest to the lowest as follows: Congregational Christian Church of Sāmoa – CCCS (34.8 per cent), Catholic (19.6 per cent), Methodist (15.0 per cent), Latter Day Saint (12.7 per cent), Seventh Day Adventist (3.5 per cent), and Others (14.5 per cent). All the major denominations have decreased in number since 1991 except the Latter Day Saints which has increased from 2.9 per cent to 3.5 per cent in 2001. Those belonging to Other denominations have also increased from 5.9 per cent in 1991 to 14.3 per cent in 2001. The CCCS has decreased from 42.6 per cent, Catholic from 20.8 per cent, Methodist from 16.9 per cent. The other denominations have also increased from 5.9 per cent in 1991 to 14.3 per cent in 2001. The other denominations include the Assembly of God (6.6 per cent), Jehovah's Witness (0.8 per cent), CCCJS (1.0 per cent), Nazarene (0.4 per cent), Protestant (0.2 per cent), Baptist (0.2 per cent), Full Gospel (0.8 per cent), Voice of Christ (0.4 per cent), Worship Centre (1.3 per cent), Peace Chapel (1.3 per cent), Anglican Church (0.2 per cent), Community Church (0.3 per cent), Elim Church (0.1 per cent), Sāmoa Evangelism (0.1 per cent), A'oga Tusi Pa'ia (0.4 per cent), Baha'i (0.5 per cent), Muslem (0.0 per cent), Others (0.1 per cent), Not stated (0.1 per cent).<sup>5</sup>

## HISTORY

Exponents of the Austronesian culture left South East Asia about 7,000 years ago travelled southwards through the coastal areas of Papua New Guinea continuing down towards the south Pacific where they reached the Fiji-Sāmoa-Tonga triangle about 3,000 years ago. In Sāmoa, the Austronesian culture adapted and developed in accordance with local conditions. The impact of continuous inter-Island migration after the Austronesians had settled the Pacific Islands also influenced local developments shaping them into the Sāmoan culture that existed at the time the Europeans made first contact with the locals in the late 1700s. The 1800s was a politically difficult time for the Sāmoans as the three foreign powers Great Britain, Germany and the United States of America (USA) competed for territorial possessions in Sāmoa against the technologically powerless Sāmoans. The result was a division of the island group by Germany and the USA between themselves while Great Britain traded off her Sāmoan interests for possessions elsewhere in the Pacific. In 1900, the western group came under Germany rule, who surrendered control of the group to New Zealand at the start of World War One in 1914. The establishment of the United Nations (UN) in 1945 and the implementation of its anti-colonial policies resulted in Sāmoa gaining its independence on 1 January 1962. Compared to the political situation in other Pacific Island countries, Sāmoa has been relatively peaceful and stable. In its 43 years of political independence, Sāmoa has utilized help from the international community and its limited local resources to maintain a relatively happy and peaceful society although there are rooms for improvement in some sectors of society.





**MALUA  
THEOLOGICAL  
COLLEGE.  
CENTRAL ICON  
OF SAMOA'S  
CONGREGATIONAL  
CHRISTIAN  
CHURCH**

*PHOTO BY SKIV JOHNSTON*



WINNING SAMOA'S  
2006 GENERAL  
ELECTION  
CONTINUING 23  
YEARS IN  
POWER: THE HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
PROTECTION PARTY  
[HRPP]



## GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

Sāmoa adopted a Westminster model of parliamentary democracy. From independence in 1962 until the introduction of universal suffrage in the 1991 general election, only *matai* (chiefly titleholders) could stand as candidates and vote in elections. The change in the electoral system gives all Samoan citizens aged 21 years and over the right to vote in parliamentary elections while still restricting the right to stand as candidates to *matai* only. Parliament comprises the legislative assembly and the head of state, whose written consent is required before a bill can become law. Whilst the incumbent Head of State's term is for life, his successor will be elected by parliament for a term of five years. General elections are held every five years. The legislative assembly comprises 49 seats, two of which represent descendants of non-Sāmoan descent. Elected by the legislative assembly in its first meeting after the general election, the Speaker presides over parliamentary sessions. A deputy speaker and prime minister are also elected at the same time. The prime minister, who is the leader of the caucus section of his/her political party, selects 12 other members of parliament to form his cabinet. Cabinet ministers have portfolios headed by chief executive officers of government ministries and state-owned enterprises. An independent judiciary comprises the Chief Justice and the President responsible for the criminal court system and the Land and Titles court system respectively. The constitution not only blends custom and tradition, and democratic institutions and practices, but it also recognizes the division of state power into the three independent branches of legislators, executive and judiciary.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Gilson 1970. p. 1

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Census of Population and Housing, 2001. p. 7, 9, 10

<sup>3</sup> Report of the Census of Population and Housing, 2001. p. 10

<sup>4</sup> Report of the Census of Population and Housing, 2001. p. 17

<sup>5</sup> Report of the Census of Population and Housing, 2001. p. 22-23

## INDEPENDENCE

Sāmoa became the first Pacific nation to gain independence when it raised its own flag on 1 January 1962.







This chapter provides an executive summary of the eight thematic chapters relating to human development in Sāmoa, relative to the theme “*Sustainable Livelihoods in a Changing Sāmoa*”. The order in which the executive summary is presented is the same order in which the eight chapters are presented. Extended and more detailed coverage of points in this executive summary are given in the respective chapters in the report.

### 1. The Human Development Indices

1.1. Livelihood patterns in Sāmoa are changing. Agriculture’s share of 7.6 per cent of the total GDP in 2004 fluctuated and often experienced some extreme lows. Vulnerability to various forms of natural disasters and the climatic effects of global warming have probably contributed to this state of affairs. Fishing remains one of Sāmoa’s primary sources of livelihoods in terms of consumption, exports, proteins and employment. The benefits from agriculture and fishing are inadequate to guarantee food security and sustainable future food supply in Sāmoa. However, there are some prospects for agriculture. The taro and coconut export markets are recovering. The small-scale production of high quality oil provides opportunities for local processing, such as high value soap, and Electric Power Corporation (EPC) experiments with the use of coconut oil for power generation and use in vehicles instead of diesel. New markets have been found for nonu (*morinda citrifolia*) and ‘ava (*piper methysticum*) exports.<sup>8</sup> Export prospects for cocoa are good, except that local producers have moved away from this crop and supply is now too low. The future prospects for the fishing industry is difficult to assess. The industry is now largely based on small boats with Sāmoan crews. Not only are there some concerns about crew safety and the present level of resource use, but if larger ships join the industry, the local

workers may face competition for jobs with foreign crews.<sup>15</sup>

1.2. There are also changing patterns in employment. There has been a general movement of people both out of subsistence production generally and out of agriculture and fishing in particular, which may have resulted in job growth in the commercial sector. Since the 1970s, there has been a drop in employment in agriculture from 67 per cent to 50 per cent of all workers and rises in employment in financial and business services from 0.7 per cent to 7 per cent of workers, and in social and personal services from 15 per cent to 20 per cent of workers. Employment in manufacturing doubled from two to four per cent of workers, but this remains a very small sector. The fastest growing age group is youth and adults, that is people aged from 34 years. As this group grows, so does the demand for jobs. The rise in economic activity has been greatest for women. In recent decades, the civil service or public sector, provided a lot of the growth in paid jobs, but this avenue for job growth is closing. One aim of the Government’s reform programme is to reduce public sector employment and encourage more private sector jobs. Job growth in the private formal sector has been unsteady. Unemployment is on the rise, especially for young people although it is difficult to measure unemployment in Sāmoa because a lot of excess labour is absorbed by the subsistence sector.

1.3. There are also changing patterns in global trading, manufacturing and in the service industry. In these changing conditions, other opportunities for development have emerged. Established in 1991, the Women in Business Foundation (WPF) provides economic opportunities to women, youth and the disadvantaged in the community by offering them to opportunities to earn an income where they live. Established in 2000, the South Pacific Business Development Foundation (a micro finance organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of underprivileged families) (SPBDF) provides training, unsecured credit and ongoing motivation and guidance to help women start and grow businesses.

1.4. Indices to measure various aspects of human development include the following. The Human Development Index (HDI) replaces the old GNP per capita after it was proven that it does not necessarily reflect the real well being of a country's population because national wealth is not channelled to human development areas. Nor does it show income distribution patterns. Samoa's HDI has increased from 0.651 in 1981 to 0.714 in 1991 to 0.798 in 2001. The Human Poverty Index (HPI). Although poverty means different things to different people, the World Bank has defined it as living on less than one US dollar a day in purchasing power. Samoa's HPI has also improved (or declined) from 13.8 in 1981 to 10.9 in 1991 to 9.4 in 2001. The gender-related development index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) gauge gender inequality in key areas of economic and political participation and decision-making. Samoa's GDI has also improved from 0.668 in 1981 to 0.686 in 1991 to 0.736 in 2001. The GEM on the other hand is yet to be worked out.

1.5. Government's strategy for development is reflected in its last three development reports (called the Strategy for the Development of Samoa – SDS). The overall target is macro-economic stability and growth in all sectors. The 2002-2004 SDS aims at strengthening the partnership between the private sector and the public sector. It also stresses the importance of strengthening the social structure, especially the role of *matai* in society, the influence of religion on personal standard

and behaviour, the role of women, secure opportunities for youth in order to play an active part in community development activities, and encourage the participation of Non-Government-Organizations (NGOs) in social and economic programmes. Strengthening the social structures ensure social stability especially in the village community. The 2005-2007 SDS continues the reform programme the previous SDS started. Emphasis is again given to education, health and agriculture although other areas of importance include the private sector, tourism, and community development in all aspects of life.

1.6. Although seemingly a homogenous society in that it is one people, has one language, a common system of agriculture and land tenure, and a fairly uniform culture, Samoa in fact has significant internal regional differences. Some of the general differences include the semi-subsistence economy of most of Savai'i and Upolu, the largely urban and monetized economy of Apia and much of the north-west coast of Upolu, and the large semi-subsistence and small commercial agricultural sectors. These economic differences are evident at different scales by geographic area within Samoa and between households in the same locality. Differences in material wealth are particularly evident in Apia. There are also varying degrees of hardship. There is evidence that some households or individuals are more or less disadvantaged relative to what is considered an acceptable standard of living in Samoa. The people most affected by hardship were landless families or individuals, unemployed youth and parents, single income households, family with many children to look after, and people who live in isolated villages with poor transport.

## **2. The Health Sector**

2.1. Samoa's high investment in health is reflected in the government's development plans from which her health policies are derived. The government is committed to the Primary Health Care and Health Promotion principles of *equity of access, equitable resource allocation, effective and sustainable health service provision and funding, appropriate and affordable health services, multi-sector and multi-disciplinary action for health and*



*strengthening self-reliance and self-responsibility of individuals, groups and communities for their own health and well being.*

2.2. Although there have been significant improvements in the health sector in the past decade as shown by indicators such as life expectancy; maternal, infant and child mortality rates; major reductions in infectious diseases and the achievement of a high immunization coverage, there remains the challenge of not only maintaining those standards but improving them. Particular areas of health service to look at include the constant increase in urban population resulting in substandard living conditions and limited access to health services, the rise in non-communicable diseases, poor nutrition, the persistence of communicable diseases, and the increasing costs to government of maintaining secondary and tertiary health care brought about by changing disease patterns and demographic profile.

2.3. Juxtaposed against Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 4, Sāmoa's infant and mortality rates have decreased dramatically between 1975 and 2003. However, there are areas the health system needs to continuously address. They include the following. The 2001 census shows that the infant mortality rate is higher in the Savai'i region than in the Apia Urban Region. Despite the successful immunization programme for children, the outbreak of rubella in 2003 called for a re-evaluation of the immunization campaign. Rheumatic fever is the most common cause of cardiovascular disease in children and young adults. The malnutrition problem among children is due to underweight. Breastfeeding, which has been associated with healthy babies, has declined over the years and even more so among women residing in urban areas because of pressures associated with modernization.

2.4. MDG 5 stipulates the target maternal mortality rate to be achieved by the year 2015. Against this measure Sāmoa has already surpassed that target. However, there are other emerging health issues which the health system needs to be concerned with. Teenage pregnancies is one. It constitutes a risk to the health and well being of both the mothers and the infants. Breast and cervical cancer problems are on the rise. Iron deficiency

anaemia is prevalent among pregnant mothers aged 20-29 years. It is linked to dietary inadequacy, poor child spacing and worm infestation which is common amongst both school age children and mothers. Easy access to night clubs and ready availability of alcohol leading to promiscuous sexual behaviour among teenagers are issues often associated with teenage pregnancies, which could in turn contribute to increased maternal mortality rate.

2.5. MDG 6 targets a reverse of the spread of HIV/AIDS and other major diseases by 2015. Although HIV/AIDS is not a major concern, the prevalence of non-communicable diseases is. More Sāmoans suffer from non-communicable diseases such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension and cancer than from infectious diseases. Suicide is another major concern. In the period between 1999 and 2004, 47 per cent of suicide attempts resulted in deaths and those involved were mainly males below 29 years of age. Although communicable diseases are still prevalent, they are no longer the leading causes of deaths. Sexually transmitted diseases are on the rise and it is a major concern because they are the medium through which the HIV virus is transmitted.

2.6. Among the health issues that needed to be addressed in the future are the following. Population increase has put increasing pressure on limited resources. Urbanization has resulted in the adoption by the new immigrants of the urban lifestyle of fast foods and so forth which do not contribute to healthy living. The increasing cost of up-to-date medical technology will continue to put pressure of the health sector's limited budget. To realize the government's aim to expand and support the Integrated Community Health Services will need an additional budget to the Health Sector's budget. There needs to be better coordination of the work carried out by the traditional healers and those undertaken by the public health system. There is inequity among different income groups in terms of access to health care services. The different fees charged by women committees on members and non-members make it even more difficult for those in already vulnerable groups to access health services.

### 3. The Challenge in Education

3.1. The greatest challenge for education in any country is being able to continuously and consistently clarify what is quality in education, setting appropriate goals and acquiring the capacity to work towards achieving these goals. It requires vision renewal and constant vigilance to monitor, assess and redirect as needed. Notions of sustainable livelihoods constantly change as people re-examine values, assess resources capacity and evaluate possible futures. It is about people having the capacity to create and make choices. It is about sustainable human development. Education plays a pivotal role in all of these enterprises. The four key concepts that have underlined education policy and strategies in the last 10 years have been Equity, Quality, Relevance and Efficiency. They are also four of the six main issues that are often examined in reviewing any education sector, the other two being financing and management of education.<sup>1</sup> The Goals of Education in Sāmoa are explicit statements about the school curriculum, pedagogies, assessment and the individual and society in a humane education system. Assessed against these education goals and the four key concepts underlining education policy in the last 10 years, the following conclusions and issues are put forward.

3.2. Access and equity need to be expanded to include all people including those who leave school prematurely and those with special needs. Gross enrolment rates, net enrolment rates at primary and secondary levels, drop out rates, transition rates at secondary levels, and repetition rates must all be improved. There are many children who should be but who are not at school including special needs children. Access and equity demand that all children are treated equally. Furthermore, for Sāmoa to achieve education for all by 2015, the education and training of out of school youth (those who left school prematurely) should also be addressed. These people are in the urban as well as the rural areas. The demand and supply of good quality teachers must be addressed. These include not only adequate numbers of teachers who are qualified but also supporting structures such as a flexible and progressive teaching career structure, good conditions of work and fair and just

salaries. Equity and access are compromised when there are not enough teachers in the system. There is a real sense of hardship among people particularly in the rural areas who find it difficult to keep their children in school either due to inability to pay fees or to contribute in kind to the upkeep of schools. Changes in family structures also place the responsibility of looking after parents or grandparents on youth who should be at school. There is also a deteriorating sense of importance placed on education by parents resulting in children not going to school.

3.3. Quality issues in any education system are very complex. They include issues relating to infrastructure, learning outcomes, production and adequate resources, on-going curriculum development, teacher development, and effective and realistic policies. In the past five years, Sāmoa has taken infrastructural development as a major quality issue obtaining a loan from the Asian Development Bank to refurbish and rebuild school buildings and improving facilities in the practical and vocational subjects. However, learning outcomes in terms of examination and test results show low levels which are disappointing. These exam results and the types of testing instruments used must be investigated to enable ways of improvement. Quality control mechanisms must be put in place to monitor student performance, curriculum performance, school performance and performance of the sector. Improving the capacity of the ministry to provide adequate multi media resources especially print resources, enabling teachers to use these resources and making all resources available to school remain an issue. The development of the capacity of the ministry and schools to develop, teach and maintain relevant and worthwhile curricula in the schools is on-going work. The development of more relevant measures for learning outcomes must also be considered. A rationalization of resources to enable better and more efficient and effective ways of teacher development at both pre and in service education is critical in a small country like Sāmoa. Such initiatives must be carefully coordinated and monitored for quality and effectiveness. Effective human resource development requires forward looking policies that enable strategic decisions to identify pri-

orities and allocate resources for effective and efficient outcomes. Education and training remain the most crucial single means to achieving sustainable human resources development. But resources are scarce. The Government of Sāmoa is now taking out loans to fund education and good and wise decisions are required to ensure that finances are used most effectively.

3.4. Improving efficiency also involve several issues. Resources inputs for educational development are often regarded as long term investments. However, inefficiencies do occur when expectations and aspirations do not match the realities of resources capacity. Thus attempts must be made to address all aspects of inefficiencies in the education system in Sāmoa. It may be necessary to consider a refinement of the structure of the current educational system. A policy study must be carried out to look at the effect of the current entry age to start school (age 5) on repetition and drop out rates. The implications of repetition at all levels and the presence of an optional year eleven as part of the secondary structure must also be investigated. In fact a review of the resource implications of the expansion of all secondary schools to year 13 level must be carried out as a matter of priority.

3.5. Improving relevance is another important set of issues. Debates are ongoing regarding the provision in secondary schools and relevance of vocational education in regards to their cost effectiveness. Many discussions have also taken place with regards to the efficacies of providing mainly academic education in the schools in Sāmoa. A clear understanding of the kinds of labour markets that exist for the people of Sāmoa is required so that the experience of schooling and the outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes match the real world in which people are expected to live. Surveys of human resources needed and the labour markets must be carried out periodically. Sāmoa like all other small countries of the world must come to terms with globalization and the issues that affect national economies. To attract outside investment, the people must be educated to attract investors. Sāmoa must invest in education to enable the production of goods and services that are exportable. All peo-

ple in Sāmoa must have the opportunity to gain skills and knowledge to enable them to achieve a sustainable livelihood.

3.6. Finally whether the issues are those of equity or access, or quality and efficiency or relevance and effectiveness all of these are mediated through the teacher. This makes the tasks and responsibilities of a teacher both comprehensive and specialized at the same time. The education and training of teachers is critical to human resource development in any country. Adequate and adequacy of teachers are issues that go hand in hand. There are inadequate numbers of teachers in Sāmoa caused mainly by the high attrition rate from the service. There are issues of inadequacy of teachers as good and experienced teachers are lost from the service. This is probably the most critical of the issues that must be addressed immediately in Sāmoa if quality in education is to be improved.

## 4. Economic Update

4.1. Sāmoa's economy relies heavily on a narrow resource base that is limited to agriculture, tourism, small-scale manufacturing and fisheries while its macroeconomic performance acutely depends on external factors such as commodity export prices, crop diseases, tourism demands and weather-related shocks. Critical economic reforms implemented since 1997 aimed at improving the efficiency of the public sector, opening up the economy and developing its small private sector. These reforms have the full support of the Sāmoan public, its development partners and the international community. Although generally Sāmoa's economic situation is promising, the economic indicators vary a great deal. Although the GDP had increased between 1995 and 2001, it declined to 2 per cent in 2002 and declined further in 2003. Only the tertiary sector, particularly commerce, fared well in the same period along with the transport and communications industries. Although the growth rate had increased by 0.5 per cent between 1991 and 2001, out migration mainly to New Zealand, Australia and the United States of America has kept the growth rate at below one per cent. Despite a setback in economic reforms after Cyclone Heta in early 2005, the government none-



theless pressed on with its planned reform process.

4.2. The average inflation rate between 1995 and 2001 was 3 per cent per annum. By March 2003 it had increased to 6.3 per cent per annum, an increase of 0.8 per cent since March 2002. The 2.5 per cent increase in VAGST probably had an effect on this increase. Since 2003, the government target of 3 per cent inflation was revised upward to below 6 per cent. Several factors contribute to the general rise in prices including the recent trend in government fiscal deficits and sustained growth of money supply and credit to the private sector. From March 2002 to March 2003, the annual change in total money supply increased by 11 per cent, which was about the same rate since 1999. It was the result of a build up of government net deposits in the bank during the mid to late 1990s, which coincided with the period of financial system reform. Most economic sectors received increases in commercial bank credit with the exception of agriculture, forestry and fisheries which registered a decline. The Central Bank of Sāmoa, however, has announced its intention to relax monetary policy in order to make available to the private sector credit given the expected decline in inflation in the short to medium term.

4.3. The foreign exchange has been reported to cover about four months which is considered by the Central Bank to be sustainable. The Commercial banks (ANZ and WESTPAC) weighted average lending and deposit rates were at around 12 per cent and 5 per cent at the end of March 2003. In early 2003, Sāmoa's newest and fourth commercial bank, Sāmoa Commercial Bank, began trading. The nominal value of the official external debt increased from SAT380 million to SAT500 million between 1995 and 2001. However, that amount has fallen as a proportion of GDP from 80 per cent to 59 per cent over the same period. These favourable trends in external debt and debt servicing reflect the concessionary nature of the debt portfolio and the growth in exports of goods and services, but the exporting sector will face more staunch competition as Sāmoa gains full World Trade Organization (WTO) membership. Balance of payments is dominated by private and official transfer although significant contributors

include remittances and foreign aid, tourism and fisheries up to 2002. Foreign aid amounted to 10 per cent of GDP in the past two decades. Amongst others easy access to official grants and other preferences become immediate challenges as Sāmoa graduates from its current economic status (least developing LDC) to developing country in 2006.

4.4. Tourism grew from 5 per cent of GDP in the 1980s to around 10-15 percent in recent years. Fisheries grew from earnings of SAT150,000 in 1993 to SAT36 million in 2000 and 2001 before it experienced a dramatic downturn in 2002. The priority now is for the government to provide specific policy interventions that would facilitate the granting of time-bound tax relief, undertake an extended review of import taxes and tariff on fishing boat and specialized fishing equipment, and introduce other indirect fiscal incentives. The tourism sector in the last four years between 2000 and 2003 had grown to 20 per cent. It was still good by the first six months of 2004. The government is committed to consolidating the tourism sector. Because of the on-going problem of Polynesian Airline debts, the Sāmoan government has successfully negotiated a merger of its airline with an Australian based Airline Company, Virgin Blue, in an attempt to sustain the Sāmoa tourism industry. Associated with air travel policies are those of the hotel development. The government aims to have at least 350 hotel rooms by 2007. To help achieve this target, the 2003 Tourism and Hotel Development Incentive Act was passed

4.5. Despite the good economic performances in recent years the employment sector remains weak. Most are in the informal sector comprising agriculture and fisheries. Fifty-one per cent of the economically active population were in paid employment according to the 2001 census. The rest were in unpaid family-related work. Thirty-two per cent of those in public employment are in the formal sector. Twenty-two per cent are in government jobs and the other 10 per cent are in the state-owned enterprise sector. The private sector, on the other hand, employs 26.8 per cent of the population, most of whom by the Yazaki Industry. At its height in 1996, Yazaki employed 4,000 locals. The unemployment rate of the whole labour force in 2001 was 2.5 per cent (males with a slightly higher





MAINTAINING MACRO-ECONOMIC STABILITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH INVOLVE PRESSING ON WITH CURRENT REFORMS IN THE HEALTH AND EDUCATION SECTORS, CREATING AN INVESTMENT-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPING VILLAGE INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES, PROMOTING SMALL-SCALE HARDSHIP ALLEVIATION PROJECTS TO IMPROVE WATER SUPPLY, HEALTH SERVICES, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION, AND SO FORTH.

PHOTO COURTESY SAMOA TOURISM AUTHORITY



rate than females) and those not economically active 49 per cent (males 32 per cent and females 68 per cent). These high numbers of the 'economically inactive' population, who are mainly youth, suggest that there is considerable potential for increased rural output. Despite the heavy reliance on the agricultural and fishery sector, total government expenditure on the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery has remained at 6 per cent in the last five years. The government is aware of the present situation and is currently implementing policies aimed at the promotion of equitable growth and hardship alleviation. Extensive consultations have been carried out whose aim, among other things, is to steer Sāmoa towards the achievement of the UN's Millennium Development Goals. Although yet to be officially recognized by Government, a 2002 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) showed that about 20 per cent of households have income below the poverty line (US\$1 dollar a day). The youth and the elderly are the most vulnerable. Thus, it is necessary to maintain macro-economic stability and economic growth. It would in turn involve pressing on with current reforms in the health and education (including vocation training) sectors, creating an investment-friendly environment, developing village income-generating activities, promoting small-scale hardship alleviation projects to improve water supply, health services, transport and communication, and so forth.

4.6. Sustaining and improving economic growth will be a priority for government in the short term. This is particularly important, not only to maintain the momentum for continuing reforms, but also given the increased emphasis now placed by government on issues of income distribution, equity, and its plans to develop and implement targeted hardship reduction strategies. Thus, the authorities must implement the necessary reforms equipped to target immediately central areas or intervene using carefully targeted policy interventions supporting sectors and industries that are showing signs of exhaustion. The future stance for the Sāmoa economy appears optimistic with real pressure likely to be mounted on the budget over the next few years. The gains from the reforms would inhibit positive political will to speed up

reforms in public works, telecommunications, education, health, state-owned enterprises and agriculture. Government must exercise controlled fiscal discipline to ensure that fiscal monitoring is maintained, thereby paving the way for nurturing an investment environment with good governance in order to maintain a sustained economic growth.

## 5. The Fa'aSāmoa

5.1. Sāmoan culture is a composite of both historical and contemporary influences which have helped shape the way Sāmoans view their world, live and act in it. The elements of Sāmoan culture evolved in three periods. The first period was the Mongoloid homeland in Southern China about 5,000 years ago. The second period was the Austronesian era which is traced to South East Asia about 2,000 years ago. The third period is the modern period which began in the first contact with European culture about 300 years ago following the sighting of Manu'a Island by La Perouse in 1722.

5.2. Remnants of the Mongoloid culture include tattooing, pottery-making and mediumship in religious practice while elements of the Austronesian culture include language, horticulture and deep-sea voyaging technology. It was during and after the dominance of the Austronesian culture that the *matai* system evolved. The dominant agents of change in the modern period include means of communication (such as radio, television, ships and aeroplanes), trade, Christianity and other introduced religions, and education.

5.3. The overall effect of modernization has been the gradual incorporation of Sāmoa into the global community. No longer would Sāmoa be an isolated island group in the Pacific Ocean whose intermittent contact was with the neighbouring Pacific Islands only. International migration mainly to New Zealand, Australia and the United States of America has resulted in the establishment of migrant communities in those countries who would not let go of their cultural links with the homeland. Constant contacts between the homeland and the migrant communities ensured not only the maintenance of culture but the incorporation of new variant elements. At home, on the other hand, the establishment and growth of Apia town



attracted rural communities because of better chances to succeed in education and the availability of paid jobs.

5.4. Changes associated with modernization are manifold. The country has a Westminster parliamentary democracy. The introduction of universal suffrage in the 1991 parliamentary election now exist alongside the long established socio-political system that revolves around the *matai* system whose apex are the *matai*. Some constitutional changes should be sought to (1) allow the untitled Sāmoan citizens to stand as candidates for parliament and (2) allow for the establishment of a second house to cater for chiefs' only candidates even though this may be problematic from the point of view of costs.

5.5. Christianity has survived in Sāmoa for close to 200 years. Religion is thought to be a unifying institution but the provision in the constitution for freedom of religion and individual rights has challenged the one-village-one-religion policy of some villages that value unity more than freedom of religion per se. The concept of individual rights has challenged communalistic values that are part and parcel of Sāmoan culture. Village councils and central government should negotiate a settlement which must satisfy the requirements of the law and village governance. Economic principles of free enterprise and capitalism now coexist with the cultural principles of reciprocity and subsistence living where most material necessity of life are exchanged rather than being bought with cash.

5.6. Understandably, cultural elements that are no longer relevant to modern conditions become obsolete. Polygamy has given way to the one-man-one-wife teaching of the Christian Bible. Virginity test (*fa'amasei'au*) is slowly dying out as Christianity takes root. On the other hand, cultural innovations that are relevant to modern situations are taken on board. For example, the concept of Women's Committee in the village structure, which was first introduced in the 1920s as a way of bringing together in one organization the wives of *matai* and *taulele'a* (non-*matai* males), and village girls (*aualuma*) is now a permanent feature of village organization. However, in the majority of cases, old cultural elements continue to co-ex-


ist alongside newly introduced practices, which have often created tensions.

## 6. The Church and Development

6.1. Since independence, the church and the state have worked harmoniously side by side for the benefit of Sāmoan citizens generally. State leaders are usually also the leaders in the church. Life in rural areas and in town revolves around the church, which is often represented in the area by at least one Christian denomination. Although the three mainline churches (Congregational Christian Church in Sāmoa (CCCS), Methodist Church of Sāmoa (MCS) and Catholic Church of Sāmoa (CCS)) established in the early 1800s dominate religious life in Sāmoa, relatively new denominations have posed a challenge not only in villages but in relation to the established doctrines and practices of established denominations. Under the authority of their respective council of *matai* (chiefs), some villages prefer that they follow one denomination only in the belief that the presence of more than one denomination in the village would breed division among village members. Village unity is a cultural virtue. Furthermore, the increasing outflow into new denominations of adherents in established denominations has not sat easily with leaders of the latter. Thus, there exists a tension between the freedom of religion principle espoused in the Constitution of the Independent State of Sāmoa and the deep-seated feeling of unity among both the church and the village communities. Generally, however, Sāmoans have been tolerant to religious differences.

6.2. Offering is a big part of the church and a number of issues relating to this practice and its associated theological justification have been raised within and without church circles. Given that the church annually receives massive revenue from its members, it could easily be turned into a business venture. However, leaders must always remember that the church must remain an organization for the physical and, most importantly, the spiritual wellbeing of its members. Furthermore, given that several church members survive just above the poverty line, the CCCS has tried to help parish members through a loan scheme from which they could borrow money for the construction and/





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or maintenance of their church halls, pastor's residence and so forth. The church, however, has yet to help the financial situation of individual members of congregations. It has even been criticized from within to be a mechanism that is only imposing a financial burden on its adherents through contributions to several church activities. Church administrators have also been severely criticized by its members for the loose manner in which church funds have been accounted. Huge church buildings constructed from church offerings have always taken precedence over the near-poverty-line situation in which some church adherents live. These issues will be around for many years to come.

6.3. Education has always been part and parcel of the conversion strategy when Christianity was first introduced to Sāmoa in the early 1800s. Mission schools were, therefore, the first schools in Sāmoa. In the last 20 years, the churches have gone further to providing centres for vocational training in their respective education systems. Appreciative of church efforts in the education sector and true to the harmonious spirit of cooperation between the church and state, the government has for a number of years now allocated money for the development of mission and private schools. In its budget this year (2005), the government has allocated SAT3 million to the four main categories of schools. They include the mission schools, private schools, special needs schools and early childhood education/pre-schools. Private and mission schools have been given a total of SAT2,550,000. The rest of the money has been allocated to the special needs schools and pre-schools.<sup>2</sup> The church also helps out in the area of health care. In villages where trained nurses live, the church community would co-opt their help for its health care programmes. In cases where either the village pastor or his wife is a trained doctor or a trained nurse, their expertise would naturally be utilized as part of their pastoral care work. The Catholic Church is particularly noted for its huge contribution to the care for the Aged. A community complete with all required facilities run by the Sisters of the Poor called Mapuifagalele has been taking in the elderly for care regardless of their denomination and affiliation. In the area of

disease, in particular HIV/AIDs, the 'natural' position of the church is to encourage fidelity in marriage and abstinence outside marriage.

6.4. Women have always been the backbone of the church. Through independent organizations within the church they form at the parish and national levels, the women contribute immensely to such things as facilities for the use of the pastors and their families at the parish level, construction and maintenance of some church facilities, cleanliness around church premises and so forth. In spite of the strong influence of women in many church activities, however, there remains the question whether that influence would eventually translate into women becoming pastors.

6.5. Given its 'natural' affinity to questions of creation and life generally, the church has always had a role to play in issues relating to the environment. Often man sees himself as the boss of the environment who can therefore do anything with it, thereby ignoring the concerns of others. Theologically, this should never be the case. Instead, man should know that he ought to be a good steward of the environment. The theological concept of creation should not be confined to man only. Instead it should be extended to other lives besides that of man. That is, the church should commit itself to the protection of biological diversity and the preservation of natural landscapes, which have sometimes been ruined to make way for the construction of new church projects.

6.6. Although early Christianity attempted to separate Sāmoan culture from it, developments in the last 20 years tried to reverse this practice. Most noticeable in this move has been the Catholic Church where culture has been incorporated into most of its rituals and practices. The new belief is that incorporating local culture into the church would make the brand of Christianity in this part of the world more meaningful to locals. Other denominations are slowly following in the footsteps of the Catholic Church. Since the introduction of Christianity, the mainline churches have always been pushing hard for the development of the youth in mind, body and spirit with limited success. Now, all churches have taken seriously the education of youth and children so that they are well versed not only in Christianity but in their



Sāmoan beliefs and traditions, as well as family values as these form the basis of who they are and where they are in this world of constant flux. Despite the work of the church, however, there has been an increasing rate of youth crime and suicide in recent years. The message for church leaders is for more resources to help combat this growing problem. The Government established the Ministry of Youth, Sports & Culture (MESC) in the early 1980s to complement the youth programmes of the church. The family environment has always helped cement the foundation of youth. Respect for the elders, among other Sāmoan-Christian values, are taught and learned in the homes. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has already been adopted by the government, is a challenge to the church and Sāmoan culture. Wide consultation among the community would help negotiate and ease the tension between existing cultural and Christian practices, on one hand, and the implementation of the Convention on Children's Right provisions on the other.

## 7. Governance and Rendered Service

7.1. Governance is an authority system with its associated structures and rules that define not only the relationship between these structures but the manner in which they operate for the achievement of identifiable outcomes. Generally, there are four such governance systems in Sāmoa and they relate to the four types of service (*tautua*) a Sāmoan would normally render in one's life time. They are service to one's family, village, church and the national government. It is these four kinds of *tautua* in the context of their respective authority systems that are discussed here.

7.2. A family comprises not only the parents and their immediate children but the extended kin group which could include both the biological descendants and others adopted into it. It is headed by a *matai* (titled person) elected by the family for a life term unless the family decides otherwise at a later stage if the *matai* is not living up to the family's expectation. The *matai*'s responsibilities include representing the family in the *fono* (village council of *matai*), settling family disputes, protecting family interests (such as lands and ti-

ties), upholding and advancing family prestige and honour, and providing leadership in the family. The challenge in family governance is for its leadership to continue to promote and uphold the collective interests of the family for the benefit of all. This is a daunting task given the un-halted nature of family expansion as members migrate to towns and overseas for better economic and education opportunities. The tendency is for the family *matai* to cater only for the interests of family members who are close to him/her, thereby ignoring the interests of other family members. The family leadership has to ensure that members are happy in the family and that their basic needs are met under the system of family governance. Only then would family governance contribute to sustainable livelihood in a changing Sāmoa.

7.3. The supreme authority in the village polity is the *fono* (council of *matai*), which comprises all *matai* of the village families. Although the number of *matai* in the council could range from 10 to 100 in big villages, only a small number has the final say in important village decisions. The *fono* has the umbrella authority over all village land. Moreover, it defends village boundary with next door villages, mediates over land disputes between village families although (following the establishment of the Land and Titles Court whose roots is traced to the Land Commission established during the German administration in 1903) most of these disputes are now dealt with by the Land and Titles Court, maintains law and order in the village, and ensures village security and wellbeing.

7.4. Village governance will continue to play a major role in the lives of Sāmoans. Its positive contributions to peace, stability and security are to be acknowledged and encouraged. Its negative aspects, on the other hand, are a challenge for which remedies should be found. Taking village authority to the extreme where it has harmed people is to be discouraged. Bringing village governance within the orbit of state governance is one way of checking unnecessary and extreme exercise of collective village power. Education would help in a gradual change in village leadership mentality where human rights have been ranked second to those of village honour, unity and pres-

tige. The challenge is to find a balance between these two extremes. Steering a way forward with these objectives in mind would contribute to sustainable livelihood in a future Sāmoa. On the other hand, the rise of non-traditional villages being established around the urban areas has introduced a new set of governance issues that are directly related to the characteristic absence in them of traditional structures and associated 'laws', processes and a value system. These are problems the relevant government agencies who handle their affairs must address.

7.5. The church continues to play an important role in the lives of the people. Youth group programmes and Sunday schools are examples of the means the churches have deployed towards personal and community development within the orbit of the church governance system. However, there is room for improvement not only in the governance systems of the church but also in the manner it administers its affairs. Looking at the church from within, there are two challenges its leadership has to address and respond to appropriately. One concerns the criticism that some churches seem to be existing for their own sake ignoring the physical, social and economic well-being of their members. The second relates to the defensive manner in which the leadership in the established churches has responded to the threat posed by the quick and exponential growth of the newly established denominations. The church leadership has to constantly adapt itself to existing conditions in order to fulfill their missions of catering not only for the spiritual but also the physical, social, economic and psychological well-being of their church members. Only then would the church make a meaningful and lasting contribution to sustainable livelihood in a changing Sāmoa.

7.6. The state's overarching sphere of influence transcends those of the family, village and church. Given this fact, the effects of state governance on Sāmoan citizens are either profoundly positive or profoundly negative. Among the former are policies that have led to the introduction of universal suffrage, the ratification of the CEDAW and convention for the rights of the children, the recognition of the important contribution of

women to development through the establishment of the Ministry of Women Affairs, and the adoption of the Strategy for the Development of Sāmoa (SDS) 2005-2007 document in which are policies aimed at "enhancing people's choices". As in other governance systems already discussed, there are rooms for improvement in state governance. For example, the lot of the 20 per cent of the population below the poverty line need to be improved, a way forward must be found where the government is made to be responsible to parliament in the present age of party politics, to name a few. Another challenge for state governance is to continue the evolutionary process already underway where village governance becomes a component of the state governance structure rather than a polity existing independently of the state which could therefore resists state efforts at will, particularly when things are not going their way. The challenge of non-traditional villages is related to the absence of an established social structure to coordinate their infrastructural requirement in order to cater for the needs of their fast growing populations. It is, therefore, vitally important that the government should not only understand the problems of non-traditional villages but come up with remedies to those problems. It calls for co-operation between the relevant government agencies and settlers of those non-traditional settlements.

## **8. The Millennium Development Goals Evaluated**

8.1. Workshops organized by the NGOs, O le Si'osi'omaga (OLSSI), to plan, coordinate, organize and implement the MDGs in Sāmoa in March and April 2004 included representation from the Sāmoa Umbrella for NGOs (SUNGO) and government. The opportunity provided an enabling environment and a consultative forum to capture the real life experiences of all sectors in the village communities on the eight MDGs addressed. Papers presented and views expressed were fairly representative of the views of both the civil society and government. Issues discussed therefore need to be integrated in any calculation defining sustainable livelihood from a Sāmoan perspective.

8.2. Government presentations indicated that

work was already in its advanced stage towards achieving each of the eight MDGs (the eradication of extreme poverty, universal primary education, gender equality, reduction of child mortality, improvement of maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS and other major diseases, environmental sustainability and global partnerships). The government's view is premised on the fact that the government's tri-annual development plan called Sāmoa's Development Strategies (SDS) implemented in 2003, 2004 and 2005 aimed towards meeting similar objectives. The current SDS (2005), whose theme is "Enhancing People's Choices", continues the government's policy statement of the previous SDS.

8.3. As synthesized from the workshop presentations and discussions, the key development indicators of Sāmoa emphasized aspects of developments such as education and health. In 2001, 94.7 per cent of 15-24 year olds were enrolled in primary schools. Enrolment ratio for girls enrolled in primary schools in 2003 was 85 per cent and 62 per cent for secondary schools. Enrolment ratio for boys in primary school in 2003 was 84 per cent and 48 per cent in secondary schools. Literacy rate for 15-24 year olds saw an increase in 2003 at 99.9 per cent and for all adults at 95.7 per cent in 1999. As for health, there was 10 per cent of people without access to safe water in 1999, four known cases of HIV/AIDs in 2004 and the prevalence of non-communicable diseases on the increase in 2004. Government works from the above figures and progresses to fulfill its commitment to improve on the situation. It is recommended that measures identified to try and improve on should have the people themselves as the central focus of any implementations.

8.4. Against the data and information presented in the OLSSIS workshops, the current status of the eight MDGs in Sāmoa is presented. The target of eradicating extreme poverty has been reached and is higher than UNs of US\$1 a day. The universal primary education target is almost achieved with 84 per cent of primary school age males, and 85 per cent of females enrolled at school in 2003, an increase from 83 per cent and 85 per cent in 2002. There is progress noted for gender equality with females consistently better represented at

primary school level in the past three years, one percentage point more than their male counterparts. In 2001, 129 males and 227 females attended university for the age of 15-24 years. This highlights a general attendance more favourable to females, in contrast to the perceived gender disparity envisioned by the UN. Women in Sāmoa have always been held in high esteem by traditional society and four females are Chief Executive Officers in Government Ministries. The child mortality rate is already low with a recorded 1.2 per cent death rate for babies born live in Sāmoa in 2003 or a ratio of 12 deaths for every 1,000 births compared to 16 and 33 child deaths in 1998. There is also progress in maternal health with close working relationships with traditional birth attendants. There is some progress on efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. HIV/AIDS is still relatively minor in Sāmoa compared to other countries with the official count of those infected between 1990 and 2003 at 12, eight have died since and four still alive. Progress is noted in the efforts to ensure environmental sustainability. The government has progressively over the past fifteen years built up its official institution responsible for safeguarding the environment initially the Lands, Surveys and Environment Department, now renamed Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) together with the help of NGOs and community groups. Global partnerships is progressing slowly with targets set out to measure progress such as good governance, free quota access for least developed countries with regard to exports and dissemination of crucial information on important issues.

8.5. The role of International Development Agencies (IDAs), Government and NGOs is crucial in meeting and sustaining the MDGs in Sāmoa. Bilateral and International Development Agencies have an important role. The level of official development assistance, and the volume of development finance procured under softer than commercial terms have continued to play major and pivotal roles resourcing basic infrastructure and long-term development projects in the country. The low local savings rate, and lack of opportunities to earn surplus income from exports and other economic activities sees the situation persisting



into the future. Government efforts with the implementation of various social development and service functions in the country have also been undergoing some noticeable changes over the past decade. A number of service delivery agencies have been corporatized, with others commercialized. Some ministries have been relegated a more regulatory role, with the delivery of related public services consigned to commercial enterprises. The results have been positive. The partnership between the IDAs, government and civil society is working well, ensuring that tasks are carried through to the very people needing the services.

8.6. Recommendations for all of the eight MDGs have to be taken on board if workshops and consultations were to be of value, with the first recommendation for more recognition and acknowledgement of the existence of 'poverty of opportunities' to be afforded in official government policy formulation and implementation so that the effect of development programmes aimed at alleviating these conditions are better targeted. It is also recommended that more recognition and assistance be given to NGOs conducting preschools and other pre-education and non-formal activities so to meet the universal primary education MDG. That the description of 'women' as used for commercial categorization be reviewed and that a more representative and impartial label such as 'home managers' be developed that suits the local situation to be in line with promoting

gender equality. To reduce child mortality, it is recommended that greater accountability and transparency in the promotion of quality service be made a priority and partnerships with traditional and NGO agents be enhanced. To improve on maternal health, training for traditional midwives should be enhanced and expanded in conjunction with women's committees to meet the growing needs of Sāmoan mothers. Health advocacy programmes are recommended to focus on non-communicable diseases as malaria is not prevalent in Sāmoa. Awareness programmes are strongly recommended to be continued to combat HIV/AIDS. Environment Sustainability is recommended to be considered in Sāmoa's drive for commercial developments. Regulations need to be in place with independent evaluation of projects and consideration of local community inputs to ensure developments are sustainable. Government is recommended to review and establish guidelines and routine procedures that steer relationships with NGOs. An enhanced role for SUNGO in the consultation process regarding formulation of policies and procedures is to be considered.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Government of Sāmoa - ADB Draft Education Sector Review 2004. p. 1

<sup>2</sup> Press Release, Secretariat, Prime Minister's Department, 27 June 2005.

<sup>8</sup> McGregor 2002.

<sup>15</sup> Pacific Islanders comprise less than 10 per cent of the crew of the commercial fishing boat, UNDP, 1998.

### FINDING A BALANCE BETWEEN THE COMPETING WEIGHTS OF CUSTOM AND RELIGION



Clearly the way to sustainable livelihood in a changing Samoa is finding a balance between the competing weights of custom and religion whereby the localization of introduced religion does not turn out to be a physical burden to church members who are supposedly in that institution in search of spiritual gratification.

The background of the entire page is a soft-focus photograph of a tropical sunset. A palm tree is silhouetted against the bright, hazy sky. Overlaid on the image is a faint, light-colored grid pattern that covers the entire area.

[A LIVELIHOOD REFERS TO CAPABILITIES, MATERIAL AND NON-MATERIAL ASSETS AND ACTIVITIES REQUIRED TO SUSTAIN A LIVING],

WHILE A SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD REFERS TO WAYS OF EARNING A LIVING THAT ARE SECURE AND DO NOT DEplete THE RESOURCES THEY DEPEND UPON.

[FOR A SMALL ISLAND LIKE SAMOA, SUSTAINABILITY OF LIVELIHOODS IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT AND COMPLEX DUE TO THE EFFECTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS, SUCH AS HURRICANES AND PRESSURES ON MATERIAL AND BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.

THUS THE NEED TO SUSTAIN THE SEMI-SUBSISTENCE AND INFORMAL SECTOR AS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF EMPLOYMENT. THIS, HOWEVER, DOES LITTLE TO IMPROVE THE COUNTRY'S EARNINGS FOR FOREIGN EXCHANGE, HENCE THE DILEMMA THAT CONFRONTS THE COUNTRY'S LEADERS."]

WRITTEN BY SEFUIVA REUPENA MUAGUTUTI'A  
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**This chapter examines human development trends in Sāmoa. It also examines prospects for sustainable livelihoods, identifies inequalities in human development within the country, and describes the special disadvantages some groups face as the indicators show. Sāmoa's economy is changing quickly because of the influence of international trends. The theme is "Sustainable Livelihoods in a Changing Sāmoa".**

**THE REPORT WILL IDENTIFY AND DISCUSS THE LIVELIHOODS** upon which the Sāmoan people depend for survival. It will also examine in detail the selected livelihoods and the problems that may hinder progress towards achieving sustainable human development.

The phrase 'sustainable livelihoods'<sup>1</sup> refers to ways of earning a living that are secure and do not deplete the resources that they depend upon. That is, not all types of jobs or livelihoods necessarily enrich the community, promote human development, or use resources in sustainable ways. For example, our small country has already experienced environmental degradation and resource-based livelihoods such as agriculture, already face limits on their expansion.

A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required as means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base.<sup>2</sup>

Sāmoa's economy is predominantly village-based subsistence agriculture, which is often supplemented largely by either fishing or transfers from overseas as remittances. The social and cultural institutions of Sāmoan society (*fa'aSāmoa*) are strong and still intact. Sāmoa's system of village government is well organized and coherent, making it an effective means for initiating and overseeing developments in the village for the livelihood of its members. However, it is at the macro level that the success and effectiveness of government development plans implemented in the last two decades have been more visible and have

resulted in other sectors like manufacturing, construction, transport and communication, finance and business services gain momentum of upward growth.

### **Sustainable Livelihood in Sāmoa**

In a small Island country like Sāmoa, sustainability of livelihoods is becoming increasingly difficult and complex. The shocks inflicted by natural disasters and increasing population on our natural and biological resources have been unbearable and devastating, especially for the future generations of Sāmoa. Non-complementary development efforts appear to have triggered serious problems that enormously affect our most potential sources of livelihoods like fisheries, agriculture, flora and fauna, rainforest and of course our physical environment.

The maintenance of sustainable livelihoods is a practical way to prevent or counter poverty. Sometimes the promise of formal sector jobs draws attention away from the repercussions that commercial ventures can have on other forms of livelihood, particularly those in the large 'traditional' or informal sectors. The likelihood in Sāmoa that labour force growth could outstrip formal sector jobs, together with the vulnerability of the physical environment, reinforces the need to sustain the semi-subsistence and informal sector as an important source of employment.

The most sustainable form of livelihood in Sāmoa has been traditional village subsistence agriculture and fisheries. But while this has a much lower environmental impact than commercial agriculture for export, it does not produce the foreign exchange necessary to support a modern so-

ciety. This dilemma continually confronts Sāmoa's leaders. Is it better to meet the growing demand for electricity by depending on imported oil, face the possible environmental cost of developing hydroelectricity, or wait for a more environmentally safe technology?

Will a new industry today remain viable tomorrow? Will globalization, particularly in the form of accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, open up new economic possibilities? Or will it instead swamp the opportunities that now exist, and require even more people to leave in order to maintain an increasingly outdated cultural remnant at home? Employment and livelihood are critical issues for Sāmoa, as they are throughout the Pacific island region. They will be central to future human development trends in the country.

## **The Changing Livelihoods in Sāmoa**

### **Agriculture and Fishery**

Since independence, Sāmoa has relied on the agriculture sector as the country's main engine of growth. Agriculture's share of 7.6 per cent of the total real GDP<sup>3</sup> in 2004 has from time to time fluctuated and often experienced some extreme lows and highs because of its vulnerability to various forms of natural disasters, which has in turn been the result of global warming.

While subsistence agriculture and fishing are the primary sources of livelihoods for nearly all Sāmoans, land tenure is one of the factors, among others, that might contribute significantly to the continuing fall in both sector performances in terms of productions. Agriculture production for exportation continued to fall on a downward trend. Fishing remains one of Sāmoa's primary sources of livelihood in terms of consumption, exports, proteins and employment. However, its contribution of 5.8 per cent of real GDP growth in 2004 suggests that its performance for export has been constantly fluctuating.

The benefits from agriculture and fishing are inadequate to guarantee food security and sustainable future food supply in Sāmoa. The 1999 Census of Agriculture Statistics recorded about 15,000 agriculturally active households, which was 73 per

cent of all the households counted. Despite the high participation in agriculture activities, efforts to revive and redevelop traditional crops with the help of modern farming techniques to boost agriculture production for consumption and exports have been unsuccessful.

### **Prospects in Agriculture**

Over the past decade, the importance of agriculture in terms of labour absorption declined and the estimated area of crops in Sāmoa rose only slightly from 131,000 acres in 1989 to 132,200 acres in 1999.<sup>4</sup> The subsistence sector is a fundamental source of livelihoods in Sāmoa, but this sector is stagnating. Incomes are low and not rising. Production of the traditional staple crops of taro and cocoa slumped and were partly replaced by ta'amû, banana and breadfruit. Commercial agriculture picked up somewhat. The 1990s saw a wider range of new crops grown, such as vegetables and kava, but commercial farming is still quite small.

The agricultural sector will no doubt remain the main source of employment in Sāmoa for some time. Given the 'white collar' orientation of the school system, young people go into subsistence production mostly as a last resort. Yet demand for paid jobs is likely to grow faster than their supply. The subsistence sector has always proved to be a good absorber of surplus labour, but over time this will help widen the gap in income levels in Sāmoa.

The growth of commercial agriculture is limited by land tenure arrangement, relatively small local market for produce, and by agricultural pests, such as fruit flies, which damage crops or prevent their export. Exports are also limited by small supply, inconsistent standards, and difficulties in meeting food health standards.<sup>5</sup> Reduced tariffs may also encourage more temperate zone vegetables to be imported, reducing the market for local producers<sup>6</sup>. Commercial poultry production is unlikely to be able to compete with imports.<sup>7</sup> Dairy and beef production may be sustained, although the environmental costs of converting land to tropical pasture are high.

Some of the best export prospects are the traditional crops that are widely grown throughout the country. Hot forced air treatment, which is now



being trialled, may open opportunities for bananas and breadfruit exports. The taro and coconut export markets are recovering. The small-scale production of high quality oil provides opportunities for local processing, such as high value soap. New markets have been found for nonu and kava exports.<sup>8</sup> Export prospects for cocoa are good, except that local producers have moved away from this crop and supply is now too low.

### Prospects in Fishing

Fishing is another important source of livelihoods in Sāmoa. Subsistence fishing provides food and some cash to many households. It is predominantly a male occupation given that 86 per cent of the population engaged in it are males. According to the 1999 agricultural census, just over 10,000 people were engaged in some form of fishing, or a third of all households in Sāmoa. The importance of subsistence fishing is evident in that 70 per cent of fishing households did not sell any of their catch and 6 per cent sold all of it.<sup>9</sup> Employment in commercial fishing increased considerably in the 1990s. In 2000, an estimated 455 people worked on locally based tuna long-liners, another 55 Sāmoans worked for tuna processors and exporters in Apia, and about 70 more people were employed in commercial non-tuna fishing. In all, 500 to 600 people were formally employed in the fishing sector<sup>10</sup>. Most of these jobs were created during the 1990s.<sup>11</sup>

Change in trade conditions is unlikely to increase import competition on the local market and consumption of tinned fish will increase because it is cheaper. The tinned fish consumption rate is 14 kg per capita and all canned fish is imported into the country.<sup>12</sup> The only other significant fisheries imports are the fresh and frozen products that arrive by ship from Tokelau, which in recent years has averaged 15 million tonnes per year.<sup>13</sup>

As with agriculture, subsistence fishing will probably continue to be an important source of livelihood. This prospect, however, will have an ongoing environmental damage to in-shore fisheries. Efforts to improve coastal environmental management may help save them, but there are clear limits to growth in catches. Increased employment from the in-shore fisheries will more

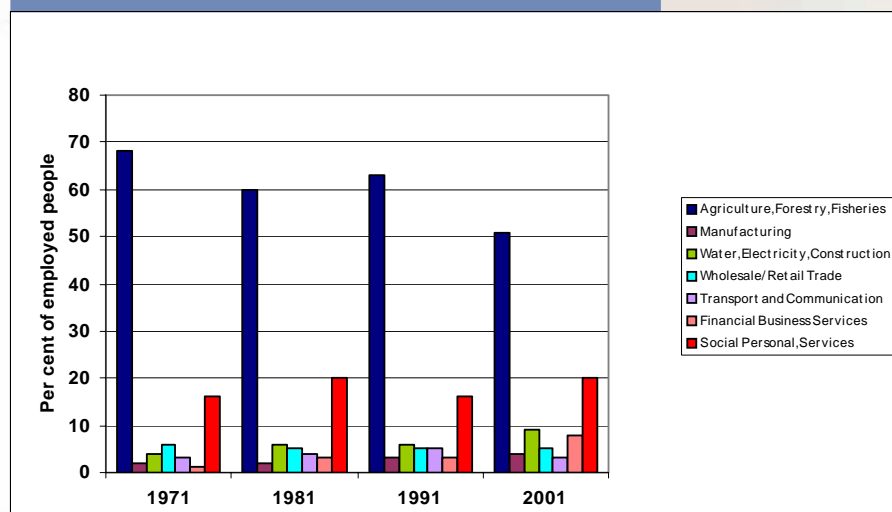
sustainably come from improved post-harvest handling and distribution.<sup>14</sup>

It is difficult to assess the future prospects of commercial fishing. The period of spectacular growth in tuna fishing may soon be over. On the other hand the industry may continue at its current level for some time. The industry is now largely based on small boats with Sāmoan crews. Not only are there some concerns about crew safety and the present level of resource use, but if larger ships join the industry, the local workers may face competition for jobs with foreign crew.<sup>15</sup>

### Labour Force

There has been a general movement of people both out of subsistence production generally and out of agriculture and fishing in particular, which may have resulted in job growth in the commercial fishing sector. This change was most evident in the 1990s. Measured since the 1970s, there has been a drop in employment in agriculture from 67 per cent to 50 per cent of all workers and rises in employment in financial and business services from 0.7 per cent to 7 per cent of workers, and in social and personal services from 15 per cent to 20 per cent of workers. Employment in manufacturing doubled from two to four per cent of workers, but this remains a very small sector.

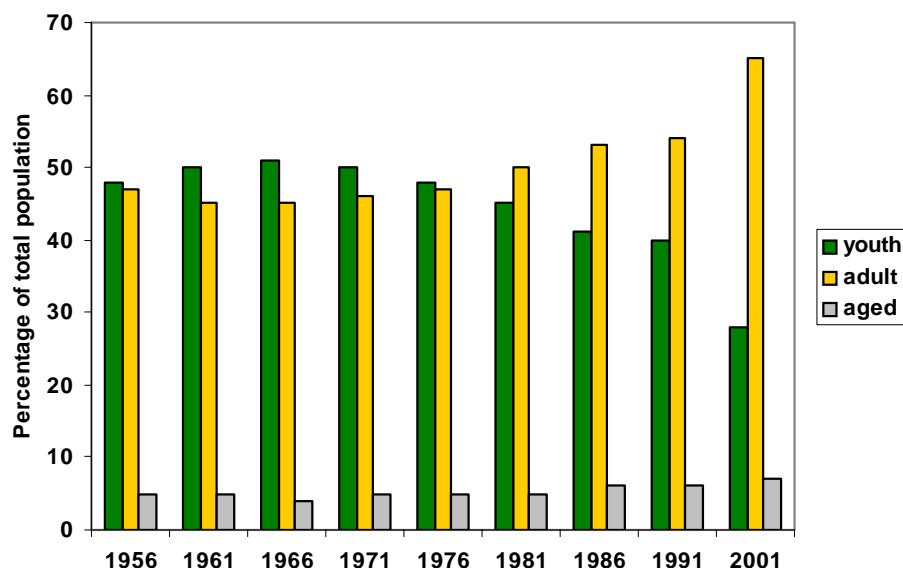
FIGURE 1: EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY 1971–2001



Source: Censuses of Population and Housing 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001

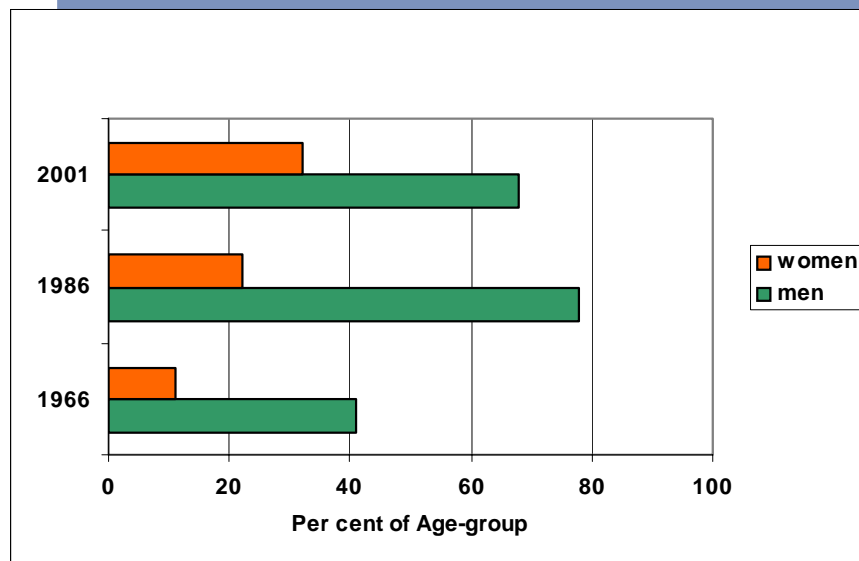
Since the 1980s and particularly in the 1990s, there has been a very significant change in the age structure of the Sāmoan population. The fastest growing age group is youth and adults, that is people aged from 15–19 years. As this group grows, so does the demand for jobs.

**FIGURE 2: GROWTH OF ADULT AGE-GROUP 1956–2001**



Source: Censuses of Population 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001.

**FIGURE 3: ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE MEN AND WOMEN 1966–2001**



Source: Censuses of Population 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001.

**Note:** A person is considered to be ‘economically active’ if they have a paid job or received payment in kind (like church pastors), produce goods to sell or for their own consumption (i.e., subsistence agriculture) or are unemployed and seeking work. ‘Economically inactive’ are people who are not available for work because they attend an educational institution, are housewives/homemakers, retired or are unable to work.

There has been an overall growth in the proportion of adults who are economically active. The rise in economic activity has been greatest for women, but this is exaggerated because older censuses greatly under-counted women’s work.<sup>16</sup> The 2001 census showed a decline in the proportion of economically active men. This reflects growing numbers of people who count as unemployed often previously ‘hidden’ in the subsistence sector and adults who do other things, such as housework or study. For example, in families where most of the people have left Sāmoa, often one member would come back to mind the family property for their aged parents.

In recent decades, the civil service or public sector provided a lot of the growth in paid jobs, but this avenue for job growth is closing. One aim of the Government’s reform programme is to reduce public sector employment and encourage more private sector jobs. In 1998, there were 5,700 public employees.<sup>17</sup> According to the census, by 2001; this had increased slightly to 5,900 (or 11.6 per cent of all workers), with another 2,700 employed in corporations, some of them government-run.

Job growth in the private formal sector has been unsteady. Between 1994 and 2000, around 650 new formal sector jobs were created each year, this growth averaging 2.9 per cent.<sup>18</sup> Even so, formal sector employment declined from the mid 1990s, largely because of a loss of jobs in manufacturing. The 2001 census asked a question to those in paid employment to identify the sectors they were working in. The private sector employed 43 per cent of the total employees while the public sector employed about 38 per cent, the remaining are either employed by the churches or international bodies.

The informal sector is growing<sup>19</sup>. This is being encouraged by Government and assisted by some NGOs. Government is particularly trying to revitalize village economy, in order to give rural communities alternative means of cash income through handicraft production, small-scale agro-processing, tourism and processing and sale of products and by-products of primary commodities. The recent instalment in the rural community of a Ministerial Committee with mixed member-

ship is a drive by the government to ensure that all its developmental initiatives are properly implemented for the benefits of the people.

Unemployment is on the rise, especially for young people. It is difficult to measure unemployment in Sāmoa because a lot of excess labour is absorbed by the subsistence sector. A high proportion of young people work as unpaid family workers, which can be a semi-disguised form of unemployment. The high number of 'inactive' young people is significant, particularly males. These young people are out of school and out of work, even out of work in the family. While they do not officially count as unemployed, (that is, they are not actively seeking work) they comprise a category of the unemployed. The high number of 'inactive' women, on the other hand, reflects a particularly inappropriate census definition, of domestic work being 'economically inactive'. However, the 2001 census of population and housing recorded 31,678 males and females engaged in housework during the census reference period. Out of this, 99 per cent were at the same time involved in a number of economic activities, like agriculture, fishing, handicrafts and so forth.

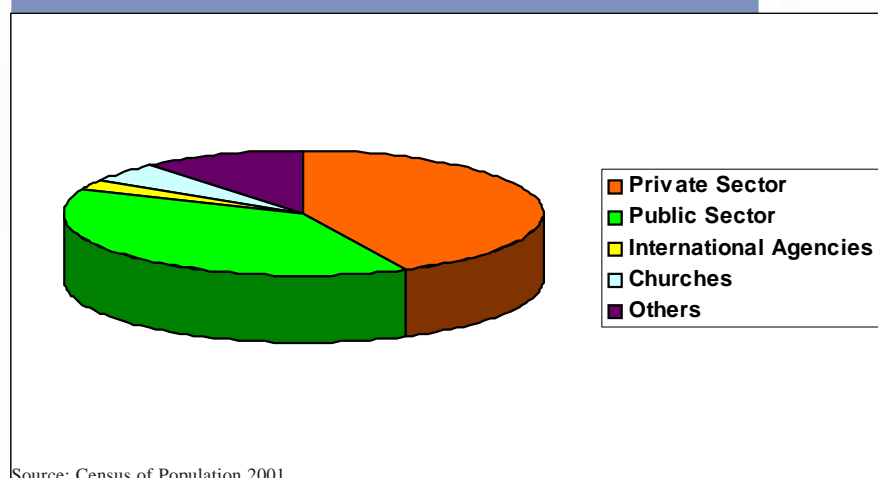
### Global Trading

Livelihood prospects in a small island state like Sāmoa are strongly shaped by conditions of trade with other countries. Over the 1990s, this environment changed and further large changes are on the horizon. The government's economic reform programme included the dismantling of tariff barriers that protected local produce from foreign competitors. Traditional trade agreements, such as the South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement (SPARTECA), which allowed Sāmoa privileged access to markets in New Zealand and Australia, will soon expire. A new regional trade agreement, the South Pacific Regional Free Trade Agreement (that is, the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement PICTA), is being forged with Sāmoa and its Pacific island neighbours. Sāmoa is in the process of acceding to the WTO, which will require further liberalization of the economy. The Sāmoa government considers that its best choice is to be an active participant in these changes, and to help local producers adjust

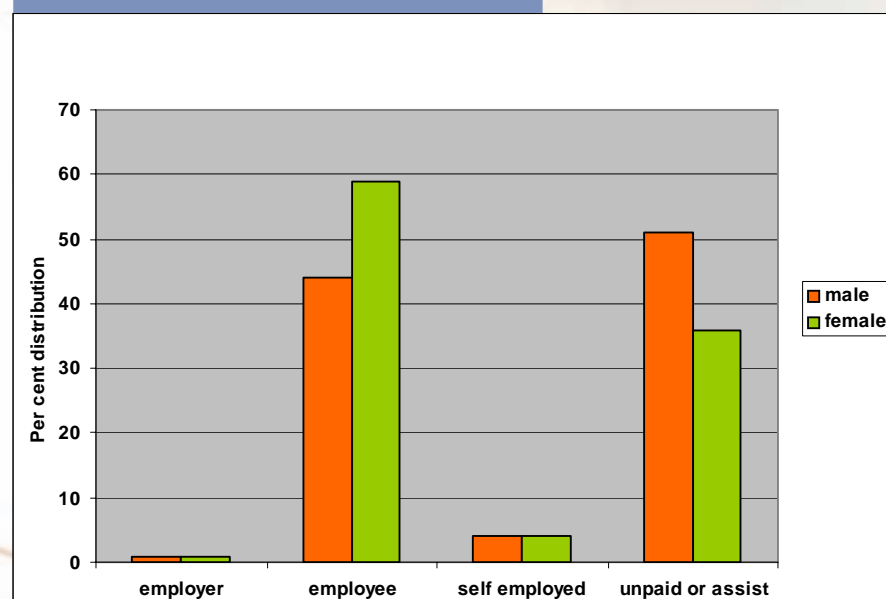
to them. While the full impact of these changes is as yet unclear, they will inevitably shape livelihood opportunities in Sāmoa by creating a new array of opportunities or disincentives to production.

Some of the ramifications of the new trade rules under WTO are now evident in other parts of the world. For example, a 1999 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) study of the experience of 16 countries including Fiji, in implementing the Uruguay Round noted that import surges occurred, especially in food products, and suggested other early changes may include some stag-

**FIGURE 4: EMPLOYEES BY SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT 2001**



**FIGURE 5: EMPLOYMENT STATUS 2001**



nation in agricultural exports and worsening terms of trade for agricultural products<sup>20</sup>. The most susceptible sector to increased foreign competition is often local manufacturing; in many countries this has all but disappeared.

The capacity of enterprises in Sāmoa to be competitive is generally hampered by problems of finance, supply capability building, labour, export development, infrastructure and transport. One of the main difficulties of the labour market is that even though there is an overall surplus of workers, there is a shortage of people who are skilled for the paid jobs that do exist.

### **Manufacturing**

At present, the manufacturing sector directly provides only 4 per cent of jobs in Sāmoa,<sup>21</sup> although it indirectly supports other jobs through its suppliers. It is, however, a significant part of the private sector, providing 21 per cent of these jobs.<sup>22</sup> The manufacturing sector companies, several small and a few medium sized enterprises producing for the local market, often use imported materials.<sup>23</sup> Manufactured exports are largely based on processing of traditional commodities, mainly coconut.

Manufacturing in Sāmoa has been constrained by the narrow range of local agricultural products; quality and supply problems with local raw materials; the small local market; the non-feasibility of bulk imports of raw materials; dependence on imported packaging; and high freight costs. Despite the recent lowering of tariffs on imported raw materials to 10 per cent, local producers still find themselves at a disadvantage to importers who pay only 20 per cent duty for finished goods.

Further reductions planned in import tariffs will pose a large challenge to local producers. They will face increased competition from the traditional suppliers, namely Australia, New Zealand and the United States, as well as from manufacturers in Asia. At the same time, traditional markets for Sāmoan produce will become uncertain as lowered tariffs in those countries open doors to producers around the world, and as these markets require sophisticated quality and health standards. An inconsistent supply of average quality goods

will no longer be accepted in either the international or local place.

Sāmoan manufacturers are understandably concerned about how they will find sustainable competitive advantages in these conditions. There are some opportunities for unusual foods and beverages, including organic and 'health' foods, but these markets are not easy to tap or keep. If the manufacturing sector in Sāmoa is not sustained, however, it will close important opportunities to add local value to agricultural production. In all, the prospects for job growth in the manufacturing sector do not look bright.

The Government undertook to help local enterprises adjust to the new trade conditions by providing (with UNDP funding and UNCTAD technical assistance) a Structural Adjustment Facility (SAF), which aimed to give advice on how to tap markets in competitive ways. However, the SAF did not meet its objectives as hoped due to a number of factors and the government, with the assistance of UNDP and NZAID, are reviewing the system in order to develop one that would cater for the needs of the private sector (including the manufacturers) in terms of access to development funding. It has also been recommended that Sāmoa slow down the process of change, and establish a standards setting body to protect against poor quality imports and exports.<sup>24</sup>

### **Service Industry**

This was the main sector of job growth during the 1990s, mainly in financial and business services. It is also a large sector, providing one third (33.8 per cent) of all employment in Sāmoa, although not all these jobs are full-time or permanent. It includes both public and private sector employment. Of all jobs in the service industries, around 12,200 (71 per cent) are in the private sector, and around 5,000 (29 per cent) are in the public sector.<sup>25</sup>

The Government's reform programme aims to halt growth in public sector employment and scale it back. Opportunities for job growth therefore will only be found in the private sector. Currently, the largest categories of private sector employment are in manufacturing (21 per cent); transport, storage and communications (13 per cent); finance, insurance, real



estate and business services (11 per cent), and accommodation, cafes and restaurants (11 per cent).<sup>26</sup>

As discussed above, manufacturing industries are in for difficult times, at least initially as the process of liberalizing world trade continues. Their trade advantages established niche markets, will evaporate and some of the largest enterprises may close. In the longer term, local manufacturers may be able to exploit new niche market opportunities, but short-term prospects for employment growth here are not good.

The local market is already quite well served by the wholesale and retail trade. New entrants to the business are stepping up price competition, which helps keep down job growth. The biggest opportunities for growth here probably depend on growth in tourist trade.

Tourism was an important area of economic and job growth during the 1990s. The economic reform programme improved the attractiveness of Sāmoa to foreign investors in the tourism sector.<sup>27</sup> The growth of tourism is being moderated so that it does not interrupt Sāmoan culture. The sector has developed a range of facilities to attract different sectors of the market. Many of the new facilities are small and locally owned. Sāmoa has generally avoided the large hotel chains. Sāmoa remains a high cost destination because of airfares, and the flow of tourists is uneven and heavily influenced by events in foreign countries. In an increasingly uncertain world, however, Sāmoa may be able to capitalize on its reputation as a friendly, safe and politically stable country. As tourism is a labour intensive business, strong growth here could generate many jobs. New courses at the Polytechnic provide various training programmes related to tourism.

Transport and communication are possible areas of growth, particularly with developments in ICT-related businesses. Finance and business service have shown fast growth over the 1990s and this may continue. Both these categories of jobs, however, particularly require educated and skilled workers.

The technological revolution in information communication could be a growth area of jobs in Sāmoa. In the late 1990s, there was a major reform of the telecommunications sector in Sāmoa, establishment of a mobile telephone system and devel-

opment of internet-based business activities. These developments can be expected to underpin major developments in the service sector in Sāmoa.<sup>28</sup> Factors that still limit developments in this field include:

- Low tele-density;
- Lack of sector policy and the need to improve legislative framework for act;
- Relative high telephone charges, computer equipment, internet set-up and access,
- Lack of know-how in use and benefits of computers and technical support;
- Relative reliability and efficiency of existing bandwidth;
- Lack of a coordinated telecommunications sector policy framework and priorities;
- Lack of IT skills and training;
- Lack of enabling environment for e-commerce;
- Lack of facilities for electronic payments, especially the availability of credit cards; and
- Poor supporting infrastructure such as electricity supplies;<sup>29</sup>
- High cost of international calls for internet and telephone.

Given this present situation, direct opportunities for any large-scale job growth in this field are not immediate but may take some time to develop. In the meantime, however, improved communications open up other livelihood opportunities in, for example, tourism, distance education and marketing.

Growth in the formal sector offers many livelihood opportunities as well as valuable support for the village lifestyle and rural economy. This support includes advice on business opportunities and management, introduction of useable technology, such as home-based manufacture of high quality oils, and increased access to small-scale credit.

### **Women in Business Foundation**

The Women in Business Foundation (WIBF) was formed in 1991 to provide economic opportunities to women, youth and the disadvantaged in the community by offering them opportunities to earn an income where they live. It operates a successful micro-finance scheme that is tailored to fit the needs of Sāmoan families. WIBF has set up a very successful organic project, which produces virgin

coconut oil, *nonu juice*, bananas and dried fruit for niche markets in Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Germany. It also manages a fine mat project that gives women who stay at home an opportunity to earn money by weaving mats of exceptional quality, reviving this age-old art of producing heirlooms of great cultural importance. These village weavers are now speaking out about poor quality fine mats being used for cultural presentations and Government has formed a committee to address the issue.

### The South Pacific Business Development Foundation (SPBDF)

Established in 2000, SPBDF is a micro finance organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of underprivileged families in Sāmoa. SPBDF provides training, unsecured credit and ongoing motivation and guidance to help women start and grow businesses. SPBDF also provides unsecured credit for housing improvements and childhood education to members who have already established a successful small business. So far, SPBDF has helped over 2,000 poor Sāmoans in 63 villages build small businesses. It has provided over SAT2.4 million in loans to these aspiring micro-entrepreneurs. SPBDF members have started a wide variety of successful micro-enterprises and are reinvesting their profits back into their businesses and their families.

### Intellectual Property and Culture

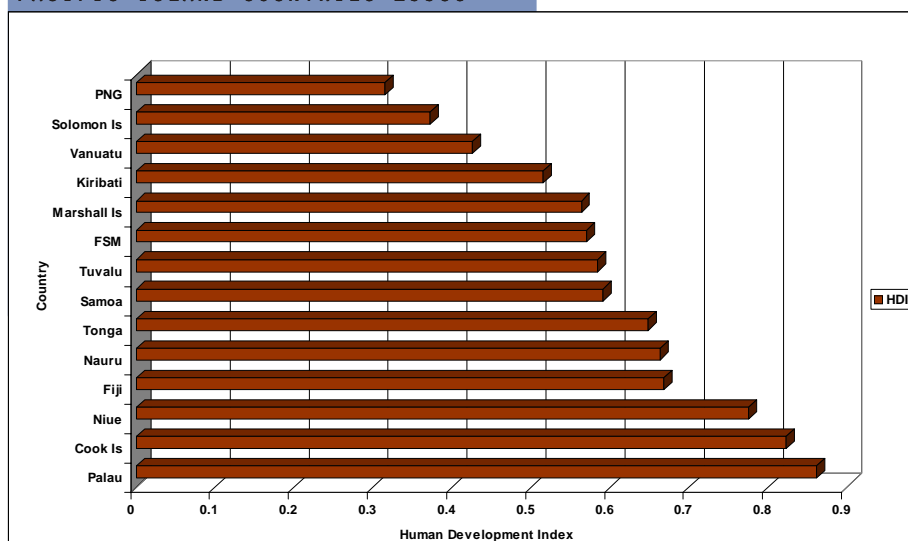
Increasingly in a global marketplace, Sāmoan culture - art, music, dance, design, sporting prowess - provides not just a mark of identity, but a tradable commodity and source of livelihoods for both resident and expatriate Sāmoans. Three small art studios and training programmes were established in Sāmoa during the 1990s. Small niche businesses, such as training programmes in Sāmoan tattooing and wood carving, are reaching an international clientele over the internet. Sāmoan dancers and musicians have established a firm footing in the United States, Hawaii, New Zealand and Australia. Talented sports people have found professional employment throughout the world. Trends in world music may enable Sāmoan music to graduate from the category of exotica to a place in the global market. These at present are very small 'niche' areas of employment.

### Overall Livelihoods Prospects

Given the expected change in the age structure of the Sāmoan population, the increased demand for paid jobs, restrictions on growth of employment in agriculture and limited immediate job opportunities in other sectors of the economy, the most likely outcomes in the short term are either an increase in unemployment or, if main destination countries allow, an upsurge in emigration. If emigration is restricted, or if economic conditions in Pacific-rim countries encourage unemployed Sāmoans to return, the small labour market in Sāmoa will come under considerable pressure. This would affect household incomes not only through the direct cost of unemployment but also through reduced amounts of remittances. The government of Sāmoa seems to be leaning more towards this option and has established a Sāmoa Qualifications Authority (SQA) to standardize and ensure the high quality of post secondary school training from Sāmoan formal and non-formal institutions. By doing so Sāmoans who choose to migrate will possess competitive qualifications for skilled work in countries in the Pacific Region and elsewhere, guaranteeing an equitable salary according to the existing labour market norms there.

Unemployment is already becoming a visible problem in Sāmoa because of the overall shortage

**FIGURE 6: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX, PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES 1990s**



Source: UNDP 1999 Pacific Human Development Report

of paid jobs and the shortage of skilled people to satisfy the job market that does exist. An important strategy of the Government in improving livelihood opportunities is to better prepare young people for productive livelihoods and more development assistance is now being channelled towards this goal.

### Overall Human Development Status

Compared with other Pacific Island countries, Sāmoa has a middle ranking in its standard of human development.

In 1999, Sāmoa ranked seventh in the region on its Human Development Index (HDI) and sixth on its Human Poverty Index (HPI). On a global scale, Sāmoa also ranked in the middle third of the countries listed in the UNDP Human Development Report, on par with countries like Thailand, Lebanon, Ecuador and Latvia. This reflects high level of life expectancy and literacy in Sāmoa, and good access to education, water, and sanitation and health services.

### Measuring Human Development

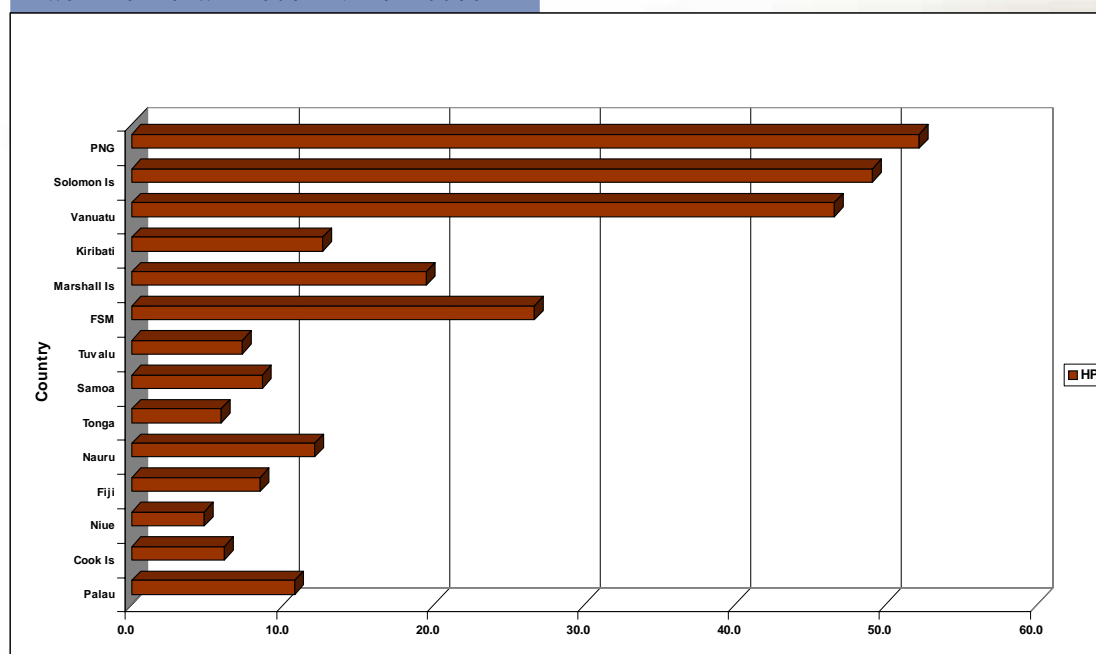
The refined measure of Human Development Index (HDI) replaces the old GNP per capita after it was proven that it does not necessarily reflect the

real well being of a country's population because national wealth is not channelled to human development areas. Nor does it show income distribution patterns. A country could have a high GNP per capita, but still, a large segment of its population remain poor, uneducated and unhealthy because of prioritizing unnecessary development, or pursuing developments that suit the needs of a few privileged elite. HDI enables governments to evaluate progress over time and to determine priorities for policy intervention. It also permits instructive comparisons of the experiences in different countries.

Application of the HDI places countries on a comparable basis by defining their ranking in the world and helps analyse a country's human development standing. HDI ranks all countries on a scale ranging from 0.000 to 1.000. The countries make up three groups: high HDI 0.800 and above, medium HDI 0.500 to 0.799 and low HDI below 0.500.

The HDI is based on three indicators: longevity, as measured by life expectancy at birth; educational attainment as measured by the combination of adult literacy and combined primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment ratios and standard of living as measured by the real GDP per capita.

**FIGURE 7: HUMAN POVERTY INDEX, PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES 1990s**



Source: UNDP 1999 Pacific Human Development Report



**TABLE 1: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX 1981–2001**

	1981	1991	2001
<b>National</b>	0.651	0.714	0.798
<b>Male</b>	0.641	0.705	0.790
<b>Female</b>	0.663	0.722	0.805

Source: See Annex 1.

**TABLE 2: HUMAN POVERTY INDEX 1981–2001**

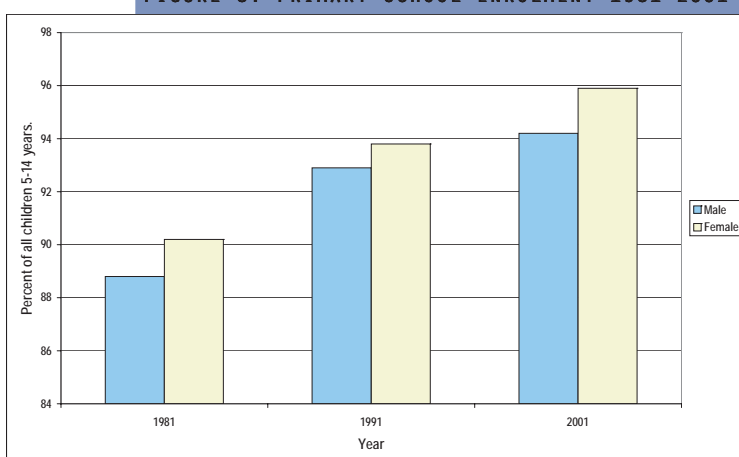
	1981	1991	2001
<b>National</b>	13.8	10.9	9.4
<b>Male</b>	14.2	10.9	9.6
<b>Female</b>	13.3	10.9	9.4

Source: See Annex 2. Note: A lower HPI indicates a better situation.

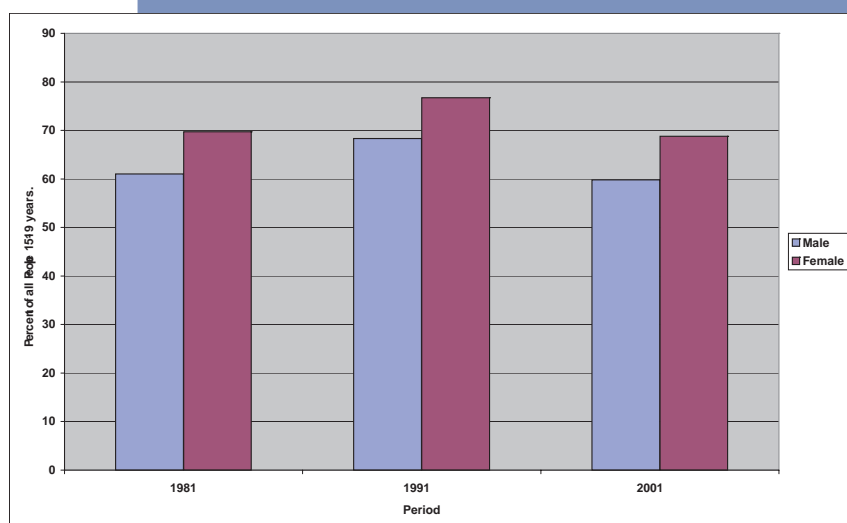
**TABLE 3: GENDER DEVELOPMENT INDEX 1981–2001**

	1981	1991	2001
<b>Male</b>	0.668	0.686	0.736
<b>Female</b>	0.666	0.679	0.728

Source: See Annex 3. Note: A higher Gender Development Index indicates a better situation.

**FIGURE 8: PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT 1981–2001**

Source: Census of Population 2001

**FIGURE 9: SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATIO 1981–2001**

Source: Census of Population 2001

The increase in Sāmoa's HDI from 1981 to 2001 is roughly equivalent to moving up by twenty countries on the 2002 scale. The consistently higher HDI for women than for men reflects their greater life expectancy and slightly higher education achievement status.

The rise in the HDI reflects a strong government commitment and a large national investment in education and health services. Prioritizing health and education on the developmental agenda, corresponds to a strong emphasis in government spending on these two sectors. In particular, in the 2000 to 2004 financial years, consistently, over one third of public expenditure went on social services, despite the fact that the government is now trying to contain these costs. As well as a substantial part of the national budget, a large amount of foreign aid has been injected into health and education.

- Gross total enrolment rose from 83 per cent in 1981 to 86 per cent in 1991, and 93 per cent in 2001<sup>30</sup>. The percentage of primary school-aged children enrolled in school rose sharply in the 1990s but dropped at secondary level. Enrolments have consistently been higher for females than for males<sup>31</sup> as shown in Fig. 8.
- Adult literacy has long been high in Sāmoa because of widespread access to basic education through both the village *faife'au* (pastor-run) schools and primary level schools. Unfortunately it cannot be measured accurately for there has been no recent literacy survey conducted. In the absence of a survey, the proxy statistics used here probably over estimates the true level of literacy amongst the adult population<sup>32</sup>.
- Life expectancy at birth rose from an average 62 years in the mid 1970s to 63 in the early 1980s, 64 years in the early 1990s and 72 years in 2001. This reflects the generally good health of the population, and the effectiveness of public health services and community-based primary health services, especially in improving child survival and controlling infectious diseases. Gains in life expectancy mainly reflect better child survival. The growing prevalence of lifestyle diseases, however, is reflected in marginal progress in longevity for men than for women.

- Access to health services: The Ministry of Health (MoH) operates health clinics throughout Sāmoa and reports that all communities and households have good access to them. Recent surveys of reproductive health by UNFPA have reported high level of accessibility and client satisfaction<sup>33</sup>. Family planning and reproductive health services, especially in the rural communities have been increasingly successful because of the joint effort of the MoH and the NGOs, like Sāmoa Family Health Association, Women's Committees and others. Both rural and urban people nevertheless prefer to attend the National Hospital whenever possible<sup>34</sup>. Village women health committees complement these facilities by monitoring the health of the community, especially small children
- Access to safe water: Defined as the proportion of households with piped water, this rose from 81 per cent in 1981, to 90 per cent in 1991, and 91 per cent in 2001. Although piped, this water is not necessarily safe as it is untreated chemically and often contaminated<sup>35</sup>. Other households get water from less secure sources such as wells, rivers and rain. Like electricity, the recent improvement on piped water under a project funded by World Bank, saw virtually all Sāmoan households have piped water in their homes or next to their homes.
- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew from US\$760 in 1993 to US\$1,431 in 2001<sup>36</sup>. In 2001 GDP grew at 6.8 per cent<sup>37</sup>.
- The percentage of people not expected to survive to age 40 is calculated from census data, in a similar way to life expectancy. It is an important statistic because it reflects the particular risk of early death for men, which in turn reflects their greater tendency to diet, smoking and alcohol related illnesses.
- The percentage of adults who are illiterate is simply the inverse of literacy statistics used in the HDI, and suffers the same weaknesses.
- The percentage of children under the age of five who are under-weight for age. This is a common measurement of poor health and malnutrition in children. It understates the problem of child malnutrition because the most common form of protein-energy malnutrition does not always show up as under-weight. Under-weight children are becoming more numerous. From 1969 to 1979, the prevalence of child malnutrition grew by 10 per cent, especially in Apia<sup>39</sup>. In 1990, estimated incidence rates were 6.7 per 1,000 in Apia, 5 per 1,000 in rural Upolu and 4.8 per 1,000 in Savai'i<sup>40</sup>.

Child malnutrition associates closely with poverty. A 1990 study found that of the malnutrition children examined, 30 per cent were from families where at least one other child was also malnourished. These families were financially the poorest families in the study sample<sup>41</sup>. Besides economic factors, other causes of child malnutrition in Sāmoa are water shortage, inadequate breast-feeding, poor weaning foods, too few meals, and food mal-distribution. Some of these factors are culturally determined. Others reflect environmental conditions (mainly poor sanitation) that promote infectious diseases, diarrhoea, respiratory infections, chronic worm infestation and scabies. Sixty per cent of hospitalized children suffer from anaemia<sup>42</sup>.

The issue of poverty is quite a new public concern in Sāmoa. It has been less recognized before, although certainly it is not a new phenomenon. The close-knit nature of Sāmoan society and the tradition of sharing resources through family and community networks even out a lot of material wealth differences. Even so, some groups and individuals face particular disadvantages, as discussed in more detail below.

### The Human Poverty Index

The main objective of the Human Poverty Index (HPI) is to compare and rank countries on a global scale according to their respective standings on other forms of human deprivation. Poverty means different things in different parts of the world. The World Bank defines absolute poverty - complete material destitution - as living on less than one US dollar a day in purchasing power. Relative poverty means living in a considerably worse way than other people in the same society<sup>38</sup>.

Poverty in the Pacific is rarely as visible or as extreme as it is in some of the harshest parts of the world. However, there are people who are quite disadvantaged compared to other people in their community or country, and that is poverty here.

"The 1997 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) recorded about ST\$109,000 a week, ST\$5.7 million a year, was spent on church obligations and correspondingly, about ST\$668,000 a week, ST\$34.8 million a year, was being spent on cultural obligations. The 2002 HIES recorded that much more was spent on cultural and church obligations. On an average, about ST\$1 million a week had been spent on both cultural and church obligations, about ST\$52 million a year. Such contributions for church or cultural obligations have imposed severe hardships for some families, particularly landless families or individuals, unemployed youths and parents, single income households, families with many children and people in isolated villages with poor transport."

The government has no specific policies for poverty alleviation. Instead it is trying to improve livelihood opportunities throughout the country in both the formal and informal sectors, especially through private enterprise. It is particularly investing in rural development by increasing access to better quality infrastructure, education and health services, diversifying the village economy, strengthening rural social institutions, and finding ways to assist particularly vulnerable groups<sup>43</sup>.

The Gender-related development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) gauge gender inequality in key areas of economic and political participation and decision-making. The GDI uses the same variables as the HDI, but measures the disparities between men and women. Both the GDI and the GEM are based on life expectancy, adult literacy, school enrolments, and proportional income shares for men and women. The GEM includes the involvement of women in economic and political life.

- Life expectancy at birth: There is a widening gap between the longevity of women and men. At several stages of their lives, males have higher death rate than females, in infancy during adolescence, when they are more exposed to accidents, violence and suicides, and from their late 40s, when lifestyle diseases become prevalent. Average life expectancy in Sāmoa grew from 62 in the mid-70s to 68 years in the late 1990s, but the difference between men and women widened, from three years more in the 1970s to 6.5 years more in the late 1990s<sup>44</sup>. In early 2000, life expectancy at birth for males and females estimated from the 2001 census of population and housing, were 71.8 years and 73.8 years respectively.
- Adult literacy, which is measured by early primary attendance, literacy level for both men and women in Sāmoa is very high.
- Combined gross enrolment: Today the attendance of girls at both primary and secondary school levels is higher than for boys. This difference, however, shrinks at tertiary and vocational training levels.
- Ratio of female to male average wage: Figures from the 2001 Census of population and Housing on paid workers were matched with the NPF 2001 data on wages. The slightly higher average female wages could be explained by the fact that, although fewer women than men work for wages, women more of-

ten seek paid work when they have some kind of qualification, and therefore on average they earn more. There are very few paid jobs available for unskilled women workers in Sāmoa.

- Ratio of female to male non-agricultural wages: This ratio was only slightly higher than for average wages. Unpaid family workers, which constitute a large proportion of the active population, dominate the agriculture sector, and so the average wage is close to the non-agriculture wage.
- Male and female share of earned income and male and female share of economically active population: Women's share of earned income is slightly more than one third, and they also make up just less than one third of the economically active population. This shows that there is limitation in the participation of women in the work force. That aside, they are not discriminated against in wages or salaries.
- Females as a percentage of all legislators, senior officials and managers: This has clearly risen from 11 per cent in 1971, to 19 per cent in 1981, 20 per cent in 1991 and 30 per cent in 2001<sup>45</sup>. This is a clear indication of the growing access of Sāmoan women to professional qualifications and senior management positions. In the late 1990s, one third of the government departmental heads were women. This is exceptionally interesting, for these very departments are the most powerful in the public service. However, there are still few women legislators.
- Females as a percentage of professional and technical workers: This has fluctuated but mostly declined from 48 per cent in 1971, to 36 per cent in 1981, 47 per cent in 1991, and 40 per cent in 2001<sup>46</sup>.
- Percentage of female-held parliamentary seats: In 1988, women held 6 per cent (3 seats) of all parliamentary seats. Cultural settings dictate the structural hierarchy of local government (village council of chiefs and village mayors) and leadership positions in the church. Sāmoa's CEDAW report noted that the main obstacles to full participation of women in public and political life is women themselves, and that there is a need to promote leadership and lobbying skills, and self confidence so that women make use of the opportunities available to them.

## Development of Sāmoa 1996–2007

The Government of Sāmoa's commitment to human development is evident from the priority fo-



cus of the last three Strategies for the Development of Sāmoa (SDS), where macro-economic stability and growth in all sectors have been targeted. The theme of the 2002-2004 SDS, "Opportunities for All", again stresses the importance of strengthening the partnership between the private sector and the public sector or essentially the government. This theme not only highlights the need for every Sāmoan to enjoy the benefits of national developments, it also reflects and builds on the commitment on the part of government to ensure that benefits from development are equitably shared by all the people of Sāmoa.

In particular, the 2002-2004 SDS stresses the importance of strengthening the social structure, especially in the roles of *ali'i* and *faipule* in society, the influence of religion on personal standard and behaviour, the role of women, secure opportunities for youth in order to play an active part in community development activities, and the participation of NGOs in social and economic programmes.

Strengthening social structures ensure social stability especially in the village community. The move by the Government to formalize and strengthen the roles of the *pulenu'u* (village mayors) as well as raising their remuneration package reflects clearly the importance of their roles in community development. Being the government representatives in the village community, they are expected to provide good leadership in all forms of development that the villages decide to implement.

The 2005-2007 SDS<sup>47</sup> reflects a continuation of the reform programme implemented over the past SDS period. Six broad focal areas are identified in the current SDS as priority for Sāmoa's development in the next three years. Since the start of the SDS programme, education, health and agriculture continue to be the high priority sectors in the government's development agenda. Other areas of importance include the private sector role in development, tourism sector role in development, and community development in all aspects of life.

Essential in rural villages development, the (*pūleaga a ali'i ma faipule*) village council of chiefs, which is the paramount hierarchy in the Sāmoan

social structure, must continue to be proactive, not only in development decisions, but also in effectively maintaining law and order within the community. The council of chiefs encouraging the participation of women in community-wide developments at all levels, ensures success in virtually all community social developmental activities. Similarly, the recognition of the youth as the future of a country, and their active participation in community development as implementers has increasingly benefited all communities.

## Development Differences in Sāmoa

### General Differences

In this small island country, with one people, one language, a common system of agriculture and land tenure, and a fairly uniform culture, there is an image of general uniformity across the country.<sup>48</sup> Yet Sāmoa has significant internal regional differences, as Ward and Ashcroft (1999) demonstrated in a series of maps based on the agricultural and population censuses. Marked differences in household economies, living conditions and levels of development show up patterns of relative advantage and disadvantage within the country. Agriculture being the backbone of Sāmoa's economy, its contributions to household economies had declined considerably in the recent past.

The 1999 Census of Agriculture showed that, out of 21,000 households recorded to have engaged in some form of agricultural activities, only two thirds were agriculturally active. The 2002 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) also showed that about 8 per cent of the 23,000 households registered in the 2001 Census of Population and Housing were below the food poverty line, and 20 per cent below the basic needs poverty line. This is a significant improvement since the last HIES.

The main economic differences are between:

- The semi-subsistence economy of most of Savai'i and Upolu;
- The largely urban and monetized economy of Apia and much of the north-west coast of Upolu; and
- The large semi-subsistence and small commercial agricultural sectors.

There are four levels of socio-economic status in Sāmoa:

- People who derive their livelihoods from land resources supplemented by remittances;
- Unskilled and semi-skilled labour, mainly in the towns;
- A “middle class” of people with formal education and employment in managerial and professional positions (mainly in government);
- A small but influential power elite, defined closely by political and family connections, education and wealth.<sup>49</sup>

These economic differences are evident at different scales: by geographic area within Sāmoa and between households in the same locality. Differences in material wealth are particularly evident in Apia.

### Regional Differences

There is a big difference between the economies of Upolu and Savai'i. Upolu is much more densely populated than Savai'i. The main town, Apia; the two international airports; the main wharf; and most other major economic infrastructure and cash earning opportunities are located there. Savai'i is more often subsistence or semi-subsistence than Upolu. The 1997 HIES also revealed a disadvantage of Savai'i households, in that of all households in the bottom 20 per cent by household gross expenditure, 42 per cent lived in Savai'i. (Another 20 per cent live in NW Upolu, 9 per cent in Apia, and 25 per cent in the rest of Upolu)<sup>50</sup> as shown in Table 4 below.

The Government is addressing some of these difficulties by expanding the network of infrastructure throughout the country to support a wider distribution of economic opportunities, including roads, water, electricity and telecommunications. The number of telephone connections doubled during the 1990s. SāmoaTel has launched a fully-fledged promotional programme throughout Sāmoa supplying telephone connections including a new cable hub installed at Salelologa, Savai'i.

### Income Differences

Since the early 1970s, the growth of the formal economy has been reflected in a growing concentration of income.<sup>51</sup> Income differences particularly relate to the number of household members with paid jobs and the amount of remittances the household receives. Urban households more often have a wage earner than do rural households. A 1991 survey found that 78 per cent of households in the urban villages had at least one wage earner, compared to 37 per cent in peri-urban villages and 33 per cent in rural villages.<sup>52</sup>

Among people with paid jobs, there is a wide range in wages, although most are under SAT10,000 or US\$3,000. According to the 2001 census, approximately 27,000 people worked in paid jobs, just over half of the employed population. The average wage was around \$14,500, but this average means little as the distribution of wage is strongly skewed to the lower end of the scale. Seventy per cent of salary and wage earners earn less than SAT10,000.

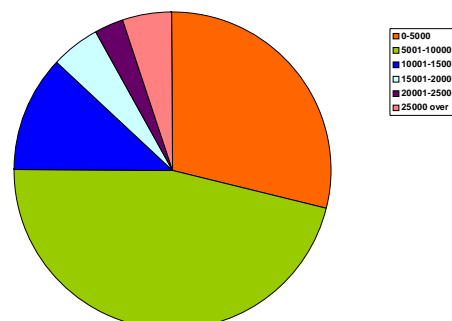
Wages, however, are only one of several sources of household income. The important roles

TABLE 4: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SAVAI'I AND UPOLU

	Upolu	Savai'i
Population density (people per sq km)	123	25
Per cent of Population in Sāmoa	76	24
Households engaged in farming (%)	64	96
Farming households who produce only for household use (%)	59	92
Farming households in commercial production (%)	5	4
Agriculture households with piped water supply (%)	81	76
Agriculture households with electricity supply (%)	93	92
Wage or salary workers as % of economically active adults	(21589)	(2972)
Population growth rate	0.7	0.1

Sources: National Census 2001; Agriculture Census 1999

FIGURE 10: EMPLOYEES RECEIVING SALARY AND WAGES 2001



Source: Census of Population 2001

of subsistence production and remittances, and the powerful traditional economy that distributes wealth along family lines, make household inequality difficult to measure in Sāmoa. In the 2001 Census, 48 per cent of households reported that they received a salary income through at least one of its members; 40 per cent reported receiving remittances; 33 per cent received income from plantations, and 16 per cent from pensions; these in order being the four most common sources of household income though not necessarily the largest. (Just over 10 per cent of households reported an income from business, which would yield the largest amount of money.)

The materially most disadvantaged households in Sāmoa are those that have the least access to these main sources of income. The most vulnerable households probably are urban villagers without land, rural households with little cash earning abilities, young people with little formal education, or households headed by women or elderly or disabled people.

### Patterns of Hardship

There is evidence that some households or individuals are more or less disadvantaged, relative to what is considered an acceptable standard of living in Sāmoa. The 1997 HIES estimated that 48 per cent of the households could not meet the minimum cost of basic nutritious diet, a situation that did not cause hunger so much as poor nutrition. When all basic household living costs such as food, shelter, transport, energy, health, education and water were taken into account, one third of households in Sāmoa could not afford them, and were described as relatively poor.<sup>53</sup> The poor nutrition that often accompanies hardship is evident in the increasing number of cases that are referred to the National Hospital for nutrition care, of which nearly one-half are from Apia or its neighbouring districts, a sign that food security problems are more serious there.<sup>54</sup>

The 2002 HIES gathered reliable data for hardship/poverty and equality. Of food poverty as measured by basic nutritious diet, it was estimated that 8 per cent of all households could not meet the cost of this basic diet, compared to 48 per cent

in 1997. The Basic Need Poverty Line showed a reasonably accurate estimate of about 20 per cent of households in Sāmoa, still struggling to meet basic need requirements compared to 33 per cent recorded in 1997. Included in the basic need requirements are education, health, church contributions, cultural obligations (*fa'alavelave*), such as weddings, funerals, and title bestowals.

Coupled with the limited amount of cash available, cultural and church obligations costs appeared to have contributed substantially to hardship. Church contribution and donations strained some household budgets, particularly as these contributions have become competitive. Cultural obligations (*fa'alavelave*) such as weddings, funerals, and title bestowals were becoming more and more expensive. Material expectations were rising. The punishments meted out by Village Councils were often harsh and financially expensive.

The 1997 HIES recorded about SAT109,000 a week, SAT5.7 million a year was spent on church obligations and correspondingly, about SAT668,000 a week, SAT34.8 million a year, was being spent on cultural obligations. The 2002 HIES recorded that much more was spent on cultural and church obligations. On an average, about SAT1 million a week had been spent on both cultural and church obligations, about SAT52 million a year. On the basis of the 1997 distribution, it is estimated that in 2002, approximately SAT44.7 million was spent on cultural obligations and SAT5.3 million on church obligatory costs.

The people most affected by hardship were landless families or individuals, unemployed youth and parents; single income households; family with many children to look after; and people who lived in isolated villages with poor transport. Many people depended heavily for their sustenance on their families in Sāmoa or overseas.

Disabled people are often disadvantaged. Over the past twenty years, NGOs and individual benefactors have done a lot to assist with disabilities, through for example, the formation of the Society for the Intellectually Handicapped; *Loto Taumafai* School for the Disabled; and the School for the Blind. In the past five years, Government supported several initiatives to improve the capac-



ity of people with disabilities to lead more productive lives in their communities. This support include the empowerment of rural people with disabilities project through which young people with disabilities have received training in inorganic farming, tailoring and basic computer literacy. The project is linked with the work of the Marist Brothers Order in Sāmoa to deliver training to caregivers of disabled children and teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills to enable them to become effectively integrated into the mainstream educational system. A local NGO, the WBF, has assisted in organic farming and other skill based training.

### Poverty of Opportunity

Beyond material poverty, there is growing recognition of poverty of opportunity, which can be assessed in regard to education, health, employment, denial of opportunities in material well-being, access to markets, job security, social freedoms, and other conditions that are difficult to quantify.

- Formal education was made compulsory for children aged 5 to 14 years in Sāmoa in 1959, but was never really enforced until the Education Amendment Act of 1992. Although primary school participation is very high, education is not free. Cost for having a child in school include fees, uniforms and other necessary clothing, bus fares, contribution to fund raising, and snacks or lunches. They range from SAT100-150 a year for primary students to SAT200-\$400 for secondary students.<sup>55</sup> This situation resulted in the growing number of children from poorer families not attending, or dropping out of school long before the end of the school calendar year.
- While access to schools has risen in recent years, the expansion of the school system has taken priority over the quality of school services. There is strong evidence that many people who are now out of school were disadvantaged by the unequal allocation of education resources. A recent review found that most junior secondary schools were inefficient. With their poor facilities and poorly trained teachers, they offered most students, particularly rural students, inferior educational opportunities. The review found that few students who entered junior secondary schools were able to move on to senior secondary schools.<sup>56</sup> Even now, most primary

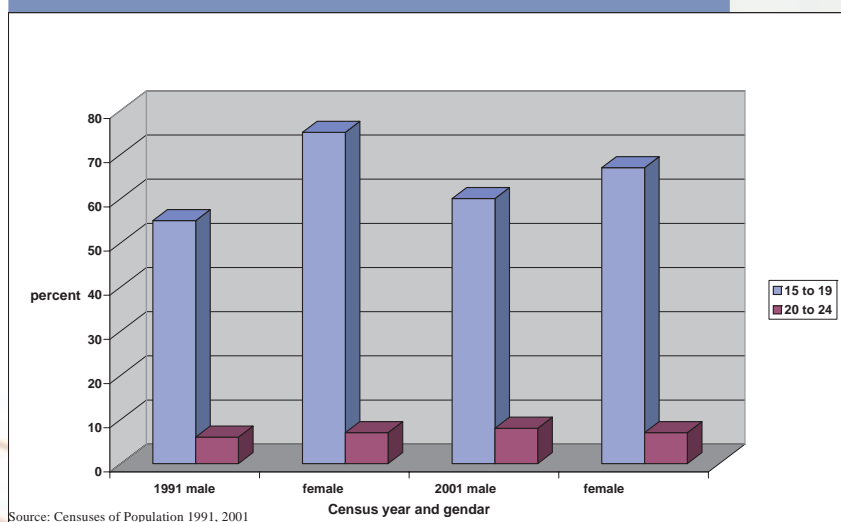
schools have poor facilities and are inadequately equipped,<sup>57</sup> and this disadvantaged their pupils.

- Educational opportunities after secondary school are limited in Sāmoa, slightly more so for females. As a result, many young people go abroad<sup>58</sup> for further education on either the expense of the government or their own families. The government is now expanding tertiary and vocational education facilities in Sāmoa in order to provide young people who stay in the country with wider opportunities.

Other limitations on livelihood choices are linked to economic, cultural, political and vulnerability factors.<sup>59</sup> These include the narrow base of the economy on agriculture; the traditional land tenure system; the strict social and ceremonial obligations to the extended family, church and village; the vulnerability of agriculture crops to pests and diseases and the general vulnerability of the community to natural disasters; and the growing number of households that lack access to land or sea resources.

There is awareness in Sāmoa that young people today face special difficulties. The high youth suicide rate appears to be linked to raise expectation of youth from education and exposure to the modern world clashing with the more oppressive aspects of the traditional system.<sup>60</sup> Unemployment is central to the problems young people face in Sāmoa. Each year, a new group of school-leavers attempt to join the labour force, many of them prepared for white-collar jobs that do not exist. Most will need to make their living in the village

**FIGURE 11: YOUTH IN SCHOOL IN SĀMOA 1991, 2001**



economy or emigrate to find the types of work they aspire to or are qualified for.

The National Youth Policy identified the main problems facing youth as:

- Cultural change
- At risk, sexual behaviour
- Alcohol and other substance abuse
- Youth suicide
- Juvenile delinquency
- Lack of parental care and the impact of divorce
- Lack of skill training centres; and
- Not enough sports or recreational facilities.

### Preparing Young People for Productive Livelihoods

There has been a mismatch between the skills taught in the schools and those that are needed for the types of employment and livelihoods that are available. This has long been recognized in Sāmoa, but it is a difficult problem to solve. Many school leavers find they have poor or inappropriate skills for the few wage jobs that are available, for farming, or for other types of livelihood. On the other hand, parents and children prefer academic rather than vocational schools, because they want the chance of a white-collar job, and recognize that educating children for 'export' is another form of livelihood. Outside of the formal school system, there are few training programmes available, so people cannot readily change their skills.

Over the past 20 years, much of the national investment in education has gone into expanding services, that is, improving the quantity rather than quality of education opportunities.<sup>61</sup> Urban schools often have best maintained quality standards, but have come under pressure as many students have sought places in them. Many urban schools have become overcrowded, with class sizes of up to 60 or 70 pupils, forcing their quality down too.

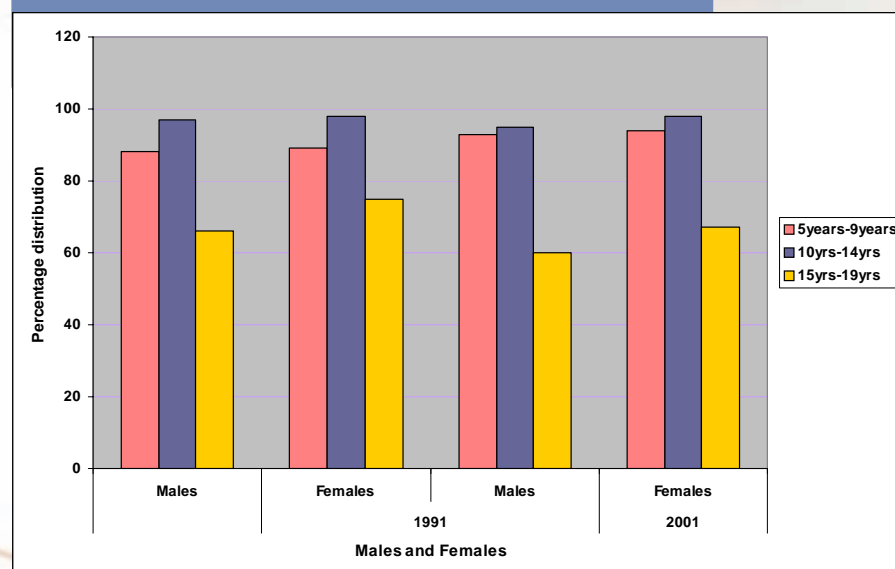
By the early 1990s, it was well evident that the education system was not meeting the needs of either the rural or urban communities. Severe cyclones in 1990 and 1991 destroyed many schools. Through the efforts of the Department of Education and with foreign aid, not only was the physical structure of the school system rehabilitated, but the decision was also made to reform the entire school system over the decade 1995-2005. A strategic plan

was developed with the aim of building an education system characterized by equity, quality, relevancy and efficiency. Its goals are to:

Encourage and support early childhood education;

- Improve the overall quality of primary education; ensuring equity in terms of universal (compulsory) primary education and developing a broad, enriching curriculum that enables students to realize their full potential, including appropriate opportunities for students with special needs;
- Achieve good quality education and academic achievement through bilingual teaching methods that develop literacy in Sāmoan and English as well as computational skills and numerical, scientific and technological concepts, understanding about the need to protect the natural environment; an introduction to social science, and creativity through the expressive arts;
- Increase access to senior secondary education by upgrading Junior Secondary Schools to Senior Secondary status and introducing a single stream curriculum for all secondary schools;
- Strengthen the functions of the Teachers' College and improve the quality of its graduates;
- Facilitate linkages between secondary schools and post-secondary institutions; and
- Introduce best practices into the Department of Education's central management.

**FIGURE 12: RATIOS OF PUPILS ATTENDING SCHOOL BY AGE AND GENDER 1991, 2001**



Source: Censuses of Population and Housing 2001

prepared by Policy Alternatives

The changes in the basic education system are progressing well. Principal achievements since 1990 include:

- The institution of compulsory primary education;
- Curricula reviews and production of related books for primary and secondary students;
- Greater emphasis on vocational subjects;
- More support for early-childhood education;
- More support for special needs education;
- The greater use of the media for public educational programmes;
- The use of standardized academic attainment (SPELL) tests; and
- Training of teachers in Early Childhood Education and Special Needs education.

The community has shown its support for education by maintaining and building more primary schools, and through their participation in school committees and Parent Teacher Associations (PTA). The MESC is running workshops to ensure effective community management of schools.

- The Government is also investing in the NUS and the Sāmoa Polytechnic which have now new campuses and enrolments have increased rapidly.
- The Government of Sāmoa aims to develop more enterprise based and competitively structured economy. Investing more on vocational and technical education and increasing post-secondary education opportunities are an important part of this policy. There is also an increasing community demand for training and a growing number of privately operated education facilities.

- The NUS, which incorporates the Teachers' College and Nursing School, is widening the range of degree, diploma and certificate courses that it offers. Enrolments have grown quickly. Other tertiary programmes are available through the University of the South Pacific (USP) School of Agriculture at Alafua and the USP Sāmoa Centre.
- The Sāmoa Polytechnic has since 1998 been structured into four schools: Technology, Commerce, General Studies and Maritime Studies. Trade Advisory Committees, which include industry representatives, meet four times a year to ensure that programmes are in line with industry needs.
- Non-formal education programmes are being recognized as effective and cost-efficient ways to help people gain productive skills. More supports are being given to these programmes and to improving their co-ordination. Still, however, there are fewer places available than there are potential students. Some programmes, especially NGO-run, are under-funded.
- Distance education is also recognized as a cost-effective way to overcome the problems of distance and isolation. The internet opens up new prospects for distance education, although the high cost of internet service restricts them. Funding support from the Japanese and Australian Governments has enabled the USP to connect its three campuses in Suva, Apia and Port Vila and its extension centres in other Pacific island countries. The university now offers on-line lectures from the main campuses to students at the extension centres.
- The National Training Authority is providing strategic policy advice on the development of the post-

#### OPPORTUNITY AND VISION: OCEANIA MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

Recognizing that most opportunities for change rest with young people, Government, NGOs and private sector bodies are working to improve basic education and widen the range of post-secondary education and training.





secondary sector, strengthening coordination between the various programmes, and developing national quality assurance policies and procedures.


## CONCLUSION PROSPECTS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Especially over the past decade, demographic, economic and social changes have helped to considerably change the characteristics of Sāmoa's labour force. At the same time, the international trading environment has been undergoing fundamental transformation, in a way that sets up real challenges for the economies of small island developing states. The maintenance of sustainable livelihoods is critical for the progress of human development in Sāmoa and its overall prospects for sustainable development. The Government is directing economic development to areas of potential job growth. Assisted by NGOs, the Government is also trying to support rural livelihoods by increasing opportunities for cash incomes. Recognizing that most opportunities for change rest with young people, Government, NGOs and private sector bodies are working to improve basic education and widen the range of post-secondary education and training. Emigration, however, has long provided a significant employment route for Sāmoan people. In the short term at least, the biggest risk to livelihoods is if migration opportunities are reduced.



## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> UNDP 2000.
- <sup>2</sup> DFID 2000.
- <sup>3</sup> Quarterly GDP Report 2004.
- <sup>4</sup> Agriculture Censuses 1989 & 1999.
- <sup>5</sup> UNCTAD 2001:12.
- <sup>6</sup> *ibid.*,
- <sup>7</sup> UNCTAD 2001:15.
- <sup>8</sup> McGregor 2002.
- <sup>9</sup> Agriculture Census 1999, cited by Gillet and Lightfoot 2001.
- <sup>10</sup> Gillet & Lightfoot 2001.
- <sup>11</sup> 1991 does not differentiate between skilled agricultural and fisheries worker.
- <sup>12</sup> Passfield 2001.
- <sup>13</sup> Gillet pers.comm.
- <sup>14</sup> UNDP 1998:53.
- <sup>15</sup> Pacific Islanders comprise less than 10 per cent of the crews of commercial fishing boats, UNDP 1998.
- <sup>16</sup> Ironmonger & Hill 1997. The censuses define women's work as domestic, homemaking or household work, thus, categorizing them as economically inactive. Men doing the same work are counted as unpaid family workers, and are categorized as economically active.
- <sup>17</sup> ADB 1998.
- <sup>18</sup> WSSD Report.
- <sup>19</sup> ADB 1999.
- <sup>20</sup> FAO Symposium on Agriculture, Trade & Food Security 1999. Geneva, 23-24 September.
- <sup>21</sup> Census of Population and Housing 2001.
- <sup>22</sup> Government of Sāmoa Project Report 2000.
- <sup>23</sup> UNCTAD 2002, National Workshop on Competitiveness of Sāmoan Enterprises, Apia, March.
- <sup>24</sup> UNCTAD 2001.
- <sup>25</sup> Population and Housing Census 2001; Government Project Report 2000.
- <sup>26</sup> *ibid.*,
- <sup>27</sup> UNCTAD 2001:5.
- <sup>28</sup> UN 2002.
- <sup>29</sup> UN 2002.
- <sup>30</sup> Census of Population and Housing 2001.
- <sup>31</sup> National Population Censuses 1981, 1991, 2001.
- <sup>32</sup> Adult literacy measures the percentage of adults over 15 years who can both read and write a simple statement on his or her everyday life.
- <sup>33</sup> UNFPA in press.
- <sup>34</sup> ADB 1998. Health Sector Review.
- <sup>35</sup> Ministry of Health 1991. Annual Report.
- <sup>36</sup> Ministry of Finance 2001.
- <sup>37</sup> Ministry of Finance 2001.
- <sup>38</sup> UNDP 1999.
- <sup>39</sup> Adam and Sio 1997.
- <sup>40</sup> Ministry of Health Annual Report 1998-1999.
- <sup>41</sup> Hughes 1990.
- <sup>42</sup> Ministry of Health Annual Report 1999.
- <sup>43</sup> United Nations 2002.
- <sup>44</sup> Population and Housing Census 1976; Ministry of Health 1999.
- <sup>45</sup> National Censuses 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001.
- <sup>46</sup> *ibid.*,
- <sup>47</sup> Strategy for the Development of Sāmoa 2005-2007.
- <sup>48</sup> Ward and Ashcroft 1999.
- <sup>49</sup> Hooper 1998.
- <sup>50</sup> 1999 "Coordinating Committee on Children. Note: Gross expenditures refer to all forms, i.e. not just cash but imputed costs of traded supplies and traditional exchanges.
- <sup>51</sup> United Nations 2002.
- <sup>52</sup> Fairbairn-Dunlop 1991, cited in UN 2002.
- <sup>53</sup> HIES Report 1997. Results of survey are now being revised.
- <sup>54</sup> UNO 1998.
- <sup>55</sup> Sāmoa Coordinating Committee on Children 1999.
- <sup>56</sup> Government of Sāmoa 1995.
- <sup>57</sup> UNO 2002.
- <sup>58</sup> There is no combined listing of all the private and public funded students.
- <sup>59</sup> UNO 2002.
- <sup>60</sup> Hooper 1998.
- <sup>61</sup> National Population Policy.



THE HEALTH SECTOR REFORM PROGRAMME CONSISTS OF THREE MAIN COMPONENTS. THEY ARE THE INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING, PRIMARY HEALTH CARE AND HEALTH PROMOTION AND QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES. THE ULTIMATE AIM OF THE REFORM PROGRAMME IS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH STATUS AND HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR THE SAMOAN POPULATION.

THE URBAN LIFESTYLES OF FAST FOOD, SMOKING, ALCOHOL AND PHYSICAL INACTIVITY ARE MAKING SAMOANS LESS HEALTHY. THESE CHANGES HAVE INCREASED THE DEMAND FOR HEALTH CARE AND OTHER AVAILABLE SERVICES.

MAINTAINING CONTROL OVER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES NEEDS TO REMAIN A PRIORITY AS SEVERAL IMPORTANT INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS CONTINUE TO PERSIST AND ARE STILL AMONG THE PRIMARY CAUSES OF MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY.

THE SĀMOA HEALTH SERVICE IS AT A TURNING POINT.

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DEAN, FACULTY OF NURSING  
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The Government of Sāmoa (GoS) makes a relatively high investment in its people's health as reflected in its last two development plans entitled "Statement of Economic Strategies" (SES 2002–2004) and "Strategy for the Development of Sāmoa" (SDS 2002–2004). The main aim of these development plans is the improvement of the quality of life for every Sāmoan. This emphasis on the people's health is recognized as the key component in human resource development which is critical in meeting the sustainable development needs of Sāmoa.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES to enhance the people's potential and capacity, thereby enabling them to participate actively in their own development and live a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature. It is about putting people first (Bruntland 2002).

The current health policy statements and strategic directions for the health sector development reaffirm government's commitment to the Primary Health Care and Health Promotion principles of "equity of access, equitable resource allocation, effective and sustainable health service provision and funding, appropriate and affordable health services, multi-sector and multi-disciplinary action for health and strengthening self-reliance and self-responsibility of individuals, groups and communities for their own health and well being". The Health Sector Reform Programme (HSRP) consists of three main components. They are: institutional strengthening, primary health care and health promotion, and quality health services. The ultimate aim of the reform programme is to improve the health status and health outcomes for

the Sāmoan population. A healthy population leads to greater work productivity and concomitant benefits to the country's economic and social development and well-being.

### Health Status and Trends

There has been significant improvement in the health sector over the past decades as shown by indicators such as life expectancy, maternal, infant and child mortality rates, major reductions in infectious diseases and achieving high immunization coverage. The challenge now is not only to maintain those standards but better them.

The 2001 population census reported that life expectancy for Sāmoa has improved compared to previous years. The average life expectancy has increased from 63.5 and 64.5 in 1991 to 71.8 and 73.8 for males and females respectively. Sāmoa has a young population (more than half of the population is below 20 years) with an increasing ageing population of 65 years and over.

The achievement of the high immunization rate of 96.3 per cent is reflected in the almost non-

Emphasis on the people's health is recognized as the key component in human resource development which is critical in meeting the sustainable development needs of Sāmoa.

#### HEALTH DEPARTMENT OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY REALITY



PHOTOS BY SALLY JOHNSON



existence of the six communicable diseases (acute respiratory infection, typhoid, unspecified viral infection, gastroenteritis, influenza and pneumonia) under the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) in the country. Poliomyelitis, tetanus and diphtheria have been virtually eradicated in Samoa (World Health Organization (WHO) Report; <http://www.wpro.who.int/countries/sma/>). The main health indicators are shown in Table 1.

The significant changes in Sāmoa's urban region with its rapidly growing population through opening of new residential areas has brought new health and environmental pressures, sub-standard living conditions in particular areas and increasing the vulnerability of these groups to access health services and education (MoH 2005). At the same time, employment opportunities are not keeping pace with the growing number of young adults leaving schools and entering the labour force. With the new freehold housing developments, the role of traditional community support structures such as *pulenu'u* and women's committees is lessened and more urban households live without the support that the village community provided. The urban lifestyles of fast food, smoking, alcohol and physical inactivity are making Samoans less healthy. These changes have increased the demand for health care and other available services.

The Sāmoa population is undergoing epidemiological transition and faces severe threats in the rise of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) as

major causes of ill health thus replacing infectious diseases as the main cause of death (Samoa MoH 1998; World Bank 1998). The rates of NCDs such as hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, asthma and cancer are also increasing throughout the Sāmoan population. Uncontrolled diabetes resulting in renal failure is emerging as a major problem.

Poor nutrition is an ongoing national issue. Protein malnutrition is affecting a significant number of young children while over half of all adults are either overweight or obese. Rheumatic fever is another concern because of its effect on cardiac problems. The new communicable diseases that have already affected some Asian countries such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Rubella (German measles), Avian flu are another concern because of the potential impact they could have on our vulnerable environment and defend-less population. The main causes of inpatient morbidity are respiratory conditions notably asthma and pneumonia (14 per cent of admission), pregnancy and childbirth excluding single spontaneous deliveries (10 per cent), injury and poisoning (7 per cent), and infectious and parasitic diseases (7 per cent).

Maintaining control over communicable diseases needs to remain a priority as several important infectious diseases and respiratory infections continue to persist and are still among the primary causes of morbidity and mortality. These changing disease patterns and demographic profile imply that health care demands are increasing secondary and tertiary care costs to government. This situation places a great burden on government resources given the government's free health care policy for pensioners and the high cost of overseas tertiary care which rose from SAT308,758 in 1991 to SAT2.9 million in 1999 (MoH & World Bank 2002). This cost escalation over the past five years has raised concern that has led to discussion on alternative health financing especially health insurance and increase of user fees. It also highlights the need for strengthening the integrated health prevention and health promotion programmes to assist in a reduction of massive treatment costs in the future.

**TABLE 1: KEY HEALTH INDICATORS**

	1991	2001	2003/2004
Total population	161,298.0	176,710.0	
Population 0-15years	65,469.0	71,978.0	
Population >65 years	6,348.0	8,207.0	
Total fertility rate	4.8	4.4	
Life expectancy	63.0	72.8	
Crude birth rate (CBR)/1000 population	30.0	29.0	20.8
Crude death rate (CDR)/1000 population	7.7	6.4	3.0
Infant mortality rate (IMR) /1000 live births	22.1	19.3	13.0
Maternal mortality rate (MMR)/100,000 live births		19.6	5.3

Source: Ministry of Health Annual Reports 1991-2001, FY2003/2004; WHO Report of the Samoa Health Sector 2001.

## Health and Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)

The MDGs which relate to health call for halving by 2015 the proportion of children under five who are underweight, reducing by three quarters the maternal mortality rate, halving and starting to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, and halting and beginning to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

**MGD 4: To reduce by two thirds between 1990 and 2015 the under five mortality rate**

The child mortality rates are a measure of health services and a good overall indicator of a community's current health status. The three indicators by which progress is monitored in order to meet this target are: the under five mortality rate, infant mortality rate and the proportion of one-year-old children immunization rate. By 1975, Sāmoa had reached the stipulated target of fewer than fifty deaths per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate has decreased steadily from 50 per 1,000 live births in 1975 to 22.4 per 1,000 live births in 1990, 17.8 in 2000 and 13 in 2003. These figures represent an overall 85 percent decrease since 1975.

The children's mortality rates declined by 35 percent between 1999 and 2001 and this occurred across all childhood age groups (0-1, 1-4, 5-14 and 15-19 years). Nearly two-thirds of deaths in childhood occurred in the under one year age group. This suggested that the risk of dying declined rapidly after the first year of life. It was highlighted in the 2001 Population Census that the

difference of Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) between males and females in the Apia Urban region and the Savai'i region is, Apia has the lowest whilst Savai'i has the highest, an indication that babies in the Apia urban area have better chances of survival in their first year of life than babies in the rural regions.

The immunization programme since its inception in 1981 has consistently achieved immunization coverage of between 92 to 96.3 per cent and this is reflected in the almost non-existent of the six immunizable diseases under the expanded programme of immunization. This situation is attributed to many factors such as the invaluable contribution of WHO and other international and bilateral development partners in health and the effective primary health care approach, which networks into every village through women's committees that have been vital to achieving the current health status.

However, despite the successful immunization programme for children, the rubella (German measles) outbreak in 2003 resulted in the sudden increase of rubella cases in 2003/2004 compared to previous years. A mass rubella immunization campaign was launched to cover the target population of children and young adults from the age of one year to 18 years and women of childbearing age. This was funded by the WHO, JICA and AusAID.

Rheumatic fever causes rheumatic heart disease. It is the most common cardiovascular disease in children and young adults (Adams 2001). Major cardiac problems often result in heart disease, which in turn require referral for treatment overseas.

The malnutrition problem among children is mainly due to underweight. Under one year old children affected by protein energy malnutrition and those of low birth weight are being monitored by the nutrition centre. The number of malnourished children in the centre has declined. The decline is attributed to the intensive Food and Nutrition Education and Promotional Programmes by the nutrition centre (MoH & NZAID 2004). At the same time there is great concern with the increasing number of children aged 10-16

**TABLE 2: INFANT MORTALITY RATE IN SĀMOA PER 1,000 LIVE INFANTS FROM 1975-2003**

Years	IMR per 1,000 live births
1975	50.0
1990	22.4
1994	19.8
2000	17.8
2003	13.0

Source: Ministry of Health Annual Reports 1975, 1990, 1993/1994, 2000, 2003/2004.

years being overweight due to changing lifestyles (Faculty of Nursing & Health Sciences (FoNHS), National University of Sāmoa (NUS) 2002).

### Nutritional-related Conditions

Traditionally, Sāmoan women feed their babes up until they are two years of age or until they become pregnant again, a practice confirmed by Parkinson in 1951. Parkinson found that the average weaning age in Sāmoa is 20 months. However, studies by Quested (1978) and United Nations (1998) both showed that the average duration of breastfeeding had declined dramatically over the past thirty years. The United Nation study also found that rural women were more likely to breastfeed and to breastfeed for a longer duration than their urban contemporaries. The main reasons for the decrease in breastfeeding included lack of birth spacing, lack of appreciation of the value of breastfeeding, faulty breastfeeding techniques, women's involvement in the cash economy, pressure of modern living, child adoption and lack of encouragement of breastfeeding in the post-natal period (Adams and Sio 1997; UNICEP 1996; United Nations 1998).

### Anaemia (Iron Deficiency)

The prevalence of iron-deficiency anaemia is high amongst children aged five years and under. It is linked to poor diet, poor child spacing, inadequate breast feeding, poor weaning food, and worm infestation (Adams and Sio 1997; National Food and Nutrition Council 1995). The Sāmoa National Nutrition Survey (SNN) 1999 showed that high proportions of anaemia occurred among children in the following age groups: six months to less

than two years (61 per cent ), 2-4 years (20 per cent ) and in teenagers (20 per cent ) (Mackerras and Kierman 2002).

**MDG 5: To reduce by two thirds between 1990 and 2015 the maternity mortality ratio, and the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel, and to reduce the maternal mortality by three quarters between 1990 and 2015.**

The Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) decreased from 140/100,000 in 1991 to 60/100,000 in 1996. It decreased further to 19.6/100,000 in 2001 (Ministry of Health Annual Report 1995/1996, 1999/2001, FY2002/2003-2003/04). Although Sāmoa has surpassed the MDG's target, there are still concerns about the low antenatal coverage of pregnant mothers and the ineffective management of mothers during labour and delivery. The MoH Annual Reports 2000/03 and 2003/04 show that pregnancy, normal deliveries and puerperium accounted for 20.5 per cent of all admissions, complications of labour and delivery accounts for 6.4 per cent, and other maternal disorders predominantly related to pregnancy accounts for 2.4 per cent.

The integration of reproductive health/family planning-sexual health (RH/FP-SH) into women's committees in villages has made possible full access for everyone to that public service. The adoption of the family oriented approach recognizes the importance of men and adolescents in the planning and implementation of reproductive health programmes.

Strong cultural childbirthing system provided by the social midwife or traditional birth attendants (TBAs) is recognized as an integral component of the Sāmoa health system (WHO 2000).

There is a need in most health areas to establish formal links between the MoH and the TBAs. Between 1991 and 1994 there was a sharp

**TABLE 3: NUMBER OF LIVE BIRTHS AND STILLBIRTHS FROM DELIVERIES IN GOVERNMENT FACILITIES, FY1999-2000**

Year	Live Births	Stillbirths	TBA Births
FY1999/00	3388	51	
FY2000/01	3606	60	
FY2001/02	3467	41	328
FY2002/03	3405	49	377
FY2003/04	3395	50	335

Source: Ministry of Health Annual Report FY2002/2003-2003/2004



decline in the number of births at district hospitals as well as a decrease in the number of deliveries by TBAs while a continuous increase was reported at the National Hospital. Training programmes for TBAs is on-going focusing on safe delivery practice and mandatory reporting of births using a “card system”.

As shown in Table 3, of the 377 deliveries by the TBAs in 2003, 17 were teenagers. Of the 335 TBAs deliveries in 2004, 14 were aged less than 20 years.

Teenage pregnancy is an emerging problem. Teenage pregnancy may be under-reported particularly the unmarried teenage births given the ethical and moral constraints in Sāmoa (Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture (MESC) 2001). In 1991 about 4-5 percent of all known deliveries were to teen mothers aged 20 years and under. In 1995 there were 316 births in the 0-19 year age group, representing 10 percent of all 3,292 births delivered in Government health facilities. Approximately one in eight births born to women aged 19 years or under were delivered by traditional birth attendants outside government facilities (DoH 1998).

In the year 2000, out of the total 2,026 antenatal mothers booked in 2000, 151 (7.5 per cent ) were below 19 years of age. Of those 151 teenage pregnancies booked, 58 (38.4 per cent ) were single, 51 (33.8 per cent ) were in stable union relationships and 42 (27.8 per cent ) were married.

Teenage births constitute a risk to the health and well being of both mothers and infants. These risks are associated with premature labour leading to premature birth, low birth weight. Infant mortality is high among infants born to teenagers as shown in Table 4.

Although women have full access to reproductive health services, the incidence of breast and cervical cancer seem to be on the rise, a situation exacerbated by the lack of screening procedures. There is a need to strengthen the cancer control and prevention programmes and create awareness and understanding regarding the consequences of these two conditions. There is also a need to develop protocols aimed at early identification of cervical and breast cancers. The integration of the

Palliative Care Programme (PCP) into the Integrated Community Health Services (ICHS) by community nursing services ensures the follow-up and involvement of the patients and their families in the management of the client’s care.

More than half of the Sāmoan population (55.2 per cent ) use family planning methods. It is a result of the active participation of stakeholders in all the preventive programmes and workshops conducted at the community level in collaboration with the Health Education and Promotion Section (HEAPS) (MoH 2001/2002).

The prevalence of iron deficiency anaemia (<10g/dl) is high especially amongst pregnant mothers aged 20-29 years. It is linked to dietary inadequacy, poor child spacing and worm infestation which is common amongst both the school age children and mothers (Adams and Sio 1997). Therefore, there is a need to strengthen the promotion of nutrition education in terms of the kind of food mothers should eat to get more iron. There should also be extensive health education and health promotion programmes on anaemia in pregnancy.

Factors contributing to the status of reproductive and sexual health in Sāmoa because of the lack of appropriate RH/FP-SH programmes to cater for the needs of teenagers/adolescents include easy access to night clubs and the availability of alcohol leading to the promiscuous sexual behaviour among teenagers (which have in turn led to pregnancy), lack of communication between parents and ado-

**TABLE 4: AGE AND NUMBER OF MOTHERS, WHO GAVE BIRTH IN THE NATIONAL HEALTH FACILITIES, 1999-2004**

Age of Mother	Financial Year				
	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
<20	330	317	327	341	303
20-24	1047	1091	1013	992	964
25-29	1005	1001	967	909	860
30-34	634	694	649	715	729
35-39	372	417	391	350	401
40-44	90	125	132	128	142
45+	12	4	9	9	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3490</b>	<b>3649</b>	<b>3488</b>	<b>3444</b>	<b>3407</b>

Source: Ministry of Health Annual Report FY2002/2003-2003/2004

lescents and lack of adequate and appropriate programmes and information on sexuality.

**MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, TB and other Diseases have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and other major diseases**

**TABLE 5: TEN LEADING CAUSES OF MORBIDITY IN SĀMOA (1997 AND 2000)**

Rank	Disease (Cause Groups)	1997		2000	
		Number	% of total illness	Number	% of total illness
1	Influenza and pneumonia	1268	10.5	1099	10.5
2	Complications of labour and delivery	765	6.4	781	6.4
3	Intestinal infectious disease	439	3.6	648	5.0
4	Infections of the skin and subcutaneous	367	3.0	404	3.1
5	Other acute lower respiratory infections	360	3.0	286	2.2
6	Maternal care related to the fetus and amniotic cavity and possible delivery problems	269	3.0	278	2.1
7	Other maternal disorders predominantly related to pregnancy	266	2.2	264	2.0
8	Chronic lower respiratory disease	261	2.2	261	2.0
9	Diabetes mellitus	248	2.1	259	2.0
10	Pregnancy with abortive outcome	215	1.8	259	2.0

Source: Ministry of Health Annual Report 1999 & 2002/2003

**TABLE 6 : TEN LEADING CAUSES OF MORTALITY IN SĀMOA (1999 AND 2002)**

Ranks	Diseases (Cause Groups)	1999		2002	
		Number	% of total illness	Number	% of total illness
1	Circulatory disease	65	25.4	70	38.0
2	Respiratory disease	35	13.7	19	10.3
3	Infectious & parasitic diseases	22	8.6	29	15.8
4	Certain condition originating in the perinatal period	22	8.6	8	4.3
5	Diseases of the digestive system	19	7.4	7	3.8
6	Injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes	19	7.4	9	4.9
7	Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic disease	15	5.8	6	3.3
8	Neoplasm	14	5.4	14	7.6
9	Symptoms, signs and abnormal clinical and laboratory findings not elsewhere clarified	12	4.7	13	7.1
10	Diseases of the skin and subcutaneous tissue	11	4.3	9	4.9

Source: Ministry of Health Annual Report 1999 & 2002/2003

## Non-Communicable Disease

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are lifestyle diseases associated with diet, lack of exercise and excessive use of tobacco and alcohol. More Samoans suffer from NCDs such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension and cancer (MoH 2002) now than from infectious diseases.

As shown in Table 5 and 6 below, a significant proportion of inpatient deaths are caused by NCDs such as those associated with the circulatory system, perinatal conditions, respiratory conditions and infectious and parasitic diseases. The leading causes of inpatient deaths are diseases of the circulatory system; perinatal conditions; respiratory conditions and infectious and parasitic diseases. Motor accidents are another significant cause of death and injury. The rate of suicide deaths also remains high.

Separate studies in 1978, 1991 and 2002 to investigate the prevalence of diabetes, hypertension and obesity showed significant increases in the number of patients affected by both cases in both the rural and urban areas. Figure 1 shows an almost four-fold increase in the number of diabetic patients from 1978 to 2002. It is higher in the urban than in the rural areas and among females than males (Bruntland 2002). The high rate of pregnant diabetic mothers may have contributed to the high rates of miscarriages and stillbirths amongst these mothers. Figure 2 illustrates that diabetes increases with age.

Obesity is the most common factor associated with diabetes and hypertension as illustrated in Figures 2 and 3. The prevalence rate of obesity is 52.7 per cent, 48.4 per cent and 67.4 per cent in males and females respectively. These rates are similar to those recorded by Zimmet *et al* in the 1978 and 1991 surveys. The prevalence of obesity increases with age and is more common in the urban area. The high prevalence of diabetes and obesity, especially among the female population, is a major concern as they imply significant health costs. The GoS celebrates annually in November the Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) Awareness Week to promote healthy lifestyles.

## Suicide

The 1995 Apia Urban Youth Survey showed that

49 per cent of youth believe that suicide is the most serious problem facing them. Indeed the high number of suicide deaths among youths has become a major social and health concern. Between 1990 and 2004, an average of 33 attempted suicide cases and 15.2 deaths were recorded. Forty-three suicide deaths were recorded in 1990 and 42 in 2004 (MoH 1990-2000, 2002/3, 2003/4). More than 47 per cent of suicide attempts have resulted in death. Those involved were mostly males less than 29 years of age. Table 7 shows the number of reported cases of suicide that were admitted to the hospital between 1999 and 2004.

Paraguat has been one of the means of committing suicide. The government has taken this into account by passing a piece of legislation to change the way paraquat is purchased thus making it less easily accessible to potential suicide victims.

### Communicable Diseases

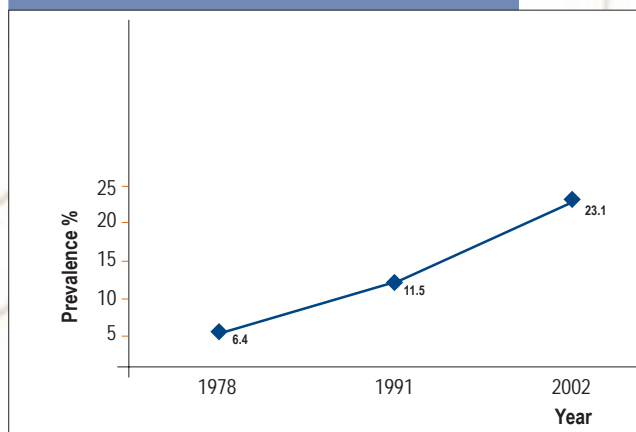
Communicable diseases are still prevalent but are no longer the leading cause of deaths.

Diseases such as acute respiratory infections, typhoid, unspecified viral infection and gastroenteritis were the main causes of inpatient morbidity between 1999 and 2004. The MoH also aims to eradicate filariasis, tuberculosis and leprosy in the near future.

### Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV/AIDS

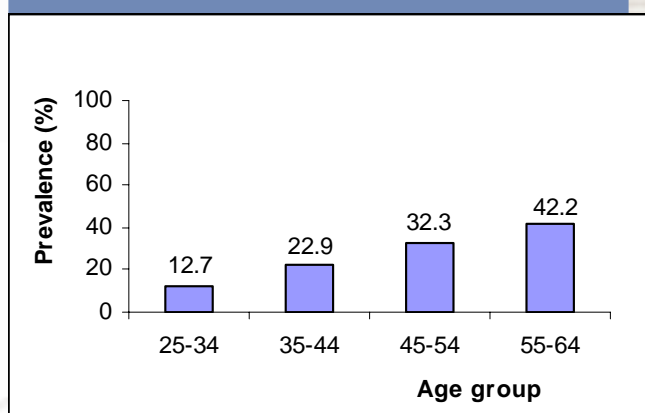
Sexually transmitted diseases are on the rise at present. They are a concern because they are the medium through which the HIV virus is transmitted. The incidence of HIV/AIDS is relatively low compared to other developing countries. The STD-HIV/AIDS/Prevention and Control Programme is integrated into RH/FP-SH programme at all levels including the primary health care level. Appropriate IEC materials and outreach activities on HIV/AIDS have been effectively disseminated through the coordination/cooperation of HEAPS, RH/FP-SH programme and the STD-HIV/AIDS unit, which is working closely with the Sāmoa Health Family Association. In response to the UNAIDS call for a regional strategy for the prevention and control of STD/AIDS in the Pacific Island countries and Territories the Sāmoa Ministry of Women's Affairs developed the National

**FIGURE 1: DIABETES PREVALENCE IN SĀMOA (1978, 1991, 2002)**



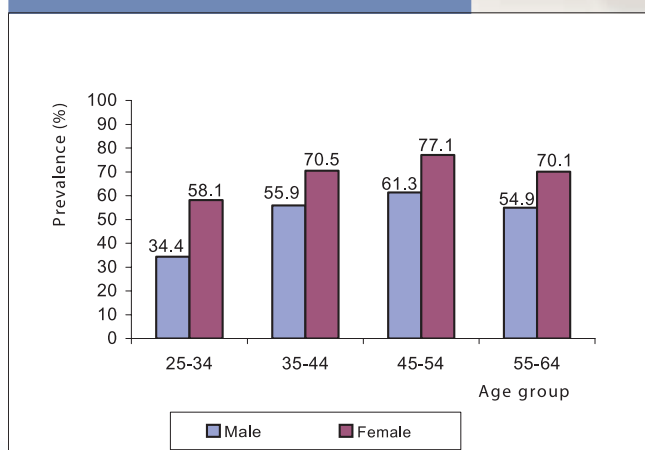
Source: MoH 2004, National Guidelines for the Prevention & Management of Diabetes in Samoa.

**FIGURE 2: DIABETES PREVALENCE IN AGE GROUPS**



Source: MoH & WHO 2002 Steps Survey

**FIGURE 3: OBESITY PREVALENCE IN MALES AND FEMALES IN SĀMOA**



Source: WHO 2002; STEP Survey on Prevalence of Diabetes, Obesity & Risk Factors



Strategic Plan 2001–2003 entitled “Responding to the Impact of HIV/AIDS on Women in Samoa”. STI/Chlamydia, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C are common in Sāmoa but due to lack of funding, appropriate screening test, immunization and treatment are not offered (Viali 2005). Table 8 below shows the prevalence of Hepatitis B in Antenatal Mothers.

## Issues and Recommendations

In its Health Sector Plan 2004–2013 called “*A Partnership in Health*” the GoS highlighted priority areas on which the MoH’s realignment programme will concentrate. Those health priority areas include the following.

### 1. Population Health Issues

#### Changing Behaviours

- It is known that with increased affluence and associated lifestyle and consumption patterns, environmental burdens have tended to become more diffuse and indirect – affecting a temporarily and spatially displaced public – whereas the environmental burdens of poverty have fallen more directly on

“vulnerable” populations. Rural to urban migration deprives some people of more healthier food sources from the land and sea, instead relying on more convenient frozen and oily foods that are associated with diabetes and hypertension. Land is scarce to cultivate a more reliable and nutritious food supply which could also provide a good physical activity.

- Sāmoa is beginning to experience the worst of both worlds: traditional risks associated with “vulnerable groups” resulting in poverty and the new and emerging risks associated with more people moving from rural areas to the urban region, adopting urban lifestyles of fast food, smoking, alcohol and physical inactivity which are making Sāmoans less healthy. This increases the demand on healthcare and on the range of services available.

### 2. Sustainability – Resource Allocation

- In the 1998/99 financial year, 6.6 per cent of Samoa’s GDP or 17 per cent of the government’s total annual expenditure was spent on health. These figures are comparable to health expenditures of middle income countries. However, with the increase of chronic non-communicable diseases mainly relating to diabetes, heart diseases and cancer that require high technology and high cost health

care, the total health care expenditure of Sāmoa as a percentage of GDP is expected to increase. This increase in high cost health care will affect the ability of government to provide health care services at the national level in terms of quality and quantity, given also that most primary and public health programmes are highly dependent on donor funding for routine activities. This situation raises sustainability issues regarding primary and public services should the do-

**TABLE 7: NUMBER OF SUICIDE ATTEMPTS AND DEATHS, PARAQUAT INGESTION AND DEATHS**

Financial year	Suicide attempts	Suicide deaths	Paraquat deaths
1999/2000	43	26	14
2000/2001	26	11	5
2001/2002	24	7	4
2002/2003	28	12	7
2003/2004	42	20	8
Total	163	76	38

Source: MoH Annual Report FY2002/2003-2002/2004

**TABLE 8: HEPATITIS B IN ANTENATAL MOTHERS**

(age 15-40 years)	Number antenatal	+ve Hep B	% +ve Hep B
Jan-Dec 2002	2656	90	3.4 %
Jan 03	356	24	6.7 %
Feb 03	236	31	13.1 %
Mar 03	233	41	17.6 %
Total	3481	186	5.3 %

Source: Dr Viali S. Presentations on Health Rights – Rights to Health Conference, September 2005.

nor partners withdraw assistance in the future.

- Primary health care and health promotion services receive less than 5 per cent of total public funding compared to expenditure on hospital based curative care, which received 59 per cent of total public expenditure. This is clearly contrary to national policy objectives of improving primary health care and health promotion services.
- The major issue facing rural health services is too many facilities but manned by only a few staff. The overall shortage of medical staff is not helping the situation. There are already changes made to staffing schedules to reflect patterns of demand, taking into account the declining rural population. Maintaining clinical staff at health facilities in rural areas, however, remains a challenge. A possible remedy for this situation is for government to increase the number of entries to health training programmes at NUS and for more students to be sent overseas to undertake medical training. An increase in the number of trained staff should help alleviate the staff shortage problem.

### **3. Expand and Support the Integrated Community Health Services (ICHS)**

- The ICHS provides primary health care services, outreach services, health promotion and prevention and clinical services. These services are delivered through District Hospitals and community based services. To date, the ICHS has not fulfilled its expected role because services are still primarily clinical. Government commitment to strengthen primary health care services, expand rural and grassroot outreach of health promotion and prevention programmes and services are crucial in order to bring under control the increase of non-communicable diseases. There is also an urgent need to have extensive health education and health promotion activities targeting the youth and children to curb the threat of NCDs.

### **4. Strengthening Partnership with Key Stakeholders: (Intersectoral Action)**

- It is important to strengthen partnerships between the Ministry and NGO's and between the Ministry and other sectors in relation to specific services they deliver to the rural communities, such as RH/FP-

SH, adolescents' health, and so forth.

- Strengthening relationships with traditional healers and traditional birth attendants (TBAs): Traditional healers and TBAs continue to play a significant role in the health services. The annual household expenditure on traditional healers averaged SAT2.8million. For each visit around SAT8.52 is spent. Some traditional healers accept donations for their services. The patients often consult traditional healers before or in addition to visits to public health centres. There is a need to strengthen training for both the traditional healers and TBAs to recognize signs of serious illness and the limits of their own services, thus assisting the people to seek the best care.
- The Ministry of Health needs to continue to work in collaboration with the United Nations Family Planning Association (UNFPA) funded Adolescent Reproductive Health project and the Sāmoa Family Health Association to provide RH/FP-SH service to youth in the rural areas. These services aim to reduce the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, increase awareness and knowledge of reproductive and sexual health, and conduct suicide awareness programme for the youth through workshops and road shows.

### **5. Equity**

- There appears to be inequity in access to health care amongst people in different income groups. Those in the highest income quintile use more health care per capita than those in the lower quintile. Similarly there appears to be inequity in access between populations in different regions. Residents in urban areas use more health care per capita than those in rural areas. These inequities in access and utilization of public health funding clearly contradict the existing government policies on equity of access to health services regardless of ability to pay and geographical location.
- Fees charged by women committees in rural health facilities vary between members and non-members of the women committees. This practice discriminates against the most "vulnerable group" in terms of financial access to health services that are close to them. There is a need to examine these policies to address equity issues.

## CONCLUSION

The Sāmoa health service is at a turning point. The introduction of performance budget mechanisms ensures an improvement in internal managerial efficiency and effectiveness at the health ministry. The Health Sector has a key role in providing solid evidence of health risks relating to non-sustainable development. This evidence would help shape effective policies and strategies to address these health risks. It would also help with capacity building activities inside and outside the health sector. Health professionals also have a role to implement future policies for sustainable development. It would be a daunting but exciting challenge.

NEW MINISTER FOR HEALTH HON  
GATOLOAIFAANA AMATAGA ALESANA WITH  
FORMER MINISTER FOR HEALTH  
MULITALO SIAFAUSA VUI READY TO  
TACKLE THE HEALTH SECTOR AND THE  
MANY PERIPHERALS

PHOTOS BY SKIV JOHNSTON







WRITTEN BY GATOLOAIFAAANA TILIANAMUA AFAMASAGA  
DIRECTOR, CENTRE OF PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SĀMOA

The greatest challenge for education in any country is being able to continuously and consistently clarify what is quality in education, setting appropriate goals and acquiring the capacity to work towards achieving these goals. This is a dynamic cycle that requires vision renewal and constant vigilance to monitor, assess and redirect as needed. Notions of sustainable livelihood constantly change as people re-examine values, assess resource capacity and evaluate possible futures. It is about people having the capacity to create and make choices. It is about sustainable human development. Education plays a pivotal role in all of these enterprises.

UNDP DEFINES SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AS enlarging people's choices by expanding human capabilities<sup>1</sup>. Sustainability of life, of development, of people or of nations is a global issue that has pre-occupied debate and consultations in the modern day world for the last thirty years. According to UNDP, sustainability means meeting the needs of present day generations without compromising the abilities and opportunities of future generations. Enlarging people's choices today should not be at the cost of people tomorrow<sup>2</sup>. Following the UNDP perspectives, sustainable livelihood then is about people having access to abilities, opportunities and choices to obtain a decent standard of living without compromising the same for future generations. Education and training play a pivotal role in expanding human capabilities.

This is recognized in the Policies and Strategies of Education for the Government of Sāmoa where education is considered the most vital factor in human resources development.<sup>3</sup>

### The Basis of Education Policy in Sāmoa

In the last ten years, the four keys concepts that have underlined policy and strategies and have provided the aims of education in Sāmoa have been Equity, Quality, Relevance, and Efficiency. They are also four of the six main issues that are often examined in reviewing any education sector, the other two being financing and management of education.<sup>4</sup>

According to the policies and strategies, equity is explained in terms of universal access to primary education and inclusion in secondary education, treatment in terms of provision of an environment that is conducive to learning, equitable distribution of all resources and provision of curriculum and learning outcomes that demonstrate effective teaching and learning and which reflect fair and just assessment practices. Quality is explained in terms of academic achievement that reflects holistic and critical learning, strong cultural understanding of Sāmoan society and social behaviour that strengthen the community in terms of cooperation, tolerance and human development. Relevance is conceived of as all learning that pertain to individual, community and national development. Lastly, efficiency is explained as effective management, adequate resources including teachers and adequate facilities. These concepts analysed into their component indicators have underpinned most of the developmental activities that have taken place in Sāmoa in the last ten years.<sup>5</sup>

### The Goals of Education

The Goals of Education in Sāmoa are explicit statements about the school curriculum, pedagogies, assessment and the individual and society in a humane education system. The curriculum is intended to be developed into a comprehensive and enriching one which:

- *combines indigenous and global knowledge within a bilingual structure, and promotes an international standard of academic achievement.*

- *is based on and develops existing knowledge, skills and attitudes*
- *develops an appreciation of the pursuit of knowledge*

Pedagogies are intended to be active, interactive and creative to:

- *ensure the systematic, presentation of essential knowledge by means of a sound bilingual methodology;*
- *develop the ability to analyse knowledge critical in a learning environment which encourages inquiry, debate and independent thought;*
- *stimulate the imagination and allow for individual expression*

To be established are impartial evaluation and assessment methods which:

- *seek information which will benefit the student*
- *recognize and enhance the developmental nature of all learning*
- *enable equitable access throughout the system*

Also envisaged is the promotion of the individual and society through a humane education system aimed at integration and which will:

- *foster the holistic development and self esteem of individual students*
- *encourage both a sense of indigenous identity and an international perspective*
- *promote the social and cultural foundations of education*
- *be responsive to economic needs*

Source: Educational Policies and Strategies 1995-2005 (1995, pp10-11)

## The State of the Education Sector and Some Issues

### Pre-school Education

Pre-schooling in Sāmoa has been mainly the responsibility of non government organizations. The

Education Policies and Strategies 1995-2005 made a commitment for the first time to this area in 1995 mainly through beginning teacher education courses and in its coordination through a National Council of Early Childhood Education of Sāmoa (NCECES). The government provides an annual grant which is given to the Council for distribution to the registered pre-schools which is allocated at about SAT60 per child per annum. The provision of materials and teachers' salaries remain the responsibility of the proprietor of a pre-school. Most of the pre-schools are 'owned' and run by pastors' wives while a few are run by school boards of local community members. To date there are 123 registered pre-schools with an average size of 35-40 children in a pre-school. The minimum size is 15 students. The pre-schools cater for approximately 4000 pre-school children.<sup>6</sup>

Not all children in the age cohort 3-5 years are in pre-schools. The 2001 Census enumerated about 10,000 children ages 3 and 4. Children attending pre-school is about 40 per cent of that age cohort. Most pre-schools have tremendous difficulty providing payment for teachers. Hence, most schools are staffed by untrained teachers who are mainly mothers. The latter is not necessarily a disadvantage. There are extensive resource implications if the government decides to make greater commitment to the development of pre-school education in Sāmoa.

### Special Needs Education

Before 1995, the education of children with special needs was the domain of non-government organizations such as Loto Taumafai (Centre for Children with Physical Disability), Fia Malamalama School (mental disability), SENESE (a private special needs school) and PREB (School for the Blind). These organizations did extremely well in providing educational and other services for children with disabilities. They depended a great deal on fund raising, donations and grants from local and overseas donors and even then, they generally lacked the resources to pay for qualified personnel to provide the required level of service necessary for special needs children. The greatest expense in any of these organizations was funding to pay their teachers and ancillary personnel.

TABLE 1: POPULATION WITH MULTIPLE OR SINGLE DISABILITIES, 2002

Population	Multiple disabilities	Single disability	Total persons
School students	60	252	312
Community	1262*	1254*	2516
Institutions/NGO	30	20	50
Total	1352	1522	2874

Source: Lene and Taaloga (2002) *Samoa Adult 15+ Disability Census Report and Key Recommendation 2003*.



The survey highlighted the fact that there were/are many children with single and multiple disabilities in Sāmoa. Some are in special schools while others are in mainstream school. However, there were others who were not in school. Of the 2,516 people with disabilities who were in the community, 396 were in the age range 15-19 years. One hundred and ninety of these people did not complete primary school, 30 never went to school or stayed for less than a year while 144 completed 10-12 years of schooling. All of these people were helping their families in some way. In order to achieve education for all by 2015, the government clearly must address the issue of enabling all children to achieve a certain level of education including children with disabilities.

The training of teachers to teach special needs children requires specialist skills and certain types of personalities and aptitudes that are quite scarce and recruiting such people is difficult. Special needs schools need to be supported particularly in the payment of their teachers. Families of children who are not at school must be encouraged to take the disabled children to school. This will enable expanded choices for them. This requires a high level of commitment from government and the private sector in terms of support for the special schools, the development of inclusive education, skills development for disabled people, payment for teachers and the provision of employment of people with special needs.

The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC) recognizes the rights of students with physical and learning disabilities to an education appropriate as a basic human right. The sentiment must be actualized in terms of specific policy and effective activities.

Currently a programme for the training of teachers to teach children with special needs is taught at the Faculty of Education (FoE) of the National University of Samoa (NUS). Special units have also been set up in some primary schools to teach special needs children. There is a need to ensure that all initiatives are consolidated as part of the overall mandate of the ministry, so that all children including those with special needs may become fully functioning members of Sāmoan society.

## **Formal Schooling: Primary and Secondary Education**

Formal schooling at primary level begins at age five and consists of eight years primary (Years 1-8) and five years (years 9-13) of secondary schooling. Eight years of primary schooling is still one year more than in other countries, while five years in secondary schools does not include the matriculation year for university. The latter is the Foundation Year programme which is located at the NUS. If this foundation year, equivalent to Form 7 in New Zealand, were to be included at secondary school, this would make six years of secondary schooling which is also one year more than in other countries. Clearly, there are economies of scale issues here which must be addressed.

Notions of quality in education are determined largely by four types of assessment. They are the Sāmoa Primary Educational Literacy Level (SPELL) tests at Years 4 and 6 and the national examinations at the end of years 8 (Year 8 National Examination) and 12 (Sāmoa School Certificate) and a regional examination at year 13 (Pacific Secondary Certificate Examination).

In the last five years, examination results in the SPELL tests as well as the Year 8 and Year 12 exams have declined. The quality of teaching, inadequate teaching resources and minimal support for teachers are related and maybe causal factors. The quality of assessment in terms of validity and reliability may be other important factors. There is clearly a need to obtain the best answers to these issues through research and policy.

### **a) School Enrolments**

Enrolment at primary school level increased from 36,729 in 1994 to 39,639 in 2003 while secondary enrolments increased from 12,701 to 14,847. This was a total growth of 11 per cent over 10 years. A further increase to 40,173 was noted for the primary area while there was a very slight decrease for the secondary area to 14,766 in 2004. Decreases are noted in 2005 for primary as well as secondary levels. Of further concern are the increases in teacher pupil ratios in both primary and secondary schools. This is especially noticeable in the mission schools where the teacher pupil ratio for secondary level has increased from

20.06 in 2004 to 32.06 in 2005. These figures indicate the general shortage of teachers in the total system.

### b) National Age Participation Rates

Participation rates in primary education have been steady at around 96 per cent in the last ten years taking into account that a significant number of students in the cohort, 12-14 years would be in secondary education. This might partly account for the lower levels of participation at secondary level.

Quite clearly, participation levels at secondary level need to be vastly improved in order to meet the human resources needs of Sāmoa. Youth who leave secondary school early are potentially wasted human resources if they have not acquired the requisite skills to be gainfully employed or indeed to obtain sustainable livelihoods.

**TABLE 2: OVERVIEW OF THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION SECTOR, 2005**

	Government	Mission	Private	Total
<b>Primary*</b>				
Schools	140	13	6	159
Students	33,719.00	4970.00	1,385.00	40,070.00
Male	17,512.00	2,553.00	717.00	20,782.00
Female	16,207.00	2,417.00	668.00	19,292.00
Teachers	1,042.00	155.00	63.00	1,260.00
S:T ratio	32.36	32.06	21.90	31.80
Repetition rate**	2.10	2.70	0.50	2.10
<b>Secondary and combined Primary and Secondary schools</b>				
Schools	25	17	2	44
Students	9,021.00	5,630.00	249.00	14,900.00
Male	4,401.00	2,701.00	116.00	7,218.00
Female	4,620.00	2,929.00	133.00	7,682.00
Teachers	424.00	239.00	20.00	683.00
S:T ratio	21.30	23.55	12.45	21.82
Repetition rate**	3.50	4.70	0.50	4.00

\*excludes combined schools \*\* 2003 rates

Source: MESOC: Education Statistical Digest, July 2005

**TABLE 3: TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLMENTS (2000-2005)**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Primary	36,292	37,705	38,946	39,639	40,173	40,074
Secondary	13,415	13,683	14,159	14,847	14,766	14,900
Total	49,707	51,388	53,105	54,486	54,939	54,974
% increase	1	3	3	3	1	.06

Source: MESOC Education Statistics 2004, July 2005

### c) Access and Participation Issues

In Sāmoa, every village has a primary school which is jointly supported by government and the village community. In some villages, primary schools run by the missions are an alternative. Clusters of villages make up districts and each district has a secondary school with the bigger ones having two. Theoretically, access to schools in terms of availability of schools should not be an issue. All children of school age from 5 to 18 years of age should be at school and the gross enrolment rate should be 100 per cent or more with the net enrolment rate close to a 100 per cent. The situation however is more complex. Gross enrolment rates and net enrolment rates are common indicators of access and participation. In 2004, these were obtained specifically for primary education as 97 per cent and 67<sup>7</sup> per cent respectively indicating that not all children of primary school age were at school. This is a challenge for the Education For All (EFA) initiative by the United Nations to improve the quality of data in order to obtain accurate statistics.

Teacher pupil ratios for primary schools differ in government (30.78), mission (20.06) and private (17.06) and overall is 27.96. This camouflages very high (70) and very low (10) ratios in some schools. An analysis of schools per district show that the lowest average ratio is in some of the districts of Savai'i. The average teacher: student ratio in mission schools is also much lower than in the government schools. High teacher pupil ratios raise real issues of quality education in the schools.

While there have been slight increases in the total school enrolments each year, overall the total figures seemed to have stagnated around 52,000. The 2001 Census enumerated a total of 56,992 persons in the age group 5-17 (approximately the age group from year 1-year 13 while the enrolment figures show 51,388 persons. This means a deficit of about 5,604 children who were not at school when they should. This is a very large number for a small country like Sāmoa of potentially wasted human resources if these young people do not have access to educational and skills development. Development policy must address this issue to minimize real risks in terms of unemployment and stresses on human resources as well

as potential social problems.

Gross enrolment rate and net enrolment rate are commonly used to determine the efficiency of compulsory education implementation. The gross enrolment (participation) in primary education has remained relatively constant for the last ten years at about 97 per cent. Gross enrolment includes overage children and in many countries will remain over 100 per cent until all overage children pass through the system. If most children enter school at the appropriate age, stay in school and repetition rates are low, gross enrolment should be slightly less than 100 per cent. Hence a gross enrolment rate of 97 per cent is quite good for Sāmoa as there is always a small proportion of children who are unable to attend school.

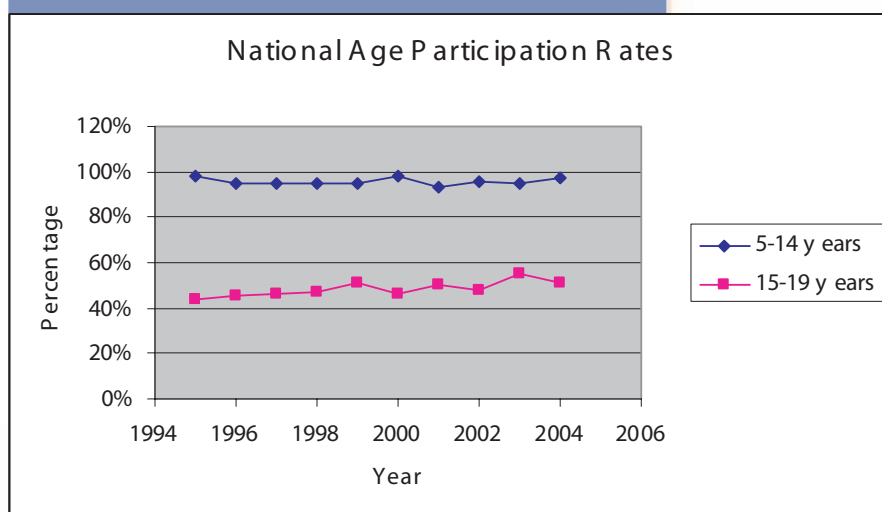
The net enrolment rate includes children of the appropriate age group and it is desirable that a net enrolment rate should also adhere as close as possible to 100 per cent. However for Sāmoa, net enrolment rates in primary education have been gradually decreasing from 77 per cent in 1995 to 69 per cent in 2001. While there was an increase to 71 per cent in 2002, the rate in 2004 is back at 69 per cent. This raises concern over the ability of the education system to ensure that all children enrol and stay in school. The fact that there is such a wide margin between GER and NER show that there are many children of school age who are not at school when they should be. If gross enrolment and net enrolment were both closer to 100 per cent, a desirable situation would exist and compulsory education would be close to achievement.

While there might be some issues that are to do with the available data, the current situation raises questions of why these children are not at school and where they are. To address the issues requires government and all communities to find out and create appropriate strategies to enable all children in Sāmoa to be educated. Children who do not attend school are potentially wasted human resources.

#### d) School Sizes

Table 6 raises questions that pertain to the number of schools and the distribution of pupils to the schools.

**FIGURE 1: NATIONAL AGE PARTICIPATION RATES**



Source: MESC (Manumea), MoF Statistical Services Division and SPC (MESC Education Statistical Digest, 2004)

**TABLE 4: GROSS ENROLMENT RATES (GER) (%) FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS<sup>a</sup>**

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
5-14 <sup>a</sup> years	98	95	95	95	95	98	93	96	95	97

Source: MESC Education Statistics 2004, July 2004

**TABLE 5: NET ENROLMENT RATES (NER) (%) FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
NER	77	75	74	74	73	74	69	71	70	69

Source: MESC Education Statistics 2004, July 2004

**TABLE 6: SIZES OF SCHOOLS: NUMBER OF CHILDREN**

	Apia urban area	Rest of Upolu	Savai'i
Primary	182-980	42-499	42-980
Secondary	346-1401	54-548	182-456

Source: MESC Education Statistics, July 2004

There is a wide range of school sizes from very small primary schools of 42 children to very large schools of 980 children. At secondary level the range is from 54 to 1,401 students. This situation raises issues of efficiency which must be addressed. A more equitable distribution of children in schools should be considered to maximize re-



sources. There might be countervailing issues such as remoteness of location that make it impractical to combine schools, however there are also real cases where some hard decisions must be made, as for example Itiutane No 1 Secondary School (Years 9-12) and Vaipouli College (Years 9-13) which are separated by only 200 meters. Primary and secondary schools with less than 100 children place a heavy demand on teacher supply and other resources. In 2004, the districts of Aleipata, Anoama'a 2 and Fagaloa had schools with minimum sizes of 41, 36, and 48 respectively. Fagaloa Secondary School only had 10 students. School size impact heavily on quality of education especially when there is such a chronic shortage of teachers.

#### e) Repetition Rates

Repetition rate is the percentage of students who are retained in a previous level of schooling for any kind of reason, the most common being lack of required achievement. A high repetition rate implies inefficiency in that the rate of return increases considerably and hence increases the cost of education. One can argue that such an indicator lacks educational justification, however, it does show trends that are significant for development.

As an indicator of efficiency, the repetition rate for primary schooling has remained approximately the same since 1995 at 2.1. This is considered to be acceptable. At secondary level the repetition

rate has been consistently high even though there was a slight improvement from 5 (1995) to 4 (2003) per cent. This has been a feature of a highly examination oriented system which until recently had three national examinations at years 11, 12 and 13. The Year 11 examination was phased out in 2001.

#### f) Transition Rates

These rates show the percentage of children who move from one level to the next. The statistics show that over the last ten years, it was not possible to obtain a 100 per cent transition rate from year 1 to year 2. This is an issue of concern that must be looked at carefully. Where are the children if they do not move to year 2? One likely explanation is that some are retained (repetition) in year 1 as they might have started school earlier than 5 years and could not move to year 2. Another likely explanation may be that some are accelerated to year 3 as a result of improved levels at Pre School. This phenomenon must be clearly investigated. In fact the figures show that there are dropouts or push outs at all levels of the system. As expected transition rates at the upper secondary level tend to be much lower than the rest of the system.

Generally transition rates are good (ranging from 88 per cent to 97 per cent) from year 1 to year 9 since 1994. Transition rates at secondary level however show that students leave the secondary system at all levels. This is an issue of concern particularly where students leave school before acquiring good levels of skills development to enable them to earn a living.

#### g) Drop Out Rates

The drop out rates mirror the transition rates. Drop out rates generally improved from 1995 to 2003 at both primary and secondary levels as the following table indicates. The highest drop out rate in 2002-2003 was experienced from years 1-2, years 8-9, and subsequent levels of the secondary system. The high rate of 8 per cent drop outs from year 1-2 must be investigated as this might indicate possible changes in policy towards the starting age of entry into primary education and/or closer monitoring and registration of movement

**TABLE 7: TRANSITION RATES BY YEAR LEVEL 1994-2005**

	Year level	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Year													
1994-1995		90	99	99	97	100	97	101	82	90	94	52	47
1995-1996		88	97	98	95	93	95	100	76	85	91	57	40
1996-1997		88	98	98	97	97	98	104	80	94	91	76	45
1997-1998		87	98	99	94	98	94	100	77	90	90	68	50
1998-1999		89	97	97	96	97	92	100	80	93	92	77	52
1999-2000		91	100	98	97	98	95	102	84	90	87	79	48
2000-2001		92	99	100	98	102	97	104	86	90	86	86	52
2001-2002		88	101	101	96	100	98	97	86	91	85	91	51
2002-2003		89	98	99	95	99	96	97	87	95	88	91	52
2003-2004		88	98	99	98	97	97	96	88	89	85	82	57
2004-2005		89	97	97	97	97	98	96	88	91	86	90	51

Source: MESCC Education Statistical Digest 2005

of the children in the education system. Taken together these percentages represent a large number of young people who drop out of school. It is critical that drop-outs or push-outs of the system are identified and interventions provided to enable these young people to acquire the required skills to enable them to gain employment or make use of opportunities to obtain a decent standard of living in Samoa.

Surveys undertaken by the ADB-ESP 2 PPTA<sup>10</sup> team in September, 2004 highlighted two main reasons for dropping out of school both in the rural and urban schools. These reasons are economic hardship and the low priority placed on education by parents in the communities. There seems to have been a shift in the value placed by parents and communities upon education since the attainment of political independence in 1963. The reasons must be found for development planning to address.

Drop outs or push outs are potentially human resources who should be educated in order to meet the challenges of education for all by the year 2015, as well as meet the millennium development goals for Sāmoa. Drop out rates must be reduced considerably at all levels. This presents huge economic challenges for the education budget not only for in school but also for out of school initiatives, particularly as very often, students leave school prematurely without acquiring the requisite levels of literacy and numeracy as well as some skills for employment or for meaningful absorption into the village subsistence economy.

Quality indicators include the national year 8 examination, the national year 12 examination, the SPELL 1 test for Year 4 and the SPELL 2 test for year 6. Between 1997 and 2002, average raw scores on the national year 8 examination decreased in all subjects except mathematics. The same was true for the year 12 examination with the exception of the average raw scores on geography and economics. The SPELL tests identify the percentage of students at risk in the literacy areas of English and Sāmoan and numeracy. At risk children at Year 4 level increased in English language from 29 per cent in 1997 to 48 per cent in 2002 but decreased in Sāmoan language from 40 per cent to 32 per cent and decreased in nu-

**TABLE 8: DROP OUT RATES (PERCENTAGE) 1995/96 AND 2004/2005**

	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
1995/96	9	1	0	3	5	4	2	20	15	9	38	49
2004/05	7	2	3	2	2	2	4	10	9	13	8	39

Source: MESC Education Statistical Digest 2005

meracy from 34 per cent to 28 per cent. There was a slight decrease in the three areas on the year 6 SPELL 2 test. These results indicated some slight improvements in SPELL 1 and 2 from 1997 to 2002. Considering the huge amounts of development aid spent on educational development in the past ten years, the issue of quality in the schools remains elusive. Are the quality indicators relevant or insignificant?

Learning outcomes are directly linked to the capacity of the teachers to facilitate learning through the use of their knowledge, professional expertise through relevant methodology and deployment of adequate and relevant resources. Provided that the assessment instruments are valid and relevant, the outcomes have been quite disappointing and begs the whole question of quality in education.

## Strategies for Development

In the Education Policies 1995-2005, the strategy for development of primary education called for the:

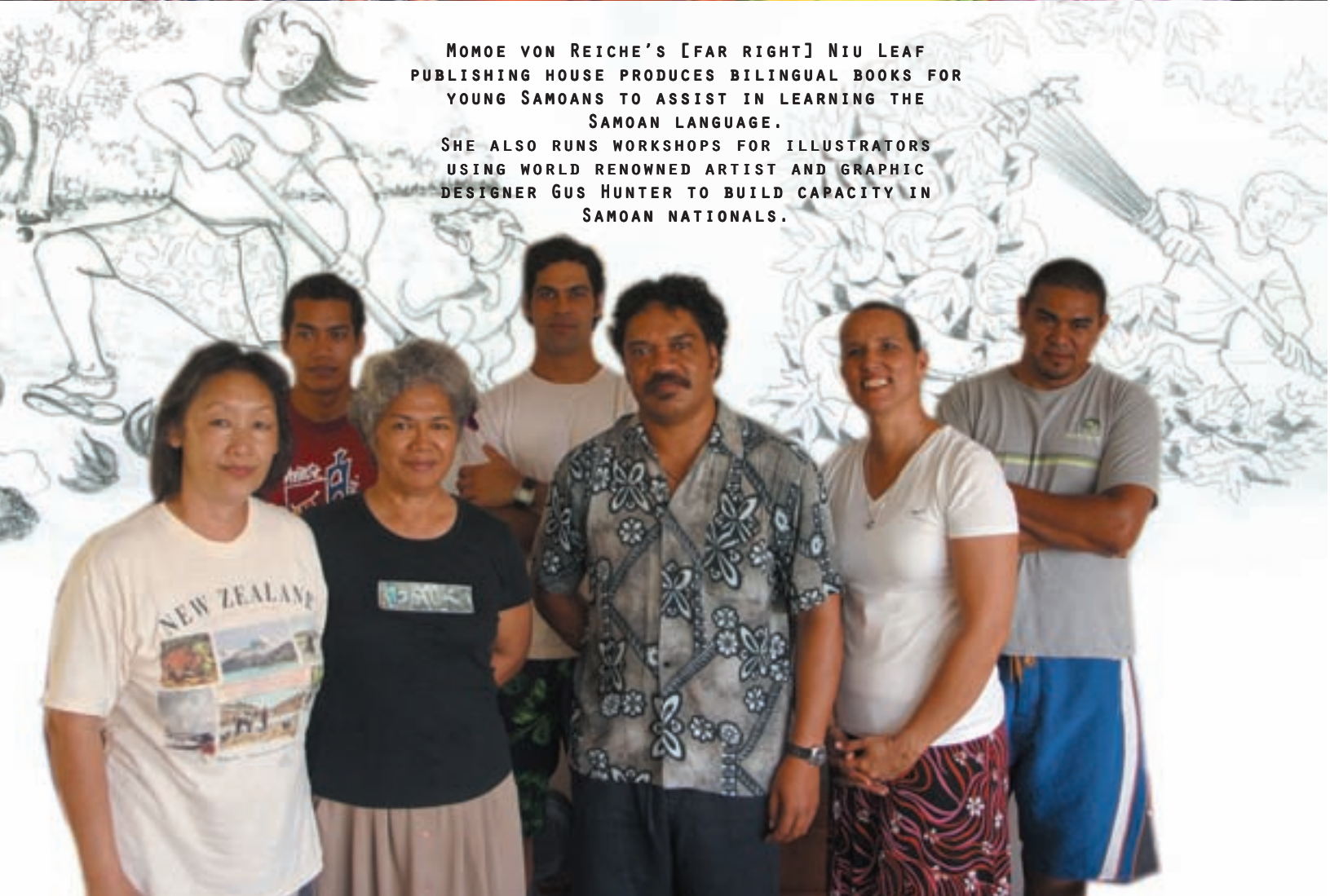
- establishment of minimum standards regarding facilities
- provision of adequate physical facilities
- enforcement of established student : teacher ratios and especially the redistribution of Mālifa compound students
- improving resources for multi-grade rural schools
- review and development of new curriculum materials with a focus on literacy in Sāmoan and English
- establishment of learning standards and development of assessment methods to measure achievement and diagnose learning needs
- and provision of pre and in service teacher education

It is immediately noticeable that while this list is not prioritized, the provision of pre and in service teacher education is last, reflecting perhaps an unconscious attitude of low concern/ considera-





MOMOE VON REICHE'S [FAR RIGHT] NIU LEAF PUBLISHING HOUSE PRODUCES BILINGUAL BOOKS FOR YOUNG SAMOANS TO ASSIST IN LEARNING THE SAMOAN LANGUAGE. SHE ALSO RUNS WORKSHOPS FOR ILLUSTRATORS USING WORLD RENOWNED ARTIST AND GRAPHIC DESIGNER GUS HUNTER TO BUILD CAPACITY IN SAMOAN NATIONALS.





tion for teacher education.

At first glance, the help provided by the donor community has enabled the government to fulfil some of the objectives stated above. Standards were stated for school and class sizes. Maximum school size is 750 and maximum class size is 40:1 in single classes, 30:1 in dual classes and 25:1 in multi grade classes. In 2003, only a few primary schools in the Apia Urban region, Faleata and Vaimauga had over 750 students. In 2003, 68 per cent of the government schools met the government national standard of 30:1. With the assistance of ADB-ESP 1<sup>11</sup>, the over-crowdedness at Mälifa was re-distributed to upgraded and refurbished local schools in the surrounding areas under the authority of local school committees.

However, upon closer examination, in 2005, the class sizes and hence school sizes have increased quite alarmingly in some of the satellite schools such as Vaimoso Primary school with 976, Vaitele-uta 879 and Vaivase 824 and the newly established Apia Primary school under the Apia village school committee is around 970. Class sizes have reached as high as 70 in some schools. Zoning around these areas has not been strictly enforced and hence the uncontrolled numbers. This is also exacerbated by the high attrition rate of teachers from the service and generally there is a huge shortage of teachers particularly at primary level. All of the schools mentioned above are short of teachers. The problem of pupil distribution and hence resources has remained and clearly some of the strategies have not been effective. These factors affect quality in education to a great extent.

Teacher education was merged into the National University of Sāmoa in 1997 as a strategy to improve the quality of programmes and hence the quality of teaching in schools. Eight years later, teachers are graduating with higher level qualifications but the standard of student achievement in schools is at an all time low with very slight improvement in the last two years. The quality of teaching plays a critical role in the quality of learning outcomes. The situation is not helped by the high attrition of teachers from the service in the last five years. Teacher retention is a critical issue with high attrition to other sectors and overseas

migration where their qualifications are recognized for much better salaries.

The strategy for the development of secondary education according to the Educational Policies 1995-2005 included

- the establishment of minimum standards and provision of physical facilities
- provision of libraries and science laboratories
- expansion of senior secondary education (years 12 and 13) through upgrading what were known previously as junior secondary schools
- upgrading the year 9 to 11 core curriculum and development of integrated applied subjects for year 9 to 13
- preparing standards lists of all equipment and materials for all subjects
- making applied subjects examinable
- provision of pre and in-service training in new curriculum materials and assessment
- collection of information on staffing needs and enforcement of a staffing formula
- and teacher incentives and improved working conditions.

Similar to the primary education developmental objectives, a number of activities have addressed the objectives listed above. Through the ADB-ESP 1, the ADB and the Government of Sāmoa allocated US\$10 million to primary and secondary education for civil works, furniture, equipment, learning materials and teacher training. To date, twelve secondary schools have been rehabilitated<sup>12</sup>. Furniture and equipment have been distributed to the schools and 676 secondary teachers have been trained in coordination with the training in the school curriculum also funded by NZAid. Standard lists of equipment have been prepared for various subject areas. An additional twelve secondary schools still require rehabilitation, seven (which includes one at Fagaloa that is being turned into a community learning centre) on Upolu, three on Savai'i and the three colleges, Sāmoa, Avele and Vaipouli. These will require extensive resources that are currently estimated at US\$14 million.<sup>13</sup>

In renewing and revising curriculum at primary and secondary levels, NZAid provided NZ\$6 million for secondary curriculum revision and materials production and teacher training while

**"Formal schooling at primary level begins at age five and consists of eight years primary (Years 1-8) and five years (Years 9-13) of secondary schooling. During the school life of a Samoan child educational level is determined by four types of assessment: Samoa Primary Educational Literary level (SPELL) at Years 4 and 6 and the national examinations at the ends of years 8 (Year 8 National Examination) and 12 (Samoa School Certificate) and a regional examination at year 13 (Pacific Secondary Certificate Examination). Enrolment at primary school level increased from 36,729 in 1994 to 39,639 in 2003 while secondary enrolments increased from 12,701 to 14,847, a total growth of 11 per cent over 10 years."**

Australia through AusAid also provided for the provision of materials and equipment (PEMP 1 and PEMP 2)<sup>14</sup> to support the primary curriculum. Other donors, like the European Union and JICA have provided upgrading of the primary school facilities and will continue to give this support through grant aid.

It is quite clear from this information that for any developmental and extensive overhaul to the education sector in Sāmoa, funding from its development partners are greatly needed. How sustainable is this practice? Is it possible to visualize a stage of development in education when Sāmoa would no longer need this extensive support from donor funding?

The current move towards borrowing from the Asian Development Bank for educational development may be a step towards some sustainability. Grant funding while welcomed has created a dependent mentality which is not conducive to sustainable development. While the level of grant funding is high as Sāmoa continues to be considered a least developing country, this status may change in the immediate future. By the same token it is important that levels of borrowing should match the capacity of the country to repay these loans.

## **Post School Education and Training**

Post school education and training include university, teacher education, technical/vocational, professional development, non-formal and on the job training.

University education is offered at the National University of Sāmoa, the Sāmoa Polytechnic, Le Amosa Institute and the University of the South Pacific- Alafua campus or through the Extension Centre. There is also the Oceania University of Medicine based at the Sāmoa Ministry of Health (MoH), whose programmes are delivered mainly through on line and internet modalities.

Other post school institutions include the Tesese Secretarial School, Mālua Theological College, Pīula Theological College, Rhema Bible Training School, the Worship Centre Missionary College and the Moamoa Theological College.

Technical/vocational schools which offer technical and vocational training for school pushouts

include the Don Bosco School (Catholic), the Puna 'Oa vocational school (Methodist), Leulumoega School of Fine Arts and the Beautiful Expressions of Nature (BEN) Art school. A few individuals also provide specific skills training in music, computer training and very recently the Ulimasao – Marist Centre for Special Learning (MCSL) for second chance learning and skills training for disadvantaged youth including disabled students.

The institutions above constitute the formal system of PSET in Sāmoa, however there are also many providers which make up a substantial sub-sector of non-government, workplace and private training and education providers. These providers mainly constitute the non-formal system of education.

Post school education and training is an important sub sector as this provides the links between school and work or between school and further education. There are some significant ongoing developments that will impact greatly on human resources development in Sāmoa in the next decade. Some of these developments include the merger between the NUS and Sāmoa Polytechnic to be completed by July 2006 and the establishment of the Sāmoa Qualifications Authority in 2005. The latter in particular has the task of rationalizing the provision of post secondary education and training through the establishment of accreditation and quality assurance mechanisms. In this way, non-formal education as well will become an inherent part of the whole education sector. The development of a post school education and training strategy is desirable.

### **a) The National University of Sāmoa**

The National University of Sāmoa was established by an Act of Parliament in 1984 which was later amended as the NUS Act of 1997<sup>15</sup> (and more recently, the National University of Sāmoa Act 2005, effecting the merger with Polytech). In the 1997 Act, the NUS mandate is set out in Part II, section 5 as follows:

- a) The establishment of a centre of excellence in the study of Sāmoa, the Sāmoan language and culture;
- b) The acquisition and transmission of knowledge by teaching, consultancy and research;

- c) The encouragement of intellectual independence;
- d) The provision at appropriate levels of education and training responsive to the needs of the people of Sāmoa;
- e) The promotion of the economic and social development of Sāmoa;
- f) The realization of the goals and guiding principles of the University as set out in its Charter.

The Faculty of Arts was the foundation faculty at the Mālifa campus and was soon joined by Science, subjects formerly taught by the Sāmoa Society of Accountants came under the University in 1990 and became the Faculty of Commerce in 1997. In 1993, the School of Nursing of the Health Department amalgamated with the University as the Faculty of Nursing. The Western Sāmoa Teachers College followed suit in 1997 and became the Faculty of Education. In the same year, the University moved to its new campus built by the Japanese Government in July, 1997. In 1999, the Institute of Sāmoan Studies was established as a Centre of Excellence to initiate, coordinate and encourage research and disseminate knowledge of Sāmoan studies through seminars, conferences and publications. In 2002, the Government of Sāmoa announced that the NUS would amalgamate with the Sāmoa Polytechnic by 2006. This duly took place 8 March, 2006.

Programmes at NUS include:

- Certificate courses in Commerce, Science and Computer Studies
- Diploma in Arts, Accounting, Education, Nursing, Computing, Environmental Science, Economics, Sports and Fitness Education (in collaboration with UNITEC, NZ) and Management
- Bachelor degrees in Arts, Science, Commerce, Nursing and Education

NUS is not self sufficient financially. It receives an annual grant from Government and levies fees for tuition and has an annual budget of around SAT9 million. The government grant has been capped at SAT5 million in the past five years while the student roll continues to increase. While fees have been relatively low at SAT120 per course per semester (average five courses per semester per student), it is almost inevitable that fees will have to increase in order to bridge the gap between the government grant and the funds required to

deliver quality education to the increasing number of students. The university also needs to work out other strategic ways of supplementing its income for sustained development initiatives.

From a staff of 10 and a student population of 62 in 1984, the NUS has grown to about 190 staff and a student body of about 1,400 equivalent full time students in 2004. The number of graduates from its sixteen programmes is set to climb every year. The NUS therefore will continue to figure largely in human resources development in Sāmoa.

### b) The Sāmoa Polytechnic

The Sāmoa Polytechnic became an autonomous institution in 1993 after many years as a Trades Training Institute taking students in as they leave the secondary school system at certain levels. The transition to being a Polytechnic recognized acquisition of a status as a tertiary institution. One year certificate courses and two year diploma level courses are offered in three schools as follows:

#### *School of Business and Tourism Studies*<sup>16</sup>

Diploma of Business; Diploma of Tourism Studies; Diploma of Secretarial Studies; Certificate in Computer Programming; Certificate of Tourism and Hospitality; Certificate of Achievement in Journalism.

**TABLE 9: GRADUATES FROM THE NUS 2000-2004 IN MAIN PROGRAMMES**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Dip. Arts	15	17	10	12	14
B. Arts	18	19	19	14	24
Cert. Commerce	51	82	29	45	38
Dip. Commerce	24	44	36	36	22
B. Commerce	19	29	42	53	38
Cert. Science	17	10	5	9	6
Cert. Computing	12	9	17	10	10
Dip. Computing	5	10	5	6	13
Cert. Maths	1	-	2	3	-
Dip. Maths	3	-	-	-	-
B. Sc	1	4	2	3	5
Dip. ED	40	28	63	57	57
B. Ed	-	-	-	6	6
Dip. Nursing	5	7	9	29	18
B. Nursing	-	5	5	28	20

Source: National University of Samoa Registry, 2005



### **School of Technology**

Certificate of Full Technology in Plumbing and Sheet metal; Intermediate Certificate in Automotive Engineering; Intermediate Certificate in Electrical; Intermediate Certificate in Carpentry and Joinery; Intermediate Certificate in Fitting and Machining; Intermediate Certificate in Plumbing and Sheet metal; Diploma in Radio and Electronics; Intermediate Certificate in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning; Intermediate Certificate in Welding and Metal Fabrication; Certificate in Tropical Horticulture.

### **School of Maritime Training**

#### *Certificate of Achievement*

Maritime Training: Nautical Rating 2 (1 year); Navigational Watch-keeping Rating 1 (3 months); Master Class 5 (3 months); Maritime Training Marine Engineering (Rating 2) (12 months); Marine Engineering Watch-keeping Rating 1 (14 weeks); Marine Engineering Class 5 (14 weeks); Qualified Fishing Deckhand (3 months); Master Class 6 (3 weeks); Fisherman Basic Certificate (3 day programme).

Short-term community-based courses are also offered on a needs basis. They include tree pruning, menu planning, sewing machine maintenance and others. The Sāmoa Polytechnic is financed by a grant of about SAT3.5 million plus fees. The Sāmoa Polytechnic has been the main source of human resources in the technical and vocational areas in the last four decades.

### **c) The NUS-Sāmoa Polytechnic Merger**

The Educational Policies (1995–2005) anticipated a rationalization of post secondary education and training where an amalgamated university and polytechnic could create an institution that would attract other training being carried out by non-governmental institutions thus addressing the issue of “synergy and making optimum use of scarce resources while building a system in which the aspects of equity, quality, relevancy and efficiency are present”.<sup>17</sup> The merger date was set for March

8<sup>th</sup> 2006 and as it drew closer, both institutions were grappling with financial issues that included equitable salaries structures, upgrading and refurbishment of facilities for vocational and technical training, programme rationalization and division of responsibility, student facilities including boarding residences, staff rationalization and many others. The Japanese Government provided an estimated US\$12 million to upgrade all facilities at the Sāmoa Polytechnic and phase 1 was completed on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006. In fact, educational expenditure in this part of the sector is expected to increase substantially in the short term.

The creation of a mega institution in Sāmoa essentially means that it is now possible to create multi-various pathways to enable all people in Sāmoa to obtain education and training for employment. It also means a unified process whereby non-formal education providers can seek links to formal programmes.

The labour market in Sāmoa is dominated by agriculture and fisheries. Of the employed population enumerated in the 2001 Census, (50,345 persons), the majority of 42 per cent were engaged in skilled agriculture and fisheries occupations. The other 52 per cent was distributed among craft and related skills (12 per cent), service work (11 per cent), elementary occupations (10 per cent) and clerical work (9 per cent). The rest worked as machine operators, professionals and legislators. Information about the labour market is an integral part of human resources planning. Such information also should influence the kinds of cognitive, practical and manipulative skills that form part of training and education particularly at PSET level.

### **Non Formal Education**

Non formal education is provided by the various government agencies working through non-government organizations (NGOs). For example, training for women in the vocational areas of cooking, sewing, flower arrangements, sewing machine maintenance and other skills may be provided directly by the Ministry of Women to NGOs, or

The labour market in Sāmoa is dominated by agriculture and fisheries. Of the employed population enumerated in the 2001 Census, (50,345 persons), the majority of 42 per cent were engaged in skilled agriculture and fisheries occupations.

through an NGO such as Women in Business who would then conduct training in coconut oil making, or weaving using its own personnel.

Such non-formal education and training include the work done by the Public Health section of the Ministry of Health, the agricultural fieldworkers of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries, and the Youth Division of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development.

Non-government organizations such as the Si'osi'omaga (Environment) Society, Sāmoa Umbrella for Non-Government Organizations, Women in Business, Women Development Committee, Fa'atāua le Ola, National Nurses Association, National Teachers Association, the Public Service Association, all run non-formal training

for their members in areas specific to their concerns and related areas. For example, the National Teachers Association runs workshops for members not only in union matters, but also curriculum workshops and community paralegal training in collaboration with regional organizations or world organizations. The work of government ministries and NGOs are supported by the bilateral donors as well as multilateral aid agencies. Training activities in most NGOs have all depended on either grant aid or provisions made by development partners including regional organizations.

There are many diverse and multifarious training programmes carried out in the area of non-formal education in the work of NGOs. A recent survey identified 115 non-formal education providers with 13 per cent in the public sector and 87 per cent in the private sector. These organizations range from small business organizations to worker groups, church mission groups to women's groups. There is a need to coordinate these training programmes so that there is a rationalization of resources, reduction of duplication and implementation of quality assurance. It is, therefore, critical that a sector-

**TABLE 10: NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN ALL SCHOOLS IN SĀMOA, 2005**

	Government	Mission	Private	Total
Primary	1042	155	63	1260
Secondary	426	353	20	799

Source: MESC Statistical Digest, 2005

**TABLE 11: TEACHERS MOVING IN AND OUT OF TEACHING SERVICE 1/2001-7/2004**

Indicator	Total number of teachers	Average annual rate
New appointment	284	81.1
Re-employment	71	20.2
Total	355	101.4
Retirement	159	45.42
Resignations	250*	71.42
Dismissals	12	3.42
Deceased	18	5.14
Contract terminated	8	2.28
<b>Total</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>127.71</b>
Long service/personal leave >1 month	176	50.28 (4.19 full time equivalent)
Secondments/study leave 3 months-2 years	147	42.0 (36.75 f t e)
Maternity leave 2 months	69	19.71 (11.3 f t e)
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>52.24 full time equivalent</b>

Source: MESC/ADB ESP 2 Samoa Education Sector Review, p 52, 2004

wide approach to educational policy planning and strategizing to bring together the formal and non-formal sub-sectors must be effected for the next ten years. The MESC is addressing this in its current policy planning process.

### **Teacher Education**

Teachers and teaching are central to the quality of any education system. Physical infrastructures are important but it is the quality of the learning environment that plays a critical role in bringing about the learning outcomes that build people's capacities and enhance their capabilities. Adequate number of teachers, which is supply and demand and the quality of the teacher, are critical factors in quality education.

Pre-service teacher education in Sāmoa is carried out at the NUS for all teachers at primary and secondary level and for early childhood and special needs education. Programmes include a Foundation Certificate in Education which is preparatory to entering a two year concurrent academic and professional Diploma of Education programme. A further two years enables a student to obtain a Bachelor of Education. There is also a one year Graduate Diploma of Education programme to provide teacher training for graduates.

#### **a) The Teaching Profession**

The total number of teachers in the teaching force is around 2,059 with 71.2 per cent teaching in government schools. The majority of these teachers would have been trained in Sāmoa. Figures obtained from the MESC Manumea database cited in the MESC Corporate Plan 2003-2006 show that the percentage of female teachers employed in total has remained constant since 1995 at an average of 64 per cent. In primary schools 75 per cent of the teachers are female with 50 per cent in primary/secondary schools and 49 per cent in secondary schools and colleges.

#### **b) Teacher Qualifications**

Since 2001, the Ministry has defined a qualified teacher as "one who has a Trained Teachers Certificate and/or qualifications from a formal teacher education/training institution."<sup>18</sup> According to sta-

tistics from the MESC, the percentage of qualified teachers in government schools has increased from 89 per cent since 1995 to peak at 96 per cent in 2000. The percentage has remained constant at around 94 per cent since then.<sup>19</sup>

### **c) Teacher Supply and Demand**

There are many factors that impact on teacher supply and demand. School population is only one of them. Other factors include annual retirements, resignations and dismissals, study leave, maternity leave and long service leave. An analysis of teachers moving in and out of the teaching service from January 2001 to July 2004 is as follows:

Every year, the difference between teachers leaving and entering the service is 26. This means that there was a deficiency of 26 teachers every year for the past 3.5 years. Considering all the reasons for leaving the service, a total of full time equivalent of 52 teachers have left the service every year for the last 3.5 years. The total shortfall in the supply has been approximately 78 teachers a year over the last 3.5 years. This is a great worry because without teachers, the quality of curriculum delivery is eroded.

There are other critical factors that must be considered in the teaching/education (production) of teachers. Government through the MESC has initiated policies that will further impact on the current gross shortage of teachers. In social sector reforms, there are now plans to further expand the top end of secondary schools and to add years 12 and 13 to all secondary schools. The new curriculum requires that students must take English and four other subjects at years 12 and 13. This will significantly increase the demand for teachers in all areas but particularly in those that are already facing severe shortages as in Science and Mathematics and Agricultural Science. The impact of such policy decisions requires careful consideration of human resources as the current supply of teachers cannot meet such demand.

The following table shows the percentage of government schools that are meeting the national standards for the primary student teacher ratio of 1 teacher to 30 students in primary and 1 teacher to 20 students in secondary schools



The table shows the rate deteriorating from 2001–2004 for primary schools and remaining static at around 65 per cent for secondary schools. This table further demonstrates that there are not

fore has come under close scrutiny, in turn placing pre- and in-service training programmes also under close scrutiny. It must be remembered however that these are not the only factors that impact on quality.

**TABLE 12: GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS MEETING STANDARDS FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEACHER-PUPIL RATIOS**

Year	% primary schools meeting national standards	% of secondary schools meeting national standards
2001	78%	68%
2002	67%	52%
2003	68%	64%
2004	58%	68%
2005		

Source: MESC Educational Statistical Digest 2005.

enough teachers in the education system in Sāmoa and the problem is critical. The impact of teacher shortage in the schools thoroughly undermines quality in education.

Student quality outcomes in terms of examinations results such as the SPELL 1 and 2 in years 4 and 6 respectively, the Year 8 results and the years 12 and 13 results have become doubtful in the last five years as the exams and test results continue to slide. The quality of the teacher there-

### **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Workplace and Private Training**

The current open climate in trade in services means that many NGOs, private companies and even government ministries are conducting their own training. Often this has come about as a result of easy access to donor funding or as a result of the mentality that ‘we can do it better’. The result is the proliferation of training programmes that often duplicate each other often competing for the same funding. Policies must be written to:

- Encourage NGOs to use the formal institutions of training to train their personnel by specifying needs and requirements
- Support formal institutions to provide open flexible and distance learning for such clientele
- Ensure that NUS provides for adult, professional development and continuing education
- Ensure SQA accreditation and registration for all NGOs and private training providers.
- In this way, scarce resources are maximized and duplication of programmes is eliminated.

### **STUDENT QUALITY UNDERMINED BY TEACHER SHORTAGE REDUCES LIFE CHOICES**



There are not enough teachers in the education system in Sāmoa and the problem is critical. The impact of teacher shortage in the schools thoroughly undermines quality in education.

## SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND CONCLUSIONS

### 1. Methodology

- This paper has defined sustainable livelihoods as people having access to abilities, opportunities and choices to obtain a decent standard of living without compromising the same for future generations.
- Education and training play a pivotal role in expanding human capabilities in order for all people to be fully participating members of their community or their society.
- Equity, access, efficiency and quality are key concepts to current educational policy and strategies and are also key parameters to determine the capacity of an education system to expand human capabilities.
- This paper has used these key concepts to provide an overview of the situation of education in Sāmoa and to identify what may be some critical issues in education that impact on expanding human capacities so that the people of Sāmoa may obtain sustainable livelihoods now and in the future.

### 2. Conclusions and Recommendations

#### a) Access and Equity must continue to be improved

- Access and equity need to be expanded further to include all people including those who leave school prematurely and those with special needs. There is a need for improving systems so as to accurately diagnose the issues that prevail. Gross enrolment rates, net enrolment rates at primary and secondary levels, drop out rates, transition rates at secondary levels, and repetition rates must all be improved.

*Recommendation 1: That data bases in the formal system are maintained and continuously improved. That databases for non formal education must be developed in order to collect reliable data in this area.*

*Recommendation 2: That the formal and non-formal systems collaborate to provide the education needed for those who leave school prematurely.*

- There are many children who should be but who are not at school including special needs children. Access and equity demand that all children are treated equally. Furthermore for Sāmoa to achieve education for all by 2015, the education and training of out of school youth (those who left school prematurely) should also be addressed. These people are in the urban as well as the rural areas.

*Recommendation 3: That creative and effective initiatives to address the needs of out-of-school youth including special needs children are supported through the structures which exist.*

- The demand and supply of good quality teachers must be addressed. These include not only adequate numbers of teachers who are qualified but also supporting structures such as a flexible and progressive teaching career structure, good conditions of work and fair and just salaries. Equity and access are compromised when there are not enough teachers in the system.

*Recommendation 4: That the Government, through the MESC, address the issue of teacher attrition in an effective, efficient and timely manner.*

- There is a real sense of hardship among people particularly in the rural areas who find it difficult to keep their children in school either due to inability to pay fees or to contribute in kind to the upkeep of schools. Changes in family structures also place the responsibility of looking after parents or grandparents on youth who should be at school. There is also a deteriorating sense of importance placed on education by parents resulting in children not going to school.

*Recommendation 5: That extensive awareness programmes are implemented to inform the public about these trends and to explain the ramifications on society of an uneducated population.*

#### b) Quality of Education Must Be Improved

##### Infra-structures

- Quality issues in any education system are very complex. In the past five years, Sāmoa has taken infrastructural development as a major quality issue obtaining a loan from the Asian Development Bank to refurbish and rebuild school buildings and improving facilities in the practical and vocational subjects. This is commendable, however, the whole question of the ability by communities to sustain these buildings is a key question that must be addressed so that they do not become burdensome liabilities.

*Recommendation 6: That the MESC considers carefully the kinds of infrastructures that provide a learning environment that is conducive for children in a school while at the same time be affordable to their communities.*

"The total number of teachers in the teaching force is around 2133 with 72% in government schools. Percentage of female teachers has remained constant since 1995 at an average of 64%. In primary schools 75% of teachers are female with 50% in primary/secondary schools and 49% in secondary schools and colleges. More teachers leave the service than enter. Every year, the difference between teachers leaving and entering the service is 26, at least for the past 3.5 years. This is cause for concern as insufficient teachers can erode quality of education."

### Learning outcomes

- However, learning outcomes in terms of examination and test results show low levels which are disappointing. These exam results and the types of testing instruments used must be investigated to enable ways of improvement. Quality control mechanisms must be put in place to monitor student performance, curriculum performance, school performance and performance of the sector.

*Recommendation 7: That the national system of assessment be reviewed so as to enable quality assurance and to reflect the types of learning that occur in any learning situation.*

### Production and adequate resources

- Improving the capacity of the ministry to provide adequate multi-media resources, especially print resources, enabling teachers to use these resources and making all resources available to school remain an issue

*Recommendation 8: That the capacity of the ministry be developed to provide good quality resources for learning.*

### On-going curriculum development

- The development of the capacity of the ministry and schools to develop, teach and maintain relevant and worthwhile curricula in the schools is on-going work. The development of more relevant measures for learning outcomes must also be considered.

*Recommendation 9: That curriculum development must be on-going and not dependent on donor-funded projects.*

### Teacher development

- A rationalization of resources to enable better and more efficient and effective ways of teacher-development at both pre and in service education is critical in a small country like Sāmoa. Such initiatives must be carefully coordinated and monitored for quality and effectiveness.

*Recommendation 10: That a national strategy such as the establishment of a National Teacher Development Framework be developed to address this issue.*

### Effective and realistic policy

- Effective human resource development requires forward looking policies that enable strategic decisions to identify priorities and allocate resources for effective and efficient outcomes. Education and training remains the most crucial single means to achieving sustainable human resources development. But resources are scarce. The Government of Sāmoa is now taking out loans to fund education and good and wise decisions are required to ensure that finances are used most effectively.

*Recommendation 11: That a sector-wide approach to educational policy and planning be effected in the medium term.*

## 3. Improving Efficiency

- Resource inputs for educational development are often regarded as long term investments. However, inefficiencies do occur when expectations and aspirations do not match the realities of resources capacity. Thus attempts must be made to address all aspects of inefficiencies in the education system in Sāmoa.

## CHANCE FAVOURS THE PREPARED MIND



PHOTO BY SKIV JOHNSTON



All people in Sāmoa must have the opportunity to gain skills and knowledge to enable them to achieve a sustainable livelihood



- It may be necessary to consider a refinement of the structure of the current educational system. A policy study must be carried out to look at the effect of the current entry age to start school (age 5) on repetition and drop out rates.
- The implications of repetition at all levels and the presence of an optional Year 11 as part of the secondary structure must also be investigated.
- In fact a review of the resource implications of expansion of all secondary schools to Year 13 level must be carried out as a matter of priority.

*Recommendation 12: That a Task Force to address the issues above be established immediately.*

#### 4. Improving Relevance

- Debates are ongoing regarding the provision in secondary schools and relevance of vocational education in regards to their cost effectiveness. Many discussions have also taken place with regards to the efficacies of providing mainly academic education in the schools in Sāmoa.
- A clear understanding of the kinds of labour markets that exist for the people of Sāmoa is required so that the experience of schooling and the outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes match the real world in which people are expected to live.

*Recommendation 13: That surveys of human resources needed and the labour markets must be carried out periodically.*

- Sāmoa like all other small countries of the world must come to terms with globalization and the issues that affect national economies. To attract outside investment, the people must be educated to attract investors. Sāmoa must invest in education to enable the production of goods and services that are exportable. All people in Sāmoa must have the opportunity to gain skills and knowledge to enable them to achieve a sustainable livelihood.

#### 5. The Importance of a Quality Teaching Workforce

- Whether the issues are those of equity or access, or quality and efficiency or relevance and effectiveness all of these are mediated through the teacher. This makes the tasks and responsibilities of a teacher both comprehensive and specialized at the same


time. The education and training of teachers is critical to obtain quality of human resource development in any country. Adequate and adequacy of teachers are issues that go hand in hand. There are inadequate numbers of teachers in Sāmoa caused mainly by the high attrition rate from the service. There are issues of inadequacy of teachers as good and experienced teachers are lost from the service. This is probably the most critical of the issues that must be addressed immediately in Sāmoa if quality in education is to be improved.

*Recommendation 14: That the following are carried out in the medium term:*

- *Implement the teachers' career structure in the public sector and develop one for the private sector.*
- *Improve teachers' salaries at all levels.*
- *Improve working conditions including employment terms and professional development.*
- *Provide adequate resources for the training of teachers at both pre- and in-service levels.*

#### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> UNDP 1999:4.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.,
- <sup>3</sup> Government of Sāmoa, Education Policies 1995-2005:9.
- <sup>4</sup> GoS-ADB Draft Education Sector Review 2004:1.
- <sup>5</sup> GoS Education Policies p.9.
- <sup>6</sup> Figures from the NCECES Centre at Sogi.
- <sup>7</sup> This figure is often disputed due to the fact that net enrolment at primary school also includes a large proportion of children 12 to 14 years who are already at secondary level.
- <sup>8</sup> Gross enrolment is all students in primary education divided by the primary school age population. Net enrolment is students of primary school age in school divided by the primary school age population.
- <sup>9</sup> Strictly speaking the official age group at primary level should be from 5-12 years. This means that the rates above also include overage children while not counting the 12-14 year olds who are in secondary schools. This is also a concern in the calculation of net enrolment.
- <sup>10</sup> GoS-ADB Draft Sector Review p.33-34.
- <sup>11</sup> Asian Development Bank: Education Sector Project 1 (2000-2004)
- <sup>12</sup> ADB, ESP2 Sector Review Draft Report 2004.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid., Costing appendix.
- <sup>14</sup> Primary Education Materials Projects 1 and 2.
- <sup>15</sup> The National University of Samoa Act (Amended) in 1997.
- <sup>16</sup> From the Samoa Polytechnic Handbook 2004.
- <sup>17</sup> From the NUS-SP Merger Document 2004.
- <sup>18</sup> MESC Corporate Plan 2003-2006:23.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.,



[ SUSTAINING AND IMPROVING ECONOMIC GROWTH WILL BE A  
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THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT, NOT ONLY TO MAINTAIN  
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THE INCREASED EMPHASIS NOW PLACED BY GOVERNMENT ON  
ISSUES OF INCOME DISTRIBUTION, EQUITY AND THE PLANS  
BY GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT TARGETED  
HARDSHIP REDUCTION STRATEGIES. ]

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### Abstract

The economic update assesses the performance of Sāmoa's economy over the last decade in terms of sustainable livelihood options for Sāmoans over the next 10-20 years. An evaluation is presented of statistics on various economic and social parameters, public sector structural reforms and management of monetary and fiscal policies, as well as policy challenges and trends for Sāmoa's economic outlook into the first decade of the millennium.

### Introduction

Sāmoa has a small open economy that has been traditionally dependent on development aid, family remittances from overseas, and agriculture and fishing. Agriculture and fishery employ about two-thirds of the labour force, and furnishes about 80 per cent of exports, featuring coconut cream, coconut oil, copra, *nonu* juice and fish. The current economic growth over the period 2002 to 2005 continues to display steady growth rate. The recent decline of fish stocks in the area remains a concern though a slight rebound was recorded in 2005 for the agriculture and fishery sector. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) steadily improves to 6.5 per cent in the first six months of 2005. The manufacturing sector mainly processes agricultural products, beverages, automobile parts and garments. The tourism sector constantly expands, accounting for 25 per cent of GDP; about 100,000 tourists visited the islands in 2004 to 2005. In the near term, the growth of the construction sector is boosted by public investment in sporting facilities for the 2007 South Pacific Games.

The review of monetary and fiscal policies induces the Sāmoan Government to deregulate the financial sector, encourage investment, enforce continuous fiscal discipline, and protect the environment. As well, the flexibility of the labour market acts as a basic strength for future economic advances. The foreign reserves have been sustained in a relatively healthy status coupled with stable external debt and persistent low inflation. Further, a short term demand would be sustained by major public sector salary and wage increases partially implemented in July 2005.

Furthermore, the need to constantly take good stock of relevant economic indicators provides an avenue where appropriate policy recommendations are formulated, to curb any adverse implication, and/or enhance sustainable livelihoods in rural and urban communities.

### Economic Update

The economic update provides a discussion of recent economic and social indicators of the Sāmoan economy including commentary on some of the key economic and social reform issues facing the Sāmoan government. It provides data on the most recent economic and social indicators relating to the performance of the Sāmoan economy, and a general assessment of some of the important challenges (and areas of potential risks) to economic (institutional, financial) and social reforms currently being undertaken. This update performs a warranty litmus test ensuring economic and social policy implications have been addressed hence, sustainable livelihoods at all community levels continue to be publicly monitored.

The economy of Sāmoa is small and open yet highly dependent on a narrow resource base that is limited to agriculture, tourism, small-scale manufacturing and fisheries. Sāmoa's macroeconomic performance acutely depends on external factors in the form of commodity export prices, crop diseases, external labour/tourism demands and weather-related shocks. Critical economic reforms have been implemented since 1997, which aimed at improving the efficiency of the public sector, opening up the economy and developing its small private sector. Sustained economic growth



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RELIGIOUS  
CONVICTIONS AS  
EVIDENT BY REGULAR  
SOCIETAL FINANCIAL  
CONTRIBUTIONS  
AMOUNTING TO THE  
LARGEST OF  
HOUSEHOLD  
EXPENDITURES AT  
\$1 MILLION TALA PER  
WEEK.



underpinned in the reforms has been supported positively by the Sāmoan public, Sāmoa's development partners and the larger international community.

Since 1995, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a yardstick for measuring economic performance, has improved constantly with a modest decline in growth in the last six months of 2003. Over the period 1995-2001, the real rate of GDP growth has been averaged at 4.7 per cent. In 2002, the GDP growth rate has fallen to around two per cent, following growth rates of 6.9 and 6.2 per cent recorded for 2000 and 2001, respectively. For the first quarter of 2003, economic indicators reveal the seasonal drop in growth when compared to the last quarter of 2002. However, steady growth recovery for 2003 to the last quarter of 2005 continues at 6.5 per cent rate.

Over the past decade, the relative growth in the structure of GDP shares of other sectors such as tertiary, significantly improved since 1997 whilst the secondary and primary sectors, either remained constant or declined. Traditionally, the major component of GDP (about 20 per cent) has been constituted by agriculture and fishing, followed by commerce, transport and public administration. Latest statistics for 2005 specify a new leading role for the commerce sector accounting for 20 per cent of GDP with agriculture / fishery and transport and communication recording 13 per cent each.

Recent data from 2004 to 2005 reveal growth of 29 per cent in the construction sector and a rebound of the agriculture and fishery sector recording the first positive contribution to GDP since 2001. All other sectors (transport and communications, commerce, finance and business services, public administration, hotels and restaurants, ownership of dwellings, electricity and water, and personal and other services recorded positive growth except for food and beverage manufacturing and other manufacturing.

The recent UNDP Human Development Indicators disclose the levels of social development in Sāmoa as well as overall health and education standards to be relatively high compared to other Pacific island countries whilst much needs to be

done to improve basic health and education services. In 2002 and 2004 Sāmoa was ranked 96 and 75 respectively in a group of 177 countries. The Sāmoa household survey identifies 82 per cent of households are headed by a male, 28 per cent of all persons aged 10 years and over are either employed fulltime, part-time or self-employed. Sāmoan values are closely knitted with her strong religious convictions as evident by regular societal financial contributions amounting to the largest of household expenditures at SAT1m<sup>1</sup> per week. Other substantial expenditure household items include utilities (telephone and electricity) bill totalling SAT274,000.00 and SAT314,000.00 respectively.

Based on the average Sāmoan household weekly expenditure of SAT575, the highest and lowest figures recorded were SAT638 and SAT460 for Savai'i and North West Upolu. For the same sites the average Sāmoan weekly income is SAT445 with highest and lowest statistics at SAT491 and SAT337 for Apia urban area and North West Upolu. Observing categorical attributes for highest and lowest incomes earned, 10 per cent of highest and lowest incomes earned, 31 and 1.8 per cent of their total income earned. Moreover, 51, 8.5 and 2.2 per cent of household expenditure income are spent on food, transport, and alcohol and tobacco, respectively whilst 42 per cent of total income received by household accrue to primary income.

In terms of population growth, emigration mainly to New Zealand, Australia and the United States maintains it below the one per cent level. Those with tertiary qualifications tend to be the most mobile, resulting in the shortage of experienced technical and managerial skills in the country. The total population increased from 161,298 in 1991 to 176,848 in 2001, an annual average growth rate of around 0.9 per cent, up from 0.5 per cent in the previous inter-censal period from 1985-1991. Reflecting sustained economic growth in recent years, per capita GDP has increased slightly to around US\$1,140 in 2001, up from around US\$1,000 in 1995.

As with most of the Pacific island countries, economic growth is centred on the main island and



With the introduction of a GSM network by Samoa's Mobile Service Provider Telecom Samoa, innovations in the field and technological advancement will be accessed and enjoyed by Samoans at all levels of Society. This benefit applies equally to Telecom Samoa's partnerships with some of Samoa's business community

in the urban area. In the case of Sāmoa, data shows 40 per cent of the total population live in the Apia area (capital city) and generate GDP output worth 70 per cent.

Following the devastating economic impacts of Cyclones Ofa and Val in the early 1990s, the Government of Sāmoa, whilst mindful of the absorptive capacity of its fragile institutions, attempted to maintain the momentum of important structural (economic and social) reforms already instigated. The reform objectives were to develop a more efficient and open economy focusing on reforms within the public sector and the development of the private sector. The central economic and public sector reforms introduced by government focused on:

- tax and tariff reforms;
- financial sector liberalization;
- introduction of performance budgeting and strategic budgeting, and planning framework and devolution of financial management;
- new governance framework for public sector budget/financial management;
- new governance framework for state-owned enterprises;
- privatisation of government services and state-owned enterprises;

- new corporate governance framework (Private Companies Act);
- realignment of government departments and devolution of responsibility for human resource management and development;
- institutional strengthening of government departments and state-owned enterprises;
- health sector reforms;
- education sector reforms; and
- telecommunication and postal sector reforms.

These reforms are anticipated to deliver the appropriate engine for economic and institutional drive ideal in the pursuit of good governance, financial and economic management to improve the standard of living, welfare and general livelihoods of the people of Sāmoa. The reforms generally brought positive economic and social change for the economy, though the pace has slowed somewhat since 2000/2001 and compounded by the negative impact of Cyclone Heta in 2003. Yet, positive economic and social impacts continue to be conspicuous throughout 2004 and 2005. Some of the most pressing issues mitigating a more positive economic future outlook have been the poor performance of state-owned enterprises, although they have always been part of the overall development commitment and strategy of government.

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS





## Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

### Recent Performance

The 2002 GDP inferences for purchasing power parity stand at SAT one billion and progress at a real growth rate of 5 per cent. This real growth rate has declined just below 2 per cent over 2002, down from 6.2 per cent and 6.7 per cent in 2001 and 2000, respectively indicating the most significant sign of economic slowdown, and reversing the trend of excellent real growth that began in 1995. The strong economic performance of recent years reveal that GDP per capita has doubled over the past decade to about US\$2,000 (SAT\$5,400 at current exchange rate) in 2005 with sectoral composition standing at 14, 23 and 63 per cent for agriculture, industry and services.

The unusually low fish catches, perhaps affected by seasonal variation, which have persisted since mid 2002, underlie the rapid decline in economic growth in 2002. In addition, contribution to GDP from the agriculture sector, other manufacturing and construction sectors also fell during the year and were even more adversely affected by Cyclone Heta in 2003, particularly agriculture. The commerce sector, on the other hand, recorded the strongest contribution to GDP over 2002 and in 2005 its GDP contribution of 20 per cent surpassed traditional sector (agriculture and fishery) for the first time. Data for GDP for the first quarter of 2003 shows a continuing decline in total fish production by around 13 per cent compared to levels for the December 2002 quarter. However, the sector experienced positive growth in 2005 marking a slow recovery of the industry. The construction sector recorded negative growth in 2002 yet it grew by around 29 per cent in 2004 and 2005. The tertiary sector, particularly commerce, transport and communication industries, reported overall positive real growth over the 2004-2005 period.

### Inflation

Over the period 1995–2001, inflation averaged just under 3 per cent per annum. The average annual inflation rate ending March 2003 stood at 6.3 per cent, up 0.8 per cent from the inflation rate ending March 2002. The 2.5 per cent increase in the VAGST is partly reflected in the latest result with

overall inflation outcome expected to remain at current levels in the short term. This low rate is a direct result of a combination of lower prices from the reductions in tariffs and duties, modest depreciation of the currency, as well as the favourable conditions in domestic supplies. They have enabled the economy to absorb price fluctuations, especially of imports (for example, petroleum). Since 1999, however, there has been an upward trend. For 2005, the yearly average inflation rate was around 7.5 per cent yet rising prices of local crop production and crude oil pushed inflation to 16.3 per cent in 2004. The Central Bank's target to contain the average rate below 3 per cent per annum appears to have revised upwards (below 6 per cent) in light of more recent developments but recent forecasts indicate the return of inflation to its target for 2005-06. The main factors contributing to general rise in prices include: strengthening of major trading partner currencies and price movements in major trading partners; price movements in global markets for petroleum; supply conditions of local produce; the impact of public service salary and wage increases, and the recent trend in government fiscal deficits and sustained growth of money supply and credit to the private sector.

The recovery of local produce supplies, especially the slow progress in developing suitable taro leaf blight resistant varieties of the main staple crop taro, is important in containing short-term price fluctuations. Over the period 2003 to 2004, Sāmoa has been experiencing negative impacts of Cyclone Heta as well as an extended period of both dry and wet weather which have affected local production of staple food and vegetables, hence the domestic price fluctuations.

### Money and Credit

For the 12 months ending March 2003, the annual change in total money supply increased by 11 per cent over the same quarter in 2002, about the same rate of growth since 1999. Partly as a result of a build up of government net deposits in the bank during the mid to late 1990s, and also coinciding with the period of financial system reform, the monetary growth rate has declined steadily from around 22 per cent in 1995. For the 12 months

ending March 2003, total domestic credit grew by 19 per cent; about the same rate of expansion since 1996. For the same period, credit to the private sector increased by 13 per cent; sustaining the steady growth of credit to the private sector since 1996. During the 12 months ending March 2003, most economic sectors received increases in commercial bank credit with the exception of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, which registered a decline. For the period 2004 to 2005, continued recuperating activities after Cyclone Heta and strong demand from the construction sector resulted in 12 and 11 per cent growth for private sector credit and money supply respectively. A continuation of these rates of growth in the monetary aggregates and credit to the private sector, in light of the recent trend in government budget outcomes, poses some threat to inflation stability and the fragile balance of payments.

The Central Bank of Sāmoa, however, has announced its intention to relax monetary policy, citing the need to support the availability of private sector credit and on the basis of expected decline in inflation in the short to medium term. The foreign exchange cover has been reported at around four months considered by the Central Bank to be sustainable. Commercial banks weighted average lending and deposit rates were at around 12 per cent and 5 per cent at the end of March 2003, relatively unchanged from levels in 2000/2001. Similarly, the interest rate spread has remained almost unchanged over the last 3 years. In early 2003, Samoa's newest and fourth commercial bank, Sāmoa Commercial Bank, began

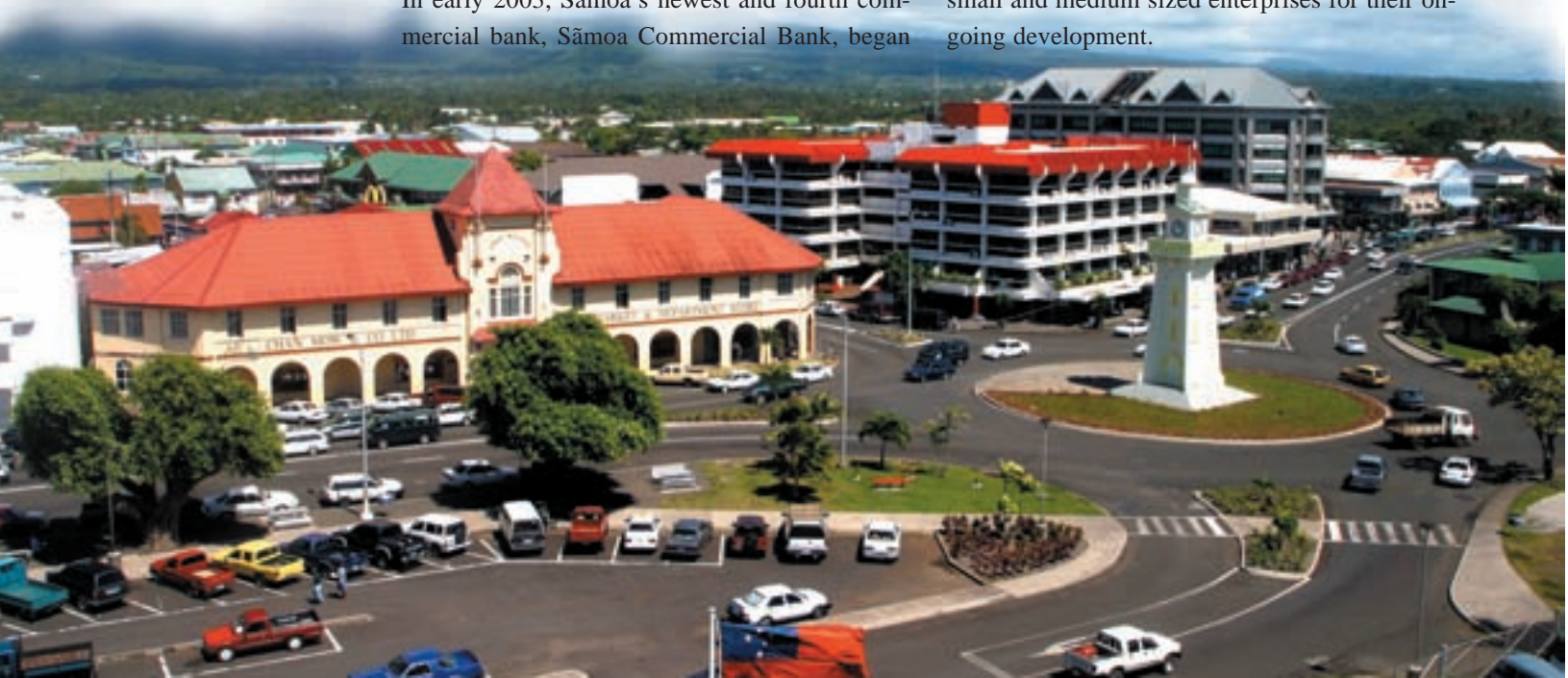
trading. The commercial banking sector is dominated by ANZ and Westpac with established national and international banking facilities/services.

In 1988 the Government of Sāmoa introduced measures to liberalize the financial sector; moving away from a regime that was highly regulated and direct monetary policy and credit controls. Some of the key components of the reform, such as the strengthening of the Central Bank management, funding arrangement for the operations of the Central Bank, management of foreign exchange and development of deeper secondary financial markets have yet to be fully implemented.

To finance and facilitate access of rural-based income generating projects and small and medium enterprises, the government, with support from international financial institutions and bilateral aid donors, established a micro-credit scheme through the Development Bank of Sāmoa (DBS), and NGOs such as the Women in Business Foundation and the South Pacific Business Development Foundation.

Also, training schemes are guaranteed through service provided by the Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC). To cater for the expansion of existing small-medium enterprises, implementation of a Venture Capital Fund was planned for 2003/2004. An aid coordination mechanism to channel development funding to the private sector is currently being devised by the government in partnership with UNDP and NZAID, to increase the accessibility of donor funds to the private sector's small and medium sized enterprises for their ongoing development.

VIEWING SAMOA'S  
CENTRAL BUSINESS  
DISTRICT FROM ATOP  
CENTRAL BANK  
BUILDING.





### External Debt

The nominal value of official external debt increased from SAT380 million to SAT481 million between 1995 and 2002, however, the amount outstanding has fallen as a proportion of GDP from 80 per cent to 59 per cent over the period. For the 12 months of 2005, official external debt declined to SAT456 million equating to 44 per cent of GDP. External debt-servicing obligations positioned at 44 per cent merchandise exports were offset by large quantities of remittances, thus valued at 2 per cent of foreign exchange revenues. These favourable trends in external debt and debt servicing reflect the concessionary nature of the debt portfolio and the growth in exports of goods and services.

### Balance of Payments

Over the past five years 2000–2005, trade openness (the average of exports and imports as a percentage of GDP) averaged around 60 per cent. Imports exceeded exports by a ratio of about eight times in 2000 and 2001 and in 2004 the gap exacerbated to around 15. Revenues from tourism, remittances and foreign aid flows continue to be significant sources of foreign exchange supporting the overall balance of payments. Overall exports grew strongly over 2001–2003 but declined by 25 per cent in 2004. The balance of payments recorded surpluses over the period 2001 to 2004 and have been largely sustained by strong contributions from private remittance, net private services, and government official borrowing.

Correcting the huge deficit stance in the balance of trade continues to be a fiscal challenge for some years to come. The exporting sector will face more staunch competition as Sāmoa gains full WTO membership. There is serious concern of the private sector concerning adverse trade implications thus, lobbied government to reintroduce import substitution though such measures are peripheral to the WTO framework. The private sector needs to identify appropriate niche produce/products with a sincere commitment to efficiency and low cost production.

The balance of payments continues to be dominated by private and official transfers, which make up for the small export earnings of the Sāmoan

economy. Private investment inflows are insignificant. The current account has been in surplus since 1994 due to earnings from tourist receipts, private remittances and official grants. Amongst others, ease access to official grants and other preferences become immediate challenges as Sāmoa graduates from its current economic status [least developing (LDC)] to developing country in 2006. Remittances with 20 per cent of GDP, have traditionally been the major source of external income persistent as a relatively viable authority behind Sāmoa's steady economic growth in recent years. Aid has also been very important, averaging over 10 per cent of GDP for the past two decades. Tourism receipts have grown from 5 per cent of GDP in the early 1980s to around 15 per cent of GDP in recent years. By comparison, fish exports have been the main revenue earner, albeit, the recent downturn in fish production and fish exports given the substantial decline in merchandise from the early 1980s to the mid 1990s.

In terms of exporting sectors, fisheries became the leading export industry earning US\$60,000 (SAT150,000) in 1993 to about US\$11 million (SAT36 million) in 2001 and 2002. The rapid expansion of offshore long-line fisheries amounts to a significant growth in the fisheries sector. Moreover, the industry has experienced a significant slump leading to significant revenue loss and rapid closure of, particularly, small-scale operations since mid 2002. For the period 2005, the industry recorded positive growth accounting for 39 per cent of total exports. To ensure the longer-term sustainability of the fishing industry and to support the contribution of the fisheries sector to the social and economic development of Sāmoa, the government agencies are reviewing their support and regulatory functions to assist the industry to deal with resource management and policy issues that have been viewed as constraining industry growth, and on ensuring that the required infrastructure is in place to support future development of the industry. The priority for government now is to provide specific policy interventions that facilitate the granting of time-bound tax relief, extended review of import taxes and tariff on fishing boats and specialized fishing equipments and other indirect fiscal incentives.



Revenues from tourism, remittances and foreign aid flows are important sources of foreign exchange supporting the overall balance of payments.

## Tourism

Over the last 5 years, gross tourism revenues were optimistic ascending by about 20 per cent, between 2000 and 2005. There was a slight reversal of the growth trend in tourist arrivals and revenues after the events of September 2001, but picked up strongly in 2002-2005. The government is committed to implementing policies that will promote continued growth in the tourism sector. Similarly, the government is committed to directly participate through intervention policies facilitating a reverse in debts accumulated by the national airline into a commercially viable investment in the medium term, which would serve as a prelude to the development of tourism as the key sector of the economy in years to come. The national goal for the tourism sector centres on expanding the stock of first-class hotel accommodation by at least 350 rooms by 2007. Hence, the government has, in 2003, introduced the 2003 Tourism and Hotel

Development Incentives Act, which offers investment tax credits during 2003 to 2007; income-tax holidays depending on the level of capital investment; and import-duty drawbacks which are intended to encourage and support accelerated investments in the tourism sector over the next five years. In boosting investment, the government participated by guaranteeing the National Provident Fund (NPF) and Development Bank SAT45million total equity fund for the new four star resort development. Four similar projects involving multinational corporations are in planning stages.

## Employment and Wages

The growth of the formal employment sector has been relatively weak despite the good overall economic growth performance in recent years. The bulk of the workforce is engaged in informal economic activities relating to agriculture and fisher-

## TOURISM



Church, Don Bosco school, tourism, corporate sponsorship, cultural identity, sports achievement all rolled into one—Fautasi PREMO Segavao II and its captain Valmasenu'u Zita tago Martel, first woman to captain a winning fautasi in a regatta. Winning American Samoa's Flag Day celebration April 2006; Honorary Consul of France in Samoa, owner of Polynesian Xplorer, mother of four ...

ies, reflecting the high value of subsistence activities and the present need for more employment opportunities in other sectors. However, recent indicators of GDP also indicate a relative decline in the share of subsistence activity in GDP. This trend in economic activity together with the little increase in formal employment - whilst not an entirely new feature of the Sāmoan economy continue to be areas of major concern.

Informal activities in the informal sector (unrecorded activities generating employment) contribute significantly to job creation throughout all communities. Physical characteristics are evident as stalls exchanging goods and services are being erected along road sides. As well, the modernization of the Sāmoan culture revives and enhances the traditional social framework sustaining the art of traditional oratory. Now it has reinvented itself more vigorously and conspicuously as a permanent monetized employment.

Total formal or paid employment recorded in the 2001 census was estimated at around 26,900

persons, about 51 per cent of the economically active labour force. A further 23,433 were employed in unpaid family work activities. Between the 1991 and 2001 census the number of people claiming to be employers, employees or self-employed increased by 42.6 per cent (from 18,900). Total public sector employment accounted for 32 per cent of this formal employment with government departments being 22 per cent and state-owned enterprises 10 per cent. The private sector accounted for 26.8 per cent of formal employment. Yazaki EDS, manufacturing automotive wiring harnesses for export, is the largest single private sector employer and the fluctuation in its number of employees has a major impact on the economy. At its high point in 1996 the company employed around 4,000, more recently the number has been around 2,000 to 2,500.

About 50 per cent of the economically active workforce is engaged in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector. Almost all are engaged primarily in subsistence farming. This fact reflects the





continuing importance of rural activities even though their relative importance in the total economy has declined. Unemployment is difficult to measure in Sāmoa as those without formal employment are generally absorbed into the informal or subsistence sectors. The 2001 census recorded that about two-third of those in the 15–24 age group were either unemployed (around 5 per cent) or ‘not economically active’ (about 60 per cent); this compares with about 56 per cent who were either unemployed (around 3 per cent) or not economically active (about 54 per cent) in the same age group in 1991.

For the whole labour force the unemployment rate in 2001 was recorded at 2.5 per cent (males with a slightly higher rate than females) and those not economically active 49 per cent (males 32 per cent and females 68 per cent). These high numbers of ‘economically inactive’ mainly youth population suggest that there is considerable potential for increased rural output.

In July 2005 major salary and wages restructuring in the public sector was implemented increasing 50 per cent of the total costs at SAT36 million, 4 per cent of GDP. The raise would be implemented in increments over a three year period. The minimum wage was also revised and raised to around SAT2 per hour.

### **Income Distribution**

Income distribution has constantly posed challenges for developing countries. In the case of Sāmoa, although the economy has performed strongly in recent years there still remain significant variations in incomes and standards of living between the urban and rural areas. Subsistence and semi-subsistence agriculture remains at the hub of economic activities for the vast majority of the population who reside in Savai’i and rural Upolu yet investment in agriculture has been diminishing. Despite the role of agriculture in the lives of many Sāmoans, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests, Fisheries and Meteorology has received an average of only around 6 per cent of current expenditure for the last 5 years - about half of the amount allocated to state-owned enterprises as grants and subsidies. The outcomes sought by

government through reforms in other key sectors, especially education, health, telecommunications and postal services are expected to be important catalysts in improving the distribution of national incomes. The government has been developing strategies to promote equitable growth and hardship alleviation. This has been facilitated through a consultative process to analyse available hardship/poverty indicators to provide government with a basis for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In order to quantify the extent to which households might be experiencing hardship, national and regional poverty lines based on the 2002 Household Income and Expenditure Survey has been calculated.

The analysis, which is yet to be officially recognized by government, indicates that in 2002, 20 per cent of households nationally had incomes below the basic needs poverty line and therefore were experiencing some degree of financial hardship on a daily or weekly basis. Generally, to many, hardship is characterized more accurately by poor access to quality services and opportunities, or the ability to realize their potential and aspirations. The youth and elderly in rural areas are being identified as the most vulnerable groups. The government recognizes the need to address both macro and micro-level issues to alleviate hardship.

This would mean maintaining macroeconomic stability and economic growth, pressing on with reforms in health and education (including increased emphasis on vocational training), creation of an investment-friendly environment, responding to village and community needs such as in developing village income-generating enterprises. In the social area, small-scale hardship alleviation projects for improving water supplies, health services, transport and communication are needed.

Improving the quality of basic services delivery will also be important through better training for teachers, better staffing of schools and clinics, better maintenance for health and education facilities and infrastructure, and improving the availability of essential teaching materials and medical supplies. The good economic performance enjoyed by the Sāmoa economy since the mid



1990s to early years of the current century, also brought to the government and public greater focus on income distribution and reassessment of economic and social hardship. With the completion of the 2001 Population Census and subsequent Household Income and Expenditure Survey in 2002, the government now has access to updated and improved demographic data and is finalizing its participatory assessment on poverty/hardship including developing appropriate hardship-reduction strategies over the medium term. There is evidence of increasing inequality/hardship as rural areas, particularly on the main island Savai'i, gain a disproportionately smaller share of economic benefits in comparison to Upolu and particularly the urban-based population.

The greater Apia urban area, containing the bulk of Sāmoa's population is estimated to generate more than 70 per cent of its national income. In the five years to end 2001 with the completion

of the road sealing over most of Upolu, the island has become much more integrated into a single catchment/commuter region for Apia. Better roads have also encouraged the development of tourist facilities around the island helping to generate employment in rural Upolu. These developments have helped to ensure that there has been a more even distribution of income throughout Upolu but has tended to increase the gap with Savai'i. Growth in the urban sector, coupled with the rapid growth of the formal economy, has thus been reflected in a growing concentration of income since the early 1970s. The goal of hardship reduction will be a challenging one in view of the recent sudden slump in the fishing industry production, and the gradual decline in the share of the subsistence sector in GDP. In the short term, sustaining rural societies will require a steady flow of remittance, and continuing population mobility between urban and rural areas.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Sustaining and improving economic growth to ensure sustainable livelihoods are enhanced enhanced will be a priority for government in the short and the near term. This is particularly important, not only to maintain the momentum for continuing reforms, but also given the increased emphasis now placed by government on issues of income distribution, equity, and its plans to develop and implement targeted hardship reduction strategies.

- The authorities must implement the necessary reforms equipped to target central areas immediately.
- Government intervention using carefully targeted policies supporting sectors and industries that are showing signs of exhaustion particularly manufacturing, agriculture and fishery.
- Exporting sector needs to minimize their costs and be efficient in production of niche products

The future stance for Sāmoa's economy appears optimistic with real pressure likely to be mounted on the budget over the next few years. The gains from the reforms would inhibit positive political will to see through the reform process.

- Government needs to drive the reform process across the public sector spectrum particularly in public works, telecommunications, education and health.
- Government to speed up reforms in other key sectors specifically state-owned enterprises and agriculture.
- Government must exercise controlled fiscal discipline and ensure that fiscal monitoring is maintained, thereby paving the way to nurturing an investment environment with good governance in order to maintain sustained economic growth and sustainable livelihoods in all communities.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Samoan Official Currency SAT: Samoan Tala



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### Introduction

This paper examines the issue of cultural maintenance and change in Sāmoa, the reasons for these and the lessons we will have learnt to consciously formulate an appropriate cultural policy in terms of sustainable livelihoods for Sāmoans in the future. Moreover, such a policy should, among other things, actively pursue the goals sought in the United Nations Human Development Report, 2004. These are the achievement of cultural freedom and multiple and complementary identities as well as efforts to fight against so-called cultural exclusion.

IN FORMULATING A CULTURAL POLICY FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT in this new millennium, there are two important considerations that need particular attention. Firstly, Sāmoan culture is unique in the sense that it is the embodiment of thousands of years of language and cultural development having its origins in the Mongoloid homeland south of China at least 7,000 years ago (cf Bellwood 1978b; Kirch 1984). It represents a solid core of knowledge and practice, which has been largely responsible for the survival of the Sāmoan people into this third millennium. Therefore it is a treasure to be preserved and jealously guarded.

Secondly, Sāmoan culture is changing and decisions have to be made as to what aspects of the culture need changing and what needs to be retained in relation to livelihood options. These are not easy decisions to make and undoubtedly there will be much disagreement even among Sāmoans themselves. But most probably the tendency for most people is to continue with their old values, beliefs and practices unless change is forced on them. And this is probably a better alternative than merely changing for change's sake or for the sake of some utopian future wellbeing promised by certain ideologies.

Whilst there have been notable criticisms of the *fa'aSāmoa* (Sāmoan way of life), principally from colonial and Marxist perspectives, what we see today in Sāmoa is a re-invigorated cultural system, proof that despite the inroads in education and other social, political, economic and reli-

gious changes, Sāmoan society is essentially conservative.

Decades of colonial enterprise in Sāmoa, beginning with the arrival of missionaries of the London Missionary Society (LMS) in 1830, have seen numerous attempts by the colonial administrations, whether American, German or New Zealand to induce Sāmoans by various means, some transparent, some not so transparent, to think and act like their masters. All things *pālāgi* (European) were praised and worthy of being mimicked by the "natives"; all things Sāmoan were denigrated and worthy to be thrown away. This was the conventional wisdom of the colonial administrations both in theory and fact.

But the Sāmoan opposition to the colonial administrations, mainly in the form of the Mau movements (see Davidson 1967), indicates a cultural conservatism that was crying out for preservation and continuation. Every colonial attempt to undermine the determination of the Sāmoan people to practise their culture has failed, from 1830 to the present. And in the migrant context, Sāmoan communities are noted for their success in replicating their village settings and activities, such as gift-giving, in the host countries such as New Zealand and Australia (cf Pitt and Macpherson 1974; Va'a 2001). The comment that the overseas Sāmoan communities are more Sāmoan than those in Sāmoa is fairly close to the truth, in terms of overseas Sāmoan participation in their life-cycle, church, social and other activities.



Both the diachronic and synchronic evidence pertaining to the cultural life of the Sāmoan people, therefore, is unmistakably one of a cultural conservatism. It is one characterized by attachment to the traditional lands of their *aiga* (family groups) and villages; to their churches and pastors; to their *matai* (chiefs) and *aiga*; to their language; to their wide array of ceremonials. True, there is always the odd individual who plays the role of “heretic”, who disagrees with everything that the *fa’aSāmoa* stands for. But such an individual is the exception rather than the rule. And if such an individual should try to live in a Sāmoan community, he or she would eventually find himself or herself in all sorts of predicaments, simply because they would not be able to fit into the cultural life of their community. In Sāmoa, there are many examples of such people trying to undermine the system usually ending unsuccessfully and often tragically.

This paper is not concerned with the very few who disagree with the *fa’aSāmoa*. It is dedicated to the vast majority of Sāmoans who believe in the *fa’aSāmoa*, indeed are proud of their culture as a “God-given” gift. These same Sāmoans also recognize that change is inevitable and are ready for it. Thus, whatever they decide represents the best compromise between the need to retain the culture and the need to change. The result is the Sāmoan culture of today, one that is often described by Sāmoans as: *E tele faiga ae tasi le faavae*. This means there is only one foundation but many ways of expressing it. Another way of putting it is cultural expression is varied but the spirit of this expression is one and unchanging.

Finally, this paper attempts to present a holistic view of the cultural life of the Sāmoan people, focussing on some of the main issues of today, such as language use. Because the topic is a broad

## CULTURAL CONSERVATION



PHOTOS BY SKIV JOHNSTON

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one, the cultural life of the Sāmoan people, its treatment must necessarily be general. Particular issues such as crime in Sāmoan communities is not touched on mainly because crime is not a cultural activity but more a form of deviancy, even in Sāmoan cultural terms. Also, crime is a form of behaviour committed by only a minute percentage of the Sāmoan population, it does not characterize the population as a whole.

## The Sāmoan Islands

In the 1930s when asked by the famous Maori anthropologist, Sir Peter Buck, who was doing research on Sāmoan material culture, as to where they think they came from, his Sāmoan informants in Manu'a told him all other peoples came from some other country. But as for Sāmoans, they have always been here.

The pre-Christian Sāmoans believed they were created by their high god, Tagaloalagi (the being who is free in the sky) and that Tagaloalagi was not only the creator of their bodies and souls, he was also the founder of their culture and chiefly system (*fa'amatai*). These ideas are to be found in the epic poem called *Solo o le Va o le Foafoaga o le Lalolagi* (see Kramer 1994,1:539ff). One might refer to this account as the mythological origin of Sāmoa and the Sāmoans. But scientifically speaking, especially in the last 30 years or so, Sāmoan origins are no longer in doubt.

Linguistically and culturally, Sāmoans are Polynesian who in turn are a sub-group of a much larger linguistic and cultural family called the Austronesians (see for instance, Bellwood 1978 and 1985; Davidson 1979; Green 1979; Irwin 1992; Jennings 1979; Kirch 1984). The Austronesians' home land is said to be Taiwan where from 5,000 to 3,000 B.C., the Austronesians developed a distinctive language and culture and from which many of the languages and cultures of South East Asia and Oceania are derived.

An outstanding feature of Austronesian culture was the development of a deep-sea voyaging technology which enabled Austronesians to colonize the huge land masses of Asia and the remote islands of Oceania. In addition to this, they also developed fishing and horticultural skills which enabled them to settle and survive on the newly

discovered lands.

By 2000 B.C. Austronesian settlers had reached the islands north of Papua New Guinea, such as those in the Bismarck Archipelago. Here they formed a distinct civilization (distinct from the neighbouring Melanesian ones) which has come to be known as "Oceania". Here further modifications of the original Austronesian language took place and the prototypic cultures of Micronesia and Polynesia were developed. Most important was the development of lapita pottery which has served as a valuable clue to the origins of the Polynesians.

Lapita pottery is not unique as pottery because Austronesians have always made pottery. What was different was the development of new designs used on the pots, many of which were made with comb-shaped instruments, similar to those used in tattooing. Remnants of these pots have been found all the way from New Britain, north of Papua New Guinea, through the Solomons, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Fiji, Tonga and Sāmoa, an indication that the settlers of Polynesia originally came from the general area of the Bismarck Archipelago.

Sāmoa is the last place in Polynesia, in the south-west Pacific, where lapita pottery fragments have been found. These were discovered by a Polynesian Airlines engineer who was looking for sea shells along the beach at the Mulifanua inter-island wharf in 1973. The fragments were dredged, during operations to deepen the inter-island wharf, from a part of the sea bed one hundred yards from shore. It appears that this was a part of an ancient village now covered by the sea to at least a distance of six feet at low tide.

The discovery of lapita pottery in Sāmoa has contributed a lot to an understanding of the origins of the Sāmoan people. Reinforced by the analyses of linguists and research by biologists on the genetic structure of the Polynesian population, scholars have reached the conclusion that Polynesians, and therefore Sāmoans, originated in South East Asia and came to these islands as a result of the migrations of their remote ancestors, who probably settled Fiji, Tonga and Sāmoa by 1,000 B.C. There is thus a close affinity between the physical make-ups, languages and cultures of these three island groups.



## Agents of Social Change

Traditional Sāmoan notions about their culture are contained in this rather romantic popular song of yesteryears. And it goes like this:

Ua tofia e le Atua Sāmoa  
Ina ia pulea e matai  
Aua o lona suafa ua vaelua i ai  
Tau nana fua le tetea  
Ae manino lava mata o le vai  
O le a'ano moni ua le toe i ai ni matai.

Tali  
Sāmoa e, le ta fa'avae lena  
E le o le tino, a'o le agaga  
Afai e tumau i le tagavai lena  
O le a tumau le manuia mo Samoa.

Fai mai ua sese ona filifili  
Sui o le Fono Sili  
Ua manumalo o le le iloa Igilisi  
O isi fo'i ua popoto i le Igilisi  
Ae leai o se faautauta  
Pe le o Tafaigata ea lona i'uga.

God appointed Sāmoa  
To be ruled by chiefs  
Because He has given His Name to it  
You can try to hide the albino  
But it is clear as water  
The truth is there are no more chiefs

Chorus  
Sāmoa, that is our constitution  
It is not the body but the spirit  
If you remain under that flag  
Sāmoa's blessings will remain forever.

It is said the members of the Council  
Were wrongly chosen  
Some did not understand English  
Whilst others did  
But they lacked wisdom  
And will probably end up in prison.

The song is a light-hearted ditty but one which encapsulates basic Samoan ideas about the function of the *fa'amatai*, or chiefly system, as a system which is God-given and that because of its divine origin, Samoa must be like God in its observance of truth and justice. Just as it is impossible to hide an albino (*tetea*) from view, the song says, so it is impossible to hide the obvious. And, if people persist in sin, then that is also the end of the chiefly system because the divine code of truth is no longer adhered to.

In the second verse, it is said that members of the Council were not appointed on the basis of qualifications and morality.<sup>1</sup> For some were appointed even though they understood no English (the language of the New Zealand Administrator, 1914-1961) and those appointed who did understand English were nonetheless persons of ill repute, therefore, likely to end up at Tāfa'igata Prison. Either way, the choice was a bad one. The truth is presumably somewhere between these two positions: people who both understood English and were of good character. Samoans thus also entertained a sense of fair play.

The chorus reminds people that the constitution of the *fa'amatai* is God's laws, truth, justice and equity. It is not material wealth (*e le o le tino*) that counts but truth as manifested in spirit (*ae o le agaga*). Remain in that, and Sāmoa will be blessed forever. There is hope for the future.

Of course, it is easier said than done. The song gives the impression of an unchanging social system ruled by chiefs and based on Christian morality but the facts are otherwise. The influence of Western cultures, beginning with Dutchman Roggeveen's visit in 1722, the influx of shipwrecked sailors and runaway convicts in the late 1820s and the introduction of Christianity in the 1830s helped launch Sāmoa onto the stage of cultural change that has continued to this day (cf Gilson 1970; Davidson 1967; Masterman 1934; Keesing 1934 & 1956).

But this was not all. For the coming of the white men and women also saw the introduction of a new economic system based on trade and capitalism and mediated by the cash economy. The kinship-based economy which relied on gift-giving, exchange, sharing and re-distribution did not suc-



cumb completely to the cash economy but had to co-exist with it in a somewhat uneasy relationship. And if it were not for the fact that over 80 per cent of the Sāmoan lands are held as customary land, even the kinship-based economy might have ceased to exist a long time ago.

The colonial regimes of the Germans, 1900 to 1914<sup>2</sup>, and the New Zealanders, 1914 to 1961, exacerbated Sāmoan dependence on the cash economy because of the colonial insistence on the pursuit of economic policies based on so-called human rationality (as if other human systems, including traditional ones, were not rational at all). Thus New Zealand insistence on the sub-division of Sāmoan lands among able-bodied Sāmoan males in the 1920s (and which was one of the causes of the political resistance movement against New Zealand, the *Mau*) even though this struck at the heart of the *matai* system, namely, the authority of the *matai* (Davidson 1967). This was perhaps the main reason why it was rejected by the majority of Sāmoans.

Defeated in this and other reforms which, while well meaning, were nonetheless contrary to Sāmoan custom, the New Zealand Administrators

subsequently attempted to sell the idea of education to Sāmoans as a means of upward mobility. This proved to be more effective, especially with the dispatch of the first group of Sāmoan students for higher training in New Zealand in 1945. This marked the beginning of the so-called Scholarship Scheme, which has continued to this day, and which has proved to be one of New Zealand's most successful foreign aid programmes in Sāmoa, it being responsible for the education of many of the government and business elites.

Another catalyst for change has been the Second World War, when thousands of U.S. marines, soldiers, airmen and sailors came to Sāmoa to help defend it against an expected invasion by the Japanese in 1941. The U.S. military helped boost the level of the cash economy to heights unknown in Sāmoa and elsewhere in the Pacific through its public works projects such as the construction of roads, airports, hospitals and gun emplacements, and hiring of locals as servants, entertainers and launderers. Many local businesses also got started this way, by providing goods and services for the marines<sup>3</sup> (Va'a 2001).

The Second World War had a pervasive effect



on Sāmoans because contact with American soldiers made them aware of a much wider world with an almost unlimited quantity of consumer goods. The question was how to access these goods. The answer was not long in coming: migration. In American Sāmoa, this was made possible initially when the U.S. Navy took members of its Guard (*Fitafta*) and their dependents to Hawai'i in 1951, after the administrative takeover by the Interior Department. In Sāmoa, the quota system initiated in the early 1970s ensured a steady stream of Sāmoan migrants to New Zealand every year (Va'a 2001:57-66).

Today, Sāmoan society is no longer located in a single place, for it is a dispersed, cosmopolitan society, with members in the Sāmoan islands, but also in Hawai'i, US Mainland, New Zealand and Australia. The Sāmoan family is typically a small residential unit but becomes an international corporation when its migrant networks are taken into account. As a small unit, it is weak economically, as an international corporation, it is extremely powerful, socially, economically and politically. Today, there are perhaps just as many Sāmoans living overseas as in both American and Independ-

ent Sāmoa, a fact which has led to consequential results in the economies, societies and politics of both Sāmoas.

## Overview of Sāmoan Culture

Culture is not something that was made in a day; it is eminently something that has a beginning, duration and an end. That is, it has a history. It is learned (not inherited like genes), shared and transmitted from one generation to another (at least until a culture dies out through genocide, for instance, as in the case of many tribal peoples in Australia and the Amazon basin). And it is relative: people have different cultures, different values, beliefs, practices and so on. It is this difference between peoples which makes them stand out.

Sāmoan culture took thousands of years to develop after the lapita migrants settled in these islands by about 1,000 B.C, or perhaps even earlier, as the archaeological record attests. But Sāmoan culture itself is the offspring of earlier cultures, such as the Oceanic one referred to earlier, based in the Bismarck Archipelago circa 2,000 B.C., the proto-Austronesian one based in Taiwan circa 3,000 B.C. and the Mongoloid culture of





Southern China circa 5,000 B.C., according to the reconstruction of historical events by eminent pre-historians such as Bellwood (1978) and others.

So-called Sāmoan skills in tattooing, together with the implements; pottery-making during the early period of settlement of the Sāmoan islands; and the practice of mediumship in religious practice, comparable to shamanism, are probably practices which originated in the Mongoloid homeland. Language, horticulture and deep-sea voyaging technology came from the Sāmoans' Austronesian ancestors. So that by the time these arrived in Sāmoa circa 1,000 B.C., they already had in their possession a set of beliefs, practices and material culture which differed very little from what Sāmoans have today.

But, of course, there is more to it. What the lapita settlers of 1,000 B.C. (see Jennings 1979) brought with them was a distinct culture complex, sometimes called the lapita culture complex, but which over the centuries they added to and refined. It was not so much the improvement of the material culture that the Sāmoans were noted for. This was to be effected by Europeans in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with their introduction of guns, steel knives and axes, to name a few of their goods.

What the Sāmoans became famous for was the development of an aristocratic system of government, which culminated in the establishment of the *fa'amatai*, or chiefly system, that is the hallmark of Sāmoan society today. In addition, they also perfected a social system centred in a series of closely connected kinship groups, from the smallest to the largest, and for which they have different names. These kinship groups, generically referred to as *aiga*, interact in mutually supporting roles for the economic and political advancement of their members. The smooth functioning of these roles contributes to peace and harmony in the group. When this does not happen, a group is seriously handicapped in its relationships, often of a competitive sort with other similar groups.

Finally, Sāmoans developed certain customs which served to promote law and order in their villages, districts and islands. An example of this is the *ifoga*, or the public apology made by one family to another to atone for a wrong, such as adultery or murder. A system of justice was also

instituted in the villages through means of fines, whether of food, fine mats or other goods; expulsions from the village (wherein a person or persons are banned from living or visiting a village for some offence); and the extreme, the burning of the houses, plantations and all property of a "criminal". The Sāmoan social order then, before the arrival of white persons, was an effective one.

But the changes do not end there because there is a third component to social and cultural change in Sāmoa, and that is the changes brought about as a result of interaction between Sāmoans and the *papālagi*. These changes again are of a major sort and some of them have already been referred to. Most important was the introduction of Christianity. Here, it is important to note that what is new is not the concept of religion, because the Sāmoans always understood this and were rigorous religious practitioners, but the name of the religion. Previously, they were animists, to use a term coined by the father of English anthropology, Edward Tylor. But with the coming of the Evangelical missionaries, John Williams and Charles Barff, in 1830, and their colleagues in 1836, Samoans changed from animism to Christianity. Still, many aspects of the old religion, such as evening devotions, remained intact.

The other major change brought about by contact with Europeans and Americans was the introduction of a capitalist economy. This type of economy, which focuses on profit-making only, was an imposed one and Sāmoans, in order to survive, had to adapt. Certainly, it meant hardship in some areas, for instance, in the loss of population to the cities and changes in post-marital residence, as husbands drifted to live with their wives' relatives because of surplus plantation land needed to grow cash crops for sale. But, at the same time, it meant blessings, in the form of the acquisition of much-needed *pālagi* goods, such as steel knives and axes, biscuits and *pisupo*. Sāmoans tended then, as now, to have ambivalent feelings towards the new economy.

What then is Sāmoan culture? Without going into specifics at this stage, it may be said that Sāmoan culture is a composite of both historical and contemporary influences which have helped to shape the way Sāmoans view their world, live



and act in it. Samoan culture is thus a complex one, idealistic yet practical, profane yet sacred, simple yet fraught with meaning, transparent yet opaque, earthly yet so transcendental, ancient yet so new, and so on.

### Cultural Characteristics

Despite the complexity of Sāmoan culture or *aganu'u Sāmoa*, it is pertinent here to try to provide an outline of some basic Sāmoan beliefs and practices if only to serve as a guideline in the task of determining the role of culture to sustain livelihoods in the changing environment of Sāmoa.

In order to simplify this analysis Sāmoa's social system will be looked at according to four main classifications as follows: social, economic, political, religious. While these do represent disparate elements in a social system, yet the fact remains they are closely linked.

The term "social", refers to the rules and expectations which govern social relationships between Sāmoans. The Sāmoan terms for these rules and expectations are: *va* and *faii*. In Sāmoan society, every person has a place (role) and a status attached to it. Nobody is of no account (*e leai se tagata e noa*). The catch, however, is that it is also

an extremely hierarchical one. Chiefs (*matai*), for instance, are ranked from the top as follows: *tafa'ifa* (emperor), *tupu* (king, leader of government, head of state cum prime minister), *sa'o*, *ali'i*, *tulafale*. Below the chiefs are the other untitled persons with children at the bottom of the ladder.

In gender relations, Sāmoan society was and is heavily biased towards males. Even though siblings were technically equal, as far as authority (*pule*) over land and titles was concerned, yet customary rules favoured males in terms of authority over land and succession to a family's chiefly titles. The rationale was that, on the one hand, the males brought their wives from outside the village, as a rule, and stayed on the land; therefore, they should be the managers of the land.

On the other, females married out, went to live with their husbands' relatives and spent most of their time with them. Thus, they should not accede to the same rights as the males. But, in compensation, they were entitled to the *taupou* title of the family. As *taupou*, they were accorded the highest form of respect by male relatives and the village. This relationship between brother and sister and their descendants is often called the *feagaiga*.





The principles of primogeniture and seniority also applied. Thus, when a title holder dies, the eldest-born is entitled to succeed him/her (primogeniture). But the brother of the dead titleholder has seniority in the family and his claim to the title is a stronger one than that of the eldest. However, these rules are not binding in an absolute sense. If, for instance, the eldest brother is corrupt, gives the family a bad name, and so on, then the family will be quite justified in choosing a younger brother to take over a family title. Similarly, if an uncle is proven to be unreliable, dishonest and so on, the family may give the title to a nephew. And so on with other rules. They may be changed, but only for good cause. The rules governing precedence in the inheritance of titles in Sāmoa are, therefore, flexible.

**Economically** speaking, the traditional economy, as in most pre-industrial societies, was kin-based, meaning it was organized around kin-

ship relations, and its primary purpose was subsistence, with a little of the production left over to meet social obligations. There was no cash involved, and wealth was gained in the form of social exchange, usually between relatives, but can also include outsiders.

These social obligations are commonly referred to among Sāmoans as *fa'alavelave* and includes important life cycle events such as births, deaths, marriages, title bestowals (*saofa'i*), house dedications (*umusaga*), church openings (*fa'aulufalega*) and so on. Presentations are normally in the form of fine mats or *toga*, the product of female labour, and/or goods or *oloa*, the product of male labour. *Toga* also includes sleeping mats, sitting mats, house blinds, fans and coconut oil, while *oloa* also includes Western goods, cash, weapons, houses and lands.

This constant economic reciprocity between relatives forms the basis of a wider economic net-



work among Sāmoans not limited to the geographical boundaries of the Sāmoan archipelago, but also extends to relatives living in the United States, New Zealand and Australia, the three main host nations where Sāmoan migrants have formed ethnic enclaves.

Another significant aspect of the pre-Christian economy was the *malaga*, a custom which permitted members of one village to visit another village or group of villages for either short or long-term visits to exchange goods. In times of famine, for instance, a village which is suffering the effects of the famine will undertake a journey to another village with a surplus of food and remain there for a time. In return, it will give its hosts a gift of fine mats. The hosts, in turn, will be expected to make a return visit later on when its own food resources run out.

Again, the question of reciprocity emerges. Unfortunately, this custom may be abused by some villages, and therefore the *malaga* was not always a popular custom. It has practically disappeared today, being considered an anachronism. Yet newer forms of the custom have emerged, such as group visits to overseas countries to raise funds for church or village developmental projects in Sāmoa, such as the construction of a new church or of a new school for the village. Money is obtained through donations at the performance of traditional dances (*siva*) and *tusiga igoa* or written pledges to contribute specific amounts. Visitors again usually donate fine mats to show their appreciation.

**Politically**, power in pre-Christian Sāmoa was vested in the chiefs. With a few exceptions, this is still true today. Sāmoa before the coming of the *papalagi* was largely a decentralized political system. Although there was a central government in the form of a *mālo* headed by its leader, usually called the *tupu*, each village was responsible for its own internal affairs, made its own laws, judged any issues that came before it and enforced its own judgments through the agency of the village *matai* council, supported by subsidiary groups such as the *aumaga* and *aualuma*.

The ancient polity was essentially the village which only united with other villages in the event of war. The village, through its district, may be a

part of the governing faction, the *mālo*, or it may be a part of the *vaivai*, the defeated party (in war). If part of the *mālo*, it had the right to a part of the spoils of war; if part of the *vaivai*, then it probably had to pay some form of tribute to the victors. Apart from this tribute, the *mālo* largely left the *vaivai* alone provided it did not again try to destabilize the government (Gilson 1970).

Competition among the chiefs was largely for the acquisition of ever higher titles which also meant influence over a larger number of families and a bigger territory. In the hierarchy of titles, most chiefs are either *ali'i* (sacred chiefs) or *tulāfale* (spokespersons for the chiefs). Thus *ali'i* are generally of a higher status than the *tulāfale*. Above these are the *ao* titles, those belonging to the paramount chiefs of the districts. Most of the *ao* titles belong to the island of Savai'i and include: *Lilomaiava*, *Le Tagaloa*, *Tonumaipe'a*.

Above the *ao* titles were the *pāpā* titles, the highest of all titles save one. These were: *Tui A'ana*, *Tui Atua*, *Gato'aitele*, and *Tamasoaali'i*. All pertain to political districts in Upolu Island. Some have argued that the *Tui Manu'a* title of Manu'a islands, American Sāmoa, is also a *papa* title (as well as the Le Tagaloa title of Savai'i). The leader who held all these four *pāpā* titles in Upolu became the *tafa'ifa*. In Sāmoan history, only a very few political leaders held the *tafa'ifa* title, which may be compared to that of emperor or king of kings.

In the area of **religion**, Sāmoans worshipped spirits who lived in fishes, animals, birds, insects, sun and moon, natural phenomena like lightning, and in inanimate objects, such as certain types of rocks. The creatures and objects possessed by these spirit deities were called pictures or *ata* of the gods or *aitu* (cf Turner 1884).<sup>4</sup>

As a rule, Sāmoans worshipped many gods. At the time of birth, each Sāmoan was given a tutelary deity. Each family, village, district also had a god. Each had its own name and its own *ata* or physical representation. Some gods were also considered national gods, because they were universally respected, such as Tagaloalagi, the creator god of the Sāmoans.

To these gods, Sāmoans prayed in their daily evening services when fires were lit, an event



A very significant aspect of social change has been the change in population movements. Every year, hundreds of Sāmoans migrate to overseas countries particularly New Zealand. This and exposure through other media have affected Sāmoan culture in both song and dance, with the hip hop revolution being particularly strong among the young people. The basic principles of Sāmoan society, such as the *feagaiga*, seniority, primogeniture and so on continue to be respected but the interpretation of the rules have been liberalized in order to satisfy the needs of an increased population.

PHOTO SHOWS A PERFORMANCE BY THE 'YOUTH OF WELLINGTON' AT THE MALUA FONOTELE 20 MAY 2006.  
PHOTO BY SKIV JOHNSTON



known as *fana afi o fa'amalama*. The gods were accorded the deepest respect and even had their feast days, sometimes lasting two weeks, when games and other forms of celebration were held in their honour.

The wishes of the gods were meticulously observed and when a person became sick, it was considered he/she had done something which displeased the god. Cure lay in atonement for the wrong done and in doing what the god wanted in the first place, as revealed through the mediumship of the ancient pagan priest, the *taulā'itu*.

Offerings of food were also done in the gods' name. These were called the *mātini* and consisted of various kinds of cooked food which were placed near the beaches to await the arrival of the gods. True, the gods did not eat the physical food: they ate only the spiritual counterpart of the food.

When the Evangelical missionaries arrived in the 1830s, therefore, the Sāmoans already had a deep understanding of the concept of religion. That was why it took only several decades to convert the vast majority of Sāmoans to Christianity (Va'a 1986).

## Social Change

Having explained some of the basic characteristics of Sāmoan culture and the agents for social change (i.e. culture change, Christianity, cash economy, colonialism, modernization, and so on), it is now pertinent to point out in more specific terms some of the cultural changes that have come about.

While it can be argued that cultural norms pertaining to social relationships are universally accepted in principle, the fact is these are being modified in practice as a result of contact with other cultures, particularly, European and American cultures, and more recently Asian cultures.

Instant communication brought about by radio, television, telephone, internet, and so on, has affected Sāmoan culture and the way Sāmoans look at the world. Not only that, every year the government sends hundreds of Sāmoan students, public servants and business people overseas for training and education purposes, thus exposing them to other kinds of cultures and world ideologies. Most important, hundreds of Sāmoans leave

the homeland every year to reside overseas permanently.

In other words, the demands of modernization and globalization have exposed Sāmoan culture to influences from a plethora of other sources and have resulted in pressures for social and cultural change, both good and bad.

At the material level, change has been profound, with European influence dominant everywhere. This is evident in the almost universal use of European-style houses, motor vehicles, radio, television, European food and clothes, and so on. Sāmoans themselves do not consider these European goods detrimental to their interests because they serve the Sāmoan communities well, especially in terms of the wealth needed for gift-exchanging and redistribution.

The items used for *sua* (gifts of food to a visitor) have also undergone change. Instead of a green coconut (*vailolo*) a can of soft drink has been substituted; Western cloth has replaced the *siapo* (tapa cloth); bread or a packet of SAO has replaced the *tā'isi* (steamed taro); a can of corned beef or chicken has replaced the cooked fowl (*taālepaepae*). Sāmoans generally agree that these changes to the composition of the *sua* are unavoidable, given the difficulty experienced by migrants of obtaining the genuine items. The problem is Sāmoans in Sāmoa are also doing likewise. While many "conservative" Sāmoans view the "modern" form of the *sua* as being a "corrupt" form, it is already a standard practice, despite the fact that the original items that go into the composition of the *sua* (for example, green coconuts and *siapo*) are plentiful in Sāmoa.

European influences have also affected Sāmoan culture in both song and dance, with the hip hop revolution being particularly strong among the young people. Sāmoans generally are acquainted not only with a variety of European songs and dances, but also with many kinds of sports introduced by Europeans, such as boxing, athletics, volleyball, basketball, soccer and especially rugby.

The basic principles of Sāmoan society, such as the *feagaiga*, seniority, primogeniture and so on continue to be respected but the interpretation of the rules have been liberalized in order to sat-



isfy the needs of an increased population. This is manifested in the splitting of Sāmoan *matai* titles in order to please the various branches of a family and the switching of statuses from *tama fafine* to *tama tane* so that the *feagaiga* can get a *matai* title.

A very significant aspect of social change has been the change in population movements. Every year, hundreds of Sāmoans migrate to overseas countries particularly New Zealand, a movement that started in earnest about 40 years ago. In his migrant study of 1992, for instance, Va'a (2001) showed that from 1961 to 1991, 38,832 Sāmoans had migrated to New Zealand. This does not include overstayers and those who migrated directly from here to Australia and the United States. This situation is further exacerbated by the movement of people from rural areas to the urbanized ones of Asau and Salelologa in Savai'i, and especially Apia in Upolu.

According to the Preliminary Census Report for 2001, the Apia Urban Area had 38,557 residents, compared with 35,489 in 1991 but North West Upolu, comprising most of the villages on the northwest coast between Apia and Faleolo International Airport, had a population of 52,412, compared with 39,046 ten years earlier. Savai'i experienced a drop of 3,222 for the same period while Rest of Upolu also decreased in population by 368. The big increase in the North West Upolu population is not a fortuitous one. It is due to the residency of rural relatives who want to be close to Apia for the education of their children or for jobs.

This movement, which has intensified since independence in 1962, has been due largely to educational and economic reasons. And there is no end in sight. Government has responded to this trend by developing and expanding urban centres, such as the new one at Salelologa, for the people of Savai'i.

What this means is that the population in the villages tends to be that of the young and the old, because most of the young adults have migrated either to overseas countries or to the urban areas. This in turn means a reduction in the rural labour force with consequential results on the economic

development of the villages. This has proved to be one of the negative effects of migration, as Shankman (1976) and others have pointed out.

To offset this disadvantage, rural Sāmoans are regularly recipients of remittances from their migrant relatives and this source of income has enabled many to survive in a highly competitive cash-oriented environment and to meet their social obligations in the village and elsewhere. But what happens when these sources of income cease to exist?

This is the question posed by Shankman (1976, 1978), who views migration as problematic in the long term. Other migration studies, however, show that firstly remittances continue to flow to village relatives until these either die or migrate in their turn and that secondly remittances continue to flow into receiving countries as long as the phenomenon of migration continues (Va'a 2001).

The Sāmoan social structure at the visible level appears to be largely intact. The customary village committees responsible for social order, such as the council of chiefs, the organization of untitled men and unmarried women, and that of the wives of the chiefs and young children, continue to function in an effective manner in Sāmoa (see Le Tagaloa 1996:26).

But this hides the fact that changes of social mores, beliefs and practices continue unabated. These changes are often not obvious, except when their negative effects surface and cause grievous problems for the villages, some examples of which are provided below.

The constitution of Sāmoa provides for freedom of religion but some villages have laws which prescribe what religious denomination could be established in the village. Sometimes, as in Vaie'e, on the south coast of Upolu island, only one denomination (Congregational Christian Church) is allowed in the village; in others only two or three may be allowed. This village "law" therefore conflicts with the provisions of the constitution guaranteeing freedom of religion.

In pre-contact times, villagers followed the law to the letter, without hesitation, but in the last two decades or so, some have challenged the right of the council of chiefs to prescribe on matters of



religion. Such opposition has led to unpleasant consequences for them (see Va'a 2000:151-169).

In the political arena, the introduction of universal suffrage in the early nineties has drastically altered the balance of power. Before this event, chiefs introduced and changed governments almost at will. Now a vastly more substantial portion of the population, in the form of women and untitled men over 21, acts as a powerful check to *matai* power at the national level, at least.

Some Sāmoan customs have been abandoned, for instance, polygamy, virginity tests (*fa'amasei'au*), giving of first fruits or particular kinds of fish to the paramount chief, and so on. Others have been maintained, for instance, gift giving (*si'i*) and kava ceremonies to welcome visitors.

Quite obviously, Sāmoans have chosen to discard those customs and traditions which are no longer relevant today, and to retain only those ones which continue to benefit their societies in Sāmoa and in foreign countries. While this can be considered an appropriate response on the part of Sāmoans, certain areas need to be looked at.

## **Economic, Religious and Political Change**

Social change, without a doubt, has had a dramatic impact in the economic area. While it is true that Sāmoans continue to practise the basics of their traditional economy, in the form of sharing, gift-giving and redistribution of wealth, the cash economy, brought about by trade and capitalistic enterprise of both small entrepreneurs and international business concerns, such as the German firm, Godeffroy, which established its headquarters in Apia in 1857 (see Gilson 1970), has made gigantic inroads into Samoan life, for the reasons already given.

Sāmoans, at the time of first European culture contact in the 1820s, were first attracted to European goods because of their novelty (such as blue beads and mirrors) but also for their effectiveness, such as guns, steel axes and knives.

With the establishment of the Christian missions in the 1830s and 1840s, the cash economy received an additional boost in the form of coco-

nut oil donated to the church by religious adherents.

The civil wars of the final four decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century also proved to be a catalyst for the cash economy as Sāmoans sold thousands of acres of land to European entrepreneurs to enable them to purchase guns.

During the colonial period, 1900 to 1940, much of the cash economy involved trade. Sāmoans earned most of their cash income from the production and export of copra, cocoa and bananas. Most planters operated on a small scale, but a few, such as the Va'ai family of Vaisala, Savai'i, operated large plantations.

With the Second World War, Sāmoans experienced the cash economy in a big way for the first time, as U.S. marines spent lavishly for their needs. This contact with American wealth, not only benefited many Sāmoans employed by the U.S. military, but also increased among Sāmoans a desire for European wealth (Gray 1960; Davidson 1967). The decolonization period, which started with independence in 1962, saw new developments as Sāmoans took control of their own economic future. And in this they have succeeded admirably. Lately, for instance, Sāmoa's economic performance has been lauded at the highest international levels as a model for the South Pacific. Perhaps this is not surprising given that Sāmoa is a strong supporter of the good governance policies of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund; and for the last few years, has introduced Institutional Strengthening Programmes intended to heighten the efficiency of the public sector. In 2006, Sāmoa is scheduled to enter the World Trade Organization, which means Sāmoa will be linked to the global trade network.

Sāmoa's economy started with a traditional-type economy based on kinship affiliation and networks and has ended as part of the global economy. But this does not mean that only one particular form of economy predominates in Sāmoa. More accurately, the Sāmoan economy is a mixed one, with capitalistic, centralized and traditional characteristics.

In the area of religion, it can be argued that the English Evangelical missionaries did not introduce

the concept and practice of religion to the Sāmoans, since they already had these. What they did introduce was the concept of a new religion, namely, Christianity. In some areas of belief, the traditional religion and Christianity shared similarities, in others they differed. For instance, in the traditional religion, it is alright to curse one's enemies, in Christianity, one is encouraged to turn the other cheek.

Just as the pre-Christian Sāmoans were a deeply religious people who worshipped a multiplicity of gods, so they continue to be almost universally a member of some Christian church. According to the 2001 census, practically 100 per cent of the population are members of a religion, with the four largest denominations being Congregationalist, 34.7 per cent; Catholic, 19.7 per cent; Methodist, 15 per cent; Latter Day Saints, 12.7 per cent. The smallest is the Moslem faith, which has only 48 members.

In Sāmoa, the church occupies a key place in the village hierarchy, with the pastor accorded the highest form of social respect as *feagaiga*. Often, as among the Methodists, he is called the *ao fa'alupega*, which in effect means that in an honorific sense, he occupies the highest position in the status hierarchy. Village people believe that obtaining the favours of the Divine Will ensures success of village endeavours. Therefore, not to have a religion is "unthinkable" to most Sāmoans. The village church thus is an integral part of the social order.

Among migrants, scholarly research shows that Sāmoans are deeply committed to their churches, even after they migrate to New Zealand, Australia, and United States (Pitt and Macpherson 1974; Kotchek 1975; Rolff 1978; Va'a 2001).

This is not merely the result of a spiritual quest among migrants: it is also a sociological phenomenon, an attempt to recreate a Sāmoan-style universe, with the church at the centre, serving to represent the traditional village polity and its unique form of organization.

Here, the pastor, office bearers, deacons and elders substitute for the village chiefs. Membership in the church and participation in its activities thereby contribute to the development of the modern Sāmoan migrant identity. And sets

Sāmoans apart from outsiders.

In the political field, power arrangements in Sāmoa have altered drastically. Reference has already been made to the pre-contact model of power, centred on several powerful titles, such as *pāpā* and *ao* and how the competition for the acquisition of these titles became the causes of ancient civil wars. With the arrival of missionaries, traders and consuls in Sāmoa from the 1830s onwards (Gilson 1970), pressures were put on the traditional leaders to institute a system of government based on European models. This necessarily meant drastic changes to the old system of power involving domination by the government, or *mälö*, and the paying of tribute by the defeated side, the *vaivai*.

The failure of Sāmoan chiefs to bring this about led to the direct intervention of the colonial powers, Britain, Germany and United States, culminating in the establishment of colonial rule in 1900. The United States took over American Sāmoa, and Germany Western Sāmoa. Germany was followed by New Zealand in 1914 (see Davidson 1967; Gilson 1970).

But the pertinent fact is that as from that date, Western liberal forms of government were being introduced in Sāmoa, though slowly at first. These developments reached their climax in 1962 when Western Sāmoa became an independent state, with its own constitution, legislative and executive bodies, an independent judiciary and public service, and so on.

Sāmoa has a workable Western democratic form of government, though there are still some areas that need to be worked on, for instance, the issue of allowing untitled persons to stand for parliament, or of having a single electoral system, rather than two as at present, a Sāmoan Voters' Roll and Individual Voters.

Today, the Western liberal democratic system of government is the dominant one but the traditional system, represented by the village council, continues to operate in the villages. Village councils, for instance, are empowered under the Fono Act to make rules for village residents but any rules they make are subject to the scrutiny of the Land and Titles Court. Sometimes, there is conflict between a village council decision and central gov-

ernment and then the Supreme Court may become involved (see Va'a 2000).

### Language Developments

Closely related to the question of culture change is that of language. Sāmoa is fortunate in that the vast majority of its residents continue to speak the language, though more and more Sāmoans, especially the young and overseas-educated, are turning to English. The increased use of English is associated with ever widening exposure of the population to foreign cultures and ideologies; it is a development which has intensified in the last few decades as a result of Sāmoa's greater involvement in globalization.

In a study conducted by the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC) under a programme called *Augmenting Institutions for General Attainment* that was released in July, 2000,

some startling revelations about the use of the Sāmoan language were made.<sup>5</sup>

It was found that fewer people, especially between the generations, were using the language. Thus, only 89 per cent of grandparents could talk to their children (the parents) in Sāmoan, while only 70 per cent of parents could do the same to their children.

About 90 per cent of grandparents could talk in Sāmoan, while only 65 per cent of their grandchildren could do the same. This means language use has been reduced by 25 per cent when comparing the above figures and also that within another three generations, only some 50 per cent will be able to talk in Sāmoan.

Another finding is that while the use of the Sāmoan language has been reduced, there has also been an increase in the number of people who use code-switching, that is, people who switch be-





tween English and Sāmoan. About 20 per cent of those surveyed were in this category. These tended to use Sāmoan mainly in the course of their ordinary daily activities, but English when they discussed important and abstruse subjects.

Fifty-six per cent of the respondents cited as the reason for not using Sāmoan regularly was that as a language it had a limited vocabulary. In the words of the report, “Sāmoan language has a limited capacity to express and conceptualize ideas and is suitable only for social, cultural and religious domains.”

Similar findings were also found for language users in American Sāmoa<sup>6</sup> and as in Independent Sāmoa, are major causes for concern. Truly, Sāmoans are not alone; they are susceptible to language and cultural influences brought about through migration, contacts with foreign cultures and the impact of the mass media.

Apart from language usage, other current problems affecting the Sāmoan language involve the use of diacritics, such as the macron and glottal stop. It now seems that there is a general consensus about the need for diacritics, especially for the guidance of migrant children and learners of the Sāmoan language. The basic problem remains though, how far? Should they be used for every word, or only when there is an ambiguity in the meaning of a word?

Another problem is the review of grammar, now being undertaken by the Language Unit of MESC. Compared with the problem of diacritics, there is a likelihood of a deeper division amongst Sāmoan linguists over grammar. Many, for instance, oppose the changes proposed by the ministry, but these changes relate mainly to orthographic requirements. For example, should the article “the” be written as “o le” or “ole”?

While contemporary linguistic issues might seem irrelevant to questions of human development in Sāmoa, they are significant to many Sāmoans, especially those involved in the field of education, because they have a bearing on Sāmoan cultural identity, of which language is a primary aspect. For instance, many Sāmoans believe that the ability to speak the Sāmoan language is a *sine qua non* of Sāmoanness, while the ability to use or write the correct forms of the language consti-

tutes the same. A narrow view, perhaps, but common nevertheless.

## Sustainable Livelihoods

The basic question here is that given the causes and the nature of social changes as explained, what kind of evaluation can be given to these developments? What aspects of culture need to be retained, what dispensed with as irrelevant in today’s Sāmoa? The answer can be expressed in a few words: because the social changes to the various aspects of culture, such as the social, economic, political, religious and linguistic aspects were the result of essential modifications of the culture in order to enable it to adapt to its modern environment, they can be considered as positive. That is to say, for the most part, they cannot nor should they be reversed, as long as they serve the general needs of Sāmoan society.

That is not to say there are no areas which need looking into, for there are. In the social system, for instance, there has been a general decline in the social solidarity of the family kin group,<sup>7</sup> brought about largely as a result of the fragmentation of the kin membership. The constant flow of relatives to overseas destinations and to the urban areas has weakened the family structure at home, leading to a certain degree of underdevelopment in the villages due to a shortage of agricultural labour. Also, the dispersal of the family group has weakened the moral support structures inherent in the *fa’aSāmoa*, such as the *feagaiga*. There are thus tensions at the structural level of the Sāmoan family induced by this reduced manpower with consequential results on social relationships.

More problematic is the confusion in values brought about by competing lifestyles and ideologies which are the normal result of globalization. This has resulted in a state of social alienation, characterized partly by a lack of strong identification with any particular group. For Sāmoans at home, identity is not a serious problem: everyone is a Sāmoan here. But in New Zealand, for instance, there is a competing allegiance between being Sāmoan and being Pacific Islander. Many migrants want to be just Sāmoan, but the dominant culture tends to label all Polynesians, Melanesians and Micronesians as Pacific Island-

ers, an official perspective now increasingly being opposed by the Islanders themselves, who prefer to be known by their individual ethnic characteristics as Fijians, Tongans, Sāmoans.

Social, economic, political, ethical, moral and spiritual values also present serious difficulties. Just what values should Sāmoans adopt in their particular context? It is not that Sāmoans lack values, but that they have a plethora of them emanating from different sources. Are these values dependent on which particular identity Sāmoans exhibit in a specific context? And if it is an ethnic identity that concerns Sāmoans, then what values are important to that identity? Fortunately, values can be determined through the use of social surveys.

Moreover, through such surveys, it may be possible to determine the extent of changes in social values through time. Already, as indicated earlier on, surveys on language use have found that significant changes are taking place, changes which cannot be ignored.

Commerce, trade, capitalism, the global economy and so on may be considered irreversible. That is not the problem inasmuch as small countries cannot do much to stop them if they wanted to. The real problem is how to adapt to these new forces in the economy.

Sāmoa is set to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2006, and there is fear among some of its political leaders that such membership could be detrimental to its economic interests. There is concern that the rich countries of Europe, America and Asia will swamp the country with their surpluses, and that this would seriously affect the development of Sāmoa's local industries.

However, the present government firmly believes that Sāmoa's membership in the WTO would be more beneficial than detrimental. Whatever the truth, the fact is Sāmoa needs to make some basic changes in its economic structure and way of thinking in order to survive in the new world created by membership in the WTO. It represents a challenge for the future, not only for Sāmoa, but for the small island states of the Pacific region.

If the new experiment does become successful, then it should be helpful to the *fa'aSāmoa* also,

because any increase in wealth created by the establishment of new global networks would necessarily spill over into the traditional Sāmoan economy as practised not only in Sāmoa but also in migrant host countries. The *fa'aSāmoa*, as researches have shown (Va'a 2000), has a tendency to thrive in the ambience of greater wealth.

As with the economy, so with political organization. The modern form of government in Sāmoa, influenced mostly by Western systems of government, is practically irreversible, because it represents many years of evolution, beginning with culture contact in the 1830s.

To be sure, more so than the economy, the introduction of a liberal democratic system of government has had serious hiccups over the years. It posed serious challenges to the pre-contact system of government, which was managed by the so called power centres of *Pule* and *Tumua*.<sup>8</sup> And it had resulted in the political non-violent opposition movement called the *Mau*, first during the German Administration, 1900 to 1914, and then during the New Zealand Administration in the 1920s (Davidson 1967; Field 1984).

As expected, the *Mau* did not defeat the colonial powers with their vast military machines behind them, but the *Mau* did manage to put pressure on them to decolonize, eventually resulting in political independence in 1962. From then on, political wars were no longer fought between Sāmoans and their white colonial masters, but between Sāmoan chiefs themselves.

This new politics, however, did not affect the democratic institutions put in place by the former colonial powers. In fact, Sāmoan governments have improved on them in many ways, including the introduction of universal suffrage in the early 1990s, and the trend is continuing.

Currently, the government's emphasis is on the principles of good governance, characterized by transparency, accountability and equity, the very same principles regarded as a *sine qua non* for the proposed UNDP Human Development Report.

These new policies of government do not necessarily conflict with Sāmoan cultural traditions and practice. What is needed perhaps is a redefinition of what constitutes transparency, accountability and equity in the traditional context of the

villages, for example, so that village practice and government practice can operate at the same level.

It may mean more government involvement in village affairs through greater rationalization of the government bureaucracy in the districts, a step that eventually has to come with the introduction of a workable system of local government. This is something that has been discussed in government circles for at least 50 years but nothing significant has yet emerged (Davidson 1967).

In the area of religion, the customary relationship between religion and the people has been established for close to 200 years. This is expressed in the *feagaiga* system which is applied to all religious denominations in Sāmoa, regardless of orientation. There are four main denominations in Sāmoa (Congregational, Catholic, Methodist, Mormon) with numerous smaller sects, all enjoying the right to practise their forms of worship, except where such right is limited by village rules, as explained before.

The desire to unite the village in its loyalty to one or several churches is one of the main reasons for the prohibition against the establishment of new

religions in some villages. Where such prohibitions exist, the Supreme Court has generally reversed the village rules because of the constitutional provision relating to freedom of religion. This, therefore, represents an area of continuing conflict between government and the villages.

However, as long as both village council and members of a prohibited religion do not overreact and resort to violence, there is a good chance of reaching a peaceful and satisfactory accommodation. Given time, disagreements have more chances of being resolved.

Fortunately, the problem involving prohibition against certain religious sects by some villages is limited only to a few villages. The vast majority continue to be liberal in their attitudes towards the acceptance of new religions. And this is a good sign for the future.

In Sāmoa, religion and culture are usually allied, they support each other. Religion legitimizes culture, and culture legitimizes religion and this coexistence promotes the establishment of solidarity in the Sāmoan community. Therefore, both are integral in the formation of the Sāmoan personality and identity.

## CULTURE AND RELIGION



Funeral procession for Cardinal Pio Taofinu'u. Described by some of his peers as "very visionary and particularly good with the enculturation - the culture with the liturgy". On several occasions Cardinal Taofinu'u took Samoan delegations that danced and performed during mass at the Vatican.



## Conclusion

The viewpoint expressed here is in line with the Pacific Forum's second principle of good leadership, which is respect for cultural values, customs, traditions and indigenous rights and observation of traditional protocols in the exercise of power. This applies to Sāmoa as to the rest of the Pacific. Thus, in a recent speech at Auckland University entitled, *Pacific States and Development: The Role of the New Good Governance Agenda*, Sāmoa's Minister of Finance, Misa Telefoni Retzlaff, said: "Every Pacific state is culturally unique, and every Pacific state is proud of its cultural heritage. This means that all initiatives, including good governance initiatives, will fail, if they are not culturally sensitive."

Yet there is more to an acknowledgment of the important contribution of the past to the lives of Sāmoans today. The present and future also present their challenges to the social system and the culture must adapt or perish. Culture is not a static phenomenon, because influenced by outside forces and by the internal dynamics of a social organization. It is constantly changing and adapting to new developments, such as those referred to under the general rubrics of social, economic, political, religious and linguistic developments.

Cultural change in Sāmoa today is largely successful because it represents a healthy compromise between the needs of tradition and of contemporary society. But more needs to be done, such as: the need to reinforce the dynamics of family

structure; the need to maintain the traditional economy as it faces challenges from the global economy; the need to give cognisance to the traditional power elites in the midst of implementing modern political reforms; the need to raise tolerance levels for new religious groups; and the need to promote the teaching of Sāmoan language and culture to the new generations of Sāmoans, many of whom are overseas-born and raised.

In other words, sustaining Sāmoan culture in the modern era is not just a matter of preserving what is best from the past, such as gift exchanges during times of family crises, but also of inventing new cultural elements to ensure that Sāmoan culture also incorporates the best from other world cultures, systems and ideologies. This is best achieved through the processes of education and training, supplemented by a realistic political assessment of development needs, goals and practices. Sustainable culture, therefore, is not a matter of tradition or modernity on its own, but a healthy combination of the two and each generation will have to redefine this combination for itself.

In short, in Sāmoa's pursuit of development objectives, policymakers on sustainable livelihoods should always be sensitive to the nuances of cultural aims and objectives of the Sāmoan people because it is by incorporating their cultural needs and aspirations that government will be more likely to succeed in its development strategies.

## Suggested Recommendations (in the light of this article)

**1** There is little that can be said about technological change, which is for the most part useful, but there is a need for the continuation and promotion of certain traditional skills in arts and crafts. There is also a strong need to focus on the strengthening of the social relationships of the Sāmoan family. These relationships are being torn apart by the centrifugal forces of social change and rapid population movements. Raising the level of family income will help considerably, as will attempts to keep family members together, such as through raising the level of employment opportunities at home so young adults do not have to emigrate. The creation of new townships at Asau

and Salelologa in Savai'i, and Aleipata in Upolu, would help in this direction.

**2** It is generally agreed that the cash economy is irreversible, and that the global economy, exemplified in the operations of the WTO, is inescapable, that there are pros and cons for all countries. The key to Sāmoa's survival in such a modern kind of economy is not to sink under the weight of globalization but to be able to maintain its own economic identity and ensure its own survival. This means it must still be able to maintain its traditional style of subsistence economy and exchange as a defence against a downturn in the glo-

bal economy, as well as a healthy mix of small-scale local industries to cater for the consumer needs of the local population. There needs to be a balance between the macro and micro levels. Or put another way, don't put all your eggs in one basket. However, trade relationships with the developed countries will be more problematic in view of the strict guidelines of the WTO.

**3** Religion is a thriving enterprise in Sāmoa. It is a truly Sāmoan success story because not only has Christianity survived in Sāmoa for close to 200 years, but Sāmoans have been able to incorporate many of their ancient religious beliefs and practices into the new religion. Religion is a unifying institution and therefore is a positive development in Sāmoan society. For the future, the trend towards the introduction of new religious groups is threatening to disrupt the political situation in some villages, where there are proscriptions against them. The constitution states clearly there can be no discrimination based on religion, but village councils may view the matter differently. Village councils and central government should be given more time to negotiate a settlement which must satisfy the requirements of the law, in the end.

**4** Some constitutional changes should be sought to (1) allow untitled Sāmoan citizens to stand as candidates for parliament and (2) allow for the establishment of a second house to cater for chiefs' only candidates. Rationale: one of the main reasons for the matais' fear of allowing the untitled citizens to stand for parliament is that they might pass laws to change the land tenure system, upon which chiefly power is based, or alter any other significant custom or practice. By establishing a second, and higher house of parliament (for which only *matai* can vote and only *matai* can stand for election), any bills introduced by the Lower House will be subject to the scrutiny of the Upper House. This will result in the much-needed balance required by the *matai*. But from the point of view of costs, the establishment of a second House for *Matai* may be problematic.

**5** The two language studies mentioned demonstrate a trend towards diminished use of the Sāmoan language, due mainly to the fact that more

and more Sāmoans, through the processes of education and migration, now have increased options to use other languages, mainly English. This calls for more education in the use of Sāmoan language and culture and this in turn calls for the establishment here and overseas of more schools and training centres dedicated towards this purpose. New Zealand is already leading the way through the establishment of pre-schools which use the Sāmoan language, and through attempts by Sāmoan NGOs, such as FAGASA,<sup>9</sup> to promote the teaching of Sāmoan language and culture in New Zealand primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.

**6** Sustaining livelihoods in the midst of culture change calls for a variety of strategies. This generally translates into preserving the best from the past and adopting the best from the present. The best from the past will include those values, beliefs and practices which do not harm or lessen the dignity of any individual or group while the best from the present will include those values, beliefs and practices which promote the social, economic, political and spiritual well-being of an individual or group. Laws, when constructed with these views in mind, and they generally are, will contribute towards the achievement of these goals. Today, there is a fine, stable balance between the requirements of law and tradition and this has contributed significantly to the development of a peaceful society in Sāmoa.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Presumably this refers to some historical incident in which some chiefs were chosen for office in the Administrator's Council but who, in the opinion of some Samoans, were obviously unqualified.

<sup>2</sup> German influence in Samoa though extended back to 1857 with the founding of the German firm Godeffroy in Apia.

<sup>3</sup> Thus Aggie Grey launched a highly successful business selling American-styled hamburgers.

<sup>4</sup> Turner, G. 1884. Samoa a Hundred Years Ago and Long Before. Macmillan & Co., London.

<sup>5</sup> Citing from a paper called "Po ua mativa ea le Gagana Samoa?", presented by Maulolo L.T. Amosa at the annual conference of the Samoan Language Teachers Association of Aotearoa (FAGASA) held at the East-West Center, Hawaii, 5–10 July, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> These findings for American Samoa were also presented at the FAGASA meeting in Honolulu by Dr Dan Aga of the American Samoa Community College.

<sup>7</sup> The high suicide rate in Samoa during the last 30 years is partial evidence for this.

<sup>8</sup> Orator groups in Savai'i (Pule) and Upolu (Tumua).

<sup>9</sup> Fa'alapototoga Faiaoga Gagana Samoa i Aotearoa.





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### Introduction

The Government of Sāmoa's latest census report in 2001 identified twenty four different religious groups within the country including Bible study groups and those that prefer to be anonymous. From the census figures 72.2 per cent of the total population of Sāmoa are members of the National Council of Churches (NCC). Its membership comprises the three mainline churches - Congregational Christian Church (CCCS), Catholic Church of Sāmoa, and Methodist Church of Sāmoa (MCS). They are called mainline churches because they are the biggest denominations and were the first to arrive in Sāmoa.

THE CHURCH OF THE LATTER DAY SAINTS HAS SHOWN remarkable growth in its numbers making it the fourth largest denomination in the country. Other member churches of the Council in Sāmoa are the Anglican, Baptist, Protestant, Nazarene, Full Gospel, and the Congregational Christian Church of Jesus (CCCJS) in Sāmoa. The Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Church is a former member of the Council and there has been no explanation for its silence for quite some years.

The term "the church" or "religion" in this chapter refers to whatever confession or denomination Sāmoan people belong to, taking into consideration their unity within diversity. Faith based organizations refer to religious groups that have the same goal, mission and vision like the church, for example, Youth with a Mission (YWAM), Young Men Christian Association (YMCA). In every effort towards the advancement of the human condition, the churches are expected to take a leading role. Moreover, moral commitment dictates that ecumenical communities are part and parcel of such an endeavour. There is no doubt that the road to achieving this goal will indeed be a difficult one. Ideally, therefore, in order to succeed churches must create situations that are conducive to mutual benevolence, flexible approaches, initiative and an accommodating heart to the people's multitude of interests.

Like the government, the church endeavours to develop people. The church in each village is often regarded as the centre of the whole community for it is their sacred site of worship and meeting place to discuss programmes to enhance the capacity of their members every week. Often, the established churches are challenged by members of the community who claim that financial and other material demands of the church are contributing to poverty in Sāmoa. It is a debatable view. The general view of many Sāmoans, however, is that great spirituality means abundant prosperity. The community's view, on the other hand, is that a healthy body and mind are the key essentials of good living. These opposing views should not be perceived in a negative way for they could all contribute to sustainable livelihood in Sāmoa in the future as discussed below.

Religious philosophies contribute enormously to quality of life in Sāmoa. Since independence in 1962, the church and state have worked side by side to develop the Sāmoan people. Government leaders are sometimes church leaders as well, which therefore reinforces the mutual beneficial relationship between these two important sectors of society. Hence, democracy, culture and Christian values have integrated well in a manner that is acceptable to the local community. This state of affairs has been possible because of Sāmoa's abil-



**It is time that the church adjusts itself to changes of contemporary times. The late Reverend Sione Pula, an agriculturalist and senior minister of the MCS, once said that "there is no poverty as long as all structural developments in the Church stop and instead concentrate on its mission to save and to love."**

ity to maintain peace, prosperity and happy living.

The church's prophetic role involves spiritual vigilance constantly reminding leaders at the top echelons of society to remain true to the teachings of God as from Him the community enjoys multiple blessings. The church to its congregation is the centre of their community in the villages. It is the same situation in the urban areas despite the fact that parish members reside on freehold land and despite structural and economic changes associated with urbanization that differentiate them from rural village communities. As in rural communities, the church plays a significant role in urban communities, working closely with organizations with which they share interests in caring for the community and to which their shared resources are distributed.

Church buildings are among the most costly ones in the village communities. It has been noted that people are slipping away or are no longer going to church because of the huge loans from the National Provident Fund (NPF) or the Development Bank of Samoa (DBS). Church financial and other material demands on church members who are already experiencing economic difficulties are a recipe for church desertion.<sup>1</sup> As expected,

the general church belief is that in the end everyone is accountable to the Creator and Sustainer of life and therefore will be punished accordingly.

## **Christianity and Other Sectors**

For over a century and a half now, Christianity is still the dominant religion in Sāmoa. However, the newly introduced denominations are proving popular. Novelty is one of their main attractions. Other appealing aspects arguably could be that a new religion or denomination provides more leadership opportunities for those who would otherwise not be recognized in the established churches. New leadership opportunities give the church members high self esteem and makes them feel important in that their contribution and talents are appreciated. And of course, a new church often meets most if not all the church-related expenses in contrast to the 'old' practice in established churches which rely solely for their survival on contributions from members.

The issue of 'freedom of religion' provided for in the constitution of the independent state of Sāmoa has caused much tension in the NCC, which comprises some Christian Churches in Sāmoa. Besides the issue of church members leaving the mainline churches for the newly established ones,



there is also the issue of variant theological interpretations. Mainline churches are of the view that most of the newly established churches not only have 'shallow' theological underpinnings but their teachings and methods of delivering their messages are out of context in relation to the Sāmoan culture. Furthermore, they seem to glorify the leaders at the expense of the congregation. Many of these started off as bible study groups then they soon grow in size and eventually established themselves as regular churches under their supposedly bible study leaders. Clearly, the influx of new churches has created an uneasy relationship between them and the mainline churches. It has also created friction within village communities because in some cases village councils have made conscious decisions to be loyal to one of the mainline churches. Village punishments against adherents of denominations other than those approved by the village council have posed a challenge to the freedom of religion provision in the country's constitution. Fortunately, most villages are quite liberal in their choice of church to attend. Given the natural tendency of religions to adhere to their particular brand of theology unreservedly, it is the duty of the state to promote religious tolerance among the people so that religious tolerance can be accepted as part and parcel of their cultural and religious values.

As Sāmoa gradually moves into a multiracial and pluralistic society, an increasing number of new religions enter its shores. It is most unfortunate that globalization is also associated with the birth of some of these religions, which are attracting more Sāmoan people. If new religions keep entering Sāmoan shores in the next two decades, its society will be a complex one and this may not necessarily be a good thing for such a small society like Sāmoa. There is quite a fear that Sāmoan culture and Christian values are being challenged by terrible "religious cyclones" from the North.

## Church Offerings

Monetary offerings by the biggest denominations range from SAT5-8 million per annum, according to Reverends Afa Tyrell and Elisaia Kolia, Treasurers of the CCCS and MCS respectively. These enormous amounts of cash come directly from the

pockets of church members, who are mainly those just above the poverty line. How to utilize these funds are at the discretion of the church executives. The amounts could fund a profit making outfit. However, the churches are always mindful that they must always remain a church and not a business exploiting its own employees.

Enhancing the living conditions of people in the local churches is a need expressed in the general meetings of mainline churches every year. A direct response to these concerns is a church loan scheme or To'omaga as in the CCCS, whereby church members apply for assistance at a small interest of 5 per cent per annum to finance local parish youth halls, pastor's residence and so forth. A slight problem associated with the loan scheme is the difficulty in repayments. It seems therefore that the loan scheme intended to help the relatively weaker parishes seems to have added another burden when repayments become due. The bottom line is that the church could become a giant economic power exploiting its own members. This situation should not occur in the church where justice, charity, peace and equal rights are promoted in opposition to the vices of gluttony, covetness and so on.

The fundamental question in relation to church resources is how they could be better utilized for the benefit of future generations. Past experience shows that most of the Church revenue is spent on new buildings, salaries of employees, and reviving certain departments of the church which operate at a loss almost every year. The most recent examples of the latter are some of the churches bookshops, land developments, youth ministries, vocational training and schools' drive for new vehicles. There is no doubt that these developments are good for the church, however, there needs to be a better system of financial control in place to ensure economic efficiency and accountability, thereby reducing some of the debts a church has to deal with every year. Furthermore, it should prevent the church practice of forfeiting debts<sup>2</sup> once it gets tired of chasing up the borrowers.

It has come to the time when perhaps the church ought to set its priorities right. Is it the welfare of church members or infrastructure development, nursing of spiritual life or pride in the



church's economic power that is more important and the reason for their existence? The church must constantly remind itself of its role in relation to the underprivileged majority in the community, widows and orphans, the elders and those with special needs. Are not they more worthy of consideration than colossal resources going to church buildings and other infrastructural developments, which are matters that could come under long term plans? As long as the church continues to utilize its huge financial resources unwisely, it is to be expected that its membership will continue to decline and some members will opt to detach themselves from the Church completely. In such a scenario, the Church would have failed in its supposed mission. It is time that the church adjusts itself to changes of contemporary times. The late Reverend Sione Pula, an agriculturalist and senior minister of the MCS, once said that "there is no poverty as long as all structural developments in the Church stop and instead concentrate on its mission to save and to love."<sup>3</sup>

## Education

Mission schools were pioneers of formal education systems in Sāmoa. Several state leaders had their education in church schools from primary to college level. These schools still exist with extensive improvements in facilities, and in both teaching staff and academic standards. Today, churches have gone another step forward to establish vocational colleges to accommodate the need of some secondary school leavers who are not able to proceed to university level. This has been a conscious church decision given the reality that the academically better students opt to attend government and private schools. It is worthwhile to note that the high numbers of dropouts from school sometimes involve the culture and the choice of the youth or parents.

Like other providers of schools, the church has at times experienced difficulty trying to keep schools open because of financial constraints<sup>4</sup>. Schools that were forced to close were converted to church facilities. Maintaining schools was a

### CHURCH AND EDUCATION



Mormon Primary School located on the beautiful village of Sauniatu.

problem. Revenue collected from school fees was not enough to pay teachers' salaries and meet administration costs. Under these conditions the mother church, school alumni, and Parents and Teacher's Associations (PTA) often shoulder the burden in their solid belief that school assets need to be maintained. The church's commitment to education should be a sacred task for without it the maintenance and growth of the church are deliberately ignored. Instead of sinking the revenues collected into building new churches, a greater investment of these funds should be channelled to education.

The MESC has just recently elevated four district high schools to college level. For years, however, the church has been the main provider of secondary schools in the country, a contribution the government noted with great appreciation. To supplement the good work of mission schools and in the spirit of partnership and cooperation the government in recent years has made it a policy to contribute to the running of mission schools and, recently, private schools. The government has been allocating in its annual budget a grant of SAT3.1 million to support church schools.

Although recent developments to establish early childhood education institutions (pre-schools) are to be applauded, the associated practice of setting up those schools only in order to be eligible to apply for government grants is to be discouraged. Also frowned upon in some sections of the community is the situation where the financially better off would establish a school, which because they have the money, would attract the best qualified teachers in the country, leaving other schools without qualified teachers. In spite of these hiccups, however, the church is steadfast in its drive to maintain its school system to cater for all students regardless of their parents' economic status.

The author's personal analysis: Children's school fees in the Catholic church schools currently show that they charge higher fees than the government schools, which is the reverse of the situation in the past. Rising fees in church schools with additional fundraising activities by teachers, alumni and PTAs indicate that church education systems are trying to adjust themselves to changes and developments of modernization. As initiated

by the government under its SDS 2005-2007, the spirit of partnership between the government and the church in providing education for the locals has simultaneously provided the opportunity for the entire community to be involved in such an excellent cause.

## Health Care

Health care service is an indispensable element of religion in Sāmoa. Every brand of religion has its own caring system to look after the welfare of its members. Sometimes their support programmes extend to people of other faiths. Registered nurses in villages often provide first aid assistance to patients prior to transference to the closest hospital in their area. Things are even better if the pastor or his wife is a doctor or a qualified nurse. The pastor's residence will turn into a clinic. This kind of service is essential for it is done at no cost and it is right there where the people live.

The Catholic Church in Sāmoa a few years ago built and is still maintaining 'The Home for the Elderly'. A reliable source from the Centre said that the demand for places in the Home is so overwhelming that some requests have been denied due to the lack of facilities. The establishment is popular and it has the support from other churches and their affiliates, the government, NGOs, the business community, women's groups, individuals, youth, schools and so forth. It is a valuable development for which the local community cannot thank the Catholic Church enough for. The late Cardinal Pio Tāofinu'u was highly praised for his incredible vision to have a place for the old people on Catholic Church land. More amazing still, there is neither cost to those fortunate enough to get a place in it nor discrimination against adherents of other religions. The beneficiaries of this programme are the elders without care-givers, respite care for some and those who are disadvantaged in several ways.

The Church has also been involved in assisting the destitute in drought relief, victims of natural disasters, psychological counselling, and various water sanitation and nutrition programmes. They are all efforts towards helping to change people's lives for the better. Unstable weather forecasts have encouraged all denominations to be



EPENESA POUESI,  
GOGOSINA TUUAU  
AND LEINATI,  
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THE CHURCH.

involved in disaster and management capacity building for the benefit of their members. Action by Churches Together (ACT) plays an important part in these training programmes through the NCC.

The profound challenge to the churches and the Health sector in Sāmoa is the problem of HIV/AIDS, which has already claimed seven lives. Not all the churches are happy with the way the MoH is handling the issue in particular, the vernacular used in the fight against it, as well as the usage of condoms as a means of prevention. The church's view, however, is that the best form of prevention is to practise fidelity in marriage and abstinence outside marriage.

In most village parishes, the well being of the elders and those with special needs are looked after by their relatives, a tradition within the extended family. Church related women organizations also have their own effective health care systems for the poor and the marginalized. Church

youth groups are no stranger to these programmes. They are indeed good stewards of the elders in the village community. The integration of services among the leaders of the community for the welfare of the elders has and will continue to contribute to sustainable livelihood in Sāmoa.

## Women and the Church

Women are highly respected in the Church and in politics. They also have a place in the Sāmoan system of respect. Their socialization in the community and in the church have often turned them into trustworthy leaders in the Church. Once they push for things to be done, they really mean business. They have often been in the forefront in fundraising activities for the construction of large multistory buildings in the mainline churches.

Most, if not all, denominations have independent women's conferences to deliberate on both spiritual and material business. However, despite their involvement in church activities a Sāmoan





woman has yet to be ordained a pastor in the mainline Sāmoan churches. This of course is not a serious issue because women and men are considered the same or possess equal rights. But there is a strong consensus among female intellectuals and women in general that it is not yet the time to take that next step.

In 1998, NCC Leaders adopted a resolution to accept women to be trained in theological colleges. So far, a former pastor's wife is currently studying for a Bachelor of Divinity degree at the Pacific Theological College in Suva, Fiji. There are Sāmoan women pastors in New Zealand and other countries overseas. The MCS has lay women preachers. A lot of women attend Bible Training Centres in Apia run by overseas missionary groups. Some are missionaries going around with pamphlets

of the new sects to which they attach themselves. Others are authentic role models in various church communities in Sāmoa.

Women are the backbone of every denomination in Sāmoa. In all church developments, they are at the forefront paving the way forward. They have taken the lead in the teaching of children in programmes associated with Sunday School, special choirs and early childhood. They have also been involved in other activities such as maintaining community cleanliness, being ambassadors for peace, creating a safe environment for the community to name a few. They are frequently the focal point of all church-related activities in the life of the church in Sāmoa. The church continues to be a haven of peace building and a site for spiritual cleansing during these arduous days of economic



and social changes. Thus, religious ideologies elevate tremendously the status of women in Sāmoan society.

## Church and Creation

The relationship between God and human beings in the light of the environment requires explanation. Many times, some people see themselves as the boss of the environment, meaning they can do anything with it while ignoring the concerns of others. This is viewed as a deplorable attitude from a pure theological perspective, because humans should accept that they ought to be good stewards of the environment. Sāmoan churches need to be reconciled with creation. That is, they should commit themselves to the protection of biological diversity and the preservation of natural landscapes, especially those destroyed because of new church projects.

Sāmoa's natural heritage is in great danger, bearing in mind that its land area is limited in contrast to the rapid population growth. The fast cutting down of the tropical rain forest in Savai'i, the uninhibited exploitation of natural resources and the everyday devastation of plant and animal species, and sea and fresh water life are to be aggressively discouraged. The Church has a role in theological interpretation that is aimed at promoting the value of the environment as it is an invaluable asset for both the present and future Sāmoa.

One of the direct causes of the impoverishment of the natural heritage of Sāmoa is the destroying of endangered species including the humid areas by the rapid increase of deforestation of tropical rain forests in the biggest island of Savai'i which are so vital for ecological balance. Indirect causes of environment destruction are equally dangerous. For instance, the use of paraquat and fertilizers, the accumulation of heavy metals in soil and plants, the levelling of slopes, destruction of mangrove areas, cutting down of trees and the excavation of beach sand for road extension work. This means that Sāmoa's natural environment is on a re-habilitation phase, which will take years to recover. For all people who are concerned with the integrity of creation, the problem is a challenge and it is now time to do something about it.

Mr Peter Harris, a Methodist theologian and

biologist once said that religious people know very well it is time to take action to save the environment. However, they could not do much because of resource constraints. His statement is true but conservation of creation starts from a person's sense of commitment. Good stewardship equals integrity of creation. Sadly, the Church is part of the same society that pursues economic growth at the expense of the environment. In this sense, it should be involved in developing programmes to protect the environment for future generations. In fact, "the key to sustainable and holistic development in the Pacific Islands is for Christians (which make up the majority) to apply their faith and biblical worldview in activities of life including science, agriculture and environment".<sup>5</sup>

## Culture in Christianity

This section will only highlight a few developments in Sāmoan culture and christianity. Culture in Christianity means christianity has adopted some of the Sāmoan cultural values for its own sake. Secondly, christianity has changed the culture according to christian principles of living. The process started from the initial accepting of the Church by the paramount chief Mālietoa Vaiinupo Tāvita when he decided to use the term "*susuga*"<sup>6</sup> for himself and endowed "*afioga*"<sup>7</sup> to the church missionary. This is a visible sign of the culture elevating the new religion to a level higher than itself.

Unlike any other government in the world, Sāmoa is unique because the church is placed before culture. People give much reverence to the church for they trust it as the power house of God's blessing for every individual.

In the urban and some rural areas where cultural structures are weak, the church becomes the centre for the people. Church leaders play a crucial role in the administration processes. They keep the community in close fellowship and tight networking for security purpose. The Church is concerned with the increasing crime rate in places where the church and culture are miles apart from each other. Partnership is thus encouraged to minimize conflicts and combat violence that threatens harmony in society. Thus, there is a mutually beneficial relationship between culture and Christianity in Sāmoa. As a popular saying in Sāmoa goes, 'Christianity

sits on the culture'. It means that Christianity is safe in the cradle of culture. For example, many church ministers depend on the protection of village councils<sup>8</sup> to solve problems not only in the church but in the village community as well. For example, a church deacon who is guilty of misusing church funds can easily be dealt with by his/her family *matai* or high chief.

For years churches in Sāmoa abolished the utilization of fine mats, wooden bowls for '*ava*, rod and *fue*, even the presentation of a "*sua*" inside the church. Now, these cultural elements and tradition are all part of church life. The author believes that the churches in Sāmoa ought to enter into deeper dialogue with members of other faiths and cultures, including non believers and support existing groups and structures for bilateral or multilateral dialogue.

## Youth and Children

Youth and children are the most valuable assets of all religions. To ignore them is like religion digging its own grave. Two of the fundamental goals of any religion are to promote human dignity and to build youth and children capacity in order for them to become useful people to their respective families and denominations.

Ever since the early days of Christianity the mainline churches have been pushing hard for the development of the mind, body and spirit of youth and children in order to prepare them for their future and for the continuation of the church. The church ensures that the youth are well versed in their religious beliefs and traditions, and culture and family values as the basis of who they are in this forever changing society of which they are part. However, despite this, the challenge is always there of youth being involved in criminal activities in both the urban and the rural areas. Clearly, the message for church leaders is to share whatever resources to combat youth crime and instill in youth love, peace, humility, honesty, respect and ceaseless patience in full measure, which are all values embedded in the Sāmoan culture.

It was also towards this aim that the Government of Sāmoa established the MESC in the early 1980s. The establishment of the Ministry enabled it to access global funds for humanitarian devel-

opment. Youth programmes initiated by the church and the respective ministry all contribute to the empowerment of the Sāmoan youth.

Youth receives their basic training in religious education at Sunday school. It is also the place where they learn about ethical questions relating to the philosophy of life and puritan discipline. Subjects like mathematics, history, creation, culture, good leadership and music are also included in the Sunday school curriculum. Most children learn how to read and write in Sunday schools. Equally important and strongly encouraged by the Church is the responsibility of the parents in the education of their children at home. The government has recently agreed to support early child-hood education and the education of people with special needs. The MESC will certainly look at a national curriculum for these schools in the near future. From the Church's perspective, this is more than good news because it has always been responsible for the education of these children. Assistance from government is, therefore, highly welcomed. One challenging aspect in relation to the welfare of the youth and children is The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1994), which the Sāmoan government has adopted. It cuts at the root of the whole issue of the parent-child relationship in Sāmoan culture, which in many instances are in direct conflict. Even in the eyes of many of the mainline churches, which purport to place youth and children as their highest priority, children nevertheless are still only to be seen and not heard. There is a need for extensive consultations and open dialogue to work through all the issues.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> B.D.3., Class discussion at Piula Theological College, 31 May, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Some denominations forgive or write off sundry debts after 10 years of non-payment regardless of whatever amount.

<sup>3</sup> Reverend Sione Pula. 1989, personal communication. September.

<sup>4</sup> Reference is made to Ulimasao College and Logoipulotu College that belongs to the Catholic Church and Avoka Girls College of the Methodist Church.

<sup>5</sup> Dr Nacanieli Tuivavagai 2004, "Science, environment, agriculture, religion and the key to sustainable and holistic development in the Pacific Islanders." A paper presented at USP Alafua, Seminar.

<sup>6</sup> A Samoan honorary title of lower rank.

<sup>7</sup> A Samoan honorary title of much higher rank.

<sup>8</sup> "Council of Chiefs" makes decisions for everyone in the village community.



## Recommendations

1. That the churches contribute in every appropriate way to guarantee religious liberty and the human rights of all individuals, so that their dignity and identity are well protected.
2. That the churches hold consultations on economic globalization and social issues bombarding Sāmoan society at large, with a profound concern for the needy people throughout the four main islands of Sāmoa.
3. That the churches are serious in their roles to eliminate all forms of exploitations and discrimination against women, children and young people.
4. That the churches continue to support initiatives worldwide for a sustainable creation, so that future generations will also enjoy and share its maximum benefit.
5. That the churches prioritize and continue to encourage education for all in their development activities, with a commitment to those with special needs and the marginalized.
6. That the churches' programmes to enhance the living conditions of people in Sāmoa be motivated and expanded wherever the need is found.
7. That the churches maintain a proactive and determined stance in their endeavours to attain a more balanced approach to tithing systems that are commensurate with the cost of living in the country and the rise in unemployment and hardship amongst their congregations.
8. That the churches initiate partnerships amongst various denominations so that sharing of welfare is encouraged where possible to the less fortunates of society.
9. That the churches develop and maintain relationships of mutual respect and sharing among different denominations and cultures to help maintain peaceful living.





GENERALLY, THERE ARE FOUR GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS IN SĀMOA. THEY RELATE TO THE FOUR TYPES OF SERVICE (*TAUTUA*) A SAMOAN WOULD NORMALLY RENDER IN ONE'S LIFE TIME.

[ SERVICE TO ONE'S FAMILY, VILLAGE, CHURCH AND THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT. ]



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### 1. Introduction

The theme and goal of this report is *sustainable livelihoods in a changing Sāmoa*. To help achieve that goal, it is important to examine in some detail the subject of governance because it is one of the most important aspects of life in Sāmoa. Governance is an authority system with its associated structures and rules that define not only the relationship between these structures but the manner in which they operate for the achievement of identifiable outcomes. Generally, there are four such governance systems in Sāmoa and they relate to the four types of service (*tautua*) a Samoan would normally render in his or her life time. They are service to one's family, village, church and the national government. It is these four kinds of *tautua* in the context of their respective authority systems that are discussed here.




PHOTO SKIY JOHNSTON

THE FAMILY, VILLAGE, CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT imply four distinct types of authority systems with their respective organisational structures and rules that define the relationship between those structures and their operation. A Sāmoan can be exposed to and be part of at least one or all of those four governance systems. All these four governance systems will be discussed in this chapter. Strengths and weaknesses of each system will be identified upon which recommendations relating to how sustainable livelihood in a changing Sāmoa might be achieved will be given.

### 1. Family governance

A *matai* (titled person) heads every Sāmoan family. Families elect at least one of their members to hold their *matai* title. Once elected, a *matai*'s responsibilities include representing the family in the *fono* (village council of *matai*), settling family disputes, protecting family interests (such as lands and titles), upholding and advancing family prestige and honour, and providing leadership in the family to ensure that every family member is adequately cared for and protected. This ideal of the *matai* looking after the collective interests of his/





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her family should be expressed in the allocation of family land for the use of family members, the re-distribution of goods obtained in the reciprocal process of gift giving, and so forth. The bottom line is to uphold and perpetuate collective values for the benefit of all family members *vis-à-vis* individualistic values. Lessons on respect for one's elders, upholding mutual respect between brother and sister, knowing one's place in the family rank and position of responsibilities, respect for the *matai* and his wife, among others, are initially taught and learned in the family context. Successful achievement of these family objectives contribute to order, peace, security and well-being of family members, which would in turn contribute to order, peace, security and well-being of the village and the country generally.

Ideally, all family members should have a say in the election of their titleholders. However, the reality in some families is that only senior members speak in such discussions. Given this situation, it is important that before these family meetings, each family branch must meet to discuss their choice of candidate before their senior representative(s) speak on their behalf in family meetings. Two obstacles can prevent this from taking place. First, it could be that members who reside permanently on the title's residential land refuse to be involved in such a meeting because of personal differences. Second, it could be that members who reside permanently overseas could not be present in such meetings. Family members must try and work out a way of ensuring that these family discussions at branch level take place.

Samoa has not only grown (and is still growing) in size as clearly shown from the population counts in its periodic censuses, but it has spread out far and wide within and outside of Samoa. This reality has had an impact at the family level as well. Because the majority of most family members now reside in other villages and in overseas countries like New Zealand, Australia, the United States of America and so forth, most families find it very difficult now to arrive at a consensus at election time to identify a single candidate to hold a family title. The last resort to arbitrate on these issues is the Land and Titles Court whose decisions often result in the splitting of the title among

more than one candidate as a compromise to please the disputing parties. Following this conflict resolution strategy of the Land and Titles Court, families, when they are not unanimous in their support of one candidate, would split their title themselves, to please all branches of the family and avoid having the issue settled in court.

Thus, splitting the family title among several holders has now become the strategy in some families to keep everyone happy, thereby avoiding the family having to resort to the Land and Titles Court to decide who their titleholder should be. Title splitting has its advantages. More holders than one means more people to contribute to family functions. More holders than one ensures there is at least one titleholder who resides permanently on the title's residential lands who would also represent the family in the village *fono*. A family representative has to be present in the *fono* to represent, defend and advance the family interests at that level. Disadvantages of title splitting, on the other hand, include the difficulty in arriving at family decisions. Titleholders who reside overseas would make it difficult to have everyone in one place to hold meetings and make decisions. Sometimes titleholders who reside overseas would unfairly insist on their involvement in all family decisions, which sometimes delay family decisions, when they know that they could not make it to family meetings in Samoa. Some understanding between all titleholders must be reached that *matai* who reside permanently on family land must have the freedom to make certain family decisions.

Once a *matai* is motivated to do things for his own immediate interest, he/she is not upholding nor advancing collective family interests and values. For example, a principle holder of a family title (*sa'o*) published in the official government newspaper (the *Sāvali*), in accordance with the *Land and Titles Act, 1981* a notice whose ultimate effect was for his granddaughter to inherit an important portion of family land. This particular piece of land is the traditional house site of that title. This particular title belongs to a huge family of several descendants residing in and outside Sāmoa. By cultural implication, this same public notice meant that the granddaughter would succeed to the family title currently held by her grandfather,



Gift giving is a means of upholding family ties and kinship relationships, ending the practice of gift giving could result in the breakdown of family ties resulting ultimately in the disappearance of that means of family support



whose election to the title was by members of the family. The Land and Titles Court is doing a good job protecting collective family properties against self-interests such as the case cited here. It was only when that notice by the family *sa'o* was published in the *Savali* that other family members knew about their *sa'o*'s selfish intention. Thus, the legal procedures of the Land and Titles are preventing selfish head *matai* from abusing their traditional influence and power to the disadvantage of other family members. In some cases, however, family members either do not have the resources to fend off such selfish practices or did not notice in the *Sāvali* newspaper these public notices. Such

notices are given three months during which objections to it could be lodged. One way of preventing these self-interested *matai* exploiting family trust to promote their personal interests is full understanding of existing laws. The Land and Titles Court can play a role in this by conducting seminars/workshops in rural areas to explain laws relating to customary lands and titles, which is something they are not doing now and have probably not done in the past either.

Care for family members through contribution of various gifts will remain a part of custom for a long time to come. Several factors are taken into account when deciding what family members



should contribute. In the present author's experience the most fair and acceptable strategy is to set a minimum amount to contribute, whether in cash, fine mats or other goods. That would not necessarily prevent others from contributing more should they so wish. Likewise, when re-distributing reciprocated goods received from functions, it should roughly follow the principle of fairness on the basis of what was put into the gift that was presented. However, there should be room for flexibility because of several other competing factors like seniority of title, seniority in age, seniority in status, quality and quantity of fine mats contributed, among others. What should be avoided ultimately is the extreme where the person re-distributing the obtained goods gives it all to himself, his immediate descendants, or people who did not contribute anything at all, thereby leaving those who contributed with nothing. This bad practice is not an incentive for perpetuating this good welfare practice, which is part and parcel of Sāmoan custom.

This discussion of gift contribution and re-distribution of reciprocated goods should not imply that this is the only task, or even the most important responsibility of the *matai*. Instead, it is the *matai*'s responsibility to see that every inner family unit within the extended family is able to cater to its basic needs, that parents are able to service their obligations in respect of their children (rights of the child), or similar other causes that improve the quality of life of each household and the welfare of the extended family as a whole. Gift giving is one of the issues in family governance. For example, whilst this practice seems to have started and institutionalized as a means of traditional social welfare measure to ensure every family member in his/her needy times has the attention of the family, it is also a generally accepted fact that gift-giving in cultural ceremonies is a burdensome practice for many family members. Setting a minimum level of contribution is of no help at all if you do not have or cannot afford the minimum. It follows from this logic that good family governance would be greatly aided by the head *matai* working towards making sure that the kinds of gift-giving and exchange that now typify Samoan cultural ceremonies will **not** "remain a part of cus-

tom for a long time to come". The opposing and an equally strong argument is that because gift giving is a means of upholding family ties and kinship relationships, ending the practice of gift giving could also result in the breakdown of family ties resulting ultimately in the disappearance of that means of family support. A compromise must be found that would result in the perpetuation of the practice of gift giving without necessarily becoming a burden to family members.

## 2. Village governance

The substantial majority of Sāmoans live under the traditional authority of the *fono*. There are 238 village governments in Samoa now.<sup>1</sup> Each of these villages has structural elements and practices that are either similar to other villages or unique to them. These differences in structural elements and practices are further illustrated by the two cultural concepts *aganu'u* and *aga'ifanua*.

*Aganu'u* refers to aspects of the *matai* system that are shared with and generally understood by other Sāmoans outside the context of village settlement. Examples of *aganu'u* include the custom that *matai* are elected by members of their respective families, that *matai* speak on behalf of their families, that there are generally two categories of *matai* (the *ali'i* and *tulafale*), that *ali'i* and *tulafale* have distinct roles to play in the traditional governance system, that there is a rank of *matai* titles and associated roles, that there are systems of gift exchange to reciprocate hospitality, among others.

*Aga'ifanua* (literally, practices that are specific/unique to a particular land), on the other hand, refers to elements of a village's socio-political structure and/or practices that are particular to a village. For example, while in some villages *tamāli'i* have the final say in decisions, in other villages *tulafale* have the final say. While in some villages the founders are *tulafale* and only later on in their history *tamāli'i* were introduced, in other villages it was the *tamāli'i* that originally founded the village and only later on *tulafale* were introduced. The concept of *aga'ifanua* also applies to families within the same village. Although generally, most - if not all - families elect their *matai* (much like the concept of *aganu'u* already

explained), in some families only certain branches or particular lines of descent have the final say in deciding their titleholders.

In most cases, variations in *aga'ifanua*, whether in relation to village or family practices, have identifiable historical origins. Similarly, most *aganu'u* practices have identifiable historical origins. The stories associated with the historical origin of these practices are passed down from one generation to the next through oral traditions. In most cases they are kept as village and family secrets. Like the origin stories of *aganu'u* and *aga'ifanua*, the origin stories of villages and titles are sometimes well-kept secrets. They belong to Sāmoa's body of esoteric knowledge. Justification of authorities pertaining to certain titles over other titles and certain villages over other villages is sometimes kept in this body of esoteric knowledge. One who is well versed in such knowledge can easily be a powerful person in Sāmoan society because of his/her mastery and appropriate application of that knowledge.

A *fono* governs every village. Like the modern state, the *fono* performs the three functions of legislative, executive and judiciary. The ultimate responsibility of the *fono* is the village's well-being and security. A generalized *fono* structure consists of several *matai* numbering between 20 to 60 or even more. Most *matai* titles belong to the two main categories of *ali'i* and *tulafale*. Generally, *tulafale* give traditional speeches on behalf of the *ali'i* and perform the general functions of an executive while *ali'i* deliberate on important village decisions and uphold the prestige and dignity of the village as a whole. In most cases, they are the village's genealogical link to the country's 'royal' lineages. In ancient times when most serious issues of dispute were settled in the battlefield, it was around these families that support for war and candidates for titles of high rank and authority were organized.

In the context of the modern state, *fono*<sup>2</sup> are indispensable. It is through the *fono* that several government projects in rural areas are imple-





mented. *Pulenu'u* (village mayors) elected by their respective *fono* are paid a modest salary by the government through the Ministry of Internal Affairs. They are the intermediary between the government and *fono*. Village governments are an asset to the State. For example, escaped prison inmates were captured and returned by one village to the custody of the Ministry of Police and Prison following public appeals by that ministry to that effect. Moreover, the implementation of government social services programmes relies on the cooperation of *fono*. For example, the government provides salaried teachers for village schools while the villages are responsible for the construction and maintenance of their own schools. Most villages also provide accommodation, morning tea, lunch and dinner for teachers on a daily basis. Similarly, the government provides salaried district hospital doctors and nurses, medical equipment and medicine while districts (comprising several villages) provide hospital buildings and are responsible for the personal safety and security of doctors and nurses.

Village honour and prestige are jealously guarded by villages. These aspects of village governance (which are also present in family governance) have both positive and negative implications. Because a village is an autonomous socio-political unit, it would want to have its own school and its own church. These material possessions are expressions of village pride and identity. Government programmes taken to villages to be implemented for the benefit of their members are carried out willingly. Collective village mentality ensures that the village should not fail in this project as it would implicate a divided village that is weak and without pride and honour, and prestige. On the other hand, the same village pride and honour have resulted in fatal situations, examples of which are discussed below.

Below the village council level are other sub-village organisations comprising the *auvaluma* (daughters of the village who no longer attend school), *taulele'a* (sons of the village who no longer attend school and are not holders of *matai* titles), *faletua ma tausī* (wives of *ali'i* and *tulafale* respectively, that is, wives of *matai*), and *fafine lāiti* (literally, junior wives, who are the wives of untitled men residing in the village). Government programmes that encourage the construction and maintenance of village plantation roads, among other programmes, are the responsibilities of *taulele'a*. Government beautification programmes to encourage village cleanliness and provision of several village necessities such as the various categories of mats plaited from pandanus and coconut leaves are the combined responsibilities of wives of *matai* and *taulele'a*, and the *auvaluma*. Widely acknowledged as the *mālosi* (strength) of the village, *taulele'a* uphold and defend the honour and strength of the village by going to war, if necessary, with any individual or group of people who might undermine or challenge village honour and authority.

It is also the *fono*'s responsibility to ensure a sufficient supply of resources for the village. Occasionally, the *fono* specifies a day on which all untitled men's gardens would be inspected. The purpose of this exercise is to make sure that all village families will not run out of food. The *fono* could also put a ban on the fishing of its lagoon, the harvesting of coconuts, the hunting of a particular species of birds, and so forth. Such bans allow time for coconuts to ripe before the next harvest, allows time for fish to grow in size before the lagoon is fished again, and allow a particular species of birds to multiply and grow in size before they are harvested again. Thus, such bans are a traditional strategy in resource management. For the same reason, *fono* have also made

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"Agaifanua" on the other hand refers to elements of a village's socio-political structure and/or practices that are particular to a village. For example, in some villages, chiefs have the final say in decisions, in others it's the orators."



public announcements in the media to ban people from other villages fishing their lagoons or hunting the birds of their lands, and so forth.

Settling village disputes and ensuring village protection from outside threat are among the most important security responsibilities of *fono*. Disputes that could not be settled at the family level are brought before the *fono* whose responsibility

it is to try and solve them by first examining the course of the dispute, identifying the people in the wrong, then either reprimanding or punishing the culprits. Village punishments can range from cash (given to the *fono* to fund various village projects) of any amount between \$ST50 and \$ST500, demanding the family of the culprit to provide food for the village, suspending the culprit from par-



ticipation in village affairs, or expelling the culprit from the village either for a specified time period or indefinitely. The kind of punishment given and severity depend on the seriousness of the offence as determined by the *fono* collectively.

Qualification for village protection, secure supply of resources and guarantee of peace is the rendering of *tautua* (village service). *Tautua* is rendered to all traditional village organizations of which one is a member. For example, if one is a *matai* his/her service is rendered to the village council; if one is a member of the *taulele'a* organization, his service is given to that organization, and similarly with villagers who are members of the *auluma*, *faletua ma tautasi*, or the *fafine lāiti*. Rendered service (*tautua*) could be in the form of financial contribution, provision of food for ongoing village functions and activities, among others. *Tautua* as such in return for village protection and security could therefore be equated to paying tax in the modern state in return for all state services for which its citizens are entitled.

Despite its many positive contributions to Samoan society, a village government has its weaknesses. Arguably, weaknesses in a village government are associated with some of its traditional structures and processes, which, ironically, are the same aspects of that system that have enabled it to survive down to the present. The issue here is how to reconcile differences in values and expectations associated with a village government with expectations and accepted values of modern society. As long as the two supplement each other, there is no problem. However, experience has shown that irreconcilable elements of the two systems have sometimes resulted in fatal outcomes. Aspects of village governments and suggested ways of improving and/or reconciling them with values of modern society are discussed here.

*Matai* rank stipulates the duties, influence and authority pertaining to a particular title or to certain titles collectively. For example, Village V comprises five *matai fa'avae* (foundation or principal titles). Historically speaking, *matai fa'avae* are the names of the five people who either founded the village together at the same time or are currently acknowledged in the village as its established titles. Of the five such titles in Village V, three are *ali'i* and two are *tulafale*. The holders of these five titles make important *fono* decisions as follows. Although deliberations in the meeting bring out issues relevant to the discussed subject, the participants in the discussion are holders of those five titles. The other 75 per cent or more of *matai* in the council who hold titles of lesser rank are restricted to listening to the discussion only. This situation is acceptable if all relevant issues are discussed and decisions are arrived at rationally.

On the other hand, if a decision is arrived at because of the respect for the view of the oldest of the five *matai* or because of the traditional status of a particular title even though it has become abundantly clear to the majority of *matai* in the *fono* that such a decision was not to be in the best interest of the village, then there is a problem with this type of traditional decision-making process. In which situation, holders of lesser titles should also be part of the discussion. In extreme situations, which is nevertheless the reality in some villages, only one or two *matai* decide (or more appropriately, dictate) the affairs of the whole village because of the rank and authority associated with their titles.

Opening up the decision-making process to holders of lesser titles would provide the opportunity for some educated and better informed *matai* on certain issues to contribute to collective village decisions, and this indeed is the situation in

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most villages now. It thus allows flexibility in the otherwise rigid traditional village structure and its associated rules. Appointments of village mayors and their associated duties is a good illustration of how villages have been able to accommodate changes. Every village elects its own mayor whose appointment is endorsed by the government. The mayor, who is paid a government salary, is the intermediary between the village and the government through its Ministry of Women, Internal Affairs and Youths. Village views on government programmes they implement are relayed to the government by the mayor, and government programmes to be implemented in villages is effected through the mayor. Over the years the position of mayor has acquired village respect to the extent that an appointee has the right to call village meetings where he relays to the village collective programmes to be implemented. In this humble way, village mayors who hold lesser titles can become influential in village affairs. Recently, the government has given the right to villages to elect female mayors in addition to their existing male mayors.

As long as the decision-making process excludes *matai* who hold titles of lesser rank, that group of titleholders would never be effective decision makers on issues that not only affect their lives but the lives of those who depend on them. Nor would their talents, education and experience be utilised fully for the benefit of the village. Dissociating decision-making from rank will understandably be difficult as the two have been part and parcel of custom. A realistic way to achieve this goal is for the *fono* to understand fully the distinction between the two cultural concepts and the merits of separating them in some cultural contexts. For example, a *fono* resolution could uphold and even venerate rank in some contexts while allowing free discussions of issues relevant to decisions for the general good of the village in some contexts. Success of this other strategy would hopefully minimise the chance of ranked titleholders making decisions that may not be in the best interest of the village. On the other hand, if the decision by one *matai* or two *matai* of high rank is genuinely for the benefit of the whole village and not merely for their own selfish gains, then

traditional aspirations match those of modern society. As long as people believe that decisions made are for their good, they are likely to uphold and perpetuate that system.

The limited number of people involved in decision making, because of title rank, can have an adverse effect of another kind on the majority of the village. The case of a decision made by the council of Faleālupo village in the period leading up to the 2001 general elections comes to mind. The incumbent Faleālupo Member of Parliament (MP) wanted another term in parliament. The best way of achieving that aim was for the *fono* to declare officially that the incumbent MP was the only candidate from the village to contest the constituency's seat. If only one candidate is put forward, he/she is declared elected unopposed by the Chief Returning Officer. This seems to be the plan one or perhaps two *matai* of high rank in the Faleālupo *fono* had in mind. When the plan was put to the *fono*, the rival candidate and his supporters raised objection. Because the *matai* who were executing the plan held positions of influence and power in the *fono* structure, the rival candidate was given the ultimatum of either withdrawing his candidacy or face *fono* expulsion.

Expulsion from the *fono*, so the 'friends' of the incumbent MP believed, would minimize the rival candidate's chance of winning the constituency's seat. The rival candidate would not bow to the high-handed demands of the chiefs in the *fono*'s positions of influence and power. He wisely exploited the feelings of the "rebellious" members of the same village who had recently been expelled after contesting successfully in the Land and Titles Court their constitutional right to establish a new Christian church in the village. Bad publicity of the incumbent MP's political ambitions and his seemingly selfish and power-abusing supporters helped the rival candidate's cause tremendously. In the end, the rival candidate defeated the incumbent MP by 613 votes 601.<sup>3</sup> The rival candidate's victory could be interpreted as a defeat of the whole concept of village government and traditional governance generally. Nor was it a pleasant impression to paint for the preservation of village and traditional governance generally.

Another example of unwelcomed *fono* govern-



ance follows. Although the example discussed here to illustrate this point is fairly common throughout the country, I shall use the case of Village V in the present discussion. In the period leading up to the general elections in 1991, Village V made a *fono* decision to support only one of the candidates for the upcoming parliamentary elections. After the general elections, evidence was submitted to the *fono* indicating that some village members voted for a rival candidate. Those voters were punished.<sup>4</sup> The case of Village V is an example of how traditional values associated with collective *fono* decision clash with modern ideals of freedom of choice. Ideally, Sāmoans would prefer that once a *fono* decision is made, everyone should abide by it. It shows the extent of village unity, the strength of village solidarity and so forth. From

the perspective of the modern state and human rights principles, however, the collective village decision of Village V had interfered with one's freedom of choice. It was in this context that the Government's Commission of Inquiry appointed to examine Sāmoa's principal *Electoral Act* (1963) and its amendments recommended that never again should custom interfere with the electoral process.<sup>5</sup> In other words, custom and tradition should be divorced from the due process of parliamentary elections. Stated differently, village governments should be discouraged from exercising undue influence in the electoral process as stipulated in the *Electoral Act 1963*, Section 98.

Another example of a *fono* decision infringing on human rights issues was the case of Lona village in September 1993 described in Box 1.

#### BOX 1

Māta'utia, a *matai* of Lona village, had had an ongoing dispute with his village going back ten years. After years of trying to reconcile these differences, Māta'utia (who had been banned for life from the village during all that time) and his family were in the process of making peace with and rejoining the village when Nu'utai Māfulu returned from New Zealand where he lived for 20 years.<sup>6</sup> A member of Māta'utia's family in his 40's, Nu'utai's attitude was to continue his family's stand off with the *fono* against the wish of the majority of his family. Upon returning from New Zealand, Nu'utai ran a small shop in the village and operated a bus business.<sup>7</sup> Nu'utai's defiant attitude against the village angered the *fono*, which resolved to expel him from the *fono*. Villagers were ordered by the *fono* not to buy from Nu'utai's shop or ride in his bus. In the district cricket championship match, Nu'utai played in the team of a village that beat the team of his own village, Lona.<sup>8</sup> As far as the *fono* was concerned, the last straw came on the Saturday night, 25 September 1993.

On the evening of 29 September, one of the villagers was sent to ring the bell to signal the start of the village's evening curfew. He could

not get to the bell. Nu'utai stopped him from reaching the spot where the bell was claiming that because the bell was hanging on land that belonged to him (even though authority over that land was at the time disputed), he would not allow the bell ringer on to his land because the *fono* had stopped villagers from buying from his shop or riding on his bus. He told the bell ringers: 'if you don't use my shop then don't come on to my land'.<sup>9</sup> That was too much for the *fono*, which called an urgent meeting that night to decide Nu'utai's fate.

The urgent *fono* meeting at about eight o'clock that evening followed Nu'utai's gesture of personal challenge against the *fono*'s ruling and authority. It resolved to summon Nu'utai to the *fono* and that his shop and cars (bus, jeep and another vehicle) be burned down. *Taulele'a* acted promptly upon receiving their instructions. Nu'utai's personal belongings were burned to the ground and destroyed.<sup>10</sup> As stones were pounding Nu'utai's house, he got down on his knees and pleaded with *taulele'a* not to harm his wife and their four children who were with him inside the house. The order for his wife and his children to be tied up as well was fortunately prevented by a village pastor intervention. Nu'utai was then tied up and led to the village. He was followed closely by his wife and their children (*Observer*, 29

Sep 1993).<sup>11</sup> Just before he got to the place where the *fono* was waiting, he was shot in the forehead at pointblank range by his first cousin, Selesele, who was in his 30's. Nu'utai's body was then carried to the *fono*.

In the aftermath of this sad incident, Selesele was charged with Nu'utai's death. Forty-two members of Lona village appeared in court to face charges. Of the 42, six pleaded not guilty. The other 36 admitted to the charges, which included throwing stones, burning Nu'utai's bus, Suzuki jeep and another vehicle, burning Nu'utai's house and store, and for willfully damaging Nu'utai's properties.<sup>12</sup> The six *matai* who were charged in the Supreme Court with Nu'utai's death were aged between 52 and 77 years.<sup>13</sup>

Interpretations of the broad causes of the Lona incident are manifold. According to the highest-ranking titleholder of Lona, Talamaivao Niko (who is also a former police officer, former member of parliament and former Minister of Cabinet), the cause of the incident was Nu'utai's attitude. Because Nu'utai had been in New Zealand for a long time and had money in Sāmoa, he acted differently. Moreover, given that boundaries in Fagaloa are unmarked, 'Nu'utai's action in stopping the ringing of the curfew bell was probably too much'.<sup>14</sup> Talamaivao also blamed Nu'utai's death on the late Prime Minister, Tofilau Eti Alesana, whose HRPP government passed the *Village Fono Act, 1990*. According to Talamaivao, the Village Fono Act gave the *fono* the right to mete out punishments. Talamaivao had always maintained that this Act would encourage *fono* to invoke traditional punishments, which in the present age would be considered barbarous and primitive.<sup>15</sup>

What is more interesting in the context of traditional village governance is the argument that *fono* would go to any extreme to enforce their authority. It would be an insult to a *fono* if people under its authority successfully oppose that authority. The *fono* is also concerned that as soon as village people successfully oppose its ruling, it would be the end of *fono* authority. Though, ideally, the liberal architects of Sāmoa's constitution would prefer it that way, realistically; the limited number of police to enforce law in the country requires the assistance of *fono* in law enforcement, protection and security in villages. As a former Commissioner of Police once said: 'the *matai* system is still the best one offering assistance to police'.<sup>16</sup> This statement was made not long after the fatal shooting at Lona. Referring to a case where *taulele'a* of one village caught for the police five escaped prisoners, the same Police Commissioner commented: 'you won't find this sort of assistance anywhere else in the world'.<sup>17</sup>

## BOX 2

Tāriu's relationship with his village Falelātai was a cordial one initially. However, it changed for the worse after Tāriu lost the defense in the Land and Titles Court of the title recently conferred on him by the Falelātai *fono*. Tāriu's cordial relationship with Falelātai changed after he realized that some of the *matai* who were present in his title conferring ceremony sided with the parties that successfully challenged the conferral of the title on him. Tāriu refused to attend church. When the *fono* punished him for this he refused to pay his fines. Eventually Tāriu was banned from the village and village people were ordered by the *fono* to boycott Tāriu's buses. Tāriu successfully challenged his village ban in the criminal court. Falelātai village was ordered to pay Tāriu money for the loss of his earnings, among other costs. Falelātai *fono* was furious. They refused to pay Tāriu the money the court ordered them to pay. They also refused to accept Tāriu back to the village.

Against this background, one of the Falelātai *matai* – Nanai Likisoe – was seen riding on one of Tāriu's buses. The order was immediately issued to have him tied up and brought before the *fono*

where a fire was lit upon which Nanai was to be placed. A stick was put through Nanai's tied up feet and hands. Nanai's treatment resembled the normal manner in which pigs are carried to be cooked in an oven. Nanai was dragged all the way from his residence to where the *fono* was waiting. The intervention of the village pastor prevented Nanai from being placed on the red hot village oven. As Meleiseā<sup>19</sup> has argued:

Clearly the Matāutu [Falelātai] *fono* [village council] was acting in protection of their authority, and the severity of their punishments was to ensure that defiance of that authority – particularly by someone like Tāriu, a "modern" man, a businessman, a man who had been to New Zealand – would not be imitated by others

Meleiseā<sup>20</sup> goes on to quote Gilson who has also pointed out that the importance of upholding the authority of *matai* in their own villages is the reason for many of their punishments, and it does not really matter what the offence is: rather what matters is that 'if left unpunished, [it] weakened Sāmoan confidence in village government'.

Meleiseā has also discussed the incident at Falelātai, described in Box 2, which was also directly linked to *fono* authority.<sup>18</sup>

Even though Lona and Falelātai instances are not everyday happenings, the fact that their *fono* have gone to those extremes to enforce their respective authorities signals a problem calling for solutions. *Fono* do not exist in isolation. Instead, they exist within the legal boundaries stipulated in the country's constitution. It would be extremely radical and downright unrealistic to call for the dissolution of *fono* throughout the country because of their valuable contributions to the security, protection and wellbeing of society. *Fono* would not want the state to interfere with their authority, nor would they want their authorities reduced. A compromise has to be reached somewhere. One of which would be for *fono* to observe by-laws that define parameters of their authority and stipulate types and extent of village punishments they could administer. Currently section 6 of the *Village Fono Act 1990* legalises a *fono* to impose punishment on its residents. The only way of checking the extent and appropriateness of that punishment is when the adversely affected person appeals that *fono* decision under section 44 of the Land and Titles Court Act 1981.<sup>21</sup>

The *Village Fono Act, 1990*, symbolically represents a dilemma between Samoan tradition and modernity. It was passed at the same time parliament passed the legislation to introduce universal suffrage. Hence, while on one hand the government was giving to Samoans aged 21 years and over the right to vote in parliamentary elections, it was also mindful that the traditional authority of village *fono* to control their activities and discipline their residents would remain intact. It was not to be. The original provisions in the *Village Fono Act* to uphold these traditional powers conflicted with the Individual Rights provisions in the country's constitution. The result was a symbolic Act that pretends to uphold 'full' traditional authority when really it does not have those powers, as already explained. Nevertheless, it is this legal/traditional dilemma wherein a realistic path for a future Samoa lies. Democratic institutions and practices have not only been stipulated in the country's constitution but they have been part and par-

cel of Samoan life since European contact more than 200 years now. The legal path has now been laid down where village governments are being incorporated into the formal state structure, thereby bringing them under the state orbit from which democratic values are being encouraged and enforced through the legal instruments of the state.

Whilst Lona and Falelātai show examples of how things could go wrong in the governance system of traditional villages, new settlements springing up in the outskirts of the capital Apia, such as Vaitele, present a different set of governance issues. Vaitele is a non-traditional village in that it does not have a traditional council of *matai*, which in traditional villages would be in charge of the village's affairs on a daily, short term and long term basis. Without such a platform the Vaitele community and the Samoan government have faced problems such as high crime and employment rates. The population of Vaitele is also dominated by youth and there is little opportunity for people to pursue subsistence or cash-crop farming. It is also physically dislocated from other urban villages and distant from many of the services an urban centre like Apia usually provides. Against the backdrop of these governance issues, the Government of Sāmoa has already approached the UNDP Apia in 2005 to consider providing assistance to complete a sustainable management plan for the Vaitele village area, as provided in the Planning Urban Management Act, 2003 (PUM Act).<sup>22</sup>

### 3. Church governance

Church governance is discussed under the two levels of central administration and village parishes. To illustrate the points made in this section, I shall use as case studies the three biggest Christian denominations in Sāmoa: Catholic, Methodist and the Congregational Christian Church (CCCS)<sup>23</sup>. This section also tends to emphasise weaknesses in the governance systems of these churches in order to understand their respective situations and suggest ways of improving existing weaknesses.

#### *Catholic*

The Sāmoa diocese<sup>24</sup> follows canon law. The bishop is the head of the church and what he says is final. He reports to the Pope and the CEPACK,



which is a meeting of bishops in the Pacific. Below the bishop are two executive committees, one for Upolu Island and one for Savai'i Island. A deputy bishop who reports to the bishop heads all executive committees. There is also a senate of priests that looks after the interests of the priests and *fesoasoani* (catechists). The bishop selects from the senate of priests members for the various church committees he consults on various issues relating to the administration of the church. Theoretically, the bishop must always consult the senate. In reality he only does this occasionally.

Other committees provided for in canon law include the financial council, land board, fundraising committee (which has only recently been established) and a pastoral committee. There is also a finance officer who in the past was the only signatory to church funds. Generally, therefore, there is enormous opportunity for corruption in the church as past experience has shown. Although there have always been a budget and a plan, they have not always been strictly followed.

Although these committees are stipulated in canon law and some of them have been estab-

lished, they have always been inactive and some have had only two or three members in it. The reason stated for the existence of this situation is that during the time when priests were recruited from overseas, they often fundraised for the church outside Sāmoa. As such they probably felt that they were not accountable to members of the local church. Most of these old church practices, therefore, lack transparency and accountability.

There have been great improvements under the recently appointed bishop. He has not re-activated existing committees but has also made them more accountable. For example, rents of church land leased out several years back have never been systematically collected, and several land blocks that have already been sold out have never been properly valued. They were therefore sold in unrealistically low prices. Even now, the rent for most domestic properties in the middle of town are unrealistically as low as \$ST30.00 per year. The church land board is still trying hard to collect rent arrears going back to 1995. Tenants strongly resist the idea of the church trying to collect rents from them. Even tenants who were told that rent

Main Catholic church at Mulivai, Apia.



arrears before 2002 would be counted as bad debts and that rents from after 2002 would be collected still refused to pay their rents. They have become accustomed to living on church lands and not having to pay rents. The present push of the church to collect rents follows the new trend in the church where most of the priests are Sāmoans who, therefore, could no longer resort to overseas help to fund activities of the local church. As long as funds are raised locally, the local members demand accountability from their leaders on how their money is spent. A recently introduced additional strategy to raise church funds is to have every nuclear family have an annual levy for the church of \$ST300.00. The church is also finding it difficult to collect this amount from its members.

### **Methodist**

The constitution of the Methodist Church<sup>25</sup> provides for a governing body called the *koneferenisi* (annual conference). It comprises heads called *Sea* (Chair) of administrative divisions called *Sinoti* (synods), pastors, deacons and church members, president, secretary, treasurer, standing committee (*komiti tiimau*) and the ministerial Committee whose function is to handle matters relating to the pastors' work. The *koneferenisi* elects the president, secretary, treasurer and members of the standing committee.

The standing committee, which comprises members of the clergy and lay people, meets between conferences. Among its responsibilities is the implementation of decisions of the *koneferenisi*. Its decisions are more often than not approved by the *koneferenisi*. As such, the standing committee is one of the most powerful committees of the church. It acts like the executive of the *koneferenisi*.

The president is not only a powerful position in the church but has a lot of discretionary powers as well. For example, he could make decisions on his own on how to spend church funds. Only occasionally does he consult the treasurer on financial matters. The wide discretionary powers of the president allow him to get away with spending of church funds on certain projects and for the use of certain individuals even though the church budget

did not provide for these expenditures. Often, the exercise of the president's discretionary powers in these matters is justified from the stand point of care for the church and its members in accordance with general Christian principles. On the other hand, it also provides opportunities for corruption and non-repayment of church funds to which other members of the church contributed under financially difficult situations.

A strong and vigilant finance committee would ensure that spending of church funds follows church policies and the approved budget. It would also be in the best interest of the church that on major policy decisions the president should consult a committee of three comprising himself and perhaps the treasurer and the secretary before exercising his discretionary powers. Such consultation would be an effective counter to undue outside pressure on the president of the church.

### **Congregational**

The most administratively organized of the three main churches in the country is the Congregational Christian Church of Sāmoa. It is governed under the constitution approved by its governing body, the *fono tele* (great council). *Fono tele* comprises all church members, which include pastors, lay preachers, deacons, lay members, office holders of the church like the chairman, secretary, treasurer and members of the church's sixteen committees. The *fono tele* elects church officers such as the chairman, secretary and treasurer. The secretary and treasurer take their instructions from the *fono tele* and are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of *fono tele* decisions. They are also responsible for the running of the general affairs of the church on a daily basis.

The chairman is not as powerful as that of the Methodist church. His responsibilities include chairing the *fono tele* and the *fono a le 'au toea'ina* (council of church elders), and presiding at ceremonial functions associated with his position as the top official of the church. In the past, lay people of the church could be elected to the position of chairman. When at one time a lay person of the church was elected chairman (who also happens to be the prime minister of the country at the time),

THE  
CONGREGATIONAL  
CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
OF SAMOA'S  
CHURCH-WIDE  
WOMEN'S MEETING  
AT THE MALUA  
FONOTELE, MAY  
2006.

the *fono tele* decided not to have any more lay persons eligible to contest the position of chairman of the church. The argument was that lay people do not have the true interest of the church at heart like pastors. It was and still is a debatable issue. However, it was acceptable in some circles at the time as some believed that the chairman at the time was bringing the church into his orbit of state politics. A significant number of church members detested this subtle intrusion of state politics into the affairs of the church. Thus, there has never been another lay person elected to the position of church chairman.

The constitution provides for the establishment of the church's 16 committees, which include the general purposes committee, finance committee, development committee, education committee, missionary committee and the committee of elders. All committees report to the *fono tele* annually. Church members of their respective *mātagaluega* elect members of the 16 committees. A *matāgaluega* comprises several *pūlega* and each

*pūlega* comprises as many as 10 or more parishes. Membership of parishes ranges from a few hundreds to several thousands. Parish pastors of *matāgaluega* elect one of their number to be its administrative head called *fa'atonu* who automatically becomes a member of the committee of elders. The pastors of each *pūlega* elect one of their number to be its administrative head called *faife'au toea'ina* (elder pastor). All church members of a parish elect its own pastor from theological students who have qualified from the church's theological college at Mālua in Sāmoa. Once convened, each of the 16 committees elects from their members their own officers, which include a chairperson and a secretary.

### Parish level

All the three Christian churches have church-wide women organizations. They provide fora where issues directly related to women are discussed, thereby addressing to some extent the relatively male-dominated structures and appointments in the





three churches. Women organizations at the parish level are concerned mainly with church development in terms of providing furniture and cooking facilities for the pastor (among other necessities), as well as maintaining the general hygiene and cleanliness around the church and the pastor's compound.

Parish governance blends traditional governance under *matai* leadership with introduced organizational structures and processes. For example, at Parish V, the congregation holds annual general meetings (AGMs) at which all parish members elect their chairperson, secretary, treasurer and committee members, who have always been *matai*. The elected officers are responsible for the daily running of church affairs. All the parish's four committees prepare reports that are submitted and deliberated upon at the AGM. The practice ensures transparency and accountability to parish members.

Never before has a non-*matai* been elected to these positions. Rendered church service means contributing on a regular basis to all parish functions and activities. Although no individual church member is prevented from contributing to the parish activities, the norm is that contributions are given under a strict structure. Families to render church *tautua* are identified at the start of the year. Normally, a *matai* or a parish deacon heads families with rendered service. Parish families not qualified under these criteria have only recently been allowed to contribute to church functions and activities in Parish V. Given that there has not been any collective parish complaint against this innovation, it has established a precedent in this particular parish.

Although parish decisions follow closely the democratic principle of majority rule, arguments presented and individuals presenting those views are dominated by *matai* who hold ranked village titles. There is also a general cultural expectation that only the more senior members of the parish, in terms of age and held titles, are the 'proper' people to make decisions for the parish. It would be a good practice to involve more junior parish members (non-titleholders and holders of titles of lesser rank) in parish decisions.

The intellectual debate about the church in Samoa infiltrating Samoan custom and vice versa is still being played out across the board in the everyday life of the church, although in varying degree between churches. There are both arguments for and against this situation. On the negative side, custom is perceived as intruding into issues such as human rights, equality, and equity, among others, that religion is supposed to champion. Given that the everyday running of most parishes follows the traditional structure and its associated value system where ranked *matai* have the most influence in the way church affairs are run, the interests of non-*matai* do not take priority. Furthermore, the continuation of gift giving in church activities that most church members believe to be dictated by custom mentality, under the custodianship of custom leaders, rather than religious altruism can and has affected individual parish families who are already struggling to keep up with a constantly increasing cost of living. Given that in most parishes individuals do not earn regular income, particular church members of parishes in the rural areas, it is a tough life for those people trying to make ends meet.

On the positive side, "acculturation" is seen as a trend to be further encouraged. It follows the philosophical logic that introduced religion that Samoans have adopted since first European contact in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century has to be made meaningful and relevant to the lives of the Samoans. Thus, blending it with local custom and practices is a wise and necessary local adaptation that should be encouraged if introduced religion is to survive in Samoa.

Clearly the way to sustainable livelihood in a changing Samoa is finding a balance between the competing weights of custom and religion whereby the localization of introduced religion does not turn out to be a physical burden to church members who are supposedly in that institution in search of spiritual gratification. It calls for a collective effort of both the church and custom leaders. Sensitivity to the situation of church members is not enough. The biggest challenges is for custom leaders in church and the church leadership generally to ease off on custom gift giving

"The most critical issue in state governance relates to the power of cabinet versus parliament. In accordance with democratic principles and as provided for in the country's constitution, cabinet is responsible to parliament. But in Samoa the reality is that parliament merely rubber-stamps decisions by cabinet. Thus the executive seems to be dictating to parliament rather than the other way around. Remedies to this problem need to be investigated."

and church contribution supposedly for the needy world out there but in reality to the detriment of the church members struggling to make ends meet right here and now.

The relevance of current practices in the 'established' churches should also be questioned against the influx and relatively quick growth of newly introduced religions. Figures on religions in Samoa recorded in the 2001 census clearly point to this trend. Leaders of established church are often unhappy with this new trend. Either the leaders of these smaller and newly introduced religions are accused of the unacceptable charismatic approach in which they spread their message, and which has 'blindly' dragged the 'superficial believers' into their groups, or the 'new believers' are accused of following the 'false' prophets, not knowing better, or not been entrenched enough in Christian belief taught in the established churches that they could be so blindly enticed to these 'new'

and 'artificial' religions.

Perhaps the leaders of the established churches should stop the defensive manner in which they have reacted to these new challenges and instead assess the situation objectively in a positive light in order to see where their churches are failing. One thing is certain though, most established churches are still clinging steadfastly to church practices, policies and philosophies that were formulated and established almost 200 years ago when their introduced religions were trying to find their feet on local soil. Two hundred years later is hugely different to the situation back then. Perhaps the established churches need to drastically adapt themselves if they want to keep the membership they used to enjoy four decades ago. Perhaps church members who are leaving the established churches in droves are doing so because they find the new churches more meaningful to their lives, that there is less dictation from the



church hierarchy, that they are finding it increasingly tough to make ends meet if they stay in the established churches, or perhaps the established churches are only surviving for their own sake and not for the wellbeing of their members and the communities for which they are supposed to care, not just spiritually but economically and psychologically as well. Whatever may be the reasons for the recent drop in membership in the established churches, it should be taken as a call for their leadership to shape up and adapt to the new situations prevailing in Samoa now.

#### 4. State governance

Sāmoa has adopted the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy into which selected elements of custom and tradition are incorporated. Elections are held every fifth year to select candidates to fill parliament's 49 seats. The 49 seats represent the country's 41 constituencies, six of which have two representatives each because of their large populations. The other two seats are occupied by representatives of the Individual voters, who are Sāmoan citizens of mixed descent who have opted out of traditional rights to customary land and titles. The political party that wins the majority of seats in the general elections forms the government. Once elected by parliament (which comprises the Head of State and the Legislative Assembly), the Prime Minister selects 12 other members of his parliamentary party to form his cabinet.

The most critical issue in state governance relates to the power of cabinet *vis-à-vis* parliament. In accordance with democratic principles and as provided for in the country's constitution, cabinet is responsible to parliament. The reality in Sāmoa (as in most other democratic countries that have adopted the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy) is that parliament merely rubber-stamps decisions cabinet has already made. Against this background, it would be beneficial

to Samoa and democracy generally that a substantial study be carried out in Sāmoa and internationally to come up with remedies to this general problem of the Westminster model where the executive seems to be dictating to parliament what to do instead of the internationally acknowledged ideal that parliament checks the executive.

Although it is family, village and church governance with which people relate more directly on a daily basis because they are part and parcel of people's lives, state governance has also had a similar impact, if not more so, despite being relatively distant from people's daily lives. For example, the cost of living, a general national salary increase, an increase in petrol price, the availability of employment, the presence or not of an effective school and health system, the impact of information that is broadcast on the government's main media organizations and so forth can affect people's lives. The citizens of Samoa can suffer under its state authority system or enjoy life fulfillment brought about by national policies that are geared towards the satisfaction of people's requirements and needs. A positive indication of the extent to which state leadership has recognized and accepted its role in the wellbeing of Samoan citizens is its dedication to meet the United Nations' eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Policies aimed at achieving the MDGs are being implemented through the work of government ministries and state-owned enterprises as stipulated in the government's Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS) 2005 to 2007.

With its theme "enhancing people's choices", the vision of the SDS 2005-2007 is the achievement of an 'improved quality of life for all'<sup>26</sup>. As stated in that document:

The achievement of the vision relies on the effective implementation of priority strategies to achieve a thriving and profitable private sector; a strong and diversified agriculture sector, a dynamic and diversified tourism sector; a coherent, stable

*New Cabinet Ministers in the 2006 Human Rights Protection Party government. L-R: Hon. Niko Lee Hang, Minister for Finance; Hon. Toleafoa Apulu Faafisi, Minister for Police; Hon. Gatoloaifaana Amataga Alesana Gidlow, Minister for Health; Hon. Tava Tavaga Kiliona Seuata, Minister for Agriculture; and Hon. Unasa Mesi Galo, Minister for Justice.*

PHOTO SKIY JOHNSTON





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FACILITIES SUCH AS THIS IMPRESSIVE SWIMMING POOL BUILT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA FOR THE SOUTH PACIFIC GAMES IN 2007 DOES ENHANCE PEOPLE'S CHOICES IN SAMOA.



and entrepreneurial community; and an efficient and effective education and health services. Achieving the national vision will also result in the attainment of Samoa's MDG targets.

In support of that vision, the theme for the 2005-07 SDS is **“Enhancing People's Choices”**. The theme underscores the national commitment to the need for every Samoan to have access to every opportunity he or she desires. Enhancing access to those opportunities is the underlying focus of the priority strategies and associated activities.<sup>27</sup>

Having identified the key sectors upon which its effort will be focused in order to achieve its vision by the target date, the present government (2005) has stated alongside those key sectors their respective goals. Thus, to strengthen the private sector - there needs to be increased investment to create employment opportunities; to boost agriculture development - there needs to be accelerated agricultural growth; to ensure tourism development - there needs to be increased tourism development within a balanced and sustainable framework; to ensure community development - there needs to be increased economic and social opportunities; to ensure the development of education - there needs to be improved student learning outcomes with specific emphasis on raising numeracy and literacy levels; and to ensure health development - there needs to be improved health standards.<sup>28</sup>

Although the work of some ministries may have been genuinely intended for the benefit of the women's community, they have nevertheless invited public criticism. For example, the heavy involvement of village women in community programmes initiated by the Ministry of Women Affairs and the Women in Business non-governmental organization have prevented women from attending to the welfare of their families and their children in particular. Another criticism associated with these outside initiated women's activities is that they have duplicated work with which traditional village women's committees (*komiti tiimama*) and local parish youth programmes have always been involved. There is, therefore, a kind of community confusion as to when to attend to 'normal' community activities and when to attend

to 'outside initiated' and funded programmes. An additional headache associated with this duplication of work is that it takes away the community initiative to be involved in these types of activities. The critics of local developments initiated from without (to which funding incentives are normally attached), have argued that such initiatives are not genuine. Instead, the involvement of those organizations has been motivated by the fact that it would entitle them to apply for aid funding. Reliance on such aid funds is not only unsustainable in the long run but it could also kill local initiative, which would in turn result in the perpetuation of the so called 'hand-out mentality'. An additional criticism related to the same practice is that the government through the work of its ministries should be confined to policy formulation and regulation, thereby leaving the initiative and implementation phase to the community. Initiative is conducive to genuine and sustainable development as the community will only be interested, in the long term, in developments that arise from and controlled by them. Therefore, the government should be aware of these issues in order to continuously revise their development strategies if those programmes are to be effective at the community level.

Unlike the family, village and church governance whose boundaries and perimeter of authority and influence are relatively limited, that of the state is overarching in that it transcends the boundaries of those governance systems. As such, state governance has the responsibility to ensure sustainable livelihood in a changing Samoa for all Samoan citizens. Its legal guide is the country's constitution. The government's forward-looking policies as stipulated in its SDS 2005-2007 are to be commended, and even more so if they are fully implemented by its target date. In the area of individual and human rights, the country has had a positive record in that it introduced universal suffrage in the 1991 general elections giving everyone aged 21 years and over the right to vote and not just the *matai* as was the case before that, and it has ratified the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the similar convention for the rights of children, among other positive developments. Although the



GOVERNANCE IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF SĀMOAN LIFE



state still needs to improve its performance and service delivery in a number of sectors, it is particularly needed in the area of the economy. For example, in 2002, twenty per cent of households at the national level had incomes below the basic needs poverty line and were therefore experiencing some degree of financial hardship on a daily or weekly basis. Generally, such hardship is characterised by poor access to quality services and opportunities, or the ability to realise their potential and aspirations. The youth and elderly in rural areas are being iden-

tified as the most vulnerable groups.<sup>29</sup> The government in its recent June 2005 parliamentary session announced a huge increase in salary for everyone in the employment sector. This salary/wage increase would also result in an increased cost of living. Those that will be most adversely affected by this increase in prices will be those who do not earn a salary/wage, the bulk of whom are already in that 20 per cent of the population under the poverty line. It is a big challenge for state governance, therefore, to come up with economic policies and strategies that would ensure a sustainable livelihood in a changing Samoa for **all** Samoans.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Governance is one of the most important aspects of Sāmoan life. Normally, Sāmoans see themselves to be rendering four types of services daily in their lifetime. They are service to one's family, village, church and government. These four types of services imply the same number of governance systems to which they are subject. An examination of these governance systems shows the positive and negative aspects of each. Recommendations herewith presented follow discussions in this chapter relating to the positive and negative aspects associated with each of these four governance systems. It is therefore recommended that:

1. In relation to family and village governance systems, positive aspects already indicated need to be encouraged and perpetuated until such time they need modification. Negative aspects, on the other hand, need to be modified or corrected in the manner already suggested.
2. In relation to the growth of non-traditional village settlements, such as Vaitele, government policies must be formulated and implemented to put in place appropriate governance structures and processes as remedies to the governance issues associated with these new settlements such as growing crime and unemployment rates, among others.
3. In relation to church governance, positive aspects associated with each of the three main Christian denominations need to be encouraged and perpetuated. Negative aspects associated with each, on the other hand, need to be modified or corrected in the manner already suggested.
4. In relation to state governance, a substantial study be undertaken to find solutions to the persisting democratic problem of parliament being relegated to the role of endorsing executive decisions instead of being a check on executive power. Government must also continuously revise its policies to cater for the changing requirements of its citizens.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Official information from Head of the Division of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, 13 September 2004. In addition to the 238 Sāmoan villages, there are 28 other settlements, which are not administered as traditional village governments. These settlements have been formed around the Apia area comprising communities that live on privately owned land (ibid.).

<sup>2</sup> Fono can be in both singular and plural forms. In this context, it is used in plural form.

<sup>3</sup> So'o 2002:228-9.

<sup>4</sup> So'o 1993:11.

<sup>5</sup> Commission of Inquiry, Report on the Electoral Act 1963 as amended, 11 October 2001.

<sup>6</sup> The Samoa Observer, 6 October 1993.

<sup>7</sup> The Samoa Observer, 29 September 1993.

<sup>8</sup> The Samoa Observer, 1 October 1993.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in The Samoa Observer, 1 October 1993.

<sup>10</sup> The Samoa Observer, 29 September 1993.

<sup>11</sup> The Samoa Observer, 29 September 1993.

<sup>12</sup> The Samoa Observer, 6 October 1993.

<sup>13</sup> The Samoa Observer, 2 November 1993.

<sup>14</sup> The Samoa Observer, 8 October 1993.

<sup>15</sup> The Samoa Observer, 8 October 1993.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in The Samoa Observer, 22 October 1993.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in The Samoa Observer, 22 October 1993.

<sup>18</sup> Meleisea 1987:214-220.

<sup>19</sup> 1987:218.

<sup>20</sup> 1987:218.

<sup>21</sup> Village Fono Act, 1990, Section 11.

<sup>22</sup> UNDP Pacific Governance Programme, Governance in Non-Traditional Villages in Sāmoa, Vaitele Pilot Case Study, DRAFT Project Proposal, February 2006.

<sup>23</sup> For information on the other religious denominations in Samoa as recorded in the last Census of Population and Housing (2001), refer to the section in this report on Background Information.

<sup>24</sup> This information on the Catholic Church was given in an interview with two local church officials.

<sup>25</sup> Information on the Methodist Church was given in an interview between the author and his co-researcher and the secretary of the Methodist Church.

<sup>26</sup> Government of Samoa, Strategy for the development of Samoa 2005-2007, p 2.

<sup>27</sup> Government of Samoa, Strategy for the development of Samoa 2005-2007, p 2.

<sup>28</sup> Government of Samoa, Strategy for the development of Samoa 2005-2007, pp 4-26.

<sup>29</sup> See chapters in this report by Fiu Mata'ese and Wood Salele.



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## Introduction

The work that O le Si'osi'omaga Society (OLSSI) carried out to plan, coordinate, organize and implement the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Sāmoa on behalf of the Sāmoa National MDG Task Force during the months of March and April 2004 provided a solid basis for these comments. This opportunity provided an enabling environment and a truly consultative forum to capture the input on real life experiences of all sectors in the village communities on the issues addressed in the eight MDGs.

Involving government officials and members of the Sāmoa Umbrella of NGOs (SUNGO) to give presentations on each of the goals, further strengthens the claim that this approach was strategic and inclusive. It is consistent with the global drive to truly involve the people in the communities, who are themselves the primary targeted beneficiaries of these MDGs, to contribute to shaping a genuine response by Sāmoa on which human development indicators are relevant for them in the broader community that will need to be integrated in any calculation defining sustainable livelihood from a Sāmoan perspective.

It was evident from the government presentations that Sāmoa is quite advanced in its progress towards the achievement of the MDGs as a number of these have already been addressed in their past and ongoing national Sāmoa development strategies (SDS) in the areas of macro economic framework, education, health, primary sector development, employment creation, enhance agricultural opportunities, strengthen social structure, tourism opportunities, and public sector efficiency. In their view, Sāmoa had already taken responsibility to address these issues as priorities for the country in advance of the MDGs, and the reports to the United Nations will reflect this.

For civil society, this opportunity helped the representative population of village people from

selected villages of Sāmoa, and from all sectors of village society, to hear directly from the government and SUNGO members what activities they are involved with in their respective efforts to help Sāmoa progress further to achieve the MDGs. It also gave many village people the chance for the first time to have their say on how they themselves are working towards these goals and elaborate on what difficulties they are experiencing, and suggest ways needed to address these goals from their perspectives as people living in village communities.

The following comments on each of the eight goals reflect the presentations from the government and SUNGO resource persons. They capture the views of the village peoples shared during the working groups, discussions, debates, and drama presentations. The three questions that formed the basis of the data captured were with reference to the usefulness of these goals for Sāmoa for which there was a resounding affirmative response; what ways would they suggest to achieve these goals; and how useful were the MDGs in their daily lives. OLSSI was also responsible for the shadow report for the MDGs from a civil society perspective and text from this shadow report form a major part of these comments.

Television and radio programmes were also aired throughout the weeks leading up to the two



national workshops. Television spots involved informative statements on the MDGs, while radio presentations allowed participation by selected government officials and NGO representatives to speak on each MDG, and to receive live telephone calls from listeners that facilitated question and answer sessions as well as discussion. These sessions were again coordinated by OLSSI on behalf of the Sāmoa National MDG Task Force which included UNDP, members of SUNGO and government.

The Sāmoa MDGs progress report: an agenda for action, is therefore a truly participatory and collaborative product of joint efforts by communities and civil society, and the Government of Sāmoa.

## MDGs' Status at a Glance

The community consensus at the two major workshops in Upolu and Savai'i, where participants from villages around the two main islands as well as from Apolima and Manono, was that all eight MDGs were relevant to the situation of Sāmoa. However, there was also general agreement that some of the targets and indicators, although relevant for some developing countries, may not be strictly appropriate in the case of Sāmoa given its current level of social and economic development.

The following table gives an overall snapshot of the general status of Sāmoa given each MDG as synthesized from community conclusions and specialist presentations.

Table 2 (overleaf) indicates the status of various measuring variables used to determine the

status of each development indicator, giving its known value and the applicable year. These indicators emphasize aspects of development, such as education and health, more so than normally discerned from strict economic analyses and presentations that can skew towards economic growth that is sometimes not equitably or socially desirable in its incidence and distribution. Latest figures available have been used. In some cases published figures differ from those currently advised by representatives of respective responsible agencies.

The following sections discuss the eight MDGs in turn, and give more details concerning progress towards achieving the targets and goals established, as well as some of the challenges faced by the country in pursuing these development objectives.

### 1. Eradication of Extreme Poverty

The primary global target set for this goal is to “*halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people whose income is less than one (US) dollar a day*”. The second target is to “*halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger*”.

The average daily income on a per capita basis in Sāmoa is already above the minimum threshold set by the UN of one dollar per day. The second target is also claimed to be not significant or widespread in Sāmoa. However, the government has set targets that are more challenging than those set by the UN, and continues to promote development policies aimed at improving the lot of every Sāmoan resident. Also,

**TABLE 1: GENERAL STATUS OF MDGs**

Goals	Status towards achievement	State of supportive environment
Extreme poverty	Achieved-target higher than UN	Strong with positive policies
Universal primary education	Almost achieved-achievable	Strong-education policies in place
Gender equality	Noted progress-achievable	Strong-empowerment policies in place
Reduce child mortality	Achievable-already low	Strong-comprehensive programme ongoing
Improve maternal health	Noted progress-achievable	Strong-associated with child health programme
Combat HIV/AIDS and other major diseases	Some progress	Fair - awareness programmes improving
Environmental sustainability	Some progress	Weak - need better understanding of conservation and development relationship
Global partnerships	Slow ongoing progress	Fair but need more civil society participation

**Source:** Synthesized from community workshops discussions and general conclusions.

as stated in the UNDP Pacific Human Development Report 1999: *"It is poverty of opportunity that is at the heart of the problem of poverty, not just poverty of income... Poverty of income is often the result, poverty of opportunity is often the cause"*.

Both the government and civil societies, as well as the communities at large, nevertheless, consider that this MDG, in so far as localized targets are concerned, is important and appropriate for Sāmoa. The government, for example, through its Ministry of Finance, has conducted a local survey and assessment of the basic needs of a local resident. It calculates that an average person requires about 2,200 kcal per day, equivalent to around SAT3.53, to be adequately sustained.

To access other essential needs like clothing, schooling, housing, travel and traditional needs,

including food mentioned above, each person requires SAT5.36 per day, or SAT1,956.40 per annum. The country's nominal GDP for 2001 of SAT849,870,000, divided by the total population as counted by census for that year of 176,848, is SAT4,805.65. This is almost two and a half times the minimum required for a relatively adequate subsistence as calculated by the Ministry of Finance. However, as mentioned above, the per capita distribution of the nation's total income is unlikely to be so evenly spread.

The Housing Survey conducted by the Statistics Department during 1997, however, showed that 7 per cent of Sāmoa's "families" were living below the food poverty line, with 20 per cent of "families" living under the overall essential needs criteria. Although difficult to be definitive about these numerals because families differ in size, and some much more below the poverty line than





others, the figures vindicate the general view reflected by the villages and by members of civil societies in the two national workshops that there is poverty in Sāmoa. Also, some of the items included in the basket of essential needs, like schooling, travel and traditional needs, can vary from family to family.

It is apparent from the above discussion that living conditions for people in Sāmoa are much better than the minimum thresholds set by the UN. However, it is also apparent that much needs to be done to achieve a more balanced and equitable distribution of the national income so that the remaining 20 per cent of families living under the overall essential needs line move above it. The government has outlined nine key areas of development strategy aimed to achieve overall socio-economic development and also help alleviate this problem.

The current strategy emphasizes “*opportunities for all*” while the previous one was premised on a “*partnership for a prosperous society*”. To achieve the stated goals of providing opportunities for all, civil society is of the view that much more attention needs to be paid to the idea of working in partnership with the government as espoused in the previous Statement of Economic Strategy (SES). It has long been recognized that government agencies have inherent inadequacies in undertaking certain kinds of ventures, like business enterprises. It is contended that such a conclusion can also be made about numerous functions effectively and efficiently implemented by NGOs.

## 2. Achieving Universal Primary Education

The stated target for this MDG is to “*ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling*”. Unlike poverty and hunger discussed above, this goal has clearer challenges for Sāmoa. During 2003 only 84 per cent of primary school age males, and 85 per cent of females, were enrolled at schools. This compares to 83 per cent and 85 per cent for 2002, and 81 per cent and 83 per cent for 2001, respectively.

The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC) aims to have achieved a 100 per cent enrolment rate at the primary level by 2015, to have 100 per cent of children achieve an education level up to years eight, and that all children 5-14 years old can read and write. These targets place Sāmoa alongside other developing countries within the target parameters set by the UN.

To achieve a 100 per cent attendance by children at the primary level in ten years time, from an average of 84.5 per cent in 2003, is a major undertaking. It will require an increase in annual enrolment of 1.6 per cent, made more difficult because children affected will increasingly be at the margin. Also, achieving the target of all 5-14 year olds being able to read and write by 2015 would require 100 per cent attendance almost im-

TABLE 2: STATUS OF KEY DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

Key development indicators	Value	Years
Population size	176,848	2001
Annual population growth rate	1.29%	2000
Life expectancy at birth (females)	71.9 years	1997/1998
Life expectancy at birth (males)	65.4 years	1997/1998
GDP per capita	SAT4,806	2001
External debt as % of GDP	54.8%	2002
Poverty ratio (population below poverty line-US\$1/day)	7% of households	2000
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	12	2003
Aged 5-14 years enrolled in primary schools	94.7%	2001
Enrolment ratio for girls in primary school	85%	2003
Enrolment ratio for boys in primary school	84%	2003
Enrolment ratio for girls in secondary school	62%	2003
Enrolment ratio for boys in secondary school	48%	2003
Literacy rate for 15-24 year olds	99.9%	2003
Literacy rate all adults	95.7%	1999
Population use of traditional wood fuel	<50% and dropping	2000
People without access to safe water	10%	1999
Prevalence of HIV/AIDS (known cases)	4	2004
Prevalence of non-communicable diseases	increasing	2004

Sources: Various official and UN reports, plus information submitted by officials at the community workshops.

Note: Figures released by the Ministry of Finance after the above table was prepared show GDP per capita for 2003 at SAT4,990, and External Debt at a ratio of GDP at 50.8 per cent.





WOMEN IN SĀMOA HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HELD IN HIGH ESTEEM BY TRADITIONAL SOCIETY. NEVERTHELESS, THERE WERE ALSO AREAS OF SEGREGATION BASED ON CUSTOM, CULTURE AND TRADITION, AND ON PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ATTRIBUTES, INHERITED FROM CENTURIES OF COEXISTENCE AND OFTEN BASED ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF LABOUR WITHIN A FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY.

mediately. The Ministry, likewise, claims 99.9 per cent of 15-24 year olds can read and write. Based on current enrolment statistics, this cannot be possible, unless some of those involved undertook other forms of reading and writing education, or returned to school at some later stage of their lives.

According to the census of the population conducted in 2001, the 5-14 age group totalled 45,933, of which 43,479 attended school full time, 103 attended school for only some time, and 2,351 did not attend school at all. Therefore, according to the census, approximately 5.1 per cent of 5-14 year olds never attended school at any time. Not available from the published data is the number of at least five-year-old children that later attended school, say when they became six or seven, or those temporarily not attending.

In addition to achieving the ambitious targets outlined above, the Ministry also recognizes that developing a comprehensive pre-school educational system, and integrating it with the primary schooling system, remains a challenge. As well, the Ministry has recently formally commenced a programme that addresses children with special needs. At present, there also exists legislation that mandates education for all. Implementing this legislation would require a host of incentives and disincentives that would compel full attendance.

To achieve its educational targets, the Ministry hopes to work closer in partnership with communities and village school committees. Its current development programmes that involve improvements to school buildings and physical facilities, teacher training, and resource enhancements, are designed to assist schools to achieve these set targets. However, civil society is of the general view that it would take a more holistic approach, encompassing in particular family development and enhancing economic resources for the relatively not so well off, to achieve the set targets for this MDG.

### 3. Promoting Gender Equality and Empower Women

The main target set by the UN for this MDG is to **“eliminate gender disparity in primary and**

**secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015”**.

The discussion of school attendance above highlighted the ratios of males and females enrolled at primary school level. For the past three years females in Sāmoa have consistently been better represented at primary school, one percentage point more than their male counterparts. This may be due to the general perception that boys in adulthood can better fend for themselves, and that there are more manual and other income earning chores for young males than females.

The disparity, however, becomes even more stark at secondary level. For the immediate past three years, 2001, 2002 and 2003, males enrolled at secondary school level represented 46 per cent, 44 per cent and 48 per cent respectively of all males at secondary school age. Females, on the other hand, represented 55 per cent, 54 per cent and 62 per cent of their peers. This trend, if it continues can eventually result in the reverse of this UN MDG, and that females in Sāmoa will become better educated than their male counterparts.

According to the 2001 census of the population 1,044 males and 953 females aged 15-24 years attended the university preparatory year, or some years at post secondary, or post secondary schooling at an educational institute, or at a university. Attendance at universities alone, however, shows a different picture. During 2001, 129 males and 227 females attended university for this age category. Again, this highlights a general attendance more favourable to females, in contrast to the perceived gender disparity envisioned by the UN.

The MESC figures show both genders in the 15-24 age group have a similar percentage representation that can read and write, at 99.9 per cent each. The census count for this population group in 2001 was 31,929. Ministry figures, therefore, indicate that just 32 people from within this category could not read and write. Females represent 46.58 per cent of this age group, implying 15 females in the group cannot read and write, again a favourable rating from the point of view of empowering women.



Employment statistics, however, show a different picture. According to the 2001 census of those aged 15 and above, 67.5 per cent of males were economically active while only 32.2 per cent of females were so engaged. This is largely explained by the number of females in this age category that declared they were engaged in “housework” or were “housewives”, 31,339 in total, representing 62.2 per cent of the total number of females in this age group. The figures can also be misleading because of the relatively significant level of subsistence activity undertaken by people labelled as domestic workers.

Women in Sāmoa have always been held in high esteem by traditional society. Nevertheless, there were also areas of segregation based on custom, culture and tradition, and on physical and natural attributes, inherited from centuries of co-existence and often based on the distribution of labour within a family and the community. In modern times, however, a lady has been on the Cabinet since 1991. Three women are Members of Parliament. Six<sup>1</sup>(Seven) are also currently Chief Executive Officers of Government Ministries. Many more hold positions as deputy CEOs, as well as responsible positions in the private sector and within NGOs.

#### 4. Reduce Child Mortality

The stated target for this MDG is to “*reduce by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015 the under-five mortality rate*”.

According to the Ministry of Health, during the year 2003 there was recorded a 1.2 per cent death rate for babies born live in Sāmoa, or a ratio of 12 deaths for every 1,000 births. Comparative figures for previous years from 1990 were not available. However, according to the Demographic and Health Survey, 1999, there were sixteen child deaths in 1997 and thirty-three in 1998, a significant increase between two years, although not sufficient to provide a meaningful series. Assuming that the course for reducing the child mortality rate is on target, this death rate needs to have been reduced to at most six out of every one thousand births by 2015.

A number of reasons have been given for child mortality in Sāmoa. These include inattention by

the mother to her condition during pregnancy, hard and heavy work by the mother during pregnancy, or the mother had some serious disease when she was carrying. These include diabetes, hypertension, and others like an inadequate diet. Poor service delivery by the obstetrician or midwife is also not ruled out.

The baby can also be born with, and be subject to certain ailments and conditions that contribute to early mortality. These include heart diseases, asthma, blood conditions (Hb), diarrhoea, pre-mature birth, malnutrition, use for delivery of unsterile equipment, not fully developed organs, as well as contributory causes like the habitual early weaning and adoption of babies. Programmes by the Ministry of Health currently address these concerns relating to both mothers and babies.

Although maternity services by community traditional caretakers are increasingly being recognized by the Ministry, and are given basic training by ministry staff, representatives of communities consider that other considerations also impact on this mortality factor. Appropriate education programmes for both expectant parents are often necessary. Providing appropriate training for traditional midwives can extend this advisory service, especially to more remote communities.

Sometimes it is the lack of family resources to meet these precautionary conditions that result in general neglect. Inadequate transportation and financial resources, for example, can result in insufficient visits to and consultations with appropriate health specialists. The general improvement of living conditions for all people, therefore, is also necessary alongside specialized programmes by the Ministry of Health if the set targets for reducing child mortality are to be achieved.

#### 5. Improve Maternal Health

This MDG targets reducing “*by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015 the maternal mortality ratio*”.

Health programmes targeting maternal health are closely associated with those for reducing child mortality. Figures were not presented by the speakers at the workshops on this MDG, and



so it is not possible to outline the magnitude of the task needed to reduce by two-thirds maternal mortality as targeted by the UN. A comprehensive programme by the Ministry of Health, however, is ongoing to address this concern.

One aspect of the Ministry's current efforts to curb maternal mortality and increase maternal health is closer working relationships with "traditional" birth attendants. This has led to more recognition of traditional healers and the provision of basic training for them in general maternal services. The Ministry has registered 89 such traditional caretakers, and has an ongoing programme for their further training. During 2002, 330 mothers were attended at birth by traditional maternal caregivers, representing 9 per cent of total births in Sāmoa that year.

Some of the reasons given by health officials and members of the communities for maternal mortality include the need by expecting mothers to recognize the special condition they are in when pregnant. Also, mothers and the family in general, must be aware of the potential difficulties this condition entails, and how important it is to recognize the value of health and life itself. Some mothers are lost through blood loss, late arrival at the hospital, lapses in maternal services, and the lack of financial and other resources for the mother to be properly cared for, and sometimes just being irresponsible.

General awareness education and training is seen as an important way to address the weaknesses mentioned above. This often requires participation by expectant fathers as well as mothers. Delivering such services requires cooperation between government officials of the Ministry of Health, village communities, and the individuals involved and their families. Awareness and the application of basic remedial actions such as sticking to a balanced diet, suitable exercise,

avoiding heavy work, regular medical checks, and avoiding harmful traditional massages are some of the basics that the Ministry is trying to instil through its educational programmes.

## 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases

This MDG proposes to *"have halted by 2015 and have begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS"* and *"have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases"*.

The general consensus by the communities and government health representatives at the workshop discussions was that Sāmoa had some other more pressing health problems than those specifically mentioned for targeting by this MDG. HIV/AIDS, however, was considered a potentially looming health disaster, and was therefore relevant. Other diseases that needed urgent attention in the case of Sāmoa, though, included hypertension, related heart problems, diabetes, obesity, various cancers, and other lifestyle diseases. Malaria, a major scourge in many tropical developing countries, is not a threat in Sāmoa.

The official count of those that have been infected with HIV/AIDS in Sāmoa between 1990 and 2003 is still stated officially as 12, eight having since died while four are alive and being treated. The cost of treatment medicine alone is estimated at around SAT28,800 per case per annum. These four cases are handled by the Ministry of Health, although it is claimed that there may be others who have sought treatment elsewhere themselves. Given this, it is possible therefore, that more than four HIV/AIDS infected persons live in Sāmoa.

The incidence of the HIV/AIDS in Sāmoa is therefore still relatively minor compared to some other countries. The main cause is still sexual

A number of Samoan families have set-up trusts and fundraising activities to help the community combat certain illnesses. The family of Lanuola Keil, who passed away after a long battle with diabetes brought to Samoa, in its 10-years of raising funds, NZ Idol winner Rosita Vai, Australia Idol runner-up Emily Williams for its 2006 fundraiser. Although not pictured but also performing in the show were Mary Jane McKibbin-Schwenke and rising Opera sensation Ben Makisi.

PHOTO BY SARAH JOHNSTON





GOVERNMENT'S MINISTRY  
OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DEVELOPED IN 2001  
"A COMPREHENSIVE  
STRATEGY FOR THE  
CONSERVATION AND  
SUSTAINABLE USE OF  
SĀMOA'S BIOLOGICAL  
DIVERSITY", AND IT IS  
CLAIMED THAT "AN  
INTEGRATED AND  
ORGANIZED APPROACH TO  
ADDRESSING  
BIODIVERSITY ISSUES  
IS IN PLACE". THIS IS  
ESSENTIAL TO  
ACHIEVING THE TARGETS  
SET BY MDG-7.



transmission, except for the case of two children who were infected through their mothers. However, another major source in the spread of the disease, especially from highly affected to relatively unaffected areas, is travel. Even small atoll countries of the Pacific with significant contingencies of sailors working cargo ships abroad have been targeted in prevention programmes. This can become an increasing concern for Sāmoa as well, although alcohol has been identified as the major problem thus far in this area.

Workshop discussants were at a quandary over aspects of the administration of HIV/AIDS programmes. For example, it is often the case that the “rights” of the person infected to confidentiality and a hidden identity is strenuously protected. However, it was also claimed that this can and has resulted in the spread of the disease elsewhere, when irresponsible carriers have passed on the HIV virus. Likewise, the cost of treatment is phenomenal, and comes mainly out of the public purse. Some views expressed favoured greater public awareness of these cases.

The Ministry of Health has had for some time ongoing programmes aimed at reducing the incidence of many of the non-communicable diseases mentioned above. It has been claimed recently, for example, that two out of every ten persons in Sāmoa may be diabetic. Epidemiological extrapolations also indicate a high and growing incidence of other lifestyle illnesses such as hypertension and related heart diseases, as well as stroke, asthma, diabetes and obesity. Comprehensive health programmes continue to combat these trends, but because they are rooted in the way people live, it continues to be an uphill struggle.

## 7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability

The main target under this MDG is to “*integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources*”. A second target is to “*halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation*”, and a third, “*by 2020 to have achieved a significant improvement in*

*the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers*”.

The Government has progressively over the past fifteen years built up its official institution responsible for safeguarding the environment, initially the Lands, Surveys and Environment Department, now renamed the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE). Over the same period, there has also been a community response to environmental degradation, with civil society responding with their own NGOs addressing concerns about the environment.

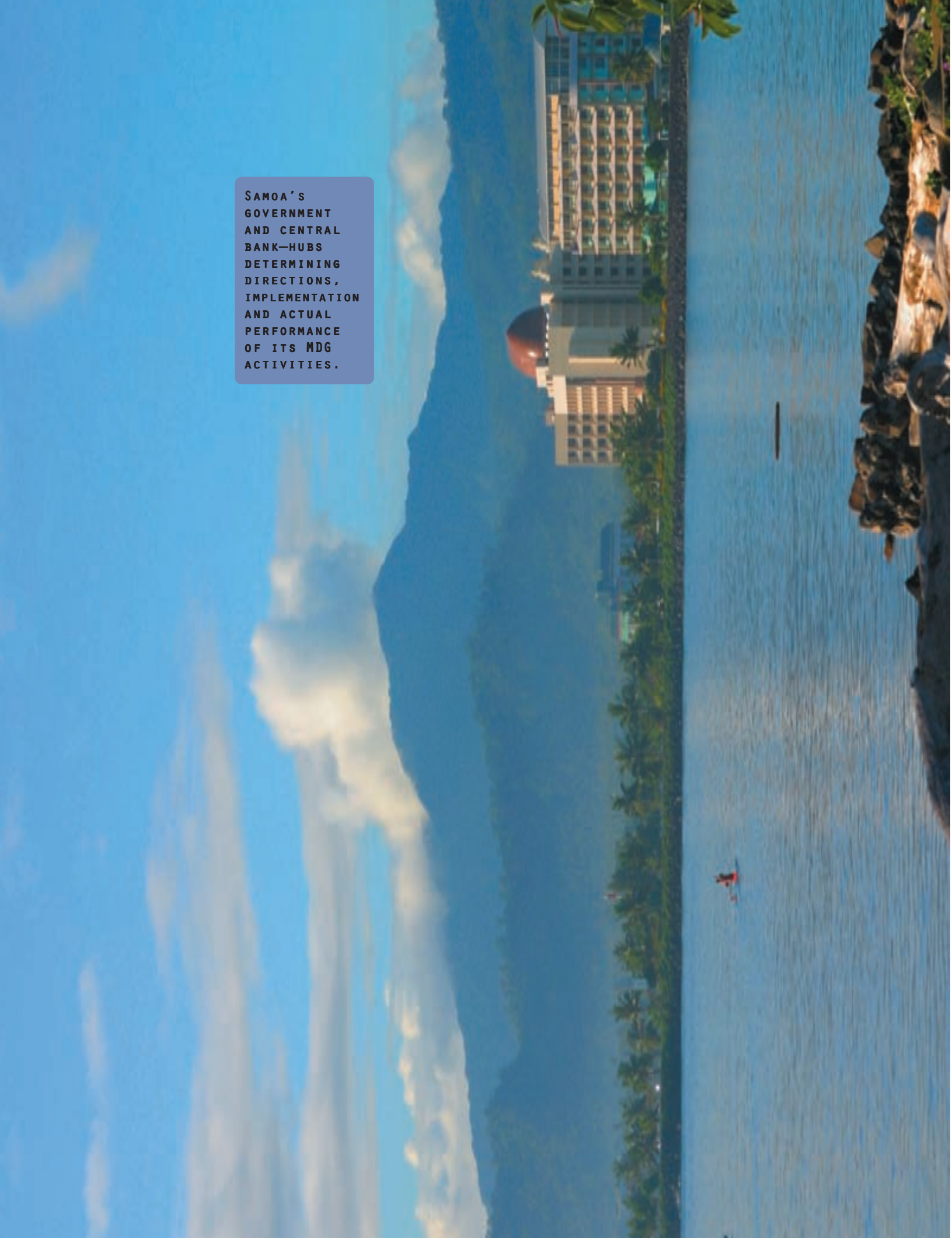
Deforestation continues to be a major concern. Most major electric energy generation had targeted the country’s major wetlands and water catchment areas. Yet again, there are current official plans to extend this exploitation from Upolu to Savai’i, with the only remaining major water catchments area in the country still free from electricity application finally being pursued. Commercial logging and agriculture expansion also continue to contribute to the reduction in forest cover. Occasionally, forest fires, cyclones, and in places the spread of invasive species, also provide threats to the ability of forests to regenerate.

The 1998 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has yet to be formally approved by Cabinet. This has continued to tint the real and genuine thrust of government policies concerning sustainable development and the environment. The current land for logging concessions granted to commercial loggers will run out soon. Because forest plantations developed by the government under its reforestation programme have been handed back to the communities, it is imperative that the capacity of communities to manage their forest resources, especially given the impending next round of arrangements with commercial loggers, need priority attention.

The MNRE developed in 2001 “*a comprehensive strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of Sāmoa’s biological diversity*”, and it is claimed that “*an integrated and organized approach to addressing biodiversity issues is in place*”. This is essential to achieving the targets set by this MDG. Nevertheless, it is also necessary, in addition to having such a strategy to also



**SAMOA'S  
GOVERNMENT  
AND CENTRAL  
BANK—HUBS  
DETERMINING  
DIRECTIONS,  
IMPLEMENTATION  
AND ACTUAL  
PERFORMANCE  
OF ITS MDG  
ACTIVITIES.**



The functions and regulatory apparatus of the Central Bank of Sāmoa have been enhanced.

Its regulatory responsibilities relating to international financial transactions and transfers have been developed in cooperation with similar financial institutions internationally.

Locally, its supervisory functions in relation to the operations of local commercial banks have been stepped up.

have the will and the means to implement it. Communities feel that the Ministry needs to work closer with NGOs and the wider community in implementing this strategy.

The energy and water sectors in Sāmoa, which contribute to environmental concerns in many ways, continue to be one of the fast-growing local industries. For example, they represented 2.5 per cent of GDP in 1995, 2.8 per cent in 1998, and 3.4 per cent in 2002, and accounting for growth during that seven-year period of 36 per cent, an average of 5.14 per cent per annum. Petroleum consumption, on its own, grew from approximately 43.1 million litres in 1989 to about 71.2 million litres in 1998, representing an increase of 65.2 per cent over that ten-year period.

The dramatic increases sustained by the economy's sectors mentioned above, in reality, are due in part to their initially low base. As well, in the case of electricity and water, these coincided with extensions to these services to cover most of the country, both urban and rural. The former traditional sources of energy, woodfuel and coconut residues, are also estimated to have declined drastically over the past few years with increasing monetization of the economy and a significant decline in purely subsistence activities.

The Sāmoa Water Authority was formally established in 1993. A number of major water improvement programmes were implemented prior to the establishment of the authority and since. These included a rural water supply project funded by the European Union (EU), maintaining freshwater quality at the community level projects funded by the International Waters Programme, a water metering project, a water-chlorination scheme for the greater Apia water supply, as well as others that have generally im-

proved the quality and availability of water to most parts of the country. Civil societies have also been active in some villages to develop clean community water supply systems.

However, cyclone damage and continuing land clearance are major threats to the ability of water catchment areas to hold water, as well as affecting the ability of remaining rivers to provide quality water. Sustaining the ability of catchment areas to provide adequate quality water will increasingly be a challenge with growing population pressures on both water use and agricultural land for development.

## 8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development.

This MDG sets out a number of targets for measuring progress. These are:

- i. Develop further an open rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system, including a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally
- ii. Address the special needs of the least developed countries, including tariff and quota free access for least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of bilateral debt; and more generous CDA for countries committed to poverty reduction
- iii. Address special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing states (through the programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly)
- iv. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of the developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term



- v. In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries
- vi. In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication

Like some of the other goals and targets discussed above, these measuring guidelines have varying application and relevance to Sāmoa. Others, however, are necessarily mostly government driven, and involve international relations and coordination and cooperation with other governments and international agencies. Some, though have specific relevance to local situations, such as the relationship between local government agencies and civil society.

Developing an open and rule-based and predictable non-discriminatory trading and financial system has been the objective of government reforms involving the financial sector over the past decade.

Important reforms have been made to the local financial environment, and the functions and

regulatory apparatus of the Central Bank of Sāmoa have been seriously enhanced. Likewise, regulatory responsibilities relating to international financial transactions and transfers have been developed in cooperation with similar financial institutions internationally. Locally, its supervisory functions in relation to the operations of local commercial banks have been stepped up.

Serious attention has also been paid to the subject of good governance, especially within the government and the public sector in general. Numerous workshops, and attendance at such training programmes overseas, have been the norm over the past five years.

A major institutional strengthening programme has also been in place for some years, aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the public sector. These programmes have been expensive, and their effectiveness difficult to measure. Only where actual service delivery has been delegated to a non-government implementing agency has the results been readily measurable.





Civil society is also generally of the view that more transparency and independent representation at corporate board level are necessary to ensure good governance. For example, because government companies, corporations and agencies are government owned, appointments to their boards of directors and to steering and advisory committees are typically made at the political level. In some cases, this process does not lend itself well to the expression of an independent viewpoint and availability of technical competence needed at this level by the client corporation.

Many of the UN-suggested measures to address the special needs of least developed countries are not strictly applicable to the case of Sāmoa, mainly because of the country's placement at the margin of those states labeled LDCs. Discussed under the section above on Sāmoa's economic situation, the country's official overseas indebtedness is regarded to be in fair shape. Official development assistance has also consistently been of significant volume relative to its

GDP and population. And the country continues to benefit immensely from the generosity of its people overseas.

Market access, on the other hand, is an area needing development. Touted as the means to economic growth, Sāmoa instead has been facing stiff opposition in Europe to its exports of 'ava. Neighbouring markets like Australia and New Zealand have stringent conditions for imports of various fruits, especially those demanded by the Pacific Island communities in these countries. In the case of these two countries, bilateral assistance in the form of technical and other services to help Sāmoa overcome these trade restrictions would be appropriate. In the case of the EU, it would have been in the spirit of the Doha agreements to provide assistance to establish finally the efficacy of claims for and against the use of 'ava.

Opportunities for opening up employment avenues for youth remain a major challenge for Sāmoa given its youthful population and restrictive local opportunities for employment creation.







THE AVAILABILITY OF  
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YEARS WITH THE  
AVAILABILITY OF  
TELEPHONY SERVICES. THE  
BUILDING BY TELECOM  
SAMOA OF A GSM NETWORK  
FOR LAUNCH IN MID-2006  
WILL INCREASE CELL  
PHONE COVERAGE TO 90%  
OF SAMOANS.

Import tariff reductions introduced to open up the economy has already had an impact on local manufacturers. Reduced duty rates have benefited consumers through cheaper imports. However, it requires applying major structural readjustment to the operations of local businesses that produce similar goods. The policy has materially shifted incentives towards construction and service industries such as tourism-related activities, and repair and maintenance services.

At the multilateral level, the opportunity for Sāmoans to migrate to developed countries like Australia and New Zealand will remain a real potential for extending opportunities for job creation. This is nothing new or extraordinary because these two countries have had a free flow of their labour forces between their borders for many years. An arrangement along these lines for Pacific island countries might have been considered under the recently negotiated PICTA and PACER agreements under the auspices of the Forum Secretariat. Likewise, there is potential to extending arrangements like the one under which Sāmoan sailors and other personnel are employed.

Because of the size of the local private sector, and also that of the public sector relative to industrial operations overseas, opportunities for negotiating arrangements for the cheap supply of medicines are limited, although opportunities exist, especially through arrangements with larger developing countries, and especially concerning generic medicine. The concern again, however, is one that is not so profound for Sāmoa given its current needs and state of its economy. Niches, nevertheless, exist for irregular arrangements with overseas manufacturers, suppliers and philanthropist organizations that facilitate and service such needs from time to time.

Extending the availability of modern technologies, especially those associated with information and communication, received major strides in recent years with the availability of telephone services to most areas of Sāmoa. Telephone lines, especially, have been significantly extended. Cellular phone coverage, however, has remained static for some years, and needs to ex-

pand manifold to reach most of the country. The use of personal computers has also grown impressively in recent years, including access to the internet. This includes their availability within schools around the country, and also their proliferation among users such as church ministers throughout Sāmoa.

### Role of International Development Agencies (IDAs), Government, and NGOs:

Bilateral and international development agencies have an important ongoing role to play in the development and the achievement of the MDGs in Sāmoa. The level of official development assistance, and the volume of development finance procured under softer than commercial terms, have continued to play major and pivotal roles resourcing basic infrastructure and long-term development projects in the country. Because of the low local savings rate, and also the dearth of opportunities to earn surplus income from exports and other economic activities, this situation is expected to persist long into the future.

Government's approach to the implementation of various social development and service functions in the country has also been undergoing some noticeable changes over the past decade. A number of service delivery agencies have been corporatized, with others commercialized. Some ministries have been relegated a more regulatory role, with the delivery of related public services consigned to commercial enterprises. The results have been positive, and there should be encouragement to do more of the same, targeting other ministries. In addition to strictly profit-oriented entities, however, there are numerous public services, especially those with more of a social nature, that can be effectively and efficiently delivered through non-governmental civil societies and organizations.

The formal arrangements for facilitating the identification and acquisition of financial resources for developmental programmes necessarily have to be coordinated through the government. This allows for a proper watch and tally of total resources availed to the country, especially



from bilateral and international governmental sources. Nevertheless, given the growing sphere of responsibilities and programmes tasked to various civil societies with appropriate competence, it must follow that, just like the overhaul needed when the functions of some key ministries were relegated to commercial interests, some of these primarily social functions - projects that can suitably be implemented by some NGOs - should be reviewed with a view to better smoothly facilitate the flow and timely utilization of resources, and the effective and efficient delivery of related services.

The partnership between IDAs, government and civil society in Sāmoa is based on very firm

grounds. Many of the government's service delivery are traditionally based on customary and social norms. Like its partnership with business, there are opportunities for NGOs and the government to also further strengthen their relationship. A major step has been made with the designation of a member of the Cabinet as the Minister for NGOs, the Prime Minister himself. Better defining and formalizing this relationship and partnership will result in enhancing effective communication and efficient service delivery.

The community view is that there are also opportunities for greater participation by NGOs at the governance level. Although members of civil society are routinely recruited to various special-



ized government task forces it is considered that such representation can be extended to the board of directors and advisory and standing committees of a number of government corporations and ministries.

Access, for example, to *ad hoc* government resources like income from gambling licenses, is one avenue for closer collaboration between civil society and the government in resourcing and delivering related social services.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Given the foregoing scenario, the following opportunities emanate from recommendations made on all the eight MDGs that came out of the two workshop processes and through the views shared in the meetings amongst members of the civil societies, village citizens, government, and NGOs. It is important to utilize the opportunities emanating from these recommendations to follow these up with the government, other identified development partners, NGOs, and with the village communities in particular to make sure that the peoples themselves are in fact the central focus of these eight MDGs and are receiving direct benefits from their implementation and targeted outputs and outcomes.

**MDG 1 :** It is recommended that more recognition and acknowledgment of the existence of “poverty of opportunities” is afforded in official government policy formulation and implementation so that the effect of development programmes aimed at alleviating these conditions are better targeted.

It is further suggested that the use of economic indicators like GDP per capita can distort the actual situation of many special groups in the population and that such indicators should be coupled with on-the-ground surveys.

**MDG 2 :** The conduct of preschools and other “pre-education” and non-formal activities are mostly undertaken by NGOs. Without these civil society services the goal of achieving literacy for all within the age group 5-14 years will not be achievable. It is recommended that more recog-

nition and assistance be given to these pioneering activities.

**MDG 3 :** The common use of the label “housewife” and “domestic duties” applied to womenfolk distorts the important and significant social and economic contribution made by women.

It is recommended that the description of “women” as used for economic categorization be reviewed, and that a more representative and impartial label such as “home managers” be developed that suits the local situation.

**MDG 4 :** Health programmes have been in place for some time aimed at reducing child mortality. It is recommended that greater accountability and transparency, in terms of service quality promotion and control, and in related professional education and training, be made a priority. Enhancing partnerships with traditional and NGO service delivery agents should be further enhanced.

**MDG 5 :** The existing programme that provides training by health officials for traditional midwives should be expanded and enhanced. Expansion should include training in other related aspects of health care other than aspects restricted to normal midwifery functions. Such an enhanced training programme would be more effective at the rural level if delivered in association with NGOs involved at that level, such as women’s committees. As well, with increasing urbanization, similar services may be necessary in newly densely populated urban communities.

A key employment destination for Samoa's youth population is New Zealand. All staff of New Zealand Immigration Services and New Zealand High Commission go on a Retreat in June 2006 to explore ways to service Samoa's public better. The retreat was led by NZ High Commissioner, H.E. Paul Adank.



**MDG 6 :** Because malaria is not prevalent in Sāmoa, it is recommended that health advocacy programmes should target more non-communicable diseases, including mental disorders, that are on the rise in the country. Instruction and awareness programmes to combat HIV/AIDS must continue.

**MDG 7 :** The longstanding issues of conservation and development continue to be controversial in Sāmoa. It is recommended that more transparency is necessary, and that the independent evaluation and review of development projects with potential adverse long-term impacts on the environment, should be encouraged. Approving and implementing EIA regulations

drafted some years back is an urgent need. Outsourcing government functions, especially so as to facilitate local community inputs, will contribute to sustainable development.

**MDG 8 :** It is recommended that the Government review and establish guidelines and routine procedures that steer relationships between the government and NGOs. This may involve an enhanced role for the umbrella of NGOs in Sāmoa, as well as policy and procedural processes in relationships with the Minister for NGOs being the Prime Minister himself and his Ministry. Such a review needs also to include policy and procedures with respect to the UN and other donor governments and agencies.

## Endnote

<sup>1</sup> Hinauri, Fo'isaga, Palanitina, Rula, To'ia, Lofi.







MDGS AIM TO PROVIDE  
BETTER LIFESTYLE  
FOR THE WORLD'S  
PEOPLE IN THE 21ST  
CENTURY WHILE  
PRESERVING ITS  
CULTURAL DIVERISTY  
AND TRADITIONAL  
UNIQUENESS FOR EACH  
OF ITS MEMBERS.

# Glossary

## GLOSSARY OF SĀMOAN WORDS [A–F]

afioga	a polite term by which an <i>ali'i</i> is acknowledged and greeted
aga'ifanua	traditions particular to a village or place
aganu'u	traditions recognised generally throughout Samoa
āiga	family
aitu	ghosts/spirits
ali'i	chiefs
ali'i ma (and) faipule	matai of the village council
alofa	love
ao	head titles of traditional Samoan districts
ata	pictures
auāluma	married and unmarried village women/girls
'aumaga	polite word for untitled men
ava	kava
fa'alavelave	traditional occasions (such as wedding, funeral, matai title conferring ceremony, church building dedication, and so forth)
fa'aaloalo	polite
fa'afeagaiga	polite word for village pastor
fa'alupega	honorifics, ceremonial greetings
fa'amasei'au	defloration ceremony
fa'amatai	matai system
fa'asāmoa	Samoa way (or Samoan culture)
fa'atamāli'i	chiefly qualities, traditional presentation of gifts(sua)
fa'atonu	head elder pastor in a matāgaluega of the Congregational Christian Church
fa'aulufalega	dedication of a building
fafine lāiti	wives of untitled men
faife'au	pastor
faife'au toe'ina	elder pastor in the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa
faletua ma tausī	wives of <i>ali'i</i> and <i>tulafale</i> respectively
feagaiga	brother/sister relationship
felagolagoma'i	cooperate
fesoasoani	catechist, to help
fono	council, meeting
fono a le 'autoe'ina	council of elders of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa
fono tele	annual conference of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa

## GLOSSARY OF SĀMOAN WORDS [K–S]

komiti tūmamā	women's health-related committee(s)
komiti tūmau	standing committee
koneferenisi	annual conference of the Methodist Church of Samoa
Loto Taumafai	literally, trying soul/heart, but it is the name given to the School of the Blind
malaga	custom of visitation
mālosi	literally strength, but it is also the collective name given to the untitled men of a village
manaia	beautiful, nice; son of a chief
matāgālua	a division of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa
matai	chief, who could either be an <i>ali'i</i> or <i>tulafale</i>
matai fa'avae	principle or founding <i>matai</i> title
mātini	various kinds of foods that were placed near the beaches to await the arrival of the gods
mātutua	elders, senior members
nafa	responsibilities
noni/nonu	a plant that produces the noni (or <i>nonu</i> ) juice
ola	life, alive, survive
ola fa'asoa	life of sharing
oloa	product of male labour
oloa gaosi	traditional goods
pālagi (or papālagi)	white person; European
pisupo	corn beef
pule	authority
pūlega	regime, governance, division of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa
pūlega a ali'i ma faipule	collective authority of village chiefs
pule ma tumua	traditional power centres in Savai'i and Upolu Islands respectively
pulenu'u	village mayor
sa'o	principle <i>matai</i> title of a family
saofa'i	<i>matai</i> title conferring ceremony
saofa'iga	social organisation
siapo	tapa cloth
si'i	traditional presentation of gifts
sinoti	synods



## GLOSSARY OF SĀMOAN WORDS [S–V]

si'osi'omaga	surrounding
siva	dance
susuga	general honorific given to any person; sometimes it is used as a special acknowledgement given to certain <i>matai</i> titles and/or certain persons
ta'alogā ma faiva	traditional games and recreational activities
ta'amu	elephant taro
tafa'ifā	one who holds the four high ranking titles of Samoa which are Tamasoāli'i, Gatoa'itele, Tui Ā'ana and Tui Ātua
tagata	person, human being
tālā	Samoan currency
tamāo'āiga	economy
tamāli'i (or ali'i)	chief
tama fafine	female line
tama tane	male line
tapua'iga	worship
taulāitu	spirit medium
taulele'a	untitled men
taupou	belle
tausa'afia	popular, admirable
tausi matua	caring for elders
tautua	service
tetea	albino
toa	brave
tōfā ma le fa'autaga	opinion (or counsel) of <i>ali'i</i> and <i>tulafale</i> respectively
tulafale	orator
tupu	king
tusigā igoa	registration of names when donating money for a particular project
umusaga	dedication of a new building
va ma faā	relationships and genealogical connections
vaivai	defeated party, weak
vailolo	green coconut

# Annexes

## ANNEX 1: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX 1981-2001

1981	Adult Literacy	Combined gross enrolment ratio	Education attainment	Life Expectancy	Life expectancy index	GDP per capital (US\$)	GDP index	Human Development Index
Sāmoa	97.0	83.0	0.923	62.6	0.626	1151	0.407	0.651
Male	97.0	81.4	0.918	61.0	0.600	1151	0.407	0.641
Female	97.0	84.7	0.929	64.3	0.655	1151	0.407	0.663

1991	Adult Literacy	Combined gross enrolment ratio	Education attainment	Life Expectancy	Life expectancy index	GDP per capital (US\$)	GDP index	Human development index
Sāmoa	95.7	85.7	0.924	64	0.65	2975	0.566	0.714
Male	95.5	83.9	0.918	63	0.63	2975	0.566	0.705
Female	95.9	87.9	0.929	65	0.67	2975	0.566	0.722

2001	Adult literacy	Combined gross enrolment ratio	Education attainment	Life expectancy	Life expectancy index	GDP per capital (US\$)	GDP index	Human development index
Sāmoa	98.2	86.1	0.942	72.8	0.797	5005	0.653	0.798
Male	98.0	84.4	0.935	71.8	0.780	5005	0.653	0.790
Female	98.5	88.0	0.950	73.8	0.813	5005	0.653	0.805

Source: Various Population Censuses 1981, 1991, 2001; Fairbairn 1981; Treasury Department 1981

## ANNEX 2: HUMAN POVERTY INDEX

1981	Percentage of people not expected to survive to age 40 (P1)	Percentage adults who are illiterate (P2)	Percentage people without safe water	Percentage underweight children < 5 yrs	Deprivation in living standard (P3)	Human poverty index
Sāmoa	14.4	3	19	15	17	13.8
Male	15.4	3	19	15	17	14.2
Female	12.9	2.9	19	15	17	13.3

1991	Percentage of people not expected to survive to age 40 (P1)	Percentage adults who are illiterate (P2)	Percentage people without safe water	Percentage underweight children < 5 yrs	Deprivation in living standard (P3)	Human poverty index
Sāmoa	10.3	4.3	10	18	14	10.9
Male	10.1	4.5	10	18	14	10.9
Female	10.4	4.1	10	18	14	10.9

2001	Percentage of people not expected to survive to age 40 (P1)	Percentage adults who are illiterate (P2)	Percentage people without safe water	Percentage underweight children < 5 yrs	Deprivation in living standard (P3)	Human poverty index
Sāmoa	8.1	1.8	9	16	13	9.4
Male	9.7	2.0	9	15	12	9.6
Female	6.5	1.4	9	17	13	9.4

Source: Life Expectancy from Life tables 1981, 1991, 2001 + SPC calculations for 1991; Censuses of Population 1981, 1991, 2001; MoH & WHO report

### ANNEX 3: GENDER DEVELOPMENT INDEX

1981

	1	2		3	4			5			9
	Share of population (%)	Life expectancy at birth	Life expectancy index *	Adult literacy rate	Combine gross enrolment ratio	Educational attainment index *	Share of economically active population	Ratio female to male non-agricultural wage	GDP per capital	Equally distributed income index	GDI
Male	51.8	61.0	0.641	97	81.4	0.865	85	100	1151	.499	0.668
Female	48.1	64.3	0.613	97.1	84.7	0.887	15	100	1151	.499	0.666

1991

	1	2		3	4			5			9
	Share of population (%)	Life expectancy at birth	Life expectancy index *	Adult literacy rate	Combine gross enrolment ratio	Educational attainment index *	Share of economically active population	Ratio female to male non-agricultural wage	GDP per capital	Equally distributed income index	GDI
Male	52.4	63.5	0.683	95.5	83.9	0.877	68	100	2,975	.499	0.686
Female	47.5	65.5	0.633	95.9	87.9	0.905	32	106	2,975	.499	0.679

2001

	1	2		3	4			5			9
	Share of population (%)	Life expectancy at birth	Life expectancy index *	Adult literacy rate	Combine gross enrolment ratio	Educational attainment index *	Share of economically active population	Ratio female to male non-agricultural wage	GDP per capital	Equally distributed income index	GDI
Male	52.1	71.8	0.715	98.0	84.4	0.888	69	100	5,005	0.499	0.736
Female	47.9	73.8	0.74	98.5	88.0	0.914	31	106	5,005	0.499	0.728

Source: 1: Population census ; 2: Estimated from census; 4, 5, 6: Census combined with NPF data; 7: Censuses; 8: Calculated using formula; Some of the figures have been estimated.

### ANNEX 4: GENDER EMPOWERMENT MEASURE

	Share of population (%)	Ratio of female to male non-agricultural wage	Ratio of female to male average wage	Male & female share of earned income	Male & female share of economically active population	Percentage share of parliamentary representation	Percentage of administrative & managerial positions held by gender	Percentage of professional & technical positions held by gender	GEM
Male	51.8	100	100	66.1	85	98	81	64	
Female	48.1	106	138	33.9	15	2	19	36	

1991

	Share of population (%)	Ratio of female to male non-agricultural wage	Ratio of female to male average wage	Male & female share of earned income	Male & female share of economically active population	Percentage share of parliamentary representation	Percentage of administrative & managerial positions held by gender	Percentage of professional & technical positions held by gender	GEM
Male	52.4	100	100	66.1	68	96	80	53	
Female	47.6	146	127	33.9	32	4	20	47	

2001

	Share of population (%)	Ratio of female to male non-agricultural wage	Ratio of female to male average wage	Male & female share of earned income	Male & female share of economically active population	Percentage share of parliamentary representation	Percentage of administrative & managerial positions held by gender	Percentage of professional & technical positions held by gender	GEM
Male	52.1	100	100	62.9	69	97	70	60	
Female	47.9	106	138	37.1	31	3	30	40	

Source: Population Censuses 1981, 1991, 2001; Ministry of Finance, Legislative Assembly. Some of the figures have been estimated.



## ANNEX 5: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

	1971			1981			1991			2001		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Total population	78,639	73,344	151,983	81,027	75,322	156,349	84,601	76,697	161,298	92,130	84,718	176,848
Average annual population growth rate	-	-	0.7	-	-	0.6	-	-	0.5	-	-	0.9
Average population density (per sq. km)	-	-	55	-	-	56	-	-	58	-	-	63.5
Urban population (% of total)	20.8	21.4	21.1	20.9	21.5	21.2	20.9	21.4	21.2	21.5	22.4	22.0
Population under age 15 yrs	38,340	34,906	73,114	34,114	32,715	69,239	34,331	31,138	65,469	37,639	34,339	71,978
Population 65 yrs and above	1,464	1,439	2,227	2,227	2,509	4,736	3,086	3,262	6,348	3,636	4,268	7,904
Total fertility rate	-	6.7	-	-	4.9	-	-	4.7	-	-	4.3	-
Life expectancy at birth	59.6	63.4	61.4	61.0	64.3	62.6	63.5	65.5	64.5	71.8	73.8	72.8
Crude birth rate	-	-	37.4	-	-	31	-	-	30	-	-	29.1
Crude death rate	-	-	7.9	-	-	7.4	-	-	4.3	-	-	5.5
Rate of natural increase	-	-	2.95	-	-	2.36	-	-	2.57	-	-	2.36
Migration rate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-10.7

Source: National Censuses 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001; Demographic & Health Survey 2000.

## ANNEX 6: HEALTH: COMMITMENTS AND CHALLENGES

	1981	1991	2001
Population with access to health services (%)	70.9	89.5	88.5
Population with access to adequate sanitation (%)	79	90	89
Population with access to safe water (%)	81	90	91
One-year olds fully immunised (%)			
Contraceptive prevalence (%)	12		31
Births attended by trained health staff (%)	63		
Population per doctor <sup>3</sup>	2476		
Population per nurse <sup>3</sup>	406		
Infants with low birth-weight (%) <sup>4</sup>			
Protein-Energy malnutrition (PEM) in children < 5 yrs (%) <sup>4</sup>	5.1% moderate; 1.8% severe (1979)		15.8% moderate; 2.8% severe (1992-4)
Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)	37	25	17
Under 5 yrs mortality rate	46		
Maternal mortality rate (deaths per 100,000 live births)			
People living with HIV/AIDS	0		
Govt spending on health as % of all govt. spending			
Govt spending on health as % GDP	10.6		

Source: Department of Health Annual Report ; National Censuses 1981, 1991; <sup>3</sup> AIDAB; <sup>4</sup> Adams & Sio 1997.

## ANNEX 7: EDUCATION: COMMITMENTS AND CHALLENGES

	1981			1991			2001		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Net primary enrolment (5-14 yrs)	88.7	90.1	89.4	92.7	93.7	93.2	94.1	95.7	94.9
Net secondary enrolment (15-19 yrs)	60.6	69.7	64.9	66.1	75.3	70.3	59.7	67.2	63.1
Total gross enrolment	81.4	84.7	83.0	83.9	87.9	85.7	84.4	88.0	86.1
Adult literacy	97	97.1	97	95.5	95.9	95.7	98	98.5	98
Expenditure on primary education as % of all public expenditure on education									
Expenditure on secondary education as % of all public expenditure on education									
Expenditure on tertiary education as % of all public expenditure on education									
Govt spending on education as % of all govt. spending					15.4			23.1	
Govt spending on education as % GDP									

Source: National Censuses 1981, 1991, 2001. Notes: Adult Literacy rate: As there has been no national literacy survey, this is calculated from population censuses.

## ANNEX 8: THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

	1981			1991			2001		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Child population (under 15 years)	36,524	32,715	69,239	34,331	31,138	65,469	37,639	34,339	71,978
Children as % of the total population	45.1	43.4	44.2	40.6	40.6	40.6	40.8	40.6	40.7
Youth population (aged 15-24 years)	18,787	17,109	35,896	19,706	16,221	35,927	17,055	14,874	31,929
Youth as % of the total population	23.2	22.7	23.0	23.3	21.1	22.3	18.5	17.6	18.1
National median age	-	-	17.0	-	-	18.7	-	-	19.6
School enrolment ratio (6-14)	88.7	90.1	89.4	92.7	93.7	93.2	94.1	95.7	94.9
School enrolment ratio (15-24)	60.6	69.7	64.9	66.1	75.3	70.3	59.7	67.2	63.1
Unemployment rate (20-24) (%)	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.3	2.6	1.7			
National unemployment rate	0.25	0.37	0.25	1.54	3.15	2.05	4.40	6.15	4.95
People under 25 years as % all prisoners									
Youth suicide rate (per 100,000 population) <sup>2</sup>				65	70				

Sources: <sup>1</sup> National Censuses 1981, 1991, 2001; <sup>2</sup> Booth 1998.

## ANNEX 9: THE SITUATION OF WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY

	1971			1981			1991			2001		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Life expectancy at birth	59.6	63.4	61.4	81.4	84.7	83.05	63.5	65.5	64.5	65.4	71.9	68.4
Infant mortality rate						37			22	17.8	16.7	17.3
Heads of households (%)			100	81	19	100	83	17	100	84	16	100
Adults separated, divorced or widowed (%)	5	13	9	3	11	7	3	10	7	4	12	8
Average age at marriage										27.4	23.9	25.8
Gross school enrolment ratio				81.4	84.7	83.0	83.9	87.9	85.7	84.4	88.0	86.1
Average years of formal education												
Adults with post-secondary education (%)				3	2	2	5.1	4.6	4.9	11.1	9.3	10.3
Economically active adults (%)				62	12	37	76	39	58	67	32	51
Unemployment rate	10.66	57.37	18.57	0.25	0.37	0.25	1.54	3.15	2.05	4.40	6.15	4.95
Unpaid family workers % of economically active adults	61.7	16.8	39.2	39.9	7	34.9	66.7	64.9	66.2	51.2	35.6	46.5

Sources: National Censuses 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001.



## ANNEX 10: EMPLOYMENT AND LIVELIHOODS

	1971			1981			1991			2001		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Economic activity rate (age 15-60)	31,078	6,336	37,414	62	12	37	76	39	58	67	32	51
Gender share of adult work force	83.1	16.9	100	84.8	15.2	100	68.3	31.7	100	69.4	30.6	100
Employment in agriculture (% of total)	69.3	24.2	61.7	68.9	15.9	60.9	71.5	64.3	69.2	42.0	12.8	33.1
Employment in industry (% of total)	16.5	5.3	14.6	8.9	6.1	8.5	8.2	4.2	6.9	18.1	37.0	28.7
Employment in services (% of total)	2.3	11.9	3.9	22.5	77.8	30.8	18.7	28.3	21.8	29.4	42.0	33.2
Unemployed (% of total)	10.7	57.4	18.6	0.2	0.4	0.2	1.5	3.1	2.1	4.4	6.1	4.9
Employers (% of total)	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.4	0.5	1.3	1.2	1.2	0.6	0.6	0.6
Employees (% of total)	34.7	78.5	56.6	35.9	87.1	61.5	26	31.6	27.8	44.9	59.1	52.0
Self-employed (% of total)	3.4	4.3	3.8	23.1	5.7	14.4	5.9	2.1	14.8	4.1	4.6	4.4
Unpaid family workers (% of total)	61.7	16.8	39.2	40.0	6.8	34.9	66.8	64.9	66.2	51.2	35.6	46.5

Sources: National Censuses 19971, 1981, 1991, 2001.



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