

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **POLICY MAKING IN WESTERN SAMOA**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Policy making in Western Samoa is influenced by four broad and significantly different sub-systems. First, traditional pre-colonial political institutions and social structures have a direct impact on policy formulation in all facets of Samoan society. Secondly, there is the role of the Church. Most Samoans are Christians and various denominations are present in the villages. Christian principles are referred to frequently by Samoans to justify and influence opinions and actions. The other two sub-systems, instrumental in the modernisation process and the introduction of Western ideas are the business sector and government, particularly through the bureaucracy. Since the thesis focuses on bilateral aid relations between Australia and Western Samoa, an understanding of traditional, socio-cultural factors is critical to an understanding of bureaucratic and political processes. These two sub-systems merit specific elaboration.

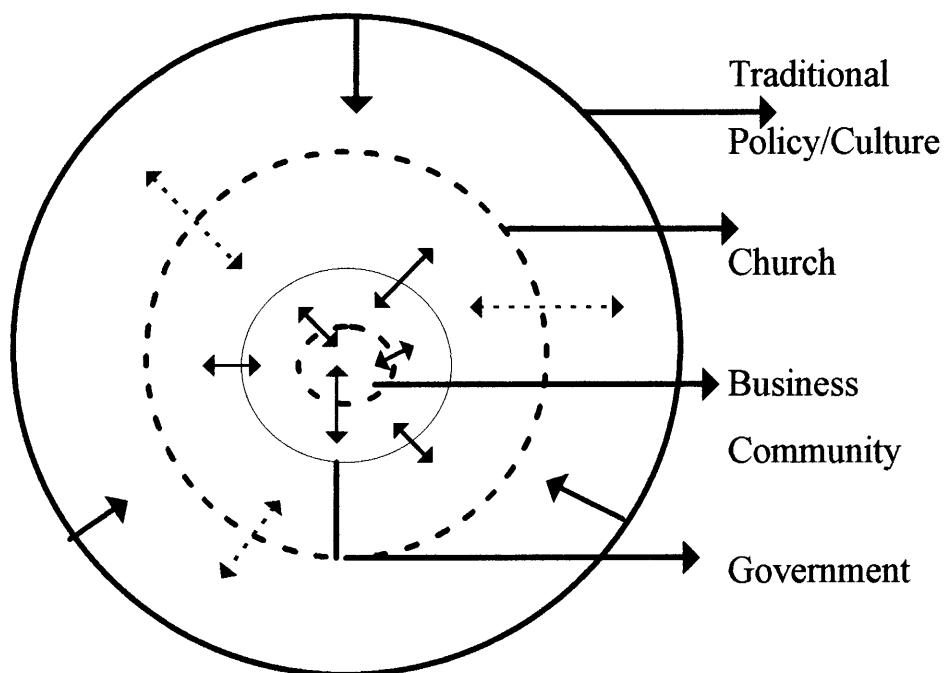
The purpose of Chapter Five is to examine the process of policy making in Western Samoa. This background information is necessary before the analysis of the selected case studied. The investigation is concerned with the interface between processes, structures and institutions of government. The thesis asserts that development policies evolved by Samoans tend logically to be more relevant to Western Samoa than prescriptions by Australia. Given this assertion, the policy making process must discuss the contemporary structure of policy making in Western Samoa.

### **5.2 CONTEMPORARY POLICY MAKING STRUCTURE**

Since colonisation and the subsequent institution of a Western type governmental system, Samoan traditions and Christian values have been embodied as foundations of present day Samoa. The preamble of the Constitution of Western Samoa (1962) states: "Western Samoa should be an Independent State based on Christian principles and Samoan customs and traditions". These factors are fundamental to all activities and at all levels in Samoa. As Figure 5.1 demonstrates, Samoan traditions and customs form an overarching system which dominates every aspect of life in Samoa, even in the domains of government and bureaucracy. Samoan traditions and customs have been affected by values of the introduced sub-systems.

Figure 5.1 by the author illustrates the overall structure of policy making in Western Samoa.

**Figure 5.1: Policy Making Structure in Western Samoa**



**Source:** Matagialofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

**Note:** Arrows showing the interaction of the Traditional systems and Government are more significant than those of the Church and the Business Community in the national policy arena. The arrows indicate the sub-systems' influence over each other and unless their variables are incorporated into the policy making process, development efforts will continue to exclude and frustrate some segments of the population. The size of each sub-systems also indicates the impact each has on the policy making process.

### 5.3 TRADITIONAL POLICY MAKING

#### 5.3.1 Traditional Polity

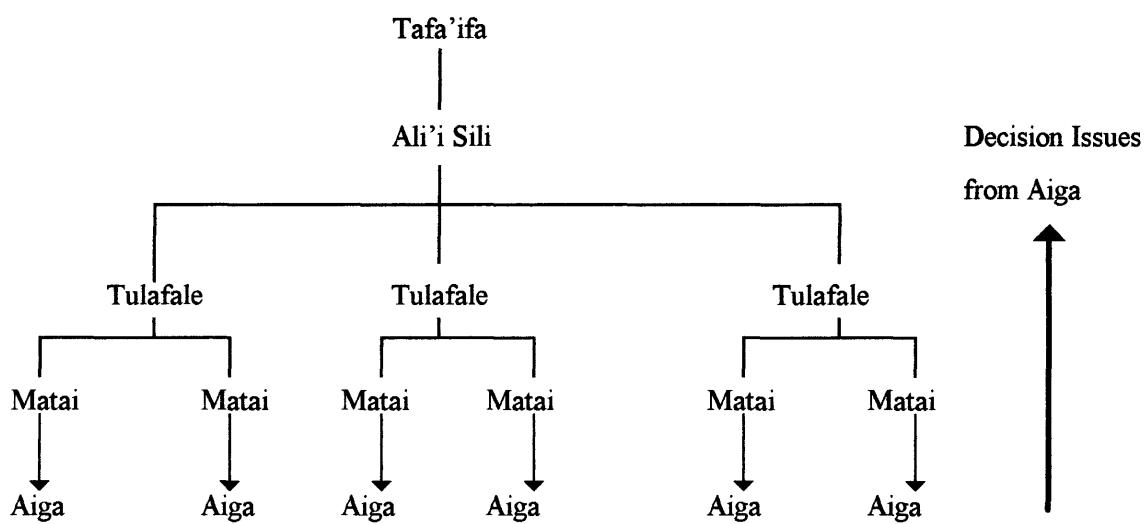
*Faa-Samoa* or the Samoan way of doing things derives from communal pride in retaining the traditional structures which 'emphasise rank and the aggressive defence of ancient privileges' (Freeman 1983, 273). The *faa-Samoa* functions on the structural framework of:

the *aiga* and the *nu'u* and the authority of *matai* and *fono*, new practices, ideas and goods could be accepted and incorporated into it so that either the system remained unchanged in its essentials, or else was not perceived to have changed fundamentally (Meleisea 1987, 17).

In that regard, the approach to policy making is largely a by-product of traditional social structures, customs and political institutions centred on the *aiga* and village *fono*. The centrality of the extended family, as a core political institution, ensures its crucial role in policy making. But it is the ‘council of *matai*, or *fono* which make decisions on all village matters beyond the scope of individual *aiga*’ (Meleisea 1987, 7).

At the village level, policy making rests with heads of the extended family, in most cases a *matai*. Both men and women have equal access to *matai* titles, though the practices of the German Land and Titles Commission undermined the significance Samoan custom accorded women (Meleisea 1987, 81). A *matai* is selected upon the consensus of the extended family. Apart from various tasks entrusted to the *matai*, he/she also represents the family at the village *fono* (Chapter Two for more information). The hierachal structure at the village level also applies at the national level. This traditional arrangement illustrated in Figure 5.2 impacts on the quality of policy making in the government sphere. As such, the policy decisions are determined and affected by Samoan values.

**Figure 5.2: Traditional Social and Political Structure**



**Source:** Matagialofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

**Note:** Issues or potential problems within the traditional system derive from the aiga or the lower level of the political unit. Compare this to Figure 5.5 illustrating the process within the introduced system of government where issues derive from the top-down. Once again this is a misfit and a hindrance during the implementation of aid programmes and projects particularly at the village level where local people are not well informed of the obvious differences.

The traditional social and political structure had five levels, but the uppermost, the *Tafa'ifa*, no longer exist leaving four functional levels. These levels indicate the status of each group of people. At the very top are the highest ranking chiefs, the *Ali'i Sili*. Some villages have only one high chief but in most cases there might be two or three, and several individuals can share one title because of title splitting. The second level consist of oratory chiefs, or *Tulafale*, who speak and perform most duties on behalf of the high chiefs. At the third level down are the young *matais* who are bestowed *matai* titles in recognition of their '*tautua matavela'* or services. Everyone else who is not a *matai* constitute the last strata of the pyramid. Distinct divisions at village level are more complicated than Figure 5.2 depicts because of many subdivisions among women and men alike (Section 2.2.2).

As indicated by Figure 5.2, issues and matters of concern are raised by extended families and voiced by their representatives during the village *fono*. Although it is a hierarchical system, most concerns derive from the bottom levels of society. Once the meeting is over, the family representative communicates the outcome to everyone through elderly family members. Everyone is informed of the decision and respects it. For example, curfew times at evening prayers is good example of this decision making process. Young *matais* and untitled men guard the village during curfew to ensure that everyone respects the decision by the village *fono*. A hefty fine (ie. fine mats, food and money) and other disciplinary measures (ie. physical labour) agreed upon by the village *fono* can be served on anyone who does not conform.

A decision by the village *fono* is unwritten law in the village: disobedience by any member of the family results in severe reprimands and punishment of the whole family. Traditional sanctions imposed by the village *fono* on a family covered range from death to banishment from the village. Since the acceptance of Christian values, the death penalty is rarely pronounced, though an exceptional incident occurred on September 25, 1993 whereby a *matai* from *Lona*, a village of *Fagaloa* district was killed upon the directions of the village *fono* (Ah Mu, 1993, 17). The deceased had refused to contribute to village matters and defied village council decisions. The incident again raised the 'issue of individual rights against traditional authority of *matai* on which the *faa-Samoa* is based' (Ah Mu, 1993, 17). The case challenged the legitimacy of government authority versus traditional authority. Comments by the Police Commissioner reflected sentiments amongst village people thus, 'you and I know there's a contradiction in authority.'

If you're a Samoan you obey Samoan laws,' (Ah Mu, 1993, 17) laid down by *matai*, although these sometimes clash with the constitution or *palagi* laws.

Societal norms and values expect everyone to co-operate and participate in the implementation process irrespective of roles. Involvement of young *matais* applies equally to the policy formulation and implementation stage. An essential feature of traditional Samoan practices is the continuous presence of *matais* to ensure the policy is implemented. This practice reinforces family cohesion and the communal spirit of collective effort for the good of everyone. Furthermore, it denotes respect and acceptance of the social structure. If a family member disagrees or resents a decision, the *matai* and family elders impose sanction considered appropriate.

The importance of the *matai* system has been undermined by two common contemporary practices; the multiplication of titles and title splitting. Title multiplication has been practised widely for the purpose of expanding or creating more voters or '*matai palota*'. A large number of these *matai palota* have very little appreciation of and understanding of the *faa-Samoa*. This practice is insignificant now given the acceptance of universal suffrage as a more representative system of voting. Title splitting on the other hand is again very common with diverse agenda by members of families. At present, the obvious motive by competitors for titles is to have access to family land, prestige and status. Contrarily, titles are splitted because families see benefit and recognition to the family by having title holders with good education, professional standing, good orators and leadership qualities and because of one's past service. Both these contemporary practices affected the qualities that are normal and desirable or proper of being a *matai*. To some extent title splitting and title multiplication have affected the cohesiveness of village management and authority vested in the *faa-matai* and the village *fono*.

At the national level, attainment of centralisation involved warfare between different districts or islands. This political structure complicated the process of maintaining any degree of centralisation (Davidson 1967). Nevertheless, its traditional decision making system encourages consultation and a fair hearing for representatives of the families. Stevenson (1892, 3-4) wrote 'important matters are debated in *fono*... debated I say not decided' (quoted from Meleisea 1987, 16). In instances where deliberations extend over several days without reaching a consensus, the highest ranking chief(s) makes a decision, *viz*

decisions were taken by a process of debate, negotiation and compromise, in which the paramount chief of the *nu'u* was but one voice in the achievement of consensus. (Meleisea 1987, 16).

The highest ranking chief explains the reasons for pursuing a particular option and usually a meeting ends with consensual agreement being reached. In the event that some participants disagree, they remain silent and consensus is assumed. The process largely acknowledges one's rank, authority, respect and social standing associated with the title, and one's ability. An outsider might label the process as authoritarian. But the authority derives from respect for a fearless and able leader chosen by the family through laborious and comprehensive procedures for selection of a *matai*.

The process described above seems simple but in reality, policy making in Western Samoa is intense and may well lead to abusive and aggressive behaviour (Freeman 1983). Contemporarily, *matais* are becoming more individualistic, accumulating wealth instead of redistributing it. Power and authority associated with one's rank, knowledge of *faa-Samoa* and material wealth are exploited by some *matais* to make calculated and manipulative decisions (Wendt 1977; Meleisea 1987; Theroux 1992). Through the misuse of power and authority the consultative process is often undermined resulting in family feuds and divided loyalties.

Generally, the system operates on the idea of reciprocity. The same principle applies to policy enforcement. Traditionally returning a favour can take many forms, reciprocating a similar favour or helping a relative, friend or colleague. It may not be immediate and may not benefit the individual providing the original favour. It could take years before one reciprocates kindness.

### **5.3.2 Socio-cultural factors**

Socio-cultural factors affect the policy process as noted in Sections 2.2.2 and 5.3.1. Any Samoan would go to considerable lengths before a decision is made to ensure that family honour and dignity is not affected by the action pursued. If an individual family member brings disgrace and shame to the family, one is likely to be disowned or asked to seek refuge with other relatives elsewhere. Many suicide cases in Samoa are caused by conflicting values and beliefs between two generations whereby many victims either refuse to conform or are shamed by collective unacceptability. Family honour and dignity cut across one's status and social standing in society. And since a policy decision is a collective action, in return the respect and honour bestowed is collective. However, as we will see in later paragraphs, using a family as a decision boundary does not hold well as its cohesiveness has been eroded by the influence of external factors.

The extended family is fundamental to Samoa's traditions and culture. During funerals, marriages and bestowal of titles, recitation of genealogies by orators reveals family connections and one's purpose of being there. Apart from family linkages, orators should possess exclusive knowledge of village '*faalupega*'.

The importance of '*faia*' or lineage is not confined to the family setting, its significance extends beyond family to the work place. And because of networks, things get done on the basis of 'who you know'. Networking and kinship connections are therefore very crucial variables in policy implementation.

As already indicated reciprocity is a central socio-cultural factor which largely influences traditional policy making. Reciprocity is a practice common to Samoan traditions and customs be they concerned with social, political or economic activities. The practice is responsible for the relatively equal distribution and redistribution of material possessions. Traditional wealth is circulated from family to family, thus the extremes of rich and poor, visible in most societies, are almost non-existent. Reciprocal practice is an acceptable societal norm whereby someday the beneficiary of one's actions will return the favour. According to Meleisea (1987, 52), the practice represents "not objects but qualities - respect, prestige, gratitude, deference, recognition, obligation and so on."

Reciprocal practices are respected and expected in the Samoan context. Some may claim however that the notion is also associated with Christian beliefs of "do unto others what you want others to do onto you", or as the Samoans believe, "*E sili le manuia o le na te foai nai lo na te talia*". This traditional belief is linked to the Christian value of mutual love and helping your fellow beings, and the belief that those who help others are much more blessed than those who receive.

On the political front, reciprocity is fundamental in maintaining the *status quo* and keeping society stable, though foreign observers found the practice to be demeaning and exploitative (Meleisea 1987). But reciprocity is so central to the *faa-Samoa* that it cannot be criticised as a form of bribery unless exercised excessively during election. Tupua versus Moananu after the 1991 election is an example. Moananu won the election but the Tupua camp challenged his victory in court, accusing him of excessive gifts and food presentation to the district before the 1991 election. The court ruled in favour of Tupua and his supporters, and Moananu lost the ballot. This case once again evident the contradiction in how *faa-Samoa* is interpreted in the context of the introduced legal system, when Samoan custom accepts reciprocity as part of its culture.

Having discussed the impact of traditional political institutions, customs and social structures, this thesis will demonstrate that policy making in the Samoan context exhibits considerable reciprocity even in the domain of government. Reciprocity is further perpetuated by Samoans' acceptance of Christian beliefs.

## 5.4 THE CHURCH(ES)

Within the parameters of this thesis, the Church plays a significant role in two areas. As discussed in Chapter Two, its educational drive during colonial days accounts for the 98 per cent literacy rate of the total population. Secondly, it contributes significantly but indirectly to decisions at the village and national levels. Christianity replaces Samoans' strong beliefs on supernatural power. A classical example is Nafanua's (supernatural figure and a *Tafa'ifa*) prophecy to Malietoa when he demanded a share of the *malo* (the authority of conquerors). Her reply to Malietoa was *tali i lagi sou malo*, "wait your turn would eventually come from heaven" (Meleisea 1987, 13). The arrival and acceptance of missionaries by Malietoa in 1830 is referred to by orators and seen by Samoans as fulfilment of this promise.

The Church was responsible for converting the Samoans from their traditional wars. Since 1830, when the Samoan leaders accepted Christian values and beliefs, nobody has held the *Tafa'ifa* title. As such, Samoa national polity therefore has lacked the centralisation observed in other Polynesian nations. A single ruler was replaced by a Saviour (Davidson 1967; Meleisea 1987; Hills 1994).

Christian values are often cited as factors minimising intense confrontation between groups. For instance, when MP Maimoaga Matatumua crossed the floor criticising government's legislation which limited newspaper freedom of expression, she responded 'sometimes we do wrong' but 'this is a Christian country and when Christ was criticised and crucified, the lesson He gave was to forgive.' (Aiavao, 1993, 58). Although on numerous occasions MP Matatumua was criticised by the press, yet she voted against the bill.

The Church became a catalyst for peace in the transitional period from Samoan civilisation to Western influx and colonisation. Its presence in 300 villages is respected by everyone including the highest ranking chiefs. On average, there are four to five different denominations in every village. Most prominent are the Congregational Christian Church (formerly LMS), the Methodists and the Catholics. Although church ministers do not preside in village *fono*, they indirectly influence decisions of senior *matais*, particularly when problems arise. Their advice tends to follow Biblical teachings, but also to merge Western Christian ethics with Samoan values and beliefs. The actions by Church pastors at the killing at Lona (1993) and a similar case at Falelatai (1980) are examples of how the Church intervenes in village decision making. The following extract demonstrates the strength of village authority and role of the Church:

While Tariu and his family were pleased with the Court ruling, it failed to reinstate them in their village, or obtain the money which the village was ordered to pay. Furthermore, the boycott of Tariu's buses was reinforced by the *fono* with threats of even harsher penalties for those who violated it.

In December 1980 the *fono* made good its threats. A *matai* Nanai Likisone was seen riding on one of Tariu's buses and was reported at the next meeting of the *fono*, which decided to impose one of the severest punishments known in the village of Falelatai. Taulele'a (untitled men) were sent to Nanai's house with a rope with orders to tie him up and to bring him before the *fono*. Other *taulele'a* were instructed to light fires in preparation for making a big *umu* (ground oven) to put Nanai in when he was brought over.

When the *taulele'a* arrived at Nanai's house they tied him up, put a stick through his legs and hands and dragged him down...from his house. Nanai was saved only when the village pastor from the Christian Congregational Church ran up and physically lay across Nanai, and refused to move until Nanai was released...Nanai was advised..to go and live in town until the anger over the incident subsided (Meleisea 1987, 217).

Generally, the Church's influence on policy has been dominant but has not escaped reinterpretation to suit the Samoan notion of legitimacy. The conflict between Christianity and traditional values and beliefs lies in individualism values of the Church *vis-a-vis* communism values of Samoa. Both cases cited above reveal the conciliatory role of the Church at village level.

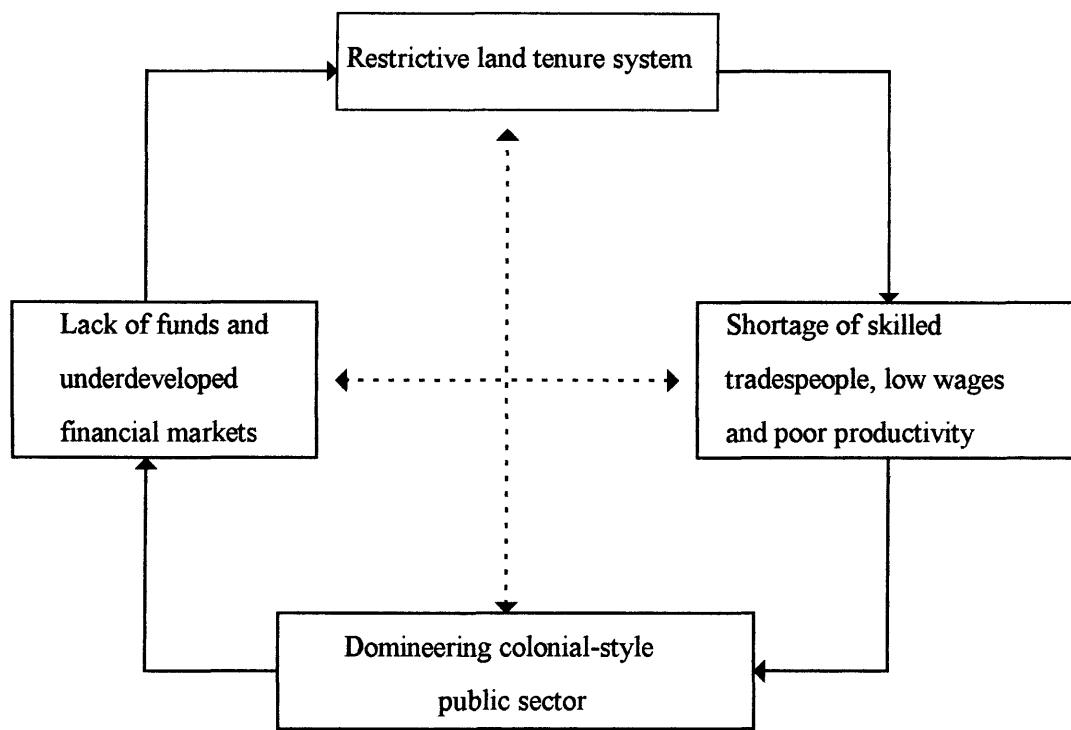
To a certain extent, the Church influence on government and business is reflected in work practices; for example, Sunday is a day of rest, or employees may take leave to attend a Church retreat. The Church and other agents of modernisation are alien forces that now co-exist with the *faa-Samoa*.

## 5.5 THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The development of the business community after colonialisation was slow and *ad hoc*. There was some commercialisation of subsistence farming practices and during the period of German colonisation cash employment slowly became a feature of both towns and villages. Individual store owners rented stores in villages, exchanging imported goods for agricultural produces like copra. Most trading in early times was conducted by half-caste Samoans. There was no remarkable shift in the business sector during the occupation by New Zealand except the redirection of trade from Europe to New Zealand. The niche markets dominated by half-caste Samoans during pre-independence are now occupied by Samoan Chinese and Samoans. The presence of foreign investors was minimal until the 1980s.

The business sector's contribution to policy making and political life has been restricted by many constraints as illustrated by Figure 5.3.

**Figure 5.3 Private Sector Constraints**



*Source:* Matagialofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

The business sector is small (Section 2.2.5). Its foundation was primarily agriculture, reflecting the narrowness of natural resources. Although the business sector has great potential, commercial farming is restricted because of the land tenure system and the rigid practices protecting customary land ownership. Apart from land restriction and endogenous constraints in Section 2.2.1 there are external constraints such as fluctuating world market prices, unreliable shipping services, isolation from markets and the inability to compete with big producers of tropical fruits (banana and pineapple) such as Australia and Central American countries.

The second major constraint is the small size of the financial market and the limited funds available for investment resulting from the inability of Samoans to save, poor incentives offered by financial institutions; and high taxation levels (WB Report 1993; AIDAB Report 1994a). The contradiction of two sets of values is again a major obstacle in business development; rigidity of lending policies of financial institutions versus land tenureship. Most Samoans have no assets apart from communal land which is unacceptable to guarantee a development loan because of reasons discussed in Chapter Two. Even if the commercial banks allow communal land as a form of collateral, the Central Bank controls their lending ability minimising the availability of capital for development.

The third obstacle is the limited availability of skilled labour and the emigration of able workers because of poor wage levels in Western Samoa. Most people migrate because opportunities overseas in career prospects and personal satisfaction are perceived to be much better than at home. Despite the claim by Bertram and Watters (1985) that migration and remittances can be a net advantage to development in island nations such as Western Samoa, the propensity to consume places a severe limit on saving and investment. Samoans inability to save is not a superficial statement lifted from analyses of some aid donors, it is the truth. One may equate savings to housing and community projects such as churches and schools, but these forms of development depend on loans. There is a saying in Samoa that if one does not loan, one cannot have any development. It is indicative from the existing lending policies that it is easier to loan to a community or many people because repayment is affordable. These elaborations correspond with the second point that Samoans would see it fit to ignore loan repayments in preference for Church contribution. If loans are the only means to development and repayment is seen as saving it is debatable whether contributions to communal projects rather than immediate responsibilities is seen as saving let alone development. Even though migration can result in foreign earnings through remittance, overall it does not contribute to development (Maiava 1988). Both the public and the private sectors suffer from shortages of skilled labour which in turn affect productivity levels.

The last and perhaps the most influential restraint upon the ineffectiveness of the private sector is the overpowering role of the public sector (WB Report 1991; 1993). The Western Samoa public sector devised by the New Zealand administration may have been appropriate at the time but has had an adverse effect on development because of government monopolisation, and because systems, legislation and structures have become outdated. This is discussed below.

Consequently, there has been inadequate performance by the private sector or business community generally. Traditional practices, customs and Samoan spirit, *fiafia puupuu* (short term commitment), further reinforce the above restraints on businesses. It is commonly accepted among Samoans that Samoans tend to give up easily when things do not work out according to plans. For instance, in the 1980s when the price of passionfruit was very high, farmers ignored other crops and concentrated on passionfruit production (Table 2.2). The high price of passionfruit was associated with the success of the Food Processing Laboratory owned by the government. Once passionfruit price dropped, most neglected their farms accounting for nearly zero production; meanwhile some were paying outstanding loans. Since most small industries depend on the agriculture sector, any uncertainty affects the sustainability of a particular industry. This Samoan attitude, coupled with very high rates of domestic consumption for family, village, church ceremonies, leaves very little savings for reserve capital in bad times. Europeans have observed that critically:

...the particular drawback of the Polynesian system is to depress and stagger industry. To work more there is only to be pillaged: to save impossible (Stevenson 1892, 17).

...one of the drawbacks in this country is the prevailing communism but how can a sound idea of individual property be cultivated if the local authorities presume that they must dictate what may and may not be done by people under their jurisdiction in matters which concern their personal welfare and economic development (Dr. Wilhelm Solf, Governor of German Samoa, to Alipia, 31 August 1900).

Communism is the foundation on which all Samoan customs and social privileges are built; they are expected to divide what they have among their relatives and friends...All industry is checked, stifled and turned into ridicule by the pernicious system of communism (Trood 1912, 3-4)

(cited by Meleisea 1987, 4).

In the legislative environment, the influence of the business community on the policy process is minimal because it lacks coherence. On the other hand, most large family businesses have allied with and supported the government in return for participation in public projects. Most recently, the government has contracted private firms to implement some major projects involving huge sums of money. The financial magnitude of these infrastructural projects are hardly available in the private sector. Therefore, their lack of coherence and impact on the policy process derive from competition for a small market and the tendency amongst many to accept whatever government decides. The absence of organised pressure groups and ineffective unions in most private businesses (except Yazaki) reflects contradictions with Samoan customs and values. The whole process has little help from the media especially with limited freedom since the passing of the Newspapers and Printers Act 1992/1993. The following extract from an Australian observer illustrates the impact of socio-cultural factors on the policy making process in Western Samoa:

Call it what you will. But the truth is, there is a thing that is more powerful here than power itself. That thing is called respect. Respect your elder is the first lesson a kid is given when he starts to speak, and it stays with him until he dies. Respect will make Samoans suffer in silence, restraining them from protesting. Lawmakers are elders, leaders, and they therefore command respect. That is part of the reason people do not protest loudly (*Samoa Observer*, 14 January 1993:3).

The protest against the government's Value Added General Sales Tax (VAGST) policy organised by *Tumua* and *Pule* (traditional political centres) with the help of the Opposition leaders led to the amendments of taxes on imported goods and utilities though the 10 percent VAGST is retained. From different parts of the country, 10,000 supporters travelled to Apia camping in front of government buildings for nearly two weeks (*Samoa Observer*, 15 March 1994). This incident once again testifies two

things; (a) the strength of Samoan traditional polity and (b) the powerlessness of the business sector to influence Government in view of the unnecessary workload put on business owners. Communal cohesion and Christian teachings are probably the most influential variables on policy processes, although there is a conflict of emphasis, collective versus individual values between these two.

## **5.6 MEDIA**

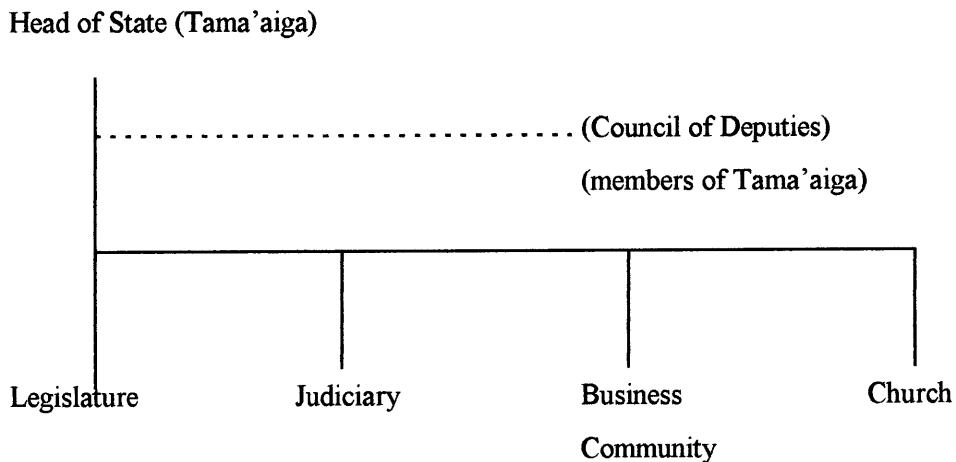
As indicated above, the role of the media to scrutinise government performances is insignificant. Unlike Australia, the press (Televise Samoa, the Savali Newspaper and the Broadcasting Department (2AP) are all government entities. Apart from providing entertainment, their purposes are primarily for political propaganda. For instance, news items promote the caring image of government and views on any government policy is confined to government only. The public and the opposition party are never questioned for their views and any slight indication of disloyalty by employees to Government result in immediate dismissal. Two television employees were dismissed in 1995 over the reporting of the protest by Tumua and Pule. Once again, the authority vested in the institution of government seems to be undermined by those in power using Samoans values as justification.

The freedom of any private newspaper to check and report on any government action is hindered by the enactment of the Newspapers and Printers Act 1992/1993 which demands disclosure of sources. There have been instances in which government has sued newspaper owners for not disclosing their sources. The authoritarian government in power has through legislation prevented this democratic process - freedom of the press. This lack of checks in the system again prohibits a critical assessment of government and therefore any means of improvements are hard to come by.

## **5.7 THE STATE AND THE BUREAUCRACY**

Connel and Irving (1980) perceived the state as an 'overarching power structure within society'. Since becoming a colony, this power structure has developed to include a mixture of traditional and Westernised institutions. Despite the fact that the state apparatus is modelled along Western ideas, elements of traditional polity and culture are incorporated into the structure. These are summarised in Figure 5.4. Western Samoa inherited a Westminster type of government in the aftermath of colonisation. Like many former colonies, Western Samoa's structural component is a hybrid of Westernised political, economic and legal systems, and traditional polity.

**Figure 5.4: Mixed State Apparatus**



**Executive**

1. Prime Minister
2. Cabinet
3. Public Service

*Source:* Matagialofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

The former emphasises individual rights, whilst traditional institutions favour communal property and sharing. Within the government sphere, operating policies are expected to be based on impartiality, objectivity and loyalty to the organisation, yet employees were groomed in the Samoan way and therefore objectivity and impartiality are difficult to penetrate a systems where loyalty is primarily to supervisors, families and friends. Undoubtedly, government is still seen as foreign concept, as such, loyalty and obligation seen in the family setting is not forthcoming in the government sphere. The following extracts from the CCA's Report are indicative of such practices:

The reason for the unlawful, unaccounted and unauthorised usage of Public Works Department machinery and plant for about 7 months in 1993 for logging operations of New Samoa Industry, without anyone in the Department stopping it or bringing it to the other Government Authorities notice, can now be more fully understood. This work was for the direct benefit of persons who appear to be either children or immediate relatives of the Minister of Public Works, Minister of Post Office and Minister of Labour.

Significant Trust Funds were advanced by the Public Trustee to Public Trust Office staff on unsecured bases and on rates of returns below what could be earned on other investment alternatives. Total advances of this nature made was \$169,333 (by 31 Dec. 1992 these escalated to \$302,643. At 31 Dec. 1993 this was \$368,871).

Those benefited most from this improper and unlawful act were the Public Trustee himself and his senior-most staff.

CCA's Report (1993, 75,83).

The co-existence of these two systems with vastly different orientations has an adverse effect on policy formulation and implementation by government. Conflicting perspectives relate to issues of property rights, legitimacy of the law and individualism as against indigenous ideas of consensus, communal property, and reciprocity. These conflicting perspectives deter the realisation of development priorities.

Any hope for success in adopting Weber's (1947) prescriptions for an ideal bureaucracy (Section 4.4) is dashed by the Samoans' argument for traditional customs and Christian beliefs. According to Meleisea (1987, 76), these contradictions were observable from the German administration up to the present. The following comments quoted from the CCA's Report (June 1993) exposing corruption in the government services used Christian beliefs and customs as scapegoat:

We find it difficult to carry out our duties and responsibilities in accordance with the laws when there is this relationship between the Minister and the requests from villages. We have to carry out what the Minister instructs us (Mechanical Plant Manager 1993, 72)

We are sad if our service has not been good but our aim is to serve the Government based on Christian principles and the customs of Samoa. (1993, 72)

#### Findings (e)

This is happening because of mismanagement, management failure, collusion and now dangerous existing position whereby the administrators and policy makers are fused together with their separation no longer observed (1993, 74)

#### Findings (f)

Section heads and management within the Department need to be significantly retrained in their role as managers and administrators for programs, policies and projects set down by the Government of the day (1993, 74)

They must be clearly made to understand they have specific Departmental functions and duties prescribed by law to carry out and that the unguided application of the *faa-Samoa* and Christian principles one respondent indicated, in the performance of such functions for the Government would actually lead to corrupt and improper practices, to the detriment of the Government and its people (1993, 74).

Though the government structure represents a Western political system, the election of Parliamentarians was, until 1991, based on Samoa's *matai* system (Section 2.2.4). Although all Members of Parliament are now selected on the principle of universal suffrage, 45 seats are selected from territorial constituencies where a candidate must be a *matai*. Therefore, the *matai* system is still incorporated into the Western system of government. Consequently, their loyalties and obligations are directed initially to their families and supporters. Effectively, the majority of politicians are more concerned with party politics and protecting immediate locality than national prosperity:

But like several other situations in the recent history of Western Samoa, when family and village interests clash with national interests, Samoans put their family and village interests first. (Meleisea 1987, 213).

Most elected politicians lack commitment and responsiveness to public issues because of limited experience and lack of higher education, and are poorly informed of development issues involving legal and technical language. These inadequacies are bridged by the advisory roles of senior bureaucrats. Although the architects of modern government were influenced by Western designs, the author observed that, those at the hubs are *matais* whose reasoning and conduct are conditioned by Samoan values. Their relation with bureaucrats will be influenced by Samoan values such as 'obey and respect your elders'.

### 5.7.1 The Bureaucracy

In Chapter Four, Weber's (1946, 1947) notion of bureaucracy is described as centring on the concept of rationality (Section 4.4). Such rationality emphasises acceptance of four basic elements of bureaucracy - a system of rules, a hierarchy of authority, specialisation and impersonality. Weber's mechanical view of bureaucracy subjects employees to the organisational structure, system and rules. Its imposition on a non-Western system results in frictions. The Western Samoan bureaucracy reminds one of the Biblical story of two brothers, Jacob and Esau: a Western skeleton which operates according to Samoan values.

The bureaucracy is very powerful because it is the major employer and has the most diverse and largest range of technical and professional personnel in the country. Its extensive involvement in overall development guarantees its control on the policy formulation and implementation process. Its stratified structure resembles traditional control and the authority of the *matais*. Authority and control are characteristics essential to the *faa-Samoa*. The bureaucracy's most direct power base has been with the influence of the professionals through their advice to policy makers. Since the appointment of Departmental Heads on a contractual basis became effective in 1990 the reverse is happening; policy-makers' influences

on the bureaucratic scene are more noticeable and brutal. The absence of a check and balance mechanism previously vested in the Public Service Commission is a disregard of proper accountability procedures. This is not a criticism of the initiative but it can easily become a carrot situation where politicians use it to achieve their agendas. This very issue has been the core theme of the CCA's Report emphasising that the separation of power between the politicians and administrators is not observed:

The practice by the Minister of Works where he issues instructions directly to personnel in the Department who administratively reports to the Director of Works is a major control weakness and a source of considerable uncertainty and confusion, by Departmental employees.

It appears that many such instructions including irregular and improper ones, are made by the Minister and actioned by operating personnel without, it appears, the knowledge of the Director who is responsible for the Departmental Budget, and its lawful spending.

Under these circumstances, the door is wide open for corruption, mistakes, misuse of public monies and stores and other improprieties to occur within the Department which is difficult, if not impossible, to detect or control.

(CCA's Report 1993, :77).

Findings by the CCA is not peculiar to the PWD, the absence of the fine demarcation line between politicians and bureaucrats weakens the objectivity and honesty of bureaucrats. Most Departmental Secretaries/Heads found themselves torn between upholding bureaucratic ethics and respect for political leaders who after all determine their contracts.

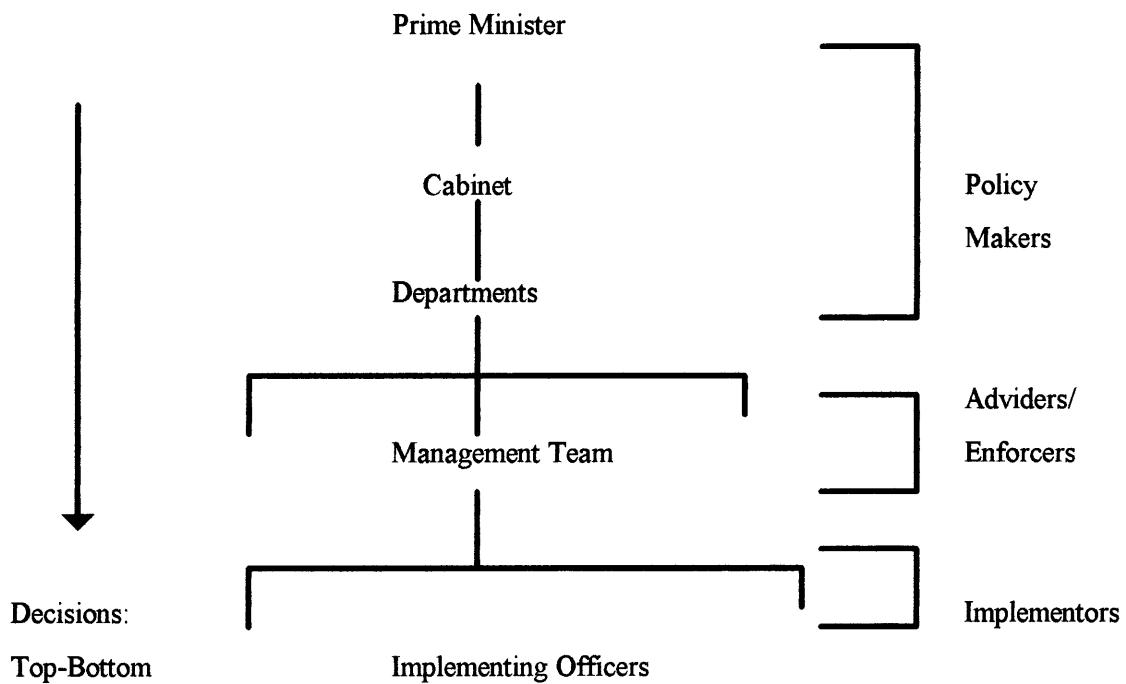
One area where Government's control has tightened in recent times is information. Information is power. It is a powerful tool filtered, manipulated and distorted by politicians and bureaucrats to achieve preconceived agendas and mobilise public opinion. Jacoby (1973:1) wrote:

every bureaucracy tries to increase the advantage of its professional administrators by keeping secret its expertise and its intentions. The tendency of bureaucratic administration is to exclude the public.

Exclusion of the general public results in most policy decisions drawing on incomplete and therefore biased calculations. This theme will be discussed in greater detail in Part Three of this thesis, drawing on selected case studies. Figure 5.5 summarises the policy making structure in the Western Samoa bureaucracy.

Typical bureaucratic policy making machinery employs a formal top-down approach conforming to rules and hierarchy of authority. This is often undermined because of extensive networks among government employees, or otherwise utilised for empire-building against other agencies or to support friends and families.

**Figure 5.5: Executive Arm of Government**



**Source:** Matagialofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

**Note:** Compare this Figure with Figure 5.2

Therefore instead of team effort, consultative processes and professionalism, it creates departmental rivalries. As will be discussed in later chapters such power games and rivalries were/are continuing because of limited resources and centralised controls between Treasury and PSC and line departments, and between the WSTI and the Department of Education main office.

A second feature of bureaucratic policy making is that policy makers are hardly ever involved in the implementation of a decision. Equally so, the Heads of Departments who advise on and enforce policies are often overseers with vague knowledge of problems during the implementation process. This is one of the common complaints by expatriates who were recruited as advisers yet end up being operational managers. As the policy matrix indicates, decisions are implemented at the ministerial levels by officers. Management's involvement is minimal until problems occur which may require some modifications to

original plans. The absence of decision makers during implementation leaves most on-site decisions to the discretion of the implementing officers. In instances where officers are not well briefed on policy decisions, outcomes could run counter to expectations and goals. And when problems do arise, management relied on the advise by implementors

The monitoring of progress of farms was left to the extension officers on an undocumented basis. These extension Officers are not independent of the location they are responsible for; they reside there.

This enhances the risk of collusion and favouritism. Some evidence suggests, has occurred, on an extensive basis.

We have noted that some bonuses have been submitted and paid twice. A case also was noted where payment was made for bonus in the first list submitted but the same plantation was resubmitted in the second list under the farmers son's name, and also paid. (CCA's Report, 1993, 24).

Theoretically, the very nature of bureaucratic behaviour is founded on the ethic of individual achievement and performance. This has its positive advantages to the organisation but policy formulation and implementation involves many advisers/analysts who have different attitudes (Section 4.7.4, McGrew and Wilson 1983, 8). The danger therefore in carrying out a decision depends on individual implementors' interpretations and willingness to co-operate with the management. It is not unusual in bureaucratic settings to have employees whose orientations and dispositions contradict a decision made. A more common feature where implementation fails so often is that of personality clashes and inter-ministerial disputes and power grabbing. Inter-ministerial differences are identified as the most common obstacle responsible for undermining the successful implementation of a policy. Differences often arise during the budget screening process, or because of reforms involving functional reshuffling and pure ideological differences.

A last feature associated with bureaucratic policy making is the organisational norm of keeping policies and decisions confidential. Most policy decisions by Government are not adequately communicated to the grassroots level simply because bureaucrats see information as assets of the organisation available only to its employees. This practice has been highlighted during interviews as a weakness of effective aid policy between Australia and Western Samoa. In fact, so much paper work in government offices could be dramatically reduced if policies were simplified and communicated widely for the information of the general public. The Western Samoan public service is renowned for keeping policy decisions closely guarded and only referring to them when the need arises. In most instances, treating policy decisions as

confidential matters because of personal interests can have negative impact on achieving organisational goals. Progress happens through accepting other alternatives and others' ideas.

The impact of socio-cultural factors filters through the formal system. Doing favours in return for a favour in the bureaucratic arena is common in Western Samoa and widely practiced especially by those in influential positions. This is a societal practice which has become an acceptable organisational norm. The established code of conduct and bureaucratic ethics differ to the Samoan ethos. This point brings to mind a comment by a New Zealand engineer who was very frustrated with the bureaucratic operations. He claimed that:

Samoans do not observe proper channels of communication at the work place and yet for some reason things get done (Pers.comm. Dec. 1993).

Observations like this are evident everywhere in the Samoa public service. Networking and family connections are short cuts the Samoans resort to even at the workplace. This defies the logic advocated by Max Weber of rationality and impartiality.

In a similar position to government, the bureaucracy is foreign to the traditional socio-political system. Subsequently, it encounters many obstacles because its ethical values contradict the local situation. Employees are far from being objective and neutral in performing their tasks when the social structure and culture hinges on communal spirit. (Refer to the above comments by the CCA). If anything, the malfunction of the Western Samoa bureaucratic machinery boils down to contradictions between the structure and employees' attitude to work. There is considerable evidence of this such as employees absenteeism and the lack of commitment to work. Absences and leaves are usually not preplanned and they adversely affect organisational productivity. This cultural aspect is most frustrating to supervisors.

But, on the other hand, socio-cultural variables can also work positively. It is not unusual to hear that, 'to get things done and avoid bureaucratic red tape' depends on one's networking amongst those who matter. The main artery of the Western Samoan bureaucracy is 'who you know not what you know'. This is the reason why bureaucratic employees tend to stay in government service, not only to provide an extension of family influence in vital positions but also because it satisfies individualistic aspirations which are clearly not encouraged elsewhere in Samoa. Policy making in the Samoan bureaucracy is based on the principle of 'don't rock the boat too much', because the consequences might be too harsh. Things tend to happen through disjointed incrementalism and therefore changes are marginal.

Not surprisingly policy making in the Western Samoa bureaucracy has a tendency of being introverted. This is because bureaucrats are too busy protecting their self interests, most lack vision and anticipation of changes in society. A comment by an Australian supplementee of the much needed catching up one does after spending two years in Western Samoa is not surprising. Isolation and poor media coverage of international changes means delayed appreciation of new initiatives. This is why so many bureaucrats and policy makers delayed making major decisions because they are busy searching for feasible policy options. Apart from that, the tendency within the Western Samoa bureaucracy is to 'wait and see' sort of mentality leading to a reactive and defensive approach to policy making. This theme is explored further in Chapter Nine.

## **5.8 THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTS AND THE WESTERN SAMOAN SCENARIO**

As mentioned in several instances earlier on, the policy making process in Western Samoa is determined largely by socio-cultural and political variables rather than by economic rationales.

Chapters Two and Five demonstrate adequately that the policy process in Western Samoa can be classified as patriarchal authoritarian. This authoritarianism is legitimised by customs and traditions where respect, especially for elders and leaders, guide one's actions. Effectively, policy outputs are results of Samoan socio-political processes rather than party politics. For obvious reasons, policy changes are infrequent because of obvious reasons.

Firstly, an introduction of major changes happens gradually, over an extended period of time unless forced onto government, mostly by external forces such as aid donors or natural disasters. But as mentioned in Chapter One this does not mean changes will not happen. For example, during the 1980s WSTEC's operations incurred enormous financial loss to government, yet no action was taken until 1989 when the WB insisted on structural adjustments affecting WSTEC's land holdings. In particular, land (under utilised) was sub-divided and leased out to individual farmers for productive use. Incidentally, the land tenure system has often been criticised as a constraint to progress (See Section 2.2.2).

Secondly, the policy making processes experience minimum pressure from electoral demands, media scrutiny and active pressure groups. Any opposition to government policies is debated mostly in Parliament. This policy making structure derives from the village *fono* style where issues are debated and resolved. Generally, introduced forces or sub-systems discussed in Chapter Five played an insignificant role in the policy process. Grafting *faa-Samoa* onto the institution of Parliament accounted for the clashes of

systems whereby guideline procedures are sometimes undermined (Section 5.5.2). The CCA's Report (1993, 79) alleged the failure by Government to comply with Parliamentary requirements demonstrated authoritarianism:

Is the institution of the people, Parliament, upholding the rights of the people in this case, by forcing Governments to report back to Parliament and account for their performances and uses of public resources and funds as stipulated by Act of Parliament, and can Parliament or individual Parliamentarians or the public have any recourse to force Governments in default, to comply with such a fundamental requirement of the people? (CCA's Report 1993, 10).

*This fundamental accountability requirement by Parliament and the Public has not been complied with in at least, the last thirteen years* (CCA's Report 1993, 13).

The above comments, and the public's support for Tumua and Pule question the representational validity of the policy process in light of defined governance functions and accountability procedures.

The authoritarian approach is possibly viable in the macro sphere of policy making where traditional leadership qualities are required. Such qualities are beneficial when there is internal instability. But when it comes to foreign policy issues such as aid, proactiveness and awareness of international mechanisms is vital. As such the government relies on the advisory capacity of senior bureaucrats. Bureaucrats' advice is fashioned by their values and procedures set down by the system of government, and sometimes creates conflicts with politicians. Effectively the apparent dysfunction in the policy process derives from the inconsistencies of two co-existing systems (*faa-Samoa* and foreign institutions) and between people with different dispositions and degree of attachment to these systems.

From the above discussion, one can conclude that the operating forces within the Australian policy making process are vastly different to those found in the Western Samoa situation. Policy outputs in Australia derive from a balance representation of various sub-systems such as organised pressure groups, freedom of the media which are less politicised, well informed electorates, developed information systems, greater tolerance of individual preferences and values, and overall a more accountable government machinery. All these forces or sub-systems are protected and encouraged by the presence of realistic legislation. This is hardly the case in Western Samoa as already discussed. Further analysis of Australia and Western Samoa's policy making processes viz models will be found in Chapter Nine.

In the aid policy environment, Australian policies are based on economic rationales for reasons mentioned already and further discussed in Chapter Eight. Australia has identified clearly its aid policy objectives as

discussed in Section 3.5 and in the analyses of Case Studies. Guidelines and processes are laid down and clarified for AIDAB personnel and recipient bureaucrats to follow. And quite often programmes and projects are considered in association with other on-going projects and in relation to Australia's strengths.

In comparison to Western Samoa, national development policies are determined on the basis of their 'political' appeal. Generally, the political will is often used interchangeably with the personal will, as noted in several instances above. Whilst there is a development statement indicating priorities and strategies, they are very broad and, as indicated in Section 2.3, these have hardly changed over the last decade. There are no benchmarks to guide the decision making process knowing which projects or programmes can be submitted for donors' consideration. This shortcoming is further disadvantaged by a rather loose management and administration of aid. Although there is an Aid Co-ordinating Committee of Government, evaluations and assessment is shallow and largely clouded by a bias opinions of Foreign Affairs who is the Secretariat. Some objectivity and in-depth technical analysis from Treasury and implementing departments, who have the relevant background and appreciation of the projects/programmes, would have strengthened and improve the co-ordination of the process. In conclusion, policy making in Western Samoa, be it in the aid arena or otherwise, differ vastly to the Australian scenario for the following reasons. Policies are less holistic, based on political and personal interests, make irrespective of any solid criteria and guidelines and are largely fragmented.

## 5. 9 SUMMARY

The discussion has attempted to highlight variables which influence the policy making process in Western Samoa. This discussion concentrates on four major sub-systems; traditional political institutions and social structure, the Church, the business community and government. Since the thesis focuses on bilateral relations between Australia and Western Samoa, emphasis on socio-cultural factors and their impact on government and the bureaucracy requires top priority.

On the basis of the above discussion, it appears that Samoan customs and traditions or *faa-Samoa* is the over-arching force in just about every activity in Western Samoa. It is noted in Section 5.7 that the Australian policy process differs remarkably to that of Western Samoa. The policy process in Western Samoa is driven by political and personal rationales based on Samoan values. Discussions in later Chapters will provide evidence thereto. It is this co-existence of the Western system of government which operates on specific ethics and values, and the Samoan system based on traditional customs, socio-cultural norms and institutions which is largely responsible for the deficiencies observed in the bureaucracy.

## **PART THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY AND CASE STUDIES**

Part Three discusses the methods used in this study and analyses Australia's bilateral aid relation with Western Samoa using the selected case studies. This is the essence of Chapter Six. These selected HRD projects and programmes highlight the shift in Australian aid policy directions, management and delivery mechanisms. The shift mirrors the impact international developments have on Australia's domestic policy making. To reinforce Australia's aid policy shifts certain strategies such as the user pays, private sector development, accountability measures, transparency, institutional strengthening and public sector rationalisation measures are encouraged. These have become part of the Australian aid packages. In summary, a shift of aid delivery from the public sector to the private sector and free market competitiveness. These measures have direct implications for Western Samoa's government structures, practices and procedures. This discussion is found in Chapter Eight.

Chapter Nine assimilates issues raised by previous chapters evaluating the role of Australian aid on HRD in Western Samoa. Specifically, it assesses Australia's aid objectives against Western Samoa's HRD needs and how the differences influenced policy formulation. Since the two countries have different developmental interests the Chapter hopes to recommend ways to improve aid policy making processes.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CASE STUDIES: RESEARCH METHODS AND BACKGROUND ON AID POLICIES**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

Since the late 1980s, Australian aid policies have shifted to reflect international trends and agenda which point to sustainable development or the sensible utilisation of resources. From this scenario, Australia changed its aid conditions and preferences affecting the delivery mechanisms and development priorities. The private sector practices and management principles were written into aid packages to improve project and programme implementation. Several private sector practices were introduced, the 'user pays' idea, better accountability, cost saving measures like rationalisation of service, transparent operations and flatter organisations. In relation to changes in delivery mechanisms, the private sector was given more emphasis than the public service. There is a global belief that the private sector should be given more resources to generate expected economic growth, and because it is production oriented.

These policy shifts illustrate certain factors regarding the policy interaction between the donor and recipient. Aid policy conditions and preferences reflect Australian values, so although there are aid consultations with a recipient like Western Samoa, a specific policy is formulated before such consultation. In relation to the theoretical discussion in Chapter Four, aid policy making identifies with the top-down approach. In effect, aid policies tend to ignore the importance of prevailing socio-economic and political systems of the recipient country. Far from a rational claim, inadequate consultation and insufficient information is the primary drawback in most projects. Although, a donor's policy making process can be classified as top-down, incrementalism is inevitable during the implementation phase. This assertion is evident in all case studies considered in this thesis.

The selected case studies reflect the rationales and changes in Australian bilateral aid policies since the 1980s. Focussing on the HRD sector, the purpose of the case studies is to examine the validity of the assumption that Australia through its aid programme influences Western Samoa's policy decisions and that by so doing, leads to decisions that ignore many domestic factors which impact on the successful implementation of these programmes. In order to accomplish this aim a comprehensive understanding of the policy making processes of both Australia and Western Samoa is inevitable. This exercise involves an

analysis of processes resulting from social relations, current trends in international development, agencies' management approach and structures. Effectively discussions in Chapters Four and Five equip the study for such a complicated undertaking.

This Chapter has two purposes; to discuss methods used in data collection and in so doing delineate the aid funded programmes selected for this study. Case study has been the main method employed in this study together with interviews, documentary search and participant observation. Part One elaborates on methods used in the study and their limitations. Any study involving human behaviour and the structure of society faces problems of epistemology and the participant observer role of the author brings special problems of reliability and validity.

Part Two presents background information of the cases studied and the analysis in Chapters Seven and Eight. Five Human Resources Development case studies of aid projects funded under the Australian bilateral programme to Western Samoa have been selected. The selection is intended to provide a balance between different modes of delivery mechanisms, clients or target groups and various management agencies. Two of the case studies target tertiary education, the Western Samoa Scholarship Scheme with emphasis on the Equity and Merit Scholarship Scheme (EMSS) and the Western Samoa Technical Institute (WSTI), now known as the Polytechnic; two focus on on-the-job or in-house training involving Australian 'experts', the Australian Staff Assistance Scheme (ASAS) and the Public Works Department Assistance Project (PWDAP) managed by the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation (SMEC). The last is the AIDAB Training Centre in Sydney, ACPAC, which conducts short-term training and undertakes consultancies in Australia and in the recipient country.

## **6.2 RESEARCH METHODS**

### **6.2.1 Case Study**

Section 1.5 provides an overview of the method used in this study and reasons for that decision. As explained earlier the choice of methodology was deliberate because of the need to gain a good understanding of the subject under investigated. The dynamic nature of policy making means the following disclosures are mere snapshots of the complexities surrounding the policy making process of two different countries. Despite that, any policy study, irrespective of the subject matter and method, makes people more aware of the uncertainties and confusion that surround political action. This method was selected to try and trace development regarding the five cases discussed herein within the specified timeframe.

Table 6.1 provides a summary of the main characteristics of the selected five case studies; justifications of their selection are provided in Section 1.5.1. The cases studied proceeded in part through interview. Table 6.2 identifies the affiliations or background information of interviewees. Table 6.3 indicates the supplementary methods used in data collection.

### 6.2.2 Interviews

Interviews took a non-standardised or unstructured format. This allows the interviewee to tell a story and to an extent influence the direction of the interview. As interviewees became more at ease, direct questions were asked on the following subjects:

- Australian aid policy objectives and strategies;
- Western Samoa's HRD policy preferences and strategies;
- compromises and related case studies' issues; and
- bureaucratic imperatives and exogenous variables.

**Table 6.2: Affiliations of Interviewees**

ORGANISATION	PROGRAMME		PROJECT		
	WSSS	PWDAP	ACPAC	WSTI	ASAS
AIDAB staff	5	4	7	4	6
AHC staff	3	3	2	2	2
AIDAB Consultant	4	4	3	2	1
Managing Agent	6	6	-	-	-
WSG Representatives	21	23	18	21	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>35</b>

*Note:* Fourteen interviewees do not belong to the above categorisation - see elaboration in Section 6.2.1.

Table 6.1 : Particulars of Five Selected Programmes

PARTICULARS	WSSS	PWDAP	PROGRAMMES ACPAC	WSP	ASAS
Implementing Ministry	FA	PWD	PSC	WSP	PSC
Managing Agent	Australian Universities	SMEC	ACPAC	Board	PWU
Supporting Ministries	PSC, DoE	Treasury, PSC and FA	FA and Participating Ministries	Treasury, FA, PSC, DoL, PWD	Treasury, FA, Participating Ministries
Funding Agencies	AIDAP, NZMER, Japan, China, CFTC, WHO	AIDAB, WSG	AIDAB	AIDAB, NZMERT UNDP, Japan ILO etc	AIDAB
Programme Clients	Sch. leavers P/Servants	PWD employees	Public Servants	Sch leavers & apprentices	Public Servants
Programme Emphasis	Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates	in-house training and in Australia	short-term in-country or in Aust. train	Diplomas and apprenticeship	on-the-job training
Costs since commencement	STP=A\$8m EMSS=A\$2.5m	A\$10.5m (Aust. contr)	N/A	A\$1.2m	A\$382.5m
Commencing Date	1980	1989	1987	1986	1979
Duration of Prog	indefinite	5 years	6 wks-2mths	4 years	indefinite
No. of interviews	38	39	30	28	35

*Notes:* Costs provided were 1993 figures.

**Table 6.3: Methods of Data Collection**

RESEARCH METHODS	PROGRAMMES				
	WSSS	PWDA <i>P</i>	ACPAC	WSTI	ASAS
Field Diaries	**	**	*	**	*
Interviews	***	***	***	**	***
Media Analysis	**	*	+	*	+
Document/Analysis	***	***	**	***	**
Visits/Observation	***	**	**	**	-

**Key:** \*\*\* extremely important source,      \*\* major source,  
           \* intermediate source,               + minor source

The use of interviews extensively as a data collection technique is vital because of the explanatory nature of this study. Interviews provided first hand information of what happened in the 'conversion box'. The method encourages instant exchange of information and follow-up in cases of doubt and contradictions to other sources, reports and project documents. Reliability and validity of information was checked by corroboration with others. Interviews were conducted on a programme basis and therefore some interviewees were questioned on several case studies on a number of occasions and in different capacities. For instance, former Australian High Commission staff in Apia (Mr Kerry Grove and Ms Barbara O'Dwyer) are presently working at the AIDAB main office in Canberra. As such, they were interviewed both as former diplomats and in their current status. Likewise, some ACPAC staff/contract trainers in Sydney were also hired as AIDAB consultants in other programmes. This prohibited a calculation of responses into per cent (Section 7.1). A similar difficulty exists among Samoan interviewees, some are both beneficiaries of a programme and representatives of the WSG during aid negotiation. To check the reliability of feedback, or in cases of anomalies, cross corroboration with others was done. In some instances corroboration with information on files, with relevant documents, and declared policies was carried out.

Fifty two (52) non-Samoans were interviewed: thirty eight (38) are Australians; eight (8) are consultants or contract expatriates from other nationalities who have been/are working in Western Samoa; and six (6) are EMSS awardees who are neither Australians nor Samoans. Fifty eight (58) Samoans were interviewed

representing most government departments included in the study. Altogether 110 people were interviewed ranging from beneficiaries, managing agents, hosting or implementing institutions, senior bureaucrats of both governments, consultants and politicians. Particulars of interviewees are provided in **Appendix 2**. These people were selected because of their involvement with the programmes at some stage and on the basis of their positions in organisations under study. Western Samoan bureaucrats selected for interview were those who held top to middle management positions in their respective organisations. This was deliberate because of their roles in decision making and implementation. Their professional background ranges across engineering, planning, education, economics, accountancy and administration.

There were problems with the use of interviews. First of all, some responses by interviewees' contain elements of unreliability and low validity. These were obvious from some contradictions in interviewees' responses against relevant information in project files. Indeed some responses varied depending on the relationship with interviewees, especially with the Samoans. In that regard, the author had to do extensive corroboration with other people and documents, and finally with the same person(s) refreshing their mind of information in hand.

Secondly, since most interviewees were politicians, business managers or senior bureaucrats, appointments either had last minute cancellation, or were rushed or delayed sometimes for hours or to the following day. No interview was recorded because the author did not feel comfortable with recording. Culturally, recording does prohibit total eye contact crucial in dialogue. There was also a possibility an interviewee's response would equivocate because the interview was recorded. On the technical side, the possibility of replacing a cassette or batteries might affect the interviewee's story.

There were observed differences in interviews conducted in Western Samoa to those carried out in Australia. As a Samoan and being a government employee, arranging interviews and knowing who to interview was not a problem. The researcher's familiarity and network was an asset. At times, prior arrangements were unnecessary and interviewees tended to be more talkative if they were unprepared. Sometimes interviewees' statements were corroborated outside the office where there is minimum pretence, ie., at the market place or in the pub. The following outcomes indicated that this research method is subject to cultural dispositions and the effectiveness of the method depended on the researcher's creativity. Firstly, during the process of interviewing SMEC personnel in Apia, the Second Secretary of the AHC in Apia tried to sabotage any further interviews. Approval was already granted by the Director of Works. Secondly, most interviews with Samoans were characteristically unaffected by time. Interviewees were either late,

without warning failed to turn up, or the interviews took days and hours even to 1.00 am. Some interviews occurred spontaneously without prior appointment and briefings. This relaxed approach proved fruitful in terms of information gained. Thirdly, there was an instance where a head of department interrupted an interview with a Minister, and the head of department was invited to stay. This can be interpreted in many ways, but the author felt that the Minister needed reassurance from his senior adviser to clarify any unclear issues. Fourthly, there was a linguistic problem where translation from English to Samoan changed the intention of the question and vice versa in compiling interview outcomes.

Interviewing in Australia by a non-Australian was not an easy task. A noticeable drawback during interviews in Australia was the fact that people are so conscious of time. For example, the end of AIDAB's financial year or the taking of leave affected interview schedules. Furthermore, the author from abroad does not have the network or contacts as is the case of a Samoan in Samoa. Knowing who to interview depends largely on other interviewees, mainly AIDAB staff. This could increase subjectivity because these people's comments might be biased towards AIDAB's view-point, and therefore alternative perspectives might have been gained from more independent interviewees.

Overall interviews were useful in getting information quicker, and in getting the first hand experiences and impressions of interviewees about certain issues.

### **6.2.3 Documentary Analysis**

A substantial portion of this thesis relied heavily on evidence from analysis of documents and required searching and consulting WSG ministries for accessibility to programme-related documents, minutes of meetings, Western Samoa's Development Plans (1980-1994), budgets papers, ministerial policy correspondence and even Cabinet decisions. Five visits were made to Western Samoa (mid November 1991-mid March 1992, August-October 1992 and again in November 1992-February 1993, November 1993-February 1994 and November 1994-February 1995) for documentary search, conduct of interviews, visits to project sites and participation in aid related consultations with donors.

In Australia, four visits were made to Canberra, (2 weeks - June 1991, 1 week-June/July 1992, 2 weeks-April 1993 and 1 week-July 1994), to conduct interviews, gather information on foreign policies and read through reports and files of selected programmes. Three visits were made to Sydney, (4 days June 1991, 1 week-July 1992, 2 weeks-March 1993), to conduct interviews, to observe training sessions and to search for documents at the ACPAC library. The documents consulted are listed in references.

A major obstacle with documentary search stems from the political sensitivity of the topic. Since all of the programmes selected are still in implementation stage, the relevant files are restricted particularly at the AIDAB end. After necessary clearance and recognition that the author was a WSG employee, AIDAB senior employees allowed access to confidential files. The confidentiality of AIDAB files prohibited follow up of some of the queries raised by bureaucrats in Western Samoa. But, more importantly, it hindered a comprehensive analysis of Australia's decision making machinery and its determining forces.

#### **6.2.4 Participant Observation**

This method was selected because it provides an opportunity to obtain data about respondents' behaviour and interpersonal skills through direct contact, and minimises distortions resulting from the author being an outsider. The strength of this method is that it provides a wealth of information in sensitive areas which may not be forthcoming during interviews.

During the field work, daily visits were made to the different implementing and executing organisations observing their daily routines. The purpose of this was to assess the effectiveness of communication channels on the basis of the structure. It became obvious that things get done through an informal network that an employee establishes using the formal structure. This applies to almost everything in Samoa such as the disbursement of funds from the Treasury, recruitment by the PSC or negotiation with Foreign Affairs.

As indicated earlier, the author has been working in the Public Service Commission Office since December 1983 as a Management Advisory Officer. In that capacity, the author has participated in aid consultations between donors and the WSG. On the other hand, the author is a beneficiary of the EMSS programme. Being a member of staff of the WSG central office that handles all public service personnel matters, the researcher obtained first-hand information from the use of records which an outsider would not be permitted to use. Access to other government departments was much easier. Work experiences on manpower planning and training and how the bureaucracy operates are both vital in this research.

But there are also disadvantages of being a Samoan during field work in Samoa. Associated with these is the sensitivity of the subject matter to employees of related government departments, especially if things did not work out as planned. There is an undeniable element of bias for and against certain people or organisations arising from the author's familiarity with the situation. Familiarity with the situation resulted in the author taking things for granted, creating enormous double checking in the last months of the study.

The following case studies provide background information on selected programmes, however detailed analysis continues in Chapters Seven and Eight. Policies of any nature are outputs of various sub-systems of the broad environment (Figure 5.1). Details provided in this Chapter assist in understanding the factors which impinge on case studies.

## CASE STUDY ONE

### **6.3.1 The Western Samoa Scholarship Scheme with emphasis on the Equity and Merit Scholarship Scheme (EMSS)**

#### **6.3.1.1 Rationale**

The Scholarship Scheme was conceived in 1945 whilst the country was under New Zealand administration. Its aim was to provide the most able Western Samoan school children with tertiary education in New Zealand. This was to achieve the long term objective of localising government positions occupied by New Zealand expatriates. Secondary and tertiary education were still underdeveloped in Western Samoa, and New Zealand, given its status as colonial administrator, was prepared to fund the scheme. Conditions attached to receiving an award required recipients to return to serve in the Western Samoan government service and that the course of study should be relevant to the country's developmental needs. The selection of awardees was the prerogative of the WSG. To ensure students returned, a bond was signed between the WSG, the student and two guarantors of whom one was to be a parent. In case a student did not return the guarantors paid to the WSG an equivalent sum of money for years under sponsorship. The sum repaid to Government varied depending on the programme of study and university requirements. The bond's administration was ineffective. There was no legal mandate indicating the party responsible for recoveries nor authorisation for court action if need be.

#### **6.3.1.2 Historical Development of Programme**

During an interview (Apia, October, 1992), the Western Samoa Prime Minister, Tofilau Eti Alesana, was asked a historical question; why and how did the scheme come into existence? As a beneficiary of the scheme, his answer was two-fold. Politically, it was a response by the New Zealand government to the Samoans' queries regarding the profits of the New Zealand Reparation Estate (now known as WSTE) and administratively to gain the natives support for the NZ administrators. The objective of the scheme was to train and prepare administrators in anticipation of independence. Revolts by Samoans (Mau Movement) prompted the creation of the programme. Davidson (1967) wrote:

the continuing political grievances of the Samoans..... Demands were made for the removal of particular expatriate officials, for promotion of Samoans to more senior positions, and for the training overseas of the ablest Samoan youths.

There was also external pressure on New Zealand from the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations in support of high level education before Western Samoa gained independence.

Consequently the scheme's foundation lay in a perceived moral obligation that was conceived out of socio-political unrest. This unrest dated back to the 1920s and re-echoed grievances listed by Davidson (1967). Rooted in these allegations was the New Zealand administration extravagance and the lack of explanation as to how export earnings of the New Zealand Reparation Estates were utilised. The Estate consisted of German-owned plantations taken over by the New Zealand administration as war reparations. Davidson (1967, 259) stated that profits of the Estates had been the source of New Zealand aid to the Samoan government. With the New Zealand Labour Party in government a Scholarship scheme was inaugurated in 1941 to be financed under New Zealand's Bilateral Aid Programme. It became operational in January 1945 after a four year delay because of the outbreak of World War II.

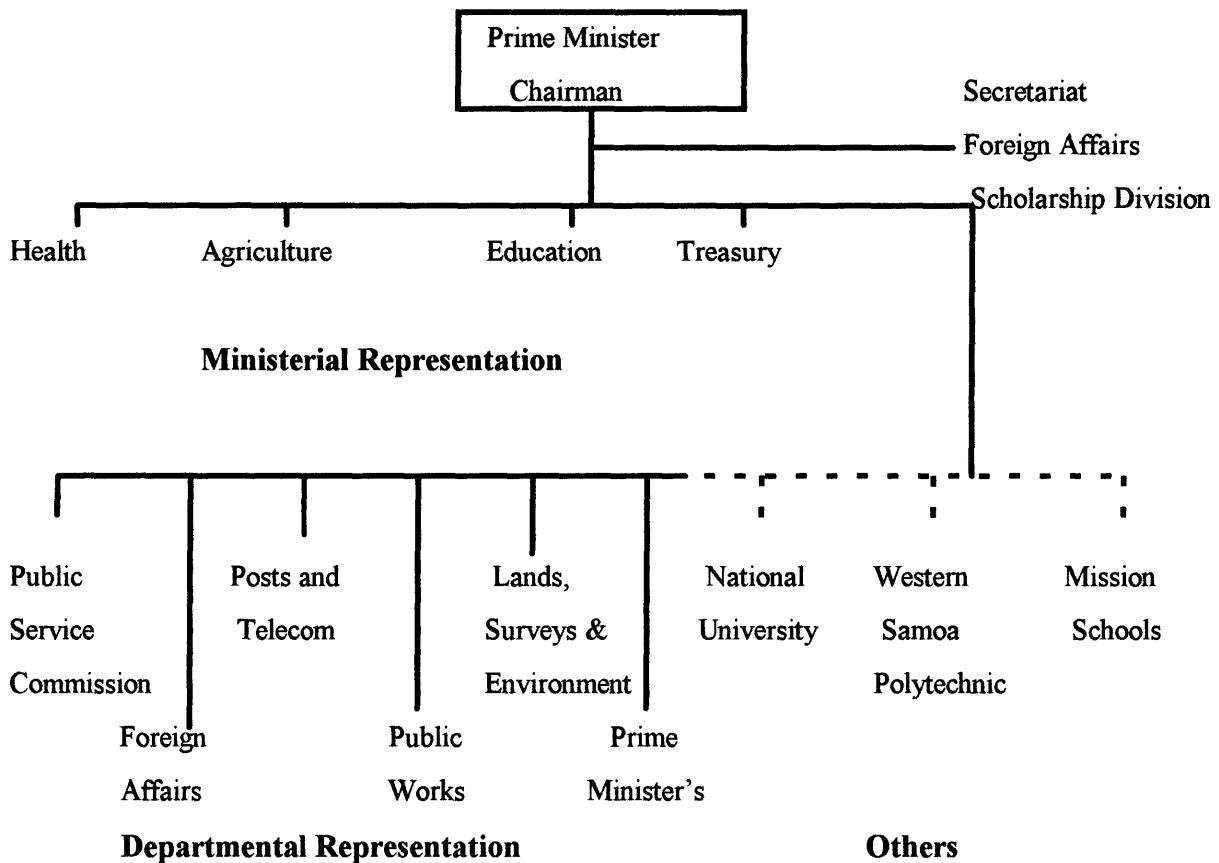
#### **6.3.1.3 Management of the Scheme**

The management of the Scholarship scheme is presented in Figure 6.1. Before, the Staff Training and Scholarship Scheme had only four Ministers representing the bigger government departments. Representations from Departments were confined to several core Departments such as the Department of Education, Treasury, Foreign Affairs, Public Service Commission, Public Works and the Prime Minister's Department. Today the number of Government Departments represented as well as the Private Sector has grown. Normally, the STSC is chaired by the Prime Minister. It has a sub-committee consisting of Foreign Affairs, Department of Education and the Public Service Commission who are responsible for selecting the awardees. Confirmation of scholarship awardees is however endorsed by the main committee.

#### **6.3.1.4 Development and Reform**

At the commencement of the Scholarship scheme in 1946, students from Form two (NSW. Yr 8) with good pass marks were chosen to continue their schooling in NZ Developments in the Samoan education system match the level in which students were selected. For instance, by the mid 1960s students were chosen on the

**Figure 6.1 Staff Training and Scholarship Committee**



*Source:* Matagialofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

basis of their New Zealand university entrance (UE) results (NSW. Yr 12). To attain UE, a student must pass four subjects including English. New Zealand universities received the bulk of students because awards were tenable only in New Zealand.

The Fiji School of Medicine, enrolled medical students who were qualified to do diplomas in medicine and/or were disqualified for entry to do medicine in New Zealand. Most of them were sponsored by the World Health Organisation. In 1968 the University of the South Pacific (USP) was established in Fiji but it was not until 1970 that degree courses became available.

During the 1970s New Zealand universities and the USP were the main avenues for scholarship awardees. With subtle colonial hangover, New Zealand still received the cream of students with the USP as a second choice mainly in general arts degree, education and traditional science subjects. In 1978, a large number of

awards was available for the first time from the U.S. under the United States Agency for International Development. This was followed by still a larger number of awards tenable at the University of Papua New Guinea in 1979 funded by the Australian government. Australia joined other donors in 1980 offering some 21 total awards for study in Australia.

Currently a prerequisite for any school leaver for acceptance into a New Zealand university is a high Yr 13 pass (an equivalent to HSC in NSW). At the USP a Preliminary Yr 12 pass is expected. Universities in other countries allow students to proceed straight from Form six (Yr 12) to undergraduate studies. More than half of the first group of awardees to Australia who proceeded directly to university studies failed the first year. This incidence plus the need to provide opportunities for the increasing number of students completing Yr 12 gave birth to the National University of Samoa (NUS).

Since 1984 all Form six students who passed UE have been required to do a preparatory year at the NUS before being selected for a scholarship award. It was assumed that a year at NUS should familiarise them with university life. This preparatory year is equivalent to the seventh form in New Zealand.

Other developments in the 1980s include a range of awards being offered by China and Japan with a particular orientation to language, trades and vocational subjects. Even with these opportunities both in-country and overseas, an increasing number of Yr 13 students have limited chances. The introduction by Australia of its Equity and Merit Scholarship Scheme was a much needed avenue for tertiary education.

#### **6.3.1.5 Equity and Merit Scholarship Scheme (EMSS)**

In mid-1989 the Australian government came up with a semi-bilateral scholarship scheme known as the Equity and Merit Scholarship Scheme (EMSS). This programme is a semi-bilateral scheme, and therefore recipient governments like Western Samoa have no say regarding the selection of awardees.

Australia, through AIDAB, also operates a scholarship scheme known as the Sponsored Training Program. This programme is a bilateral one between Australia and recipient countries which enables their students to attend institutions of higher education in Australia. There was a subsidy programme (1981-1988) that enabled private overseas students to attend tertiary studies while paying only a fraction of fees. The Jackson Report (1984, 8) estimated A\$70m. of hidden aid money was allocated for the subsidy programme, yet the said amount was excluded from Australia's Official Development Assistance.

Certain events in Australia led to government reviews affecting the subsidy programme. In the early 1980s there was immense pressure from electorates for the government to intervene and control the influx of foreign students at tertiary institutions, the majority of whom were Asians. According to Harris (1991, 4), the issue:

... was tied up with the emotional hangover of the White Australian Policy and community perceptions that these students were wealthier than their Australian counterparts.

Secondly, there were queries particularly by the then AIDAB officials regarding the scheme's domination by students from one country. Throsby (1985) estimated that 50 per cent of the subsidy was exhausted by Malaysian students, implying Malaysia had high priority in aid allocation. Yet, aid to Malaysia accounted for only 3 per cent of Australian bilateral aid (excluding PNG). This prompted investigation into the processes by which institutions and programmes accepted overseas students. A crucial issue was the choice of Australian government department to allocate overseas awards. The Department of Education and Youth Affairs argued that it was their prerogative because the bulk of the subsidy came from them. AIDAB officials argued contrarily that allocations should conform to Australia's overall aid objectives (Throsby 1985, 34).

Thirdly, Australia's economic performance was not impressive. The idea of marketing tertiary education, as done by other countries, was considered as a way of improving export income. The government actually wanted to expand the level of student participation in higher education dramatically without incurring commensurate expenditure. The introduction of student fees in Australia helped do this. Adoption of the user pays principle helped commercialise the Higher education sector. Apart from that institutional budgets were squeezed, necessitating alternative sources of income (overseas students, consulting activities, partnership with private sector, competitive research grants etc), and the introduction of ways to contain costs.

The Jackson Report recommended that:

fees levied accrue to the appropriate institutions that the students attend in order to build up appropriate courses for such students, increase the number of places available without cost to tax payers, and encourage the development of education as an export sector (1984).

Specifically, the Jackson Report recommended:

- a) A generous merit scholarship scheme should be introduced on a considerably larger scale than the present government to government scheme.

- b) A special scholarship scheme should be introduced to provide balance in the student intake and to assist disadvantaged groups. It should be used immediately to move towards the target of women making up 50 percent of the developing country intake.

These were essential components of the Equity and Merit Scholarship Scheme.

The report also recommended that overseas student charges should increase gradually to full cost levels including 35 percent in 1986 and 55 percent in 1988. The subsidisation scheme was once again reviewed by the Federal Government in 1988. This led to an announcement in March 1989 effectively abolishing the existing subsidised scheme from December 1989. Funds from the subsidised scheme were redirected to the new scheme (EMSS) which became operational in January, 1990. As the scheme changed names over the years, its administrative conditions were adopted by the STP.

The EMSS was introduced for two reasons. Firstly, the student subsidy was dominated by several Asian countries (Hong Kong and Malaysia), instead of there being a balanced intake. Secondly, based on Australia's commercialisation of higher education, the agreement between AIDAB and educational institutions included the devolution of administrative work to the latter. This reduced the management load associated with the scheme and freed more AIDAB personnel for other tasks.

As stated above this scheme is a semi-bilateral one. It aims at bypassing recipient countries' selection processes by inviting direct applications from qualified individuals. The number of awards provided for each recipient country is determined by AIDAB and the cost is deducted directly from recipient countries bilateral aid allocation. The awards are advertised and short listed by the Australian mission in each recipient country but the final selection is done in Canberra. The applicant lists three educational institutions of his/her preference and then AIDAB sends out documents to the institutions for acceptance. Once the applicant is successful other administrative work is left to the institution. Travel arrangements are handled by the Australian mission in recipient countries.

The criteria used for selection are devised by AIDAB to complement AIDAB's own projects in a specific country. From assessment of awardees and their field of studies, there are strong parallels to the important issues on the Australian agenda. These issues include women in development, project planning, environmental conservation, resource management and sports administration to name but a few. These developments indicate the donor's shift in perspectives. Simultaneously there are noticeable shifts in the WSG HRD policies and thinking.

## CASE STUDY TWO

### 6.3.2. Australian Staffing Assistance Scheme (ASAS)

#### 6.3.2.1 Rationale

When Western Samoa achieved political independence in 1962, its public service top ranks were filled largely by New Zealand expatriates. Naturally, this was based on the understanding that indigenous people were too inexperienced and ill-educated to effectively manage their own public service. Graduates under the Scholarship scheme returning from New Zealand could not be appointed directly to senior positions because of limited experience. Gradually, the top rank positions were localised. But the need for skilled human resources in specific professions became apparent in the 1970s. There was a high demand for professionals such as engineers, doctors, lawyers, managerial specialists and trades people. It became obvious that the shortage of skilled human resources stemmed from a combination of national and bureaucratic imperfections. These included an ineffective localisation policy, a high attrition rate of skilled personnel, and a failure of education curriculum to respond to development with a consequent lack of required skills.

The shortage in specific skills is reflected in the continuous increase of expatriates employed in the public sector in recent years but has fallen since 1988. The number of expatriates employed in the public service between 1985 and 1991 fluctuated between 113 and 190. Statistics from AIDAB indicate that ASAS staff peaked at 28 in 1990 and is currently at 12 (Table 6.4). The Australian Volunteers

Abroad (AVA) personnel have averaged 13, mainly in teaching positions. The bulk of other expatriates in the public sector have been recruited from America, Japan, New Zealand and the United Nations Volunteer Scheme. Because of the moderate number of returning graduates, the Western Samoa public service will continue for some years to depend on expatriates.

#### 6.3.2.2 The Scheme: Objective and Management

The Australian Staffing Assistance Scheme started in Western Samoa during 1977/1978. Its aim was to provide financial support for the recruitment of Australian citizens to fill 'in-line' positions or advisory roles in the public service and statutory authorities. The Scheme was a short term measure to assist recipient

**Table 6.4: Expatriates in the Western Samoan Public Service by  
Programme since 1985**

<b>Years</b>	<b>ASAS</b>	<b>AVA</b>	<b>ADB</b>	<b>CFTC</b>	<b>JOCV</b>	<b>NZSAS</b>	<b>UNV</b>	<b>PCV</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1985	12	16	3	5	29	10	29	47	151
1986	16	17	0	5	32	15	0	46	131
1987	18	13	2	5	33	10	30	26	137
1988	22	11	0	1	42	12	53	42	183
1989	24	11	0	0	31	10	38	30	144
1990	28	7	0	4	43	14	13	21	130
1992	12	8	Others	(10)	19	11	18	19	97

**Key:**

- ASAS Australian Supplementation Assistance Scheme
- AVA Australian Volunteer Abroad
- ADB Asian Development Bank
- CFTC Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation
- JOCV Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteer
- NZSAS New Zealand Supplementation Assistance Scheme
- UNV United Nations Volunteer
- PCV Peace Corps Volunteer

**Note:** The 1986 UNV figure is not reliable because some officers from 1985 continue their contract to 1986. Otherwise there should be new volunteers for 1986. Investigation by the PSC staff in (1989) confirmed this discrepancy in data. The PSC data for Expatriates in the service are as follows: 1984(113), 1985 (133), 1986 (167), 1987 (190), 1988 (194), 1989 (181).

governments towards localisation processes and to provide on-the-job training for local counterparts. At times, AIDAB retained the right to target staffing assistance to sectors complementing its development and other development co-operation activities. The Scheme is available to countries with which Australia has a bilateral aid relationship.

**Figure 6.2: Key Steps in the Staffing Assistance Process**

<b>Preliminary Steps</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Request Post for staffing assistance scheme	Recipient government
Negotiate MOU to establish the scheme.	CPM/Post
Negotiate and sign a contract with commercial agency and OSB.	Recipient government
Advise Post of staffing assistance grant available from country allocation (post budget).	CPM
Advise recipient government in writing of funds available for staffing assistance.	Post
<b>Position identification</b>	
Prepare localisation plans for each position sought.	Recipient government
Request Post for staffing assistance approval.	Recipient government
Appraise and approve requests and funds allocation for each position.	CPM/Post
Pay grant to the recipient government account. (Attachment 5)	CPM
<b>Recruitment</b>	
Advise managing agent of staffing needs.	Recipient government
Advertise and recruit appointee, brief and arrange transfer.	Managing agent
Negotiate and sign a contract of employment with appointee.	Recipient government
<b>Management</b>	
Pay appointee's salary supplementation and allowances from the government staffing assistance account.	Managing agent
Pay local salary to appointee.	Recipient government
Arrange accommodation and so on for appointee.	Recipient government
<b>Monitoring</b>	
Review the operation of the scheme and performance of appointees with recipient government.	Post/CPM
Write reports to the ministry, the civil service co-ordinating agency and the Post.	Appointee
Prepare audited report to AIDAB, of staff establishment and acquittal of expense (quarterly).	Managing agent
Monitor operation of scheme.	CPM/Post
<b>Evaluation</b>	
Review the scheme in each country every three years or so.	

**Source:** AIDAB Files

ASAS is managed by AIDAB through appointed country programme managers for recipient countries. Arrangements vary reflecting the need of a country and for each country are contained in a Memorandum of Understanding detailing the responsibilities of parties concerned. The Scheme provides a salary supplementation and other financial benefits to the appointee while the recipient government provides the local salary, accommodation and other support. The appointment time ranges from six months to a maximum of four years depending on the recipient government's request. Key steps in the staffing assistance process and responsibilities of parties concerned are illustrated in Figure 6.2.

#### **6.3.2.3 Historical Development**

ASAS was conceived on the realisation that Pacific Island Countries, following independence, needed skilled personnel in their public services. The Australian Staffing Assistance Scheme started with Fiji in 1975/1976; two years later Solomon Islands, Tonga, Western Samoa and Cook Islands joined. Much later, agreements with Vanuatu (1981/1982), Kiribati (1985/ 1986), Tuvalu (1988/1989) and PNG (1994) were formalised. Outside of the Pacific region the Scheme is also operational in the Indian Ocean and in Southern Africa.

The administration of ASAS involved the appointment of an agent by the recipient government to conduct recruitment and management tasks. Moreover the agent is expected to report to the recipient government and AIDAB on the operation of the scheme and the acquittal of funds. This means recipient governments each have a different agent.

#### **6.3.2.4 Reforms**

Following a review of the scheme in 1988, the Government of Australia indicated its preference for a single agent in each region. The rationale was to improve administrative arrangements and overall management of the scheme for the recipients and AIDAB. For the Pacific region, the agent is Price Waterhouse Urwick (PWU).

PWU was contracted by AIDAB in 1990 to manage the scheme. Representatives from Island countries were invited to Canberra in September 1990 to witness the selection of the agent but had no voting rights. Since the scheme is funded by the GoA disagreements expressed by Pacific recipients were ignored. Fiji refused to participate in the process and even those countries that were represented strongly indicated their preference for the existing arrangements where a recipient contracted an agent of their choice.

The recipients' resistance to a single agent arrangement had to do with the sovereign right to make decisions, uneasiness amongst smaller nations that their interests would be secondary to the interests of big countries like Fiji and the patronising attitude of bureaucrats in Canberra.

The clamour was so great the response in AIDAB headquarters in Canberra west something like "What's wrong with these bloody Pacific islanders, why can't they be like the rest - just get on with it - after all it's our aid" (AIDAB officers, Pers.comm. April 1993). The PICs represented claimed that since the agent is contracted to recipients, they should have rights in the selection.

After perusing the original Memorandum Of Understanding affecting the single agent proposal it became obvious that perhaps the push factors behind the ASAS amendments were new changes to Australian taxation and medical insurance requirements for Australians working abroad:

The changes to taxation arrangements made by the Australian Taxation Office will have the effect of treating ASAS salary supplements as foreign-sourced income and exempt from Australian tax. Accordingly the supplement for new appointees and those taking the local salary into account, each will receive a net after tax income which is equivalent to the after-tax salary of the comparable position in Australia (Letter, 9/7/91 from Australian High Commission).

There was also an argument that differences in recipient arrangements disadvantage some appointees serving under the same scheme.

The concerns over the agency arrangements and associated delays prompted further review. As a result, the single agent provision was retained but contracted by AIDAB directly. Western Samoa and Tonga were the only countries to sign the new Memorandum of Understanding. By April 1993, Kiribati had not returned to the negotiations, while the Cook Islands has done away with ASAS in preference for Australian volunteers. AIDAB agreed to have joint reviews with the governments of Fiji and the Solomon Islands to consider the concerns expressed by island countries. This was followed by further deliberations looking beyond management issues, examining the basic rationale of the scheme, its contextual setting and its effectiveness, 'in short, a zero-based policy review' (ASAS Review 1992b, i).

#### **6.3.2.5   Review Findings and Recommendations**

The South Pacific ASAS Review (1992b) asserted that, the scheme though 'valuable represents recurrent expenditure of questionable sustainable developmental value' (p.iii). With localisation, the scheme had very little value in helping the recipients to achieve sustainable development because of the unavailability of

local counterparts of the right calibre and the absence of realistic localisation plans. It was suggested that if localisation was not realised then expatriate employment should be funded from the host government budget. The issue of effectiveness varied from country to country, but anecdotal evidence submitted to the review implied that effective appointments were associated with realistic localisation plans, management support and proper selection and briefings.

The review team, having commented on the situation, recommended that AIDAB abolish the uniform Pacific scheme since the internal cultural and organisational dynamics of each country require different responses. Secondly, they recommended that the range of appointments considered be expanded to include advisers as well as in-line placements. Furthermore, the scheme should be sufficiently flexible to permit short term assignments and to fund *ad hoc* training of local counterparts and equipment. Thirdly, recipient countries should be given the right to select and manage their own agent provided accountability to the Australian government is satisfied. Fourthly, a project approach to ASAS could be more cost effective. And, finally, monitoring and evaluation should be assimilated with existing systems of island governments.

## CASE STUDY THREE

### 6.3.3 Public Works Department Assistance Project (PWDAP)

#### 6.3.3.1 Rationale

The Western Samoa Public Works Department (PWD) is responsible for most public utilities except electricity supply and water (corporatised in 1993). An organisation structure of PWD (Figure 6.3) before and after the PWDAP is attached. The Mechanical Division (Workshop) which now includes the Plant

Pool and the Transport Pool is essential for executing most departmental functions. But like other areas of the department, its performance has been affected by the high turnover of key professional staff. Apart from sluggish performance, one of the obstacles to the Mechanical Division's management is a limited budget appropriated for maintenance and operation. Cumbersome bureaucratic procedures and inter-departmental conflicts soured the depressing state of the PWD. Here, more than ever, aid critics and donors have argued that failure of projects is caused by the human factor. It is human failure that the PWDAP was established to redress.

Source: Matagialofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

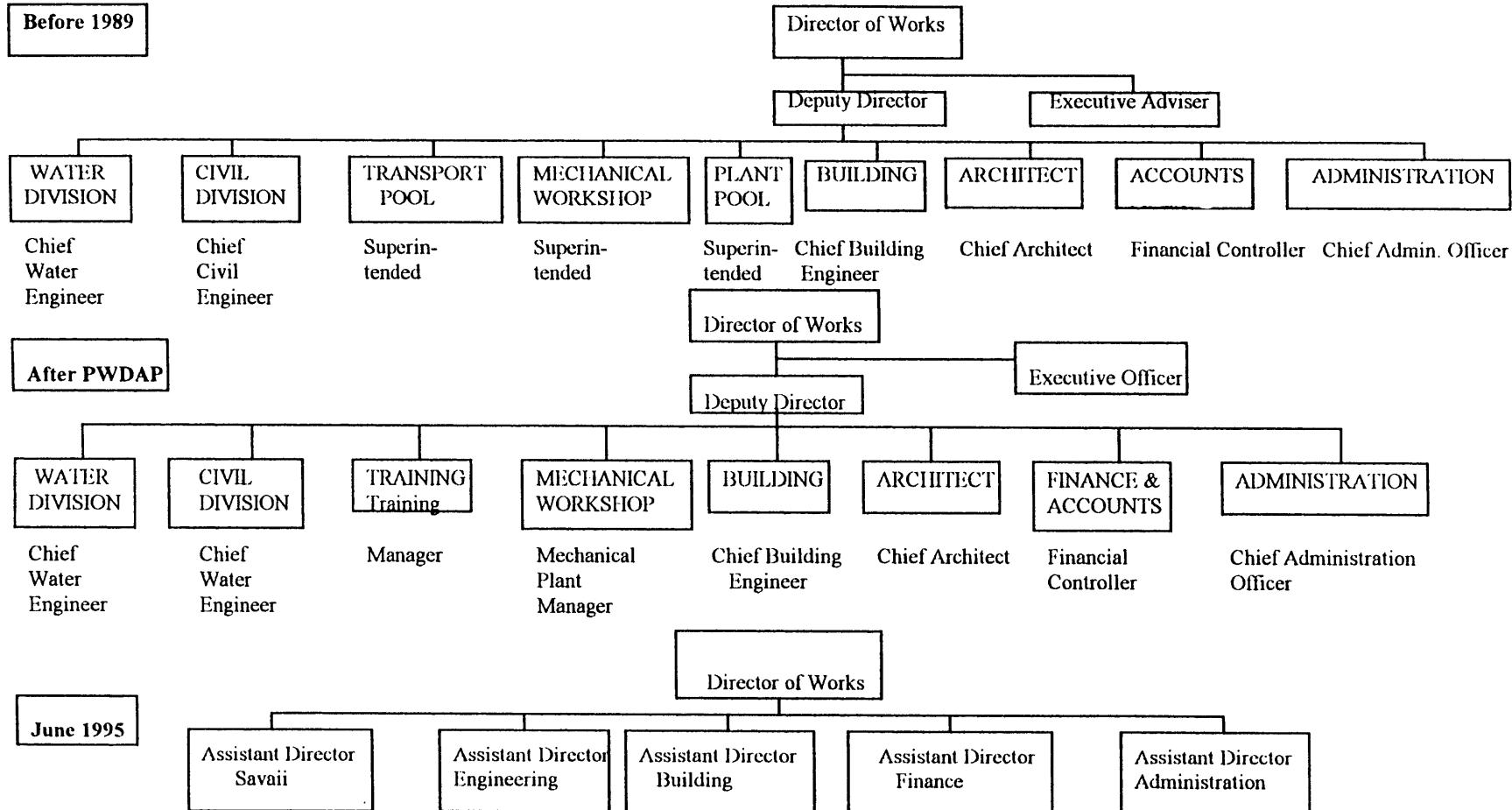


Figure 6.3: Comparison of the Public Works Department Structure before the PWDAP and After

In 1987 the WSG requested Australian assistance for road rehabilitation work. In return, Australia agreed but insisted on upgrading its 1976 project, in particular the Mechanical Workshop at Vaitele, as part of the PWD Assistance Project (PWDAP). Furthermore, training was to become the main focus of the current project. Australia's insistence on local staff training was to ensure the continuity of the project at the withdrawal of technical assistance. This was a lesson Australia learnt from the 1976 project. The project's primary objective is to develop a viable, self sufficient plant management and maintenance organisation which can be sustained by the PWD at the withdrawal of technical assistance.

### **6.3.3.2 Historical Development**

During 1976-1979 Western Samoa received assistance from Australia for road construction and the Mechanical Workshop at Vaitele. Assessments by the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation (AIDAB 1988b; 1992g) indicated the project was successful in extensive road maintenance, construction works and establishing a major workshop facility. In addition, there was training in basic skills required to undertake civil works and plant maintenance. Notwithstanding its impressive success after completion, the benefit of the project was short lived (AIDAB 1988c). After ten years, the project became constrained by the continuous loss of trained personnel and progressive deterioration of equipment through lack of maintenance.

This had adverse impacts on the performance and image of the PWD. Editorial comments in the newspapers on the poor conditions of roads challenged both the government and the status of PD. The PWD roading work was perceived negatively by everyone because potholes got worse after the next wet season. Most criticised the PWD for wasting tax payers' money because of poor road maintenance.

At the macro level, the project is certainly a product of the enlightened 1970s - the decade of integrated rural development. The general objective of the project was to assist the rural people to enhance agricultural production by means of better accessibility from farms to markets. It was the WSG's belief that such efforts 'minimise imbalances in rural/urban development'(DP6 1987). But roads were not purely for farmers to serve the domestic markets. In fact during this period, there was substantial demand for taro export. Having established niche markets overseas because of competitive prices, the farmers' returns improved steadily. Together with improved shipping services, better roads helped alleviate the dissatisfaction of rural people who often complained that infrastructural development concentrated on urban areas and had a bias towards industries.

### **6.3.3.3 Project Particulars and Management**

A need for the PWDAP was initially identified through the Appraisal Report (AIDAB, 1988b) on the PWD's Mechanical Workshop, Plant Pool and Transport Pool by SMEC. This was followed by a Technical proposal dated December 1988 prepared by a consultant from SMEC. AIDAB contracted the same company, SMEC Ltd., to manage the PWDAP. Figure 6.4 details AIDAB's project management cycle and activities prior to the endorsement of a project or programme.

The PWDAP started in June 1989 with funding from AIDAB. The implementation schedule was for a period of four years, until June 1993. The terms of reference cover the following broad areas but details are provided in **Appendix 3**.

#### **PWDAP Terms of Reference (TOR)**

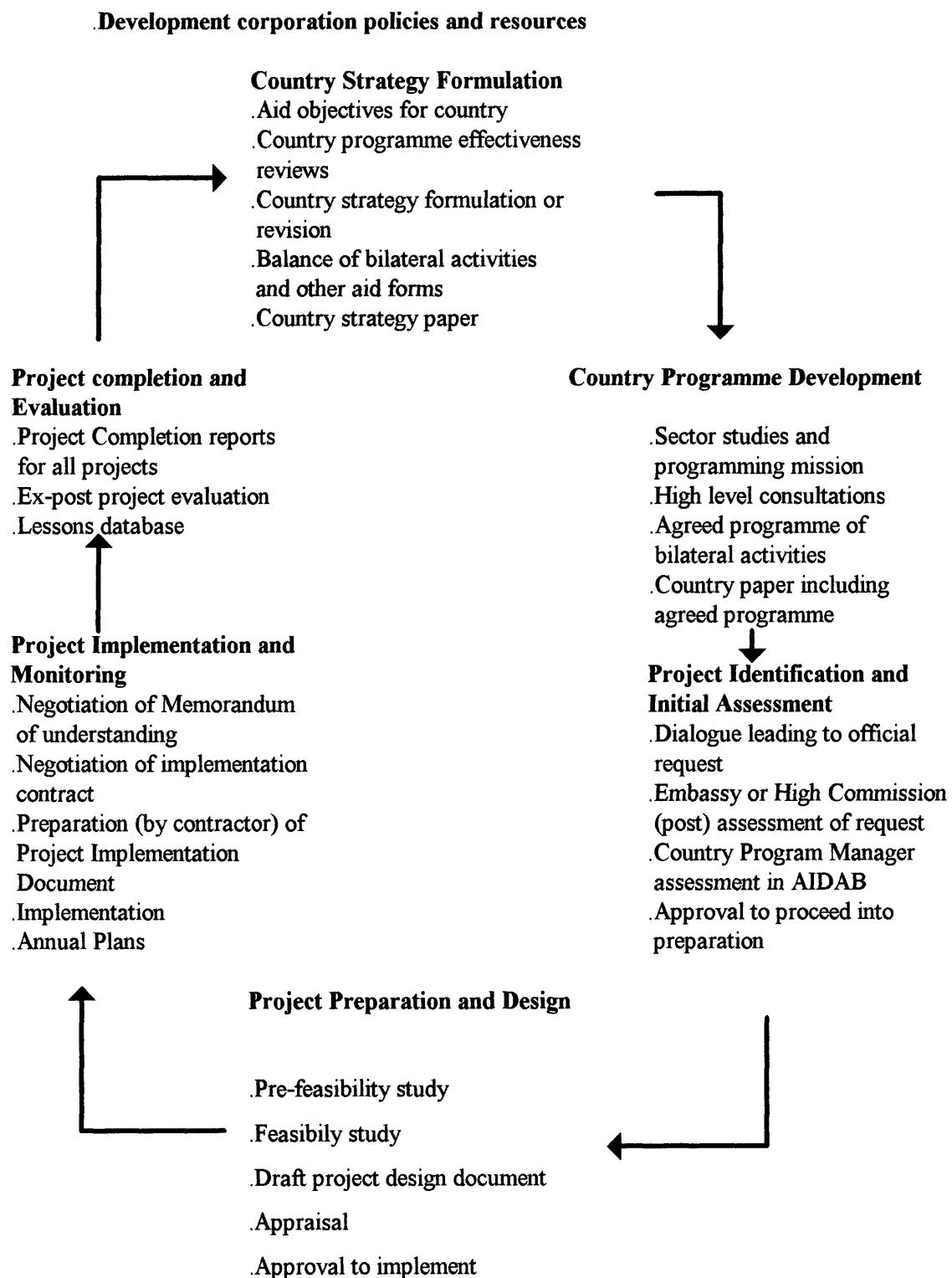
- a) the procurement of priority heavy plant, trucks and light vehicles;
- b) an equipment rehabilitation and disposal program;
- c) the upgrade of workshop facilities;
- d) the maintenance of organisation and plant management;
- e) the monitoring of equipment operation and management; and
- f) the stores management programme; and training programme.

The project administration is shared between Australia and Western Samoa with a Steering Committee (Figure 6.5) which convenes at six monthly intervals to discuss the project's progress and associated implementation difficulties.

PWDAP is said to be one of Australia's largest aid projects in the Pacific. The contributions of the WSG and Australia were estimated to reach WST1m (A\$600,000) and A\$8.8m respectively, over life of project. A more realistic total cost of the project at completion was calculated to be between A\$12m and A\$13m (Pers.comm., Treasury, Apia, 1993).

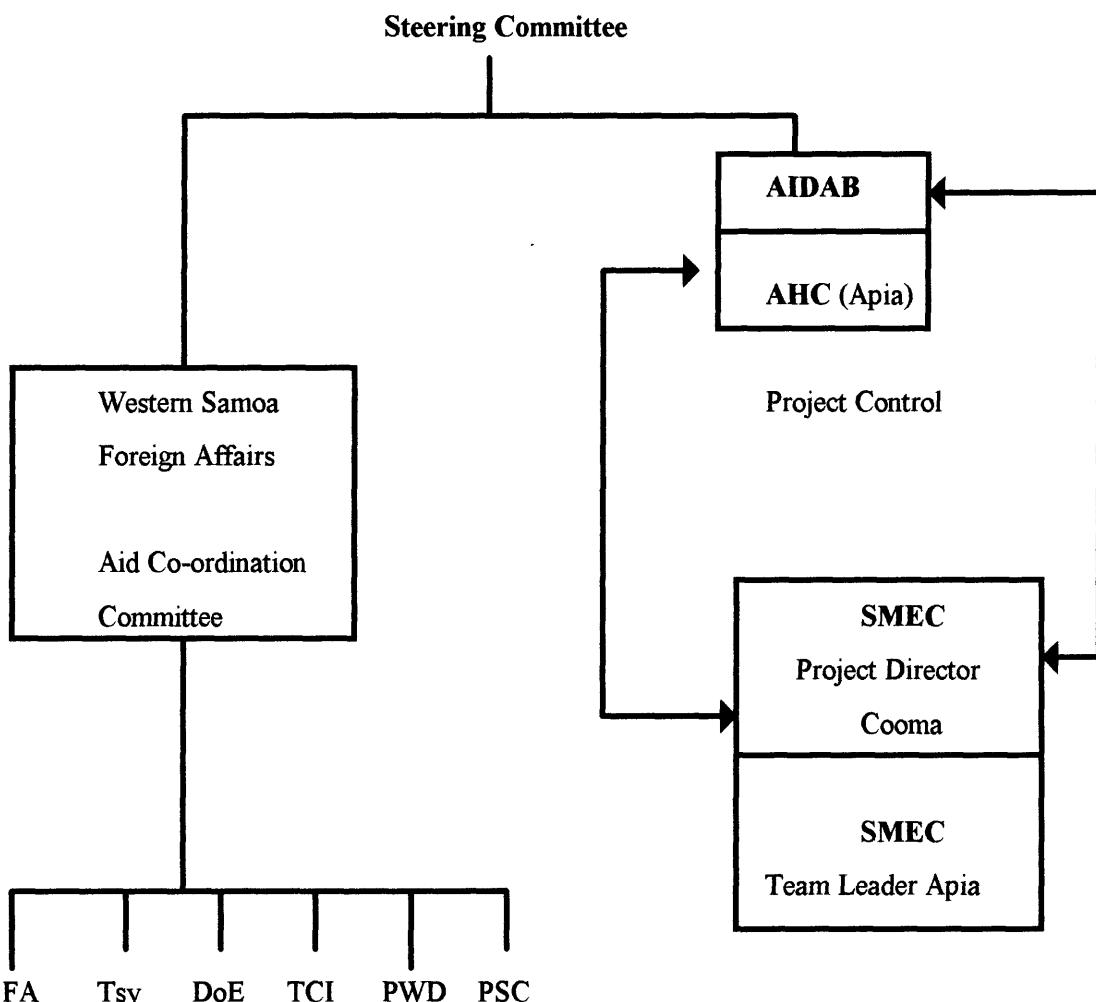
The Project Implementation Document (PID) in April 1990, emphasises that this project is unlike the earlier aid project because of its overall priority to accomplish self-sufficiency at the withdrawal of technical assistance. Evidence of this is the firm commitment of the managing agent (SMEC) and AIDAB to training local counterparts, senior officers' attachments in Australia and the establishment of the training division in PWD.

**Figure 6.4 AIDAB Project Management Cycle**



*Source:* AIDAB 1993c, p.4

**Figure 6.5: PWDAP Project Administration**



*Source:* Matagialofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

The financial management of PWDAP is unlike any other aid funded project. Reconciliation of monthly expenditures and all financial matters are handled by SMEC. This arrangement prompts the WSG to question the exact contribution by AIDAB in terms of annual expenditure and its itemisation. Western Samoa Treasury officials are not enthusiastic about this arrangement because aid funding control and accountability is their prerogative.

#### **6.3.3.4 Scope of Project**

The scope of the project covers technical assistance, provision of equipment, heavy plant, trucks, vehicles spare parts and training. Included under the contribution by Australia is a managing agent and a team of seven technical advisers in areas listed above. The team consists of a Plant Manager, Training Coordinator, Stores Coordinator, Workshop Coordinator, Welding Adviser, Electrical Adviser and Training and Orientation Adviser.

Despite having an agreed TOR, changes were inevitable particularly with the devastations caused by Cyclone Ofa in 1990 and Cyclone Val in 1991. These changes affected the project activities, implementation schedules, the scope of technical assistance, funding needs and monitoring arrangements.

#### **6.3.3.5 Changes During Implementation**

The implementation schedule was put back by another year, to mid 1994 instead of June 1993, because of delays in recruitment for vacant positions. The delays were caused by the Western Samoa Cabinet decision (FK - 23 Feb., 1990) after Cyclone Ofa, freezing all appointments in the public service. This was a temporary cost saving measure to direct funds towards reconstruction. In addition, the supplementary budget had a 10% cut which affected the WSG contribution to the project. Technical Assistance was also reshuffled to allow more time for the inexperienced counterparts to be trained and later on by internal redeployment of staff.

The activities of the project were disrupted because of Cyclone Ofa damage. The PWD was required by government to clear and fix all blocked roads. In particular, coastal roads received extensive damage from destructive waves. The SMEC Team and PWD Mechanical Workshop provided assistance to various government agencies that were affected, such as the Post Office Satellite Station, Broadcasting, Disaster Relief Committee. Electricity supply was cut off for two weeks which resulted in substantial time loss in office work like report writing.

It was gathered from interviews that one of the main obstacles facing both the local staff and the SMEC team were the differences in work attitudes and priorities. The Team Leader found the local staff inefficient and relaxed, unlike his experiences with Asian countries. Comments included: 'They don't listen', 'unsystematic,' 'pass the buck,' 'ignore proper communication channels' or 'things are done in the Samoan way'.

A consultant from ADB working with the Telecommunication project summarised the work attitudes of Samoans as, 'Nothing gets done because everyone assumes that everyone else is doing it'. On the other hand, the local staff found the first team leader who left in early 1992 and several others too rigid, serious and lacking understanding of the local staff situation. According to the PWD staff interviewed, the Australians were overbearing, condescending, ethnocentric and narrow minded.

## CASE STUDY FOUR

### 6.3.4 Western Samoa Polytechnic (WSP)

#### 6.3.4.1 Rationale

Each year about half of the students in Yr 11 enter Yr 12, the rest do not progress to senior colleges and find it hard to get jobs. These young people become helpless because of limited appropriate training opportunities and limited employment opportunities compatible with their education. This is a grave concern to parents, the DoE and the WSG. Fundamental to the planners is a realistic strategy to increase the senior college's intake capacity, and the availability of courses matching students' potentials, while at the same time addressing the labour market employment opportunities.

#### 6.3.4.2 Historical Development

The Institute at Vaivase, about 3 km from Apia, (Map 2.1) was established in 1963 as a Trade Training Institute. It was part of the New Zealand assistance to develop education in Western Samoa. The Institute started with two trade training programmes, woodwork and metalwork. In 1967, new courses were added in the electrical trades, motor mechanics, plumbing and welding. An Apprenticeship Council was established in 1975 and the Institute took on the task of providing part time apprentice training, while a secretarial studies programme was commenced in 1979.

The Institute has had various names over the years: the Trade Training Institute, the Technical College, the Western Samoa Technical College and the Western Samoa Technical Institute (WSTI) until January 1993 when it became the Western Samoa Polytechnic (WSP). Both WSTI and WSP will be used in the following text where it suits the chronological development.

The WSP has existed for 30 years and it is the sole Government institution established to provide technical and vocational education to secondary school leavers. Prior to the Institute's upgrading and autonomous status, staff requirements and budget allocations were controlled by the DoE. Intra-departmental clashes over resource constraints diminished the capacity of the Institute to launch a diversity of technical courses therefore limiting student intake. It is inevitable that the bulk of the Institute's equipment, personnel and buildings were funded by overseas donors (Figure 6.6). Like most Government schools, its facilities have deteriorated over the years and its operation has contracted because of manpower shortages. This problem, as discussed in Chapter Two, derives from limited funds made available for maintenance and poor salary levels in the public sector. A large percentage of government departments' development budgets comes from aid. As a result WSP's capacities and reputation have suffered a noticeable decline.

#### **6.3.4 Recipient's Request and Australia's Involvement**

AIDAB's support for the WSP started in 1986 in response to a request from the WSG to develop the vocational training capabilities of the then Western Samoa Technical Institute. AIDAB and the Western Samoa DoE commissioned a Design Study in 1986 to devise a plan for restructuring the WSTI, in particular the development of staff, courses and facilities. The study recommended a five-year programme with AIDAB assistance of \$2.9m covering the period 1987-1991. An itemisation of expenditure needed, recommended by the Design Study, consisted of equipment and materials WST\$354,000, building WST\$175,000, consultants WST\$2.31m and overseas study WST\$80,000. After necessary modifications to the original plan AIDAB and the WSG accepted the proposal. At the time of the 1989 Review the initial programme incurred the following expenditures; building and renovations: WST\$300,000; equipment and furniture: WST\$498,000; other WST\$49,000. The outcome of the first project was pleasing to both governments.

In May 1989, AIDAB and the WSG carried out a review to evaluate the continuation of the programme of assistance from mid 1990. The review recommended a four year programme on evidence that WSTI had 'overcome great difficulties to reach a point where it now offers quality training'. The goal of the proposed programme was 'to develop WSTI further to enable it to contribute better to the emerging development needs of Western Samoa' (AIDAB and WSDoE, 1989a, 5). The cost was estimated at A\$762,500. A brief Design document completed in March 1990 and based on the review estimated the project cost at \$A1.1m. The document also recommended a more detailed implementation report be undertaken.

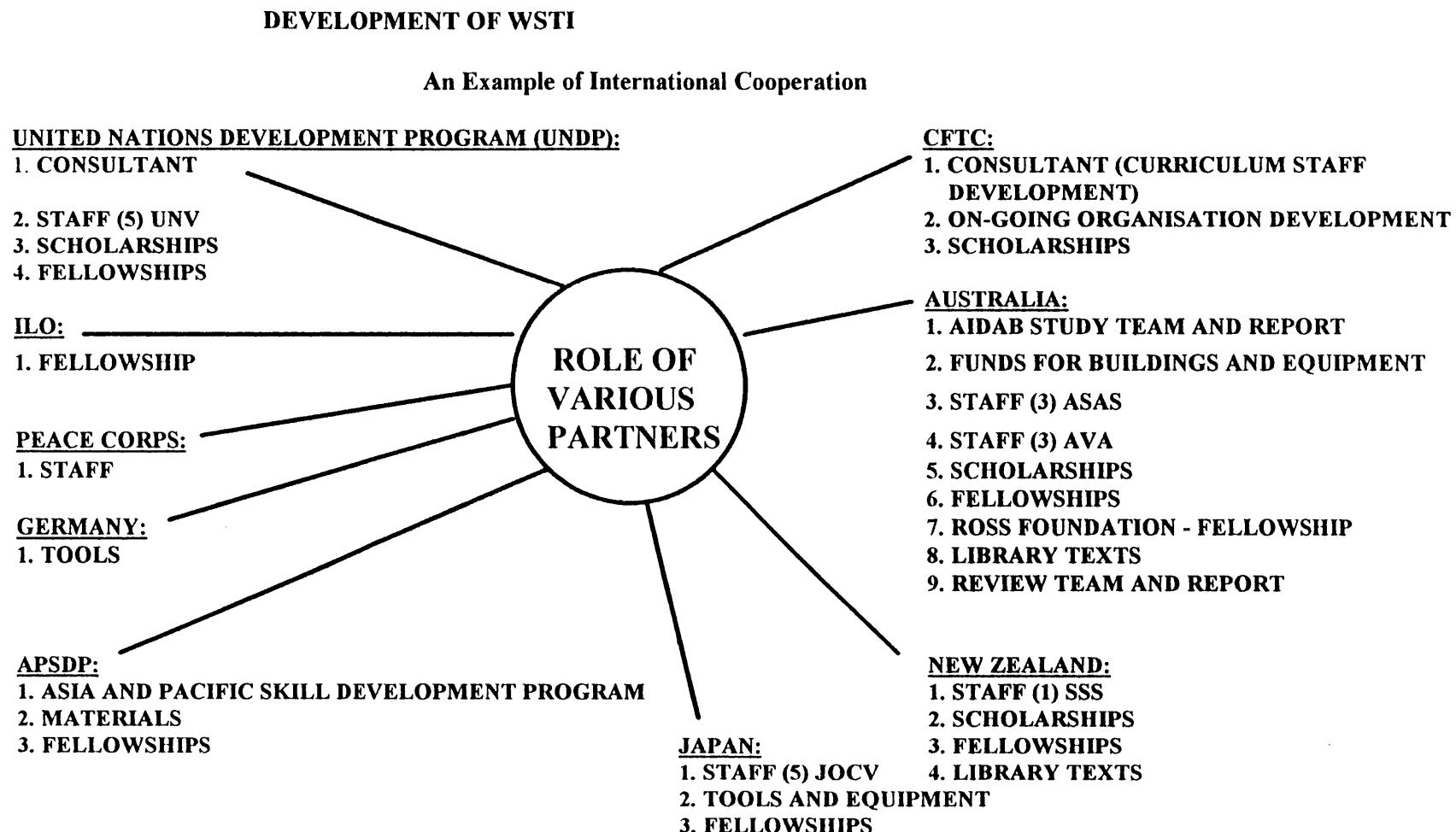
In June 1991, an implementation study based on the design document was conducted by the Overseas Project Corporation of Victoria (OPCV) contracted by AIDAB. Finalisation of this document was delayed because of required amendments and then revisions after Cyclone Val in December 1991. At last in March 1993, AIDAB produced a draft report which deemed the Project Implementation Document 'inappropriate in scale and scope for the assistance Australia could offer' (1993, 18). The ACPAC consultant involved in the second appraisal said that Australia is not keen on the idea of many donors. This is spelt out explicitly in the same report that a 'major constraint was the relative roles of other donors already involved' (Pers.comm., Sydney, March 1993).

Australian aid has contributed some \$1 million dollars since 1986 to upgrade the facilities, ASAS personnel, consultants and equipment. New Zealand aid started in 1991 to upgrade teachers qualifications. Other major donors who have an involvement with WSTI were/are Japan, United Nations Development Programme and Commonwealth Fund and Technical Cooperation. To a lesser degree Germany, APSDP, Peace Corps and ILO have assisted in fellowships, personnel and tools (Figure 6.6).

#### **6.3.4.4 Government Decision to Upgrade WSTI**

The decision by Government to upgrade the WSTI into a Polytechnic and the arguments surrounding the case must be perceived in the broad context of legal and administrative complications together with financial and manpower implications. The idea of a Polytechnic was first mooted by the Stam Report (1984), which also recommended that the WSTI enrol only students who had completed University Entrance examinations. Although the entrance requirement advocated by the Stam Report was designed to elevate the institution's profile, it limited the scope of those who would benefit from vocational and technical training. The government's rationale in upgrading WSTI to a Polytechnic was to absorb the unsuccessful students who could not enter Yr 13. It was not until the Design Study (1986a) undertaken by AIDAB and the DoE that the idea became a pipeline project. The 1986 Design Study viewed WSTI as being able to develop as a Polytechnic through the provision of a wide range of vocational and technical courses at the diploma and certificate levels.

**Figure 6.6** Donors involved with the Western Samoa technical Institute of Polytechnic



A 1986 Education Policy document, which assessed the development of education in Western Samoa, stressed the need for 'change in educational policy and structure'. Fundamental to this need was the failure of the education system to adjust and absorb societal changes and challenges. This review resulted in major changes being made by the DoE in 1989. The areas considered were:

- a) Organisational and accountability structure of the DoE;
- b) Structure of two government senior secondary schools;
- c) Examinations - national and regional;
- d) Teacher Education; and
- e) Administration.

From these changes Cabinet endorsed (CM [91] April 1991) seven proposals which included the upgrading of the WSTI to Polytechnic status. The Policy Paper anticipated the need for WSTI to develop a range of courses, particularly for students completing Junior High Schools and the general community (DoE 1986, 24). Needs for programme development and staff development were also highlighted as priority areas (1986, 16). The WSP was one of the main strategies promoted by the WSG in 1988 which looked promising.

Review of the education system generated much controversy between the Government, DoE, the Teachers Association and the public. The two main issues were the quality of teachers and therefore the need for staff development, and an appropriate education structure. Other pressing matters included the increasing number of students seeking entry into senior schools in Apia and limited classroom space. One of the strategies to solve the problem was to turn the WSTI into a Polytechnic:

capable of educating up to 1000 students specialising in vocational education as technicians, up to diploma and certificate levels (CM [88] 28, Aug 1988).

After 1988 the case was shelved until March 1991. In mid April 1991 Cabinet decided to approve the Institute's change in status. The decision was finally implemented in January 1993.

#### **6.3.4.5 The Plan**

On the basis of independent assessment (Singh 1989), numerous evaluations by Australia, New Zealand and public submissions, the Government was made to believe that enrolment projections would reach 1000 students by 1991 (UNDP 1989). This was a wildly over-optimistic miscalculation, given the total number of students by 1991 was 343. It was expected that by 1992 the number could be increased to 560. Moreover the UNDP report ignored the many constraints faced by the Institute: staffing, physical facilities,

financial constraints and a limited range of courses. In addition, the Treasury report pointed out the need to consult the Attorney General's Office for an Act providing guidelines for the Polytechnic operation.

Despite all these problems, the DoE submission to Cabinet claimed that the project would assist the substantial number of dropouts from Yr 12 and Yr 13 either on a part-time basis or through short courses. Generally, students dropped out because either they did not meet the requirements, or parents could not afford to pay school fees, or there were limited placements at senior schools for the top students. In fact most of these students ended up at Vocational schools operated by NGOs discussed in Chapter Two. It was assumed that a Polytechnic would help these students and equip them to attain employment in the formal sector or develop themselves at village level. To achieve this, the submission requested 17 additional teachers, higher entry level and ways to generate revenue. The total cost of the project to the WSG is WST\$1.43m, excluding overseas assistance towards personnel, feasibility studies and facilities.

#### **6.3.4.6 Reforms and Uncertainties**

For the DoE and the PSC, the immediate costs and benefits were less significant than changes in administrative procedures prompted by the proposal. Given its autonomous status, the Polytechnic does not have to conform to the salary structure and classification, selection and appraisal procedures set by the PSC and DoE. The Treasury and Foreign Affairs on the contrary have a significant task of marketing the project to prospective donors. For the Treasury, it is a drain on government revenue unless they come up with a good financial strategy like the 1% training levy paid by Australian Commonwealth employers towards training.

Although the Polytechnic was one of the key issues in the 1991 Government election manifesto, the project was once again shelved until potential donors were identified. In fact it was no longer an education issue but a political tool. The upgrading of WSTI to a Polytechnic was endorsed by Government strategically to absorb the less fortunate students, reduce unemployment and to attract donors. The timing was ideal. It capitalised on willing donors (Australia, New Zealand and Japan) and a shift in HRD focus favouring technical institutes. In a Ministerial Policy Paper by the Australian Minister for Trade and Overseas Development it was stated that:

intensive, short-term scholarships will be provided in Australia using the TAFE system and other higher education providers. In addition, assistance will be provided for the establishment of vocational schools in developing countries (Bilney 1992, 61).

Similarly a Japanese scholarship advertisement reflected this vocational bias (**Appendix 4**).

Whilst the donors were willing to assist with the development of the Polytechnic they did not have the same enthusiasm in contribution to NUS. This institution as discussed in the first case study was set up initially to prepare school leavers for university studies abroad. Over the years it expanded its curriculum offering first degree courses in Arts and Education to those people unable to get an award under the government scholarship scheme. It is widely speculated (Director of Education, Pers.comm Apia, Dec. 1992) that the government perceives the Polytechnic as a means of securing funds and intends to amalgamate the Polytechnic with the NUS and possibly the School of Nursing in the future.

## CASE STUDY FIVE

### **6.3.5 AIDAB Centre for Pacific Development and Training (ACPAC)**

#### **6.3.5.1 Rationale**

ACPAC is a development and training institution established by the Australian government to provide training and specialised information for its development co-operation programme. The Centre fulfils this function through expert advice from the Pacific Regional Team and the Development Training Group. The Pacific Regional Team specialists are advisers on project planning and design for aid programmes in the Pacific and Papua New Guinea. The Development Training Group delivers and manages HRD projects on behalf of AIDAB. The Centre, located in Sydney, is administered and funded by AIDAB. Figure 3.1 provides an overall view of AIDAB's organisation structure and operations. Although ACPAC is known as the Centre for Pacific Development and Training its services extend to all recipients of Australian bilateral assistance.

#### **6.3.5.2 Historical Development**

The Australian School of Pacific Administration was established in 1946. Its primary function was to provide administrative training for military people to serve in Papua New Guinea. In other words, the centre was a public training institution to prepare Australians before they were posted to work in Papua New Guinea. From late 1960s the School focussed specifically on training Papua New Guinea professionals to manage their own public service.

Once Papua New Guinea gained independence the School became part of the Australian Aid Programme, and, in 1973, having taken on a global perspective to training, the School became known as the International Training Institute. The Institute came under the responsibility of a training section of the Australian Development Assistance Bureau (ADAB now known as AIDAB), under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). In the early 1980s training programmes offered by the Institute focussed mostly on such developmental activities as financial and personnel management, development administration and rural development. These programmes targeted middle management and senior professionals.

In 1987, the Institute came under scrutiny from Canberra bureaucrats. Difficult economic circumstances in Australia which constrained aid budget growth led to questions on the viability of retaining the Centre in Sydney. After lengthy discussions the Institute's management, structure and functions were revised accordingly. The Institute was renamed to become the AIDAB Centre for Pacific Development and Training (ACPAC), merging with the Sydney based Pacific Trade Office responsible for project review, technical monitoring and advice on aid programmes.

#### **6.3.5.3 Events Leading to Changes**

The 1987 amalgamation of the Centre and the Sydney South Pacific Trade Office was an outcome of cost saving measures (ACPAC Director, Pers.comm., March 1993). These measures were initiated by the Jackson Committee Review (1984). The Committee recommended a substantial reform of aid management and delivery to improve programme effectiveness. Furthermore, the Committee suggested an increase in the proportion of aid funds available for administration. This did not materialise because of service-wide streamlining initiatives in the Australian public service.

Generally, there was also wide spread cynicism in Australia of aid viability in times of economic turbulence. With Australia being hard hit by the recession, together with high unemployment, criticisms were levelled against the Federal government's failure to sort out its domestic affairs first: the 'charity begins at home' belief. As the Australian economy plunged, budgetary cuts proceeded, reducing the aid budget by 12.4 per cent in 1986/1987 and 3.4 per cent in 1987/1988.

In cumulative terms, Australia's real level of aid performance has declined by about 20% in the last three years. The decision reflected the Government's determination to curb the level of real Government spending and to reduce the pressure on Australia's external account (AIDAB Submission 1988a,13).

In the prevailing circumstances, the cost effectiveness of maintaining the AIDAB Centre in Sydney was reviewed. With the decision making dominated by Canberra bureaucrats there was preference for the Centre's relocation to Canberra. The argument was tied to cost savings and isolation of ACPAC from the Head office.

An alternative was to retain the Centre in Sydney but to amalgamate it with the South Pacific Trade Office, and this was finally decided. Hidden in this decision was the initiative of commercialisation and streamlining of the public service for efficiency. In fact, the concept of commercialisation was flagged by the Jackson Report (1984) which saw tertiary education as an industrial commodity. The idea was to open up the education system to overseas full fee-paying students. A Ministerial Policy Paper noted that in-Australia scholarships:

paved the way for expansion and innovation in the export of Australia's education services to the Asia-Pacific region. In 1986 about 22,000 international students studied in Australia, most of whom were aid sponsored. In 1991 the number had increased to 54,000, only 10% of whom were funded through the aid programme. International students now generate over \$1 billion annually for Australia (1992d, 61).

It can be argued that both education and training are market driven, fulfilling the Australian government's commercialisation objective. Reforms in education and training ensured this sector's contribution to the export drive.

#### **6.3.5.4 Changes in Management Structure and Functions**

This reorganisation has a bearing on the management and operation of ACPAC. The Development Training Group staffing has been reduced significantly and consultants hired. Training managers for specific programmes are being hired on contract basis to replace permanent appointments. In 1988-1989, 59 contracts were let to private consultants at a value of \$803,000, representing an increase of 51 per cent over the previous year; 32 short term aid experts from the public sector were engaged compared to 22 in 1987-1988 (Annual Report 1988/1989b, 6). Out of the five DTG personnel, two are on a two-year contract basis. Moreover, the DTG has embarked on a new approach whereby training programmes are conducted in recipient countries for cost effectiveness.

In-country programmes accounted for 70% of overall training delivered, which is in accord with ACPAC's aim of ensuring widest possible access to training by participants in a cost effective way and within an appropriate culture (AIDAB 1991b, 2).

There is ample evidence to suggest that the Centre has become more flexible in its approach and is more responsive to the issues of significant importance and crucial to the development of the Third World countries. Evidence of this is in the courses available, the in-country training approach and the willingness to design a course requested by an organisation or a specific country.

ACPAC started training-on-request in 1988 with a training programme for the Philippines sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme. The Japanese International Co-operative Agency has also shown interest in ACPAC doing some training in the region under their sponsorship. ACPAC has launched core courses such as Women in Development, Environment, Health and Safety and Project Planning which reflect today's agenda and satisfy Australia's interest and drive to export educational services.

In contrast to the shrunken Development Training Group, the Pacific Regional Team has grown both in areas of specialisation and in staff number. Meanwhile, there are eight full time staff with an additional four advisers in the pipeline for PNG. The growth in these areas, (women in development, engineering, agriculture, education and training, and economics), indicates the diversity of clients' needs and their stages of development.

Several interviewees claimed that two professional groups, Training and Regional are complementary and vital to the survival of ACPAC. Combining the two under one management enhances realistic identification of HRD needs within sectors for which the latter plans, designs and appraises projects. 'Human resource development provides an integrating factor in this team approach' (Annual Report 1989-1990).

#### **6.3.5.5 Significance to Western Samoa**

ACPAC has contributed enormously to Western Samoa by providing sponsorship for public service employees to participate in training. This practice dates back to 1973. In 1992, the Centre conducted several in-country training programmes on computing and taxation. The move towards in-country training has the full support of the WSG and as a result AIDAB is working on a three year training plan for the country. Apart from delivering training, the Centre has been instrumental in facilitating refresher courses for primary and secondary teachers during school holidays. In terms of project planning the Centre conducts feasibility studies, reviews and assessments. This assists both governments in their decisions on aid allocation.

### **6.3.5.6 Potential discussion points**

This case study is crucial in that it exemplifies Australia's changes in aid policy, management and delivery mechanism. ACPAC is used in this thesis to substantiate claims relating to Australia's aid policy changes and preferences. The major issue is how effective is the use of short-term consultants in realising Australia's overall aim of sustainable development.

## **6.4 SUMMARY**

From the 1980s to date, efficiency, effectiveness, weak national policy framework, structural adjustment and institutional strengthening are core words in operations of most aid donors. To achieve these, most recipients like Western Samoa are told by donors including Australia, that the government apparatus is weak therefore institutional strengthening is required. If the structure is conducive to the prescribed development framework then failure in achieving targets falls on the human factor.

The decision to focus on the utilisation of aid towards Human Resource Development is to check the above claim. However, given that a small country like Western Samoa depends heavily on aid for the development of her people, the question is are we able to sustain the direction taken? This question raises the issue of how much influence Australia (as well as other active donors) has in determining Western Samoa's HRD policies, priorities, practices and institutions. As an aid dependent country perhaps the intervention by Australia through its aid policies ought to be considered carefully and learn from identified weaknesses. Naturally any policy change has its consequences but adopting new initiatives and modifying them to suit the political and bureaucratic processes is a progress towards achieving self sufficiency