

CHAPTER NINE

SYNTHESIS AND POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Nine provides a critique of the policy making approaches by Australia and Western Samoa relating to aid policy decisions, their weaknesses and possible improvements. This undertaking assesses whether the prescriptions offered by the models and approaches, discussed in Chapters Four and Five, could have avoided the difficulties discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight. Through combining the theoretical assertions on policy formulation and implementation (Chapters Four and Five), with the practices, how policies are actually implemented (Chapters Six, Seven and Eight), gives a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the policy decisions.

Policy making is a central function of a government. The possibility of complications and unintended outcomes are expected when two countries interact to implement a policy or policies. This observation became obvious during the interaction between Australia and Western Samoa. The weaknesses of cases studied derive from insufficient relevant information caused by inadequate consultation between representatives of the two countries. Two broad but interconnected outcomes arise. Firstly, Australia's development orientations inherent in its aid policies prompted *ad hoc* decisions by the WSG. Secondly, some Australian initiatives were not necessarily conducive with Western Samoa's socio-political and economic conditions. On the contrary, these outcomes questioned the viability of Western Samoan practices, development framework and strategies.

Following is a synthesis combining the theoretical contributions by various models and approaches to policy making as discussed in Chapters Four and Five, and the empirical evidence as in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight. Emphasis on each model or approach depend on one's applicability to the essence of this study. Having considered the findings in previous Chapters, it appears that some aspects described by models explain certain activities therefore their applicability are situational. Greater emphasis will be placed on the Rational Comprehensive model in discussing Australia's policy formulation and the Top-Down approach in the implementation stage. The Successive Limited Comparison model or Incrementalism is discussed in greater details as it tends to relate more to the Western Samoan policy formulation and implementation.

9.2 POLICY FORMULATION MODELS

9.2.1 Reflections on the System Model

The applicability of the System model is useful in understanding changes in the aid policy environment. Logically, the System model would interpret the shifts in aid policies of the donor community including Australia as a natural reaction given the impact of international processes. As discussed in Chapter Three, these international processes included the increasing demand for aid as the Eastern Bloc decentralised. Other demands for aid derived from natural disasters such as famines affecting Sub-Saharan Africa and civil wars in former Yugoslavia, Middle East and Africa. The increasing demands for aid also reveal that previous assistance have not been successful. Stagnant economic performances of most aid recipient governments urged the donor community to rethink its delivery mechanisms, aid conditions and orientations. Privatisation and corporatisation are popular universal development perspective in the search for improved utilisation of aid. Demands in the international arena highlighted above depict a mechanical reaction impacting on the donor community. This is the fundamental argument by the System model.

Australia's aid policies reflect these international trends and development perspectives. Apart from keeping the balance with the external environment, there are domestic demands which are outputs of many sub-systems within Australia. As discussed in Sections 3.5, 4.10 and parts of Chapters Six, Seven and Eight, aid policies by the Australian Government reflect demands from electoral, business community, media, conservationists and many pressure groups. For instance, the push for trade instead of aid is a combination of a universal development trend; business interests for access to markets of recipient governments and tax payers' demand for better value of the aid dollar. The decision by the GoA to 'link Australia fully to the Asian region' can be argued as a strategy to maintain political, social and economic balance between Australia and Asian neighbours. The most noticeable influence of the international policy environment on Australian aid policies is the preference for greater participation by the private sector in aid delivery. This ideological shift is built into Australia's aid policy conditions and is evidence in the case studies pursued in this thesis.

These changes impacted on Western Samoa's policy process and development goals. The idea of privatisation and corporatisation are penetrating the WSG's policy arena as reflected by the Cabinet directive to streamline public sector operations and reduce expenditures. Instrumental in the drive to reform the Public Sector is the WB, though such efforts are consolidated by donors such as Australia. Given Western Samoa's reliance on donors for development projects and programmes, it had few options but to adopt the prescribed measures despite the fact they often conflict with societal characteristics.

In view of the fundamental claim by the System model, it is inevitable that policy decisions by Australia and other donors do impact on Western Samoa's development policies, priorities and directions.

The System model is applicable in the broad sense, such as understanding of the macro aid policy environment, but its applicability at the micro level in relation to policy formulation and implementation processes is limited. It is natural that any change within a system or part of it necessitates readjustment in other parts, but that's assuming people behave in a mechanical manner and react accordingly. Cases discussed above reflect that changes in Australia do not automatically filter down or become readily acceptable to recipient governments such as Western Samoa (Section 1.3 and 7.5.2.1). On the basis of the policy making scenario in Western Samoa, interventions by Australia were considered in light of the prevailing Samoan political and bureaucratic realities. Rejection by Western Samoa of the selection procedures of the EMSS and commercialisation of PWD Mechanical Workshop are examples of Australian initiatives which were not adopted automatically. As such the System model failed to capture the finer elements of the aid policy interaction between two different countries.

Though the claims by the System model are valid in understanding the interdependency of countries and systems, they do not sufficiently explain how the mechanical chain reaction occurs. In other words, the model ignore the micro details especially the prominent roles of policy makers, pressure groups and potential players relating to a specific policy issues or within a specific locality. Effecting a major policy decision depends on clear guidelines at the formulation stage, commitment of necessary resources and acceptance by all for smooth implementation. With that, the shift in Australian policy and the reaction by Samoans are not mere outputs of mechanical activities but rather of human actions and preferences.

9.2.2 Reflecting on the Rational Model

There is a great degree of economic rationality in Australia's aid policy making process. This observation is based on processes in the policy formulation, formulation of project/programme and implementation. At the policy formulation, several indications justified the above claim. Firstly, the selected case studies were already in existence as part of the Australian bilateral aid to Western Samoa. On that basis, the modifications of original decisions are output of rational behaviour. Secondly, Australia employs rational techniques in determining the output of policy issues or in making a decision between alternative options. The use of rational techniques verify the formulation of a project or programme as well as its sustainability. Thirdly, the noticeable influence of economic ideals on development means strategies for project implementation are clearly defined during the formulation stage. Let us consider each in relation to the Australian scenario.

9.2.2.1 Policy Formulation

According to the model (Table 4.1), a policy arise from the realisation of a problem. It was mentioned in Sections 1.5.1 and 6.1 that case studies pursued in this thesis are offshoots of existing or previous programmes involving Australia. Changes in the international perception of aid in particular affect its focus, strategies and delivery mechanisms. These changes gave birth to the introduction of the concept 'sustainability' in the aid arena as a broad policy objective in funding allocation (See Section 8.2 for elaboration). Any development today is assessed critically whether its sustainable. Kerin wrote that 'sustainability is above all about the right of all people to have a recognised role in making decisions which affect their future' (1992d, 13).

Drawing from explanations and findings in Chapters Three, Six, Seven and Eight, it becomes apparent that the on-going schemes such as the scholarship programme, staffing assistance and in-Australia short-term training cannot be sustained in their existing forms. Similar arguments were made in relation to the existence of the PWD Mechanical Workshop under the PWD and the WSP under the DoE. Regarding the Government Scholarship Scheme, the claim can be qualified by assessing the cost-effectiveness of aid funds already spent on the scheme against the return to Western Samoa. The STP commenced in 1980 but for a relatively small public sector engineers, doctors, lawyers and accountants are still recruited from overseas. Whilst more students are sent overseas for training, not to mention short-term training attended by public servants, the number of expatriates working in the public service has increased correspondingly. The failure of the scholarship scheme to achieve its original goal 'to provide required skills for Western Samoa's development', (considering the NZ scheme started in the mid-1940s), are two fold; (a) the programme goal(s) is perceived interchangeably with Samoan practices and customs (lineages, kinships and reciprocity) thereby undermining the selection criteria and procedures, and (b) targeting training to address skills required for on-going development was prohibited by the absence of relevant information.

Shortage of skilled people cannot be blamed totally on the Scholarship scheme. The inability of the Public Sector to retain qualified people rests with poor salary package, restricted career development and promotions compared to the Private Sector. In addition, public servants who resigned criticised demoralising working conditions caused by power struggles in departments, politiking and red tape. In other words, deficiencies noted during the implementation of aid funded projects derived from the marginalisation of a conglomerate of external variables considered to be unrelated during the policy formulation stage.

Another contributing factor to the above claim about the unsustainability of HRD programmes is development opportunities missed in aid resource allocation because of preference to continue schemes such as ASAS and the scholarship. This justification applies similarly to other on-going programmes such as overseas short-term training. Table 6.1 showed that more than A\$8million has been spent on the STP which is approximately closer to A\$12million including the last two years, yet the returns on investment has been incremental. Since the inception of ASAS A\$382.5million has gone into it, yet that amount would be much higher if project related contracts are included.

In all, the failure to sustain and achieve original objectives of programmes such as the scholarship scheme, ASAS, the first SMEC project at PWD and WSP are caused by the lack of resources, weak management and outdated practices. Moreover, the mere fact that aid funds are available to continue such programmes the Samoan policy makers and bureaucrats will continue to depend on it. The arguments by the radical left and right (Section 3.3.3) would provide some useful lessons for the Samoans.

9.2.2.2 Project Formulation

Australia employs rational model in the formulation of projects and programmes. The Rational model specifies that procedures should be stated during the policy formulation to enable a smooth transition to the implementation stage. AIDAB has recently published Three Volumes providing guideline information on its operation and procedures. Figure 6.4 provides details of AIDAB's Project Management Cycle setting out steps or guidelines for project verification before funding is endorsed. Figure 6.2 provides key steps in the Staffing Assistance process to be met by recipient governments. Apart from these logistics, AIDAB use other rational techniques such as the logical framework, cost-benefit analysis and social impact assessment. All case studies used in this thesis are screened using one or several forms of rational techniques. These practices by AIDAB are reinforced by the selected managing agents such as SMEC and PWU in their field operations in order to achieve sustainability and accountability.

9.2.2.3 Implementation

As mentioned earlier the impact of economic ideals on worldwide development orientations has contributed to the reorientation of the project implementation processes. AIDAB's introduction of new strategies for the delivery of aid as well as the focus as discussed in Section 8.2 is evidence of rational calculation in order to achieve sustainability. Elaboration on the appropriateness of AIDAB's implementation approach is discussed in Section 9.3 below.

In comparison to Western Samoa, the absence of any rational measures or techniques to screen request for financial assistance means decisions will continue to be *ad hoc* and fragmented. Recent public accusations of unfair selection and criteria used in awarding scholarships are evidence of *ad hoc* decision making. Two years ago dual citizenship students were given awards to study in NZ and Australia. The 1995 scholarship selection did not consider students with dual citizenship although several of these students were amongst the top ten. There is obvious inconsistency in the selection procedure which is fuelled by political and personal interest. But the issue of dual citizenship becomes a non-policy issue once parents approach the Prime Minister. Once the Prime Minister makes a decision, public servants have no option but to obey the wish of political leaders. In certain instances, political rationality is needed especially when bureaucrats are bias or become personal. This example reflects the common practice in Western Samoa. It means, decisions and policies are not guided by economic rationality but by political and personal rationalities.

9.2.2.4 Criticisms

In relation to the model, AIDAB should have had minimum obstruction in implementing projects and programmes. Yet, the success of these rationally determined processes and decisions are still far from achieving trouble free implementation. Chapter Seven, noted weaknesses in the implementation of the EMSS, ASAS, PWD and WSP because of communication break down. As such procedures and guidelines, outcome of rational processes, were ambiguous, unclear and deficient. Moreover, there were no policy alternatives or options formulated until defects became obvious. Similarly, other programmes had many difficulties because of insufficient information, knowledge and investigation time. The feasibility study for the PWDAP conducted by SMEC, later contracted to implement the same project experienced many hiccups. Here again, the RCM is limited in its claim because the SMEC people who conducted the investigation could have conflicting values with AIDAB. The idea of employing managing agents or NGOs for efficiency, effectiveness and objectivity does not necessarily mean AIDAB values are sustained. The following extract demonstrates that regardless of how aid is managed and delivered, the reality is that organisations and employees have their own agendas:

In so far as NGO is project driven, it is in danger of seeking more to develop itself, rather than the country that is its ostensible concern. In this regard, the practice of some NGOs can be not unlike their government agency counterparts: they seek to benefit their own organisations more than they do the tasks for which they were founded (McCall 1992, 13).

The message is loud and clear, a policy with conflicting values or where values are mixed with goals, (humanitarian, political and commercial), and with too many linkages is bound experience greater difficulties than would otherwise. Having diversified agendas as is the case of many development projects contribute to fragmented implementation consequently policy reformulation and modifications during

implementation. On the other hand, the co-existence between two different sets of values lead to ineffective policy co-ordination with a tendency of the stronger partner having the upper hand. With respect to aid, it will be interesting to observe how the corporatisation/privatisation rationalities alleviate the problem of global poverty given its emphasis on competition and commercialisation rather than moral or humane rationality.

Shortcomings of the rational decision were also noted in relation to steps identified by the model as in Table 4.1. All case studies have experienced difficulties during implementation because concerned parties were not adequately informed about the policy decisions and guidelines before implementation. Because of ineffective consultation, absence of relevant information required for project formulation followed. Moreover, options, alternatives, legal and administrative activities were ill prepared. Obviously, time constraint affected a critical view of all aspects of the programme. Ambiguous programmes or projects also derived from the refusal of AIDAB staff or donor personnel to accept recipient government's ways of doing things.

The overall weakness of Australia's policy formulation is that rational elements could be counter-productive to consultation. Over reliance on economic rational techniques undermined other methods of data collection thereby preventing clear identification of relevant variables for effective implementation. This claim holds more truth especially in a cultural environment such as Western Samoa where consultation and dialogue is central at all levels of decision making unlike the perpetual practices of exclusion preferred in bureaucratic activities.

9.2.3 Reflections on Successive Limited Comparison - Incrementalism

Disjointed incrementalism according to Lindblom:

involves limiting analysis to a few familiar alternatives, an intertwining of goals and values with the empirical aspects of the problem, a greater preoccupation with the problem than the goals to be sought, a sequence of trials, errors and revised trials, analysis that explores only some consequences of an alternative, and fragmentation of analytical work to many participants (Ham & Hill 1984, 89).

In several instances, the thesis stated that most decisions occurred on incremental basis. It is further pointed out that the shift in Australian aid policy delivery originated from lessons drawn from previous experiences of existing programmes. One could ask about the time lapse before an affirmative decision to change

procedures and delivery. Two aspects ought to be appreciated to understand the relevancy and validity of Incrementalism in relation to case studies. Firstly, the 1980 has been labelled in the aid literature as a 'Lost Decade', Section 3.2.2.5. Though it has been a lost decade in relation to aid, it did provide an opportunity for OECD countries and aid donors alike to evaluate their performances for possible alternatives. This process of evaluation is central to Incrementalism. Secondly, the development of human resources requires a longer period of time, Sections 1.3 and 6.2. The reason for this is because of the intangible nature of developing people and the fact that donors have been more involved with finding projects, to ensure the allocated aid budget is committed before the end of the financial year, rather than carrying out evaluations and reviews.

In view of these factors, EMSS was no doubt an initiative which grew out of existing programmes, likewise PWAD, ASAS (modified version), WSP and ACPAC. Case studies' conditions and delivery mechanisms have changed from the original terms of reference. Modifications of the original EMSS policy was inevitable because the full fee concept had shortcomings contradicting other Australian policies and because the original conditions were not accepted by recipient governments. For instance, the first intake of EMSS awardees could not attend TAFE institutions. Such conditions contradicted Australia's drive to lift the profile of technical and vocational training. Other conditions of the programme were modified to suit recipient governments' demands, as noted in Sections 6.3.1.5, 7.3 and 8.5. The decision by the Federal Government policy makers to bury subsidisation in preference for the new policy had only marginal differences to the former. The overall change was the administration and delivery of the scheme but it remains a portion of the Australian aid allocation towards education or HRD. In that respect, changes were minimal however addressing the future sustainability of the programme.

Similarly, revisions and modifications experienced during the implementation of ASAS, WSP and PWDAP were marginal and guided by previous experiences of decision makers. Incrementalism is practiced widely in bureaucratic operations but more so in the budgetary processes and decisions. In all of these programmes, initial decisions were only partially achieved leading to claims that problems are superseded by other problems (See Pressman and Wildavsky 1973; Wildavsky 1979). For example, certain aspects of programmes contribute positively to development efforts but absolute sustainability is doubtful because of maintenance and operation costs, retention of skilled employees and a host of other endogenous factors. A point emphasised by Porter et al:

Past lessons are seldom examined and still fewer professionals bother to enquire into the historical circumstances of the people their interventions seek to assist (1991, xv).

Western Samoa is characteristically authoritarian and this influence its policy making process overall. Disjointed incrementalism describes Western Samoa's aid policy context whereby events happen marginally and values become goals reflecting a marginal advancement on a policy issue. Western Samoa's conservatism and reluctance to implement policies which are likely to have substantial effect on the *status quo* reinforces incremental policy making. In most cases, policies are compared to existing ones and modifications are usually minor. Evidence of which is reflected in the upgrading of the former WSTI to a Polytechnic resulting in the project being shelved for about five years. On several occasions, the Western Samoa policy makers would debate a change in donors' policies intensively then dispersed without a firm solution until years later. Interventions by donors can therefore be seen as means to progress. Lindblom's muddling through and disjointed incrementalism defines Samoans' attitude to aid policy making. Several crucial factors contribute to explain the Samoans' approach.

Disjointed incrementalism accounts for the incoherent policy approach because of the co-existence of contradictory values and systems affecting practices and procedures. Earlier citations from the CCA's Report (1993) and Western Samoa's scholarship scheme procedures explain such contradictions. The most formidable contradiction is policy makers' preferred values given the *de facto* co-existence of the two systems and their impact on the policy making process. The introduced system of governing with specific code of ethics and the *faa-Samoa* operates on vastly different logics. Contradictions from this marriage are noted by critics to be responsible for most ills in the WSG operations. Imagine a project formulated in Canberra by some bureaucrats who have no knowledge of such contradictions and the implications on the project and implementers. Feelings expressed by the SMEC people and other consultants evident the hardships and trials of having a contradictory system.

Subsequently leaders under the modern institutions' of democratic government are reluctant to part with traditions and customs because they are either central to their social standing or because such practices satisfy their personal interests. On one hand, leaders' aspire for modernisation; on the other, to preserve *faa-Samoa* which is fundamental to their power base. The business community and the Church leaders share similar outlooks in that socio-political factors have their disadvantages but they also have many advantages. Differences between these sets of values contribute to a disjointed policy making process thereby producing policies which are short-sighted. Consequently, while global issues are changing rapidly, changes in the Western Samoa policy context are marginal. Incrementalism is reinforced by the policy making processes that prevail. It follows that, both the traditional structure and the introduced institutions involved in the policy making processes, help to maintain the *status quo*.

The other factor perpetuating the reactive disjointed incrementalism in policy making in Western Samoa is resource limitations. Uncertainties undermine the government's ability to be deterministic and feel confident about its development options simply because the future is in the laps of the donors. For an agricultural based economy, this uncertainty is fuelled by other constraints discussed in Section 2.2.1. Although the development plan guides government's development aspirations, its purposes is primarily to assist donors' decision making process. Over the last decade, achievements based on the last four development plans' projections have been marginal. In summary, the reactive incrementalist nature of aid policy making processes is reinforced by two aspects. Firstly, donors' perceptions of development entice recipients to agree with a project thereby diverting aid from identified development priorities. Secondly, Samoans' authoritarian approach to policy making means the debate is influenced by traditional socio-cultural values not necessarily reflecting today's development aspirations.

9.2.3.1 Criticisms

Following from the major drawback of limited and lack of consultation and the time constraint affecting the policy formulation and implementation, it is difficult to envisage that Step 3, 4 and 5 of Table 4.2 can be realistically fulfilled. The availability of information is a single major obstacle in the process of improving the policy process. Of course, all models considered in Chapter Four acknowledged the centrality of data and right information but if evaluations do not occurred and relevant information are simply not available, which is normal in an underdeveloped country, then policy formulation cannot in any way be effective. Overall, the summary given by Incrementalism regarding the policy formulation stage is largely feasible in most policy fronts but prescriptions provided in Table 4.2 are hardly realistic.

9.2.4 Reflections on the Organisation Processes model

The OP and the BP models have some strong claims in relation to aid policy process or decision making. This claim is compounded by the fact that the study focuses on the interaction involving two different countries, various government organisations, bureaucratic levels and diverse beneficiaries. On the basis of above analysis however, it can be argued that the OP model is more visible and relevant to explain the policy making process of Australia rather than Western Samoa. Again this claim is based on the understanding that Australia's political and bureaucratic systems, activities and legislation allow the active participation of various organisations. For instance, the introduction of full fee at tertiary level was seen as a combination of external factors and compelling domestic political demands on policy makers and relevant government departments (Section 6.3.1). Effectively, Australian policy outputs reflect values of particular groups, organisations or faculties, and their impact on the policy decision largely depend on effective

networking with those in powerful positions and the use of the media to mobilise public opinion. In aid allocation, Treasury, DFAT, the business community and bureaucratic entities are influential in the determination or formulation of those programmes.

Let us take Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and verify the impact of an issue such as aid. DFAT occupies a crucial position in advising government on aid directions in respect to recipients' potentials, options pursued by other bilateral donors and multilateral institutions, and possible opportunities for Australia. As such one can argue that foreign policy including aid is partly influenced by bureaucrats' appreciation of foreign development as well as a reflection of their professional preferences. The implication is that aid policies are effectively outputs of external environment demands and technocrats' interpretation of those demands bearing in mind their impact on the domestic political scene. As such the Australian bureaucratic machinery encourages proactiveness and this explains the crucial roles of government advisers in most Western society.

Having understood the OP model's assumptions, EMSS, ASAS, PWDAP and WSP can be said to be outputs of organisational processes. AIDAB's drive to phase out the subsidisation scheme effectively eradicates interests of several other Government Departments involved previously. Central to AIDAB's argument is the idea that any bilateral assistance should be consistent with the overall aid policy objective of the Australian Government. Having too many Government Departments involved in the implementation of a policy makes it hard to co-ordinate efforts (See Wildavsky and Pressman, 1973), and the possibility that those Departments involved are pursuing their own interests. One could argue that although there is merit in AIDAB's concern about loose co-ordination thereby preventing a more transparent aid programme, AIDAB has its own agenda

The applicability of the OP model to Western Samoa as indicated above is rather limited. Undoubtedly, the essence of the model can be seen in the internal process of policy making where various departments have to present and defend their interests in the process of aid allocation. However, given the active variables in the Western Samoa policy making process, interests of outside organisations such as those in the private sector are not adequately represented. Moreover, their participation and influence are limited because of the centralisation of policy making in government and the popular belief amongst those in government that they are there to decide for everyone else. Access by other organisations and pressure groups to voice their concern regarding a policy issue is subject and treated with ridicule. Similarly, the model is applicable to

explain the interactions within a department where several divisions present their own interest, but again constructive criticisms and views are repressed by socio-cultural values implanted in Samoans upbringing. Again the absence of forthcoming criticisms by the public lies largely in the elements of the *faa-Samoa*.

9.2.4.1 Criticisms

Reflecting on the model changes brought about by the deregulation of government operations, for example, the introduction of various privatisation aspects, created numerous uncertainties to all concerned. Contrary to the central emphasis of the model, shifts in aid policies by donors were absolute deviation from established rules and operating procedures. In relation to case studies, it can be argued that assertions by the OP model and rational models are relevant in that changes are not fundamentally significant. But where changes are significant, organisation processes proved weak in explaining why inadequate information was made available if organisations do know their interests and pursue to defend those interests. Furthermore if operating rules and procedures were followed why was inadequate consultation and weak co-ordination rated as major obstacles?

Another shortcoming of the model is the fact that not all organisations share the same value. Several Federal Government departments involved with the abandoned subsidisation scholarship programme advanced their independent interests. The same can be said about government departments at the recipient end (Section 7.8), each push their individual interests although they are all part of government. Secondly, the OP model overlooks the differentiation of influence between central government departments and those at the periphery involve in aid implementation. As indicated in Chapters Seven and Eight, the implementing departments such as PWD and WSP in many instances stated delays and frustrations are caused by excessive control and non-decisions by Treasury and PSC. But even within a single department, divisions or sections have their own interests to preserve. Though the model acknowledges sequential prioritisation as a way to remedy threats and conflicts, this does not work in all cases. Greed, self-preservation and egoism underline conflicts. In fact antagonistic relations between the former WSTI and the DoE Main Office, is one factor which contributed to the poor profile of the Institute. The OP model's argument of policy as outputs of established rules and procedures again ignore the ability of employees in the organisation to manoeuvre, distort and impose personal values.

9.2.5 Reflections on the Bureaucratic Politics model

Despite the strength of the above models, the fact that most policy and decision making occur in the government domain qualifies an argument that the Bureaucratic Politics model is probably the most

influential in explaining the reality of aid negotiations between governments and within governments (Section 4.7.5). Certainly, this does not undermine the contributions by the rational models, the incremental nature of the policy process and the impact of organisational processes, but the degree of these processes depends on bureaucrats' and politicians' actions.

According to the BP model, organisation employees (bureaucrats), are calculative and manipulative during policy negotiations. Central therefore to this model is the role of players. Bureaucrats and policy makers' status almost become meaningless as it depends on one's ability to lobby, convince and influence others in order for their support. The claim by the BP model is significant to aid negotiations because various sectors, organisations and individual players compete for limited funds. However, since such interactions are hardly recorded, one cannot make conclusive statements about the process of lobbying, negotiations and bargaining.

Assertions by the BP model occurred frequently during aid negotiation and consultation between Australia and Western Samoa, and within the Western Samoa bureaucracy. Project proposals are written in language acceptable to both governments and in line with development priorities. Bureaucrats and politicians lobby beforehand for supporter if conflict is expected, creating coalitions. In all, the model advocates that a policy or decision is a product of bargaining based on consensus and compromise.

The essentiality of the BP model to aid is indisputable deriving from its central assertion that policy making depends on the players' ability to negotiate and bargain, and that a decision is a product and result of bargaining based on consensus.

Aid by its very nature involve extensive negotiation because of the many rationales associated with it (Sections 3.2 and 3.3). Between the donor and the recipient government, there are differences in development priorities, preferences, conditions and exogenous factors. Within the donor's policy arena there are many demands from pressure groups therefore aid objective and other policy cannot be ignored. Similarly within the recipient government's policy front, there are competing interests because of the scarcity of financial resources. Based on the implicit or calculative rule of resource allocation, the donor tends to put more emphasis on projects with great productive potential. The recipient government will allocate more resources to that sector which has potential of higher returns in investment. But this is not always the case. As the model acknowledges, outputs of negotiation and bargaining depend on players skills to lobby and establish coalition with other players.

Criticism of the model in relation to Australian aid policy process is the influential roles of the media and pressure groups in moulding policy outputs. The impact of such forces which may not be present during negotiation was not ignored by the BP model despite their prominent roles in the policy processes in Western countries. This is not an issue in the case of Western Samoa because of government restrictions on the freedom of the media and inactive pressure groups.

It has been stated that the policy process is affected by three factors, leadership vision, electoral demands and flexibility to adjust to changes. These factors are apparent in the context of Australian policy process and is well reflected in aid policies. Yet these factors have been down played by the model. In relation to the bargaining process between governments, one can only speculate. As such, recipient governments' interpretations of Australian actions are debatable.

9.3 IMPLEMENTATION MODELS

9.3.1 Top-Down Approach

Fundamentally, the top-down approach refers to the policy making process as a responsibility of those at the 'top' thereby maintaining control over the implementation stage (Section 4.9.1). To ensure controls, the approach prescribes steps for implementers to follow. Its applicability to the Australia-Western Samoa aid policy interface is unmistakable because most aid policies are determined in Canberra. Emanating from this approach is the likelihood that some crucial variables are ill-considered. To minimise unintended consequences, the approach assumes;

- sufficient resources and time are available;
- impact of external variables can be minimised;
- cause and effect relationship is clear with minimum agency linkage;
- specific policy objectives and responsibilities of all involved are understood; and
- absolute compliance from those in authority.

The top-down approach reflects rational characteristics sustained by the power and authority vested with policy makers. This may be the case in resource allocation but the reality is more complicated than a mere top-down relationship. Policy makers are usually absent during policy implementation because of various responsibilities under their management. As such the next level assumes responsibilities of policy makers. In so doing their judgements on certain events impact on the implementation much more than the policy

makers. The assumptions above are therefore ideals, the top-down approach is subject to street-level bureaucrats' discretion.

The top-down approach is manifested in AIDAB rules, procedures and practices. Consider for instance the project cycle (Figure 6.4) and the various instituted checkpoints that recipients' requests must satisfy. Arguably aid funded programmes and projects are designed to be compatible with AIDAB standards despite potential shortcomings once funding is approved. There is also the question of the appropriateness of Australian procedures and practices in the Western Samoa context. Such concerns are trivial because the top-down belief is to have control over the policies. An Australian part-time consultant with ACPAC pointed out, "it's difficult but that's the reality of aid, AIDAB has the final say because it's their money" (Pers.comm. October, 1993).

The implications of such an approach to policy making and in view of the above comments mean consultations between Western Samoa and Australia are ineffective. The introduction of sophisticated rational techniques such as logical framework, environmental or social input assessment and cost benefit analysis, foreign to local implementors, reinforces the top-down approach. New techniques and jargon ensures donors' control of aid management, and recipients' continuous dependence on aid 'specialists'. Since it is the Australian taxpayers' money, Australian interests are preserved as such mutual partnership and grass root level participant are part of the aid rhetoric. In effect, negotiated programmes and projects are subject to Australian policy conditions. The bottom line of the top-down approach is therefore to legitimise Australian control and influence over the recipient government's development directions, structures and operational procedures. This control and influence can be attained through the following processes and procedures.

- a) comparability of projects to AIDAB's format design;
- b) various checkpoints of the project cycle;
- c) use of rational techniques such as logical framework, Cost Benefit Analysis and social impact assessment, alien to recipients;
- d) use of an Australian company to carry out feasibility and appraisal studies;
- e) contracting of the Australian company to manage projects regardless of recipient's non-compliance; and
- f) introducing Australian standards and practices by managing agents.

The fundamentals of the Centre-Periphery perspective are quite similar to the top-down approach, although the former acknowledges the existence of other players, local implementors and target group. It is this paternalistic and patronising attitude which leads to all sorts of difficulties and half-baked projects and programmes.

The applicability of the Top-Down approach to implementation of aid project in Western Samoa is obvious given the centralised operations of government and socio-cultural values discussed above. But this assumption could be false because the contradiction originating from two sets of values may well go against the logics of the top-down approach.

The shortcoming of the top-down approach is the fact that policy makers in Australia for instance who endorsed aid funded projects have no control over implementers in Apia. On the other hand, given the differences between Australia's perception of development to Western Samoa, even if the implementation guidelines are minimal and clear supervising implementers from Canberra or Sydney will be unthinkable. The top-down model is valid as a mean of avoiding pitfalls of implementation within a country, but in a circumstance where resources are transferred across the approach faces many difficulties.

Overall, the models discussed in Chapter Four and practices in Western Samoa are not compatible with both policy scenarios. Models were conceived within the boundary of a single political unit or nation, therefore their applicability to understand and appreciate a policy issue involving two countries with vastly different characteristics are somehow limited. In anyway the existence of policy making models and the drive to improve policy making processes is somewhat disheartening given the truism of most government processes thus:

Suppose, its a bad policy. Suppose I make a mistake.

In Government, there's no such thing as a mistake, since nobody really knows what's going to happen. After all, nothing succeeds as planned. I wouldn't be worth my salt if I didn't know that.

Suppose my policy fails.

Then it fails. Nobody's perfect.

And there's no harm done. It's happened before. But there was no harm done.

Figure 9.1 summarises the differences observed between Australia and Western Samoa policy making processes which no doubt determine and influence their policy options.

Figure 9.1: Factors affecting the policy process

Australia:

Consultative

Government decisions reflect citizens' values

Political demands

electorate demands assist government to make final decision

Media

Legislation protects the media and therefore government's accountability is evaluated critically

Approach

Australia's dynamic policy environment encourage proactiveness useful in validating policy decisions. Creativity and innovation

Western Samoa:

Authoritarian

Government decisions reflect elders' and leaders' values

Political demands

electorate respect decisions, so decisions are handed down

Media

Legislation controls the media therefore government actions are not evaluated or evaluated subjectively

Approach

Western Samoa's reactive policy environment perpetuates the *status quo* and therefore prevents creativity and innovation

Source: Matagialofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

9.4 WEAKNESSES AND DIFFICULTIES OF CASES STUDIED

To synthesise the appropriateness of assertions prescribed by the various models and approaches, understanding the difficulties and weaknesses experienced during the implementation of each case study is essential. The weaknesses are summarised below:

- lack of appropriate information to devise clear policy goals, objectives and clear policy guidelines thereby affecting delivery responsibilities;
- limited time allowed for a comprehensive policy search on the viability of each policy and to secure the support and compliance of hosting institutions, recipient governments and beneficiaries;

- most policy decisions had too many hidden goals and or agendas;
- extensive use of jargon and technical language with different interpretations, causing confusion and misunderstandings;
- lack of relevant information about the local situation affecting work schedules;
- cultural differences and their impact on implementors' conception and attitude to work;
- limited necessary resources such as skilled workers, equipment and funding;
- delays and bottlenecks caused by centralised control of budget and recruitment;
- outdated operational systems and practices;
- interdepartmental disputes and personal clashes affecting co-ordination and implementation;
- too many donors with different interests, conditions and demands overwhelmed implementers; and
- political agenda versus economic rationale

Any elaboration on the weaknesses of case studies would be repetitive of Chapter Seven. In relation to the models, certain conclusions can be drawn from the above findings. Firstly, these case studies are outputs of the top-down approach to policy making, as such they present similar difficulties. Secondly, there are inherent clashes based on the overriding commercial objectives versus public sector management practices and objectives. Thirdly, aid policies are affected by variables of dynamic policy environments therefore their achievements are incremental.

9.5 AUSTRALIA - WESTERN SAMOA: APPROACHES TO AID POLICY MAKING

9.5.1 Overview of Australian Aid Policy Process

The GoA's approach to aid policies can be classified as paternalistic, ensuring Australia's political and economic interests are safeguarded. Paternal is defined by the Oxford Dictionary (1949, 70) as 'Of government, legislation etc, (that limits the freedom of the subject by well-meant needless regulations)'. As AIDAB cultivates its niches and enclaves successfully in the global aid market, not to mention its improved professional profile, its primary interest is self-preservation. The shift in aid policy from basically humanitarian and security issues to commercial driven rationales signifies the general orientation in Australia's policy preferences.

Self-preservation, according to Machiavelli and others (Section 4.2) motivates people to pursue specific actions and decisions. The GoA's shift in aid policy towards trade liberalisation and corporatisation (Table 3.1) conforms with global trends and ensures that commercial interests are preserved:

Aid for Australia is not only vital in terms of self-interest, but in terms of self-preservation as well (McCall 1992, 7).

This recognition of the private sector's contribution indicates the mutual partnership government has with the private sector in the Australian policy process. Both sectors achieve benefits such as foreign earnings, employment generation and future long-term spin-offs for Australian trading opportunities as indicated by the following comment:

Australia's development co-operation also helps to build an export orientation among Australian companies. It facilitates exposure of Australian businesses to commercial opportunities in developing countries, it showcases Australian goods and services and assists in securing subsequent contracts. Through Australia's membership of the multilateral development banks, Australian firms gain access to further export opportunities. (Ministerial Policy Paper 1992, 8).

Our version of Western society, which is particularly assertive, confrontational and adversarial, contrasts rather sharply with the courteous and consensual approach to decision-making that is characteristic of some parts of Asia and the Pacific.

The dogmatic assertion of the superiority of our own values and of a belief that they should be adopted by civilisation much older than our own is a form of cultural nationalism least likely to promote our goals in Asia and the Pacific region (The Australian, Friday, April 7 1995).

Sir Anthony Mason's, a respectable Australian, categorisation of a typical Australian as assertive, confrontational and adversarial is often visible during aid talks.

9.5.2 Overview of Western Samoan Aid Policy Process

From discussions in Sections 5.5.2, 9.4, Chapter Five and findings in Chapter Seven and Eight, Western Samoa's approach to aid policies is influenced by a socio-cultural practice of reciprocity. The practice is referred to in this study as reciprocal or reactive incremental practices.

Reciprocity is a cultural-*cum*-political practice, central to Samoan traditions and customs (Section 5.3.2). This practice impacts on deliberations, camouflaging duties with respect. It leads bureaucrats to compromise their values and comply with politicians because of socio-cultural sanctions and because of

personal interests. Reciprocity is rife on the agenda because of Ministers' discretion on departmental heads' contractual appointments. In the prevailing circumstances, reciprocity is perpetuated by the symbiotic relationship between politicians and senior bureaucrats. Findings by the CCA (1993) reflect a truism of policy making in Western Samoa:

In our view, it is fair to say, based on the circumstances, that the public servants within the Department have been 'politicised'; and as such there is no longer any checks and balances in place to safeguard against abuse and misuse of Ministerial power. Under these circumstances, corruption and a variety of irregularities can easily occur which are difficult to detect (CCA's Report 1994, 74).

Such observation is not amiss among the educated Samoans. Albert Wendt a 'perceptive and gifted poet and novelist reported that corruption is so rife and open in WESTERN SAMOA today that what he saw in a recent visit made him want to weep' (Hereniko 1994, 3).

Whilst reciprocity sustains authoritarianism, reactiveness is the outcome. As stated earlier, the incomparability of politicians' and bureaucrats' values sometimes, and with society in general means government deliberates with fixed blinkers. The outcome is delayed responsiveness to issues of national interests. Since policy makers are sometimes so out of touch, once issues become problems, they react hastily as if recovering from some bad dreams. In effect, policies are outputs of defensive reaction to a donor's changes in policies. This tendency indicates the lack of strategic and comprehensive planning. Consequently, the policy making environment proceeds with a sense of euphoria and defensive accusations but as it quiets down, the outputs are relatively disjointed and incremental.

The WSG approach to aid policy is therefore reactionary, aggravated by policy makers' reluctance to accept new ideas, management's lack of vision or fear of making decisions and politicians' satisfying their own agendas. Policy makers' resistance to accept new initiatives question the commitment to develop people explain the continuous dependency on expatriates. Synonymous with donors' interventions, new ideas would therefore have better chances of acceptance if introduced by expatriates than Samoans. The lack of vision compounded by an inward looking policy making process and management restrained by cumbersome bureaucratic procedures sums up the Western Samoa policy context. As indicated earlier, these bureaucratic procedures have hardly changed since the New Zealand administration. The inability of Western Samoa to adapt to changes was pointed out by the World Bank (1993) as another impediment to development.

Table 9.1: Two Countries Approach to Aid Policy

Australia	Policy making features		Western Samoa
<u>Objective</u>			<u>Objective</u>
opportunity to pursue commercial & foreign interests	proactive calculative	conservative reactive	opportunity to pursue political interests
<u>Delivery Mech.</u>			<u>Delivery Mech.</u>
Programme and project aid	Private sector development and trade	centralised control with Government committees	Public service machinery
<u>Goal</u>			<u>Goal</u>
sustainable development	innovative systems and practices	existing institutions- and legislation	self-sufficient

Source: Matagi alofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

9.6 POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES FOR IMPROVEMENTS

It is a fact that 'no study from the outside can equal the value of self-examination by a population' (Goulet, 1971:vii); that the recipient country knows its development needs and therefore priorities, better than the donors. But, there is a possibility that the expressed development needs may represent only a minority group who influence the policy process. Such an assumption can be appropriate to a semi-democratic policy environment like Western Samoa. Revelations in the above Chapters bring home the message that contradictions apparent in the Western Samoa's policy environment inhibits effective implementation. The politicians and senior bureaucrats are equally responsible for the perpetual dysfunctions and weaknesses observed in government.

Sometimes, being part of the process makes it difficult for those involved to reflect on their actions. Most times, those involved get defensive if weaknesses of their actions are criticised especially by outsiders. The following comments by two of Polynesia's most prominent writers and critics share donors' sentiments. Epeli Hauofa a satirist from Tonga commented:

It is the privileged who decide on the needs of their countries and the directions of development and whose rising aspirations and affluence entail the worsening conditions of the poor. (cited by Hereniko, Spring 1994, 3)

Albert Wendt a poet/novelist from Western Samoa was as critical:

I have watched the euphoria of independence throughout the Pacific degenerate after ten years into political corruption, and how our people become involved in that. Our new leadership, our new elite - of which I am a member, I am not sorry to say - is carrying out a form of colonialism which may even be worse than what we got rid of. (cited by Heneriko, Spring 1994, 3).

These criticisms by non-Australians overwhelmingly point out that educated nationals are partly responsible for the prevailing development shortcomings. A dream of progressing to achieve Western Samoa stated development aspirations and goals required a serious reconsideration of factors previously taken for granted as part of the process.

If Western Samoa is to propose a realistic approach to HRD and to ensure that aid money is properly utilised, it needs to address a balance between these extremes. More importantly it needs to say where it is all heading. With that in mind Western Samoa's policy makers need to reassess the current development objectives, strategies to achieve those objectives in other words the practices and potential alternatives. Figure 9.2 summarises alternatives for improving the policy making process whilst Figure 9.3 recommends strategies for HRD improvements.

9.6.1 Alternatives

- a) The WSG need to realise that the semi-democratic style of government and perpetual authoritarian practices in government need readjustments. Policy makers especially politicians need to equate their values with today's development orientation at the same time realising that traditional values and institutions have their roles in the process. In that respect, roles of the village fono and traditional districts need strengthening as the main mechanism to check and ensure politicians perform in accordance with the law.

- b) From the above discussions, there are several instances where deficient or weak co-ordination result from poor consultation between everyone concerned. This is associated with the tendency in policy making to exclude participation from the grassroots level. There is a need to emphasise that development is a responsibility of everyone and therefore everyone should have a say. Villages traditional division of labour should be revitalised to ensure the bottom-up flow of information for national planning.
- c) Western Samoa's policy making processes required drastic changes in institutional structures, legislation and practices. If development is a genuine interest of all then Samoans have to accept and abide by bureaucratic rules and practices. Progress cannot happen by protecting the *status quo* or by being comfortable in what we have. Having said that Samoans need to appreciate interventions by donors such as Australia and adjust them to suit local conditions.
- d) Appropriate measures must be devised for the private sector to participate equally in the policy making process in Western Samoa. For a start, legislation is required to strengthen and protect the business community. This includes lending policies of financial institutions, attractive interest rates on personal savings and the promotion of the government's incentive scheme to assist new starters as well as overseas investors. Secondly the usage of land under customary ownership must be reconsidered to encourage its productive use. Given stringent migration policies of traditional host countries, Government also needs to address migration policies with emphasis on education and health services, and employment creation. Wage and taxation policies need revision to reflect the cost of living.
- e) Central to the above suggestions is the vital role of education and training. Given Western Samoa's natural disabilities and economic vulnerabilities, the best option towards realising development aspirations is through education and training. The inconsistencies caused by two systems of values can be cultivated strategically to achieve development objectives by educating and exposing Samoans to other countries whose experiences different to the comforts of a small island nation.
- f) Policy making in Western Samoan need to embrace a bit of economic rationality or realism in development decisions where substantial funding is required. This observation is proposed because of the tendency to ignore the objective of self-sufficiency prolonging the dependency on aid donors. Samoans need to decide its future strategically, whether its development and modernisation, or cultural preservation.

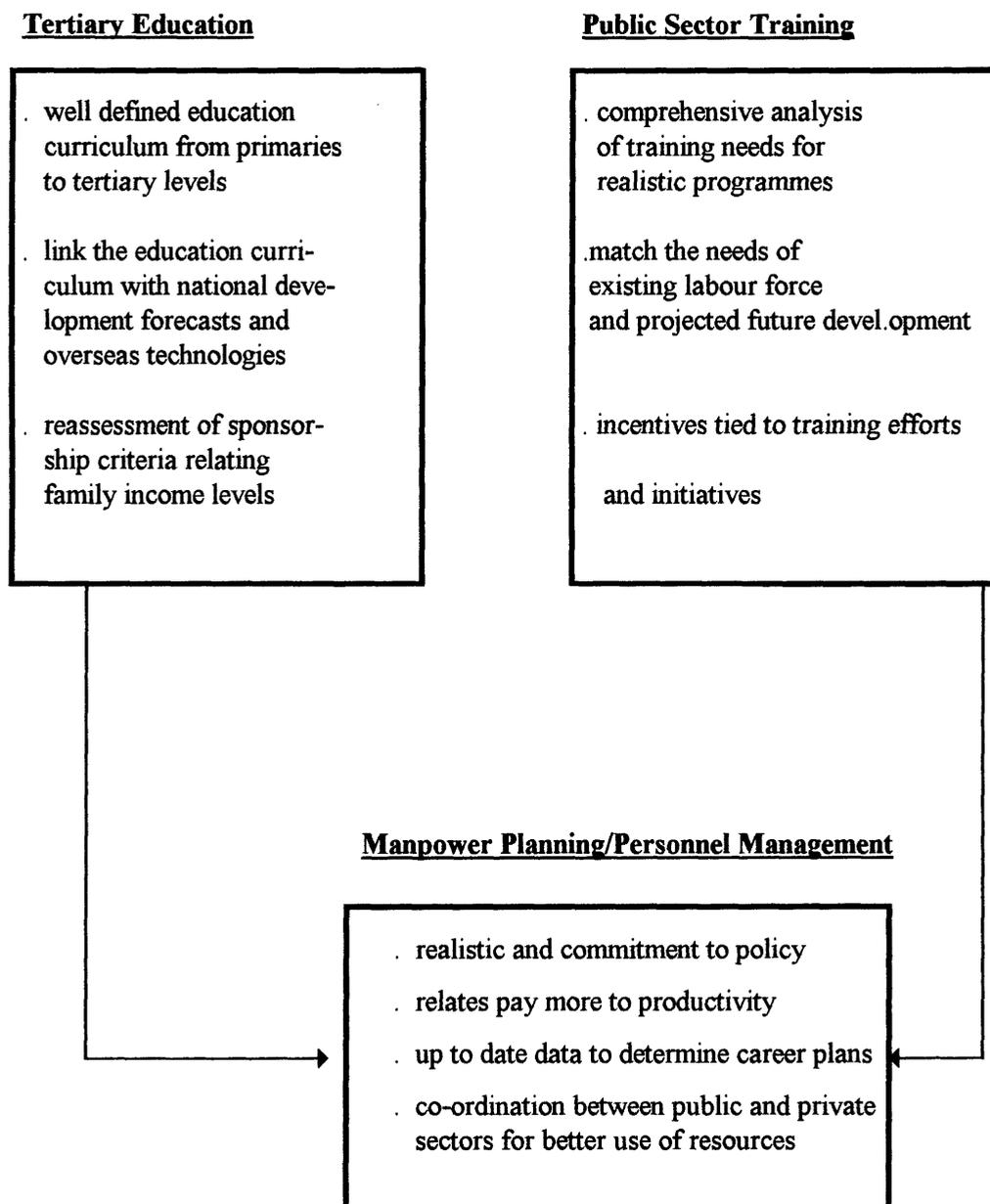
Figure 9.2: Alternatives for Policy Making Improvement

<u>Australia:</u> <u><i>Consultation Process</i></u>	<u>Western Samoa:</u> <u><i>Value Judgement</i></u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . more realistic assessment of Western Samoa's development needs by genuine aid consultation . officials to consult the likely beneficiaries rather than on bureaucratic levels . project objectives must account for local conditions . gradual introduction of new ideas ie accountability measures through training programmes . use of local consultants to carry out feasibility studies rather than Australians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . government decisions must reflect public's aspirations . education and training concentration should encourage proactiveness in expressions . legislation to encourage and protect public views on policy issues . more active role by the media to inform the public . retraining of politicians and bureaucrats on aspects of government roles and duty to the people

Source: Matagialofi Luaiufi-Moli, 1995

- g) From the above findings the thesis proposes that before any project or programme is implemented the most crucial step is to train all personnel involved. The training programmes must address values. Skills can be learned through experimentally but retraining employees to adjust their values and commitment is more crucial in Samoa. Figure 9.3 provides possible alternatives for both countries.

Figure 9.3: Strategic Improvements on HRD efforts



9.7 SUMMARY

The above discussion reveals the dire need to improve the policy making process of both Australia and Western Samoa. There is no single perspective which can improve the output of the policy process but a better understanding between the donor and recipient of why certain activities and processes are unacceptable that in itself would be a milestone achievement. Findings have indicated most difficulties encountered during implementation of aid funded projects and programmes derive from inadequate consultations, and poor co-ordination coupled with weak management. The inadequacy in consultation

could be a result of the differences in cultural values guiding the policy process between Australia and Western Samoa. This can be improved upon by mutual understanding and modifications suggested above. But perhaps the most crucial factor in the policy context is for Western Samoa to be prepared to adjust its values especially among the bureaucrats and policy makers in order to produce more achievable development goals not for the sake of a political party but for national prosperity.

On the issue of national prosperity, there is a dire need to reorient or retrain Samoans that being government employees means their actions and decisions do impact on the future of this country. There is a strong tendency that the quote on page one significantly reflect the general attitude of Samoans working in the Public Sector, that government is alien and therefore the carefree attitude to work. Any mistake has a cost to government and most have delaying consequences. An aid recipient like Western Samoa cannot go on entertaining such irresponsible behaviour.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSION

Initially, the author's frustrations with donors' high-handed approach during aid consultations gave birth to this thesis. The main purpose of aid consultation between a donor and a recipient is to clarify the donor's preferences and conditions before any commitment is made in terms of funding assistance. To accept a donor's conditions some compromises would have to be reached including modifications of a recipient's development priorities and possibly future directions.

Foreign aid or official development assistance has been studied employing different emphases and with many different donors. This study explores the aid relationship between Australia and Western Samoa focusing on HRD policy decisions. In so doing, the Western constructed policy making models provide the basic framework for the work described in this thesis. This is based on the assumption that these models apply to the policy making processes in Australia and possibly Western Samoa. This approach has been adopted to try and find answers to the claim by Australia and other donors that Western Samoa's and other PICs' existing policy frameworks or development policies are 'demonstrably not working'. The claim includes the shifts in mechanisms used by donors to deliver or implement aid policies. Given Western Samoa's many development constraints, the focus on human resources seems an appropriate choice (See Section 1.4). Drawing on the selected Australian funded HRD programmes and projects, the study tries to identify the weaknesses and possible measures to remedy them on the basis of the models' contributions. The models and approaches provide useful insight to the processes of policy formulation and implementation, and most even prescribe steps to improve policy making.

The purpose of this study was to explore the belief that Australia through its bilateral aid policies impacts on Western Samoa's policy decisions and therefore is partly responsible for the unworkable prevailing policies. The study could have taken a different dimension such as investigating the cost incurred by the recipient government in implementing the selected projects and programmes, or assessing projects and programmes from other sectors or from a different donor. Yet, the selection of HRD and Australia were deliberate decisions. As stated above Western Samoa has limited land, marine and other resources and therefore any development depends largely on people. People or human resources is a central component of any development framework (Sections 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.4 and 6.1). The decision to focus on Australian bilateral aid were two fold; Australia replaced New Zealand as the main donor in HRD activities in the early 1980s, and secondly because of accessibility to data (Sections 1.3 and 6.1).

In addressing the overriding aim of this study thus Australian aid policies impact on the Western Samoan policy making process, findings and observations suggest that the impact has been more visible in the operational sphere evident by changes to organisation structures and systems. The announcement by Hon Bilney (1994, 6) that 'whatever policies we've been following in the South Pacific are not working' explains Australia's shift in aid policy targeting the delivery mechanisms. In other words, Australia's prime objective was to improve the implementation of policy decisions. Contracting private agencies to manage projects/programmes, strengthening of institutions' systems and absorptive capacity, the introduction of accountability measures and reassessment of public sector functions were strategies reinforced through aid packages. This has had positive effect at the operational level. In retrospect, the acceptance of these strategic measures was seen by Samoans as meddling with the domestic policy process. Generally, the study's basic objectives have been achieved.

In Section 2.4, Western Samoa's HRD existing priorities and decisions by government to address them were identified. Section 3.5 provides a summary of the goals of Australia's aid programme and HRD strategies, though details are found in Chapters Three, Six, Seven and Eight. The other three objectives of the study; problems associated with HRD policy formulation and implementation, implications of Australia's aid policy preferences on Western Samoa, and possible improvements are discussed in the last four chapters of the thesis.

The principal finding from the investigation demonstrated that not all ills related to aid management were donor driven. This finding however is an outcome of many interrelated factors at the core of which is communication breakdown or inadequate consultation between representatives of the two countries. This inadequacy means that clashes between the two countries emanating from differences in the over-arching policy making environment and operational processes are overlooked. These clashes stem from differences in socio-cultural and economic aspirations, rationales associated with aid projects and programmes, political and bureaucratic operational systems, conceptualisation of development and citizens' values and attitudes in general. In effect, aid projects and programmes are negotiated with a narrow focus. Inadequate consultation is a shared responsibility and a crucial linkage especially because the two countries have vast differences. These differences and clashes are discussed below.

The fundamental contributing sustainability of aid goals is the vast differences between Australia and Western Samoa's development frameworks. It is common knowledge that Australia's economic imperatives shaped the policy preferences and strategies embedded in its aid packages. factor which prohibits these

These strategies are commercially oriented, for example the user pays idea, transparency and accountability, rationalisation of functions, contracting of private managing agents and public sector reforms. These preferences and strategies are compatible with Australia's development interests, aspirations and potentials. Australia has the resources, the operating structures and legislation to consolidate these policy preferences. On the other hand, Western Samoa has a different development framework, priorities and aspirations shaped by its socio-political, economic and environmental systems. Samoans attempt to pursue development expected by donors which create a mismatch because of various constraints: resources limitations, outdated legislation and operating procedures, and *faa-Samoa*. This overall difference affects the respective countries' approaches to aid matters.

The theoretical assessment of the policy processes in Chapters Four and Five indicated that Australia and Western Samoa differ in their approaches to aid policy making, each pursuing their respective agendas. Their differences derive from their conceptions of aid. Australian aid policies are largely associated with Australia's own development and commercial benefits. For Western Samoa, aid is used to achieve personal and political motives. The discussion in Chapter Three signified aid is associated with humanitarian, diplomatic, strategic and commercial rationales. In that regard, it appears that no single model discussed in Chapter Four articulates the totality surrounding a complicated policy issue like aid. In fact, the aid policy environment is tangled with interconnections involving many players; international, regional, bilateral and non-governmental organisations, many hidden rationales and objectives, and conflicting value systems. The different donors with their requirements and conditions often overwhelmed recipients, resulting in disjointed and incremental achievement of aid goals. Whilst donors promoted their own aid agendas, recipients are often in a weaker position and are likely to ignore the inappropriateness of some aid packages. In relation to the purpose of this study, two findings are prominent;

Australia's approach to aid displays characteristics of a top-down approach. Features of the top-down approach are discussed in Chapter Four and highlighted in Section 9.5. Given Australia's reason for providing aid tends to be self-interested and ethnocentric, it must ensure control of the processes.

Whilst Australia may be genuinely concerned about improving aid delivery, simultaneously, the adoption of free market principles (Chapter Eight) demonstrate ethnocentrism. The top-down approach and free market principles means minimum flexibility on the aid conditions and consultation is primarily to satisfy protocol and diplomacy. The lack of consultation, the tendency to lecture and prescribe policy directions to aid recipients are evident in the selected case studies .

As noted in Sections 2.2.2, 2.2.5.6, Chapters Five, Seven and Eight, Western Samoa's reasons for seeking aid are broadly categorised under the umbrella of development. The overall motive illustrates the existence of a "policy muddle", confused by political and personal agendas. Given that Western Samoa asks donors for aid, Samoans have no choice but to compromise some development priorities to receive assistance. Accepting foreign interventions goes with accepting aid. Through aid programmes and projects, Australia has been successful in changing implementing organisations' structures, systems and practices and to a certain extent employees' attitudes.

There are other findings by the study which are worth discussing. The models, approaches and literature on policy making do not contribute much to understanding the context of real politics except to understand processes of policy making. Models examined in Chapter Four were constructed within the domain of a nation-state. Effectively they fall short of explaining a policy interaction between two distinctively different countries. In this thesis, the models do not account fully for the multi-dimensional nature of the aid concept. For instance, the models infer that goals, objectives and priorities are known. This situation may not apply in the aid policy environment because of factors mentioned above. Moreover, policy development is much more difficult if one's intention is not clear as is apparent in some circumstances in Western Samoa.

The models seem to imply that all policy environments are similar. One of the noticeable differences between Australia and Western Samoa is the political and bureaucratic systems of operations. The Australian Government's policy decisions and actions are guided, fashioned and controlled by observing democratic practices such as the right of the individual and the role of the press. Contrarily, the Western Samoa policy context is determined and guided by values of a few. Central to Western Samoa's policy environment is *faa-Samoa* and traditional polity where respect is more important than individual right. The government pursues its many functions in this belief. This is another dilemma, government versus people. Contemporary Samoans experience the system's contradictions. These contradictions are found in the government sphere, public service employees and politicians often revert to traditional values to justify their actions.

Western Samoa appears to have been wandering in the wilderness over the past decade unsure of development priorities. This uncertainty derives from Samoan's dilemma, it wants both modernisation and preservation of *faa-samoa*. The other dilemma is the issue of sovereignty against donor's insistence on how aid programmes should be managed. Since Western Samoa does not have the skills and necessary resources, the issue of sovereignty is somewhat belittled. On the other hand, if Samoans do not face these

development dilemmas, they will not learn. The Samoans are inward looking in attitude, defensive about changes and ignorant of international trends and are partly responsible for the ineffective utilisation of aid. Samoans' unwillingness to change their values and compromise some cultural aspects means the only possible avenue to introduce changes is through donors' interventions. The study findings suggest that donors' aid conditions are a positive contribution. Though Australia's delivery mechanisms could be inconvenient to the Western Samoa Government, it may not be inconvenient to the people.

Finally aid is donor driven. This view means that a recipient's input into a programme is often an after thought and is likely to happen during implementation. This observation is sustained by donors' guidelines and practices, and is compounded by concentrating development consultation with government officials rather than a more participatory approach involving actual programme beneficiaries.

In light of the discussion above, the models do not provide any obvious answers to overcome the defects obvious from Australia and Western Samoa's interaction. Moreover, there are no realistic strategies to combine Australia's perceptions and outlooks and those of Samoans. Consequently the aid policy making arena, development directions and strategies are disjointed and will continue to be incremental. In effect, the very nature of aid policy prohibits a significant achievement of Western Samoa's development priorities. Moreover, the involvement of different donors with different aid policy procedures, conditions and agendas overwhelms the recipient's efforts to co-ordinate.

The thesis findings illustrate that policy making models are not universally applicable but situational. There is also a tendency that Western models are culturally applicable to Western nations because they are outcomes of forces operating in those societies. It must be noted that the discussion of problems associated with policy formulation of any sort, aid included, are mere interpretations or inferences from available information. Case studies used in this study are outputs of some existing policy decisions, subsequently, the discussion of objectives three was more oriented to implementation problems. In view of human nature and the dynamic forces prevailing at a specific policy decision, a model may not be applicable to two similar situations.

Issues for further Investigation

- a) There is a need for further investigation into the applicability of policy making models discussed in Chapter Four in other recipient countries or in other sectors. The thesis has

focussed primarily on Western Samoa and on HRD, and although generalisations can be made to other sectors in Western Samoa, the applicability of such findings cannot be assumed for other recipient countries because of societal complexities. Similarly, definite applicability of findings from the HRD sector cannot be assumed as readily relevant because of the possibility that different variables prevail.

- b) Further investigative work is necessary to determine whether the studies of improved mechanisms to negotiate the formulation and implementation of aid programmes between the relevant parties are valid.
- c) A third area for further study is the effectiveness or counter-productiveness of AIDAB's idea of using consultants and private sector agencies to manage a programme or project. Pressman and Wildavsky's study (1973) concluded that too many linkages in decision making prevent effective implementation. The study may pursue the comparability of private agencies' values to those of the donor.
- d) Fourthly, as the world changes so fast assisted by the general feeling that it is progress, the question is how much progress is desirable to everyone or who determines progress? Why do so many people debate the issue of identity and culture? A sociological investigation into these concerns is recommended given today's ethical awareness.