A tropical beach scene with a palm tree and a sunset over the ocean. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with a large, faint, stylized graphic of a globe or a similar shape overlaid on the background. The water is calm, and the beach is visible in the foreground.

"IN THE LAST TEN YEARS, THE FOUR KEY CONCEPTS THAT HAVE GUIDED EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN SAMOA WERE: EQUITY, QUALITY, RELEVANCE AND EFFICIENCY.

EQUITY REFERS TO UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION; QUALITY TO HIGH STANDARDS IN EDUCATION HOWEVER THESE ARE DEFINED BY A COMMUNITY; RELEVANCE TO LEARNING THAT PERTAINS TO INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT; AND EFFICIENCY TO EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND ADEQUATE RESOURCES INCLUDING TEACHERS AND FACILITIES."

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

UNDP DEFINES SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AS enlarging people's choices by expanding human capabilities¹. Sustainability of life, of development, of people or of nations is a global issue that has pre-occupied debate and consultations in the modern day world for the last thirty years. According to UNDP, sustainability means meeting the needs of present day generations without compromising the abilities and opportunities of future generations. Enlarging people's choices today should not be at the cost of people tomorrow². Following the UNDP perspectives, sustainable livelihood then is about people having access to abilities, opportunities and choices to obtain a decent standard of living without compromising the same for future generations. Education and training play a pivotal role in expanding human capabilities.

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

The Basis of Education Policy in Sāmoa

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

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

The Goals of Education

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

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

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

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

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

To be established are impartial evaluation and assessment methods which:

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

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

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

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

The State of the Education Sector and Some Issues

Pre-school Education

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

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

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

Special Needs Education

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

TABLE 1: POPULATION WITH MULTIPLE OR SINGLE DISABILITIES, 2002

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

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

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

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

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

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

Formal Schooling: Primary and Secondary Education

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

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

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

a) School Enrolments

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

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

b) National Age Participation Rates

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

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

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

| | Government | Mission | Private | Total |
|---|------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Primary* | | | | |
| Schools | 140 | 13 | 6 | 159 |
| Students | 33,719.00 | 4,970.00 | 1,385.00 | 40,070.00 |
| Male | 17,512.00 | 2,553.00 | 717.00 | 20,782.00 |
| Female | 16,207.00 | 2,417.00 | 668.00 | 19,292.00 |
| Teachers | 1,042.00 | 155.00 | 63.00 | 1,260.00 |
| S:T ratio | 32.36 | 32.06 | 21.90 | 31.80 |
| Repetition rate** | 2.10 | 2.70 | 0.50 | 2.10 |
| Secondary and combined Primary and Secondary schools | | | | |
| Schools | 25 | 17 | 2 | 44 |
| Students | 9,021.00 | 5,630.00 | 249.00 | 14,900.00 |
| Male | 4,401.00 | 2,701.00 | 116.00 | 7,218.00 |
| Female | 4,620.00 | 2,929.00 | 133.00 | 7,682.00 |
| Teachers | 424.00 | 239.00 | 20.00 | 683.00 |
| S:T ratio | 21.30 | 23.55 | 12.45 | 21.82 |
| Repetition rate** | 3.50 | 4.70 | 0.50 | 4.00 |

*excludes combined schools ** 2003 rates
Source: MESC: Education Statistical Digest, July 2005

TABLE 3: TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLMENTS (2000-2005)

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

Source: MESC Education Statistics 2004, July 2005

c) Access and Participation Issues

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

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

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

as potential social problems.

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

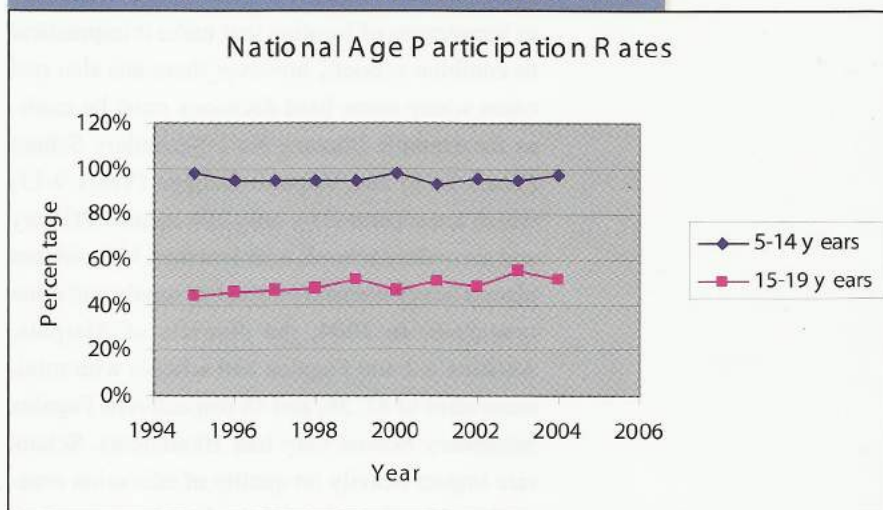
The net enrolment rate includes children of the appropriate age group and it is desirable that a net enrolment rate should also adhere as close as possible to 100 per cent. However for Sāmoa, net enrolment rates in primary education have been gradually decreasing from 77 per cent in 1995 to 69 per cent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

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

d) School Sizes

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

FIGURE 1: NATIONAL AGE PARTICIPATION RATES



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

TABLE 4: GROSS ENROLMENT RATES (GER) (%) FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS⁸

| Year | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 5-14 ⁹ years | 98 | 95 | 95 | 95 | 95 | 98 | 93 | 96 | 95 | 97 |

Source: MESC Education Statistics 2004, July 2004

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

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

Source: MESC Education Statistics 2004, July 2004

TABLE 6: SIZES OF SCHOOLS: NUMBER OF CHILDREN

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

Source: MESC Education Statistics, July 2004

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

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

e) Repetition Rates

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

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

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

f) Transition Rates

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

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

g) Drop Out Rates

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

TABLE 7: TRANSITION RATES BY YEAR LEVEL 1994-2005

| Year | Year level | 1-2 | 2-3 | 3-4 | 4-5 | 5-6 | 6-7 | 7-8 | 8-9 | 9-10 | 10-11 | 11-12 | 12-13 |
|-----------|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1994-1995 | | 90 | 99 | 99 | 97 | 100 | 97 | 101 | 82 | 90 | 94 | 52 | 47 |
| 1995-1996 | | 88 | 97 | 98 | 95 | 93 | 95 | 100 | 78 | 85 | 91 | 57 | 40 |
| 1996-1997 | | 88 | 98 | 98 | 97 | 97 | 98 | 104 | 80 | 94 | 91 | 76 | 45 |
| 1997-1998 | | 87 | 98 | 99 | 94 | 98 | 94 | 100 | 77 | 90 | 90 | 68 | 50 |
| 1998-1999 | | 89 | 97 | 97 | 96 | 97 | 92 | 100 | 80 | 93 | 92 | 77 | 52 |
| 1999-2000 | | 91 | 100 | 98 | 97 | 98 | 95 | 102 | 84 | 90 | 87 | 79 | 48 |
| 2000-2001 | | 92 | 99 | 100 | 98 | 102 | 97 | 104 | 86 | 90 | 86 | 86 | 52 |
| 2001-2002 | | 88 | 101 | 101 | 96 | 100 | 98 | 97 | 86 | 91 | 85 | 91 | 51 |
| 2002-2003 | | 89 | 98 | 99 | 95 | 99 | 96 | 97 | 87 | 95 | 88 | 91 | 52 |
| 2003-2004 | | 88 | 98 | 99 | 98 | 97 | 97 | 96 | 88 | 89 | 85 | 82 | 57 |
| 2004-2005 | | 89 | 97 | 97 | 97 | 97 | 98 | 96 | 88 | 91 | 86 | 90 | 51 |

Source: MESO Education Statistical Digest 2005

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

Surveys undertaken by the ADB-ESP 2 PPTA¹⁰ team in September, 2004 highlighted two main reasons for dropping out of school both in the rural and urban schools. These reasons are economic hardship and the low priority placed on education by parents in the communities. There seems to have been a shift in the value placed by parents and communities upon education since the attainment of political independence in 1963. The reasons must be found for development planning to address.

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

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

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

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

Source: MESC Education Statistical Digest 2005

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

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

Strategies for Development

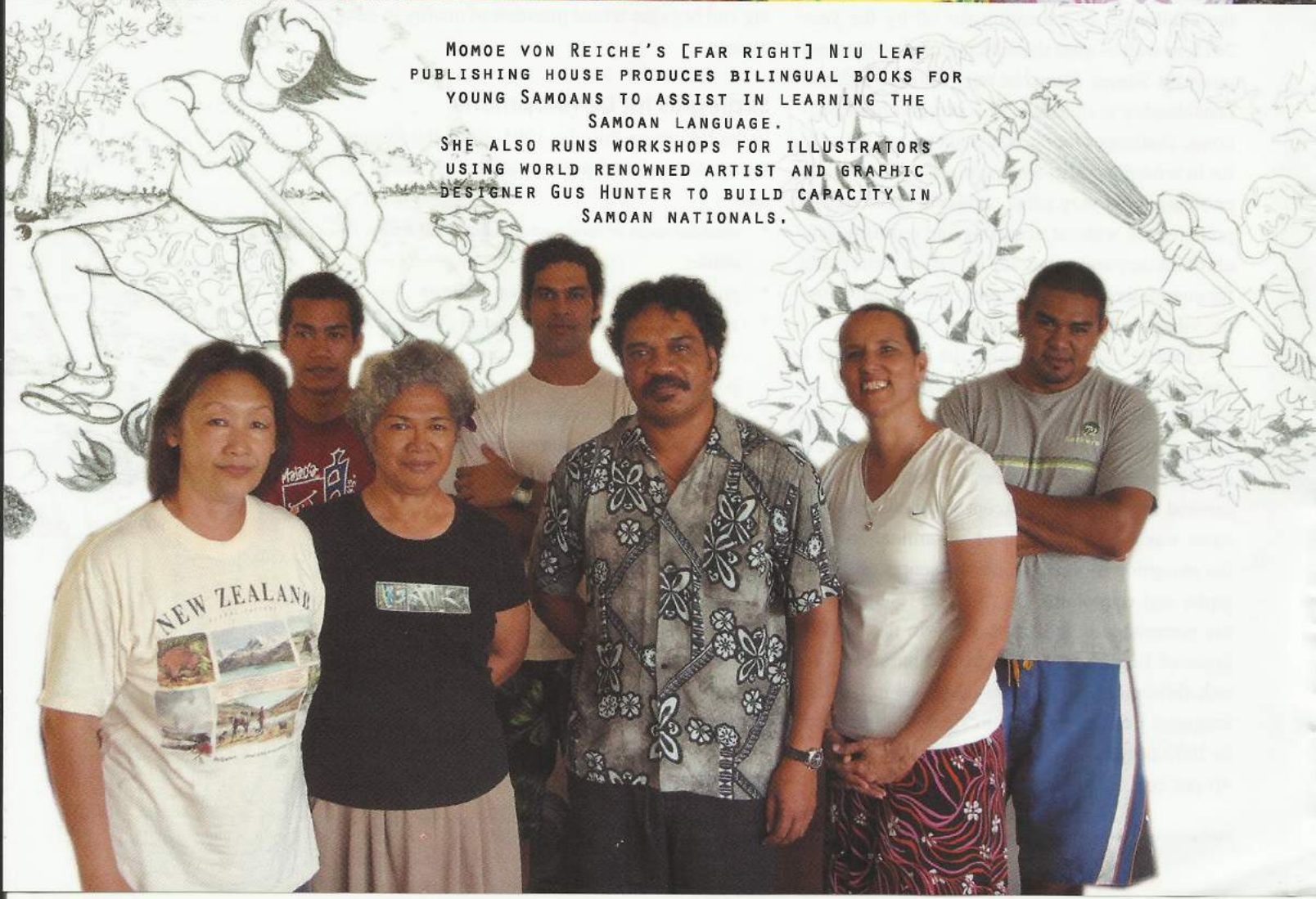
In the Education Policies 1995-2005, the strategy for development of primary education called for the:

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

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



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



tion for teacher education.

At first glance, the help provided by the donor community has enabled the government to fulfil some of the objectives stated above. Standards were stated for school and class sizes. Maximum school size is 750 and maximum class size is 40:1 in single classes, 30:1 in dual classes and 25:1 in multi grade classes. In 2003, only a few primary schools in the Apia Urban region, Faleata and Vaimauga had over 750 students. In 2003, 68 per cent of the government schools met the government national standard of 30:1. With the assistance of ADB-ESP 1¹¹, the over-crowdedness at Mälifa was re-distributed to upgraded and refurbished local schools in the surrounding areas under the authority of local school committees.

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

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

migration where their qualifications are recognized for much better salaries.

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

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

Similar to the primary education developmental objectives, a number of activities have addressed the objectives listed above. Through the ADB-ESP 1, the ADB and the Government of Sāmoa allocated US\$10 million to primary and secondary education for civil works, furniture, equipment, learning materials and teacher training. To date, twelve secondary schools have been rehabilitated¹². Furniture and equipment have been distributed to the schools and 676 secondary teachers have been trained in coordination with the training in the school curriculum also funded by NZAid. Standard lists of equipment have been prepared for various subject areas. An additional twelve secondary schools still require rehabilitation, seven (which includes one at Fagaloa that is being turned into a community learning centre) on Upolu, three on Savai'i and the three colleges, Sāmoa, Avele and Vaipouli. These will require extensive resources that are currently estimated at US\$14 million.¹³

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

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

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

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

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

Post School Education and Training

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

a) The National University of Sāmoa

The National University of Sāmoa was established by an Act of Parliament in 1984 which was later amended as the NUS Act of 1997¹⁵ (and more recently, the National University of Sāmoa Act 2005, effecting the merger with Polytech). In the 1997 Act, the NUS mandate is set out in Part II, section 5 as follows:

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

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

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

Programmes at NUS include:

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

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

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

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

b) The Sāmoa Polytechnic

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

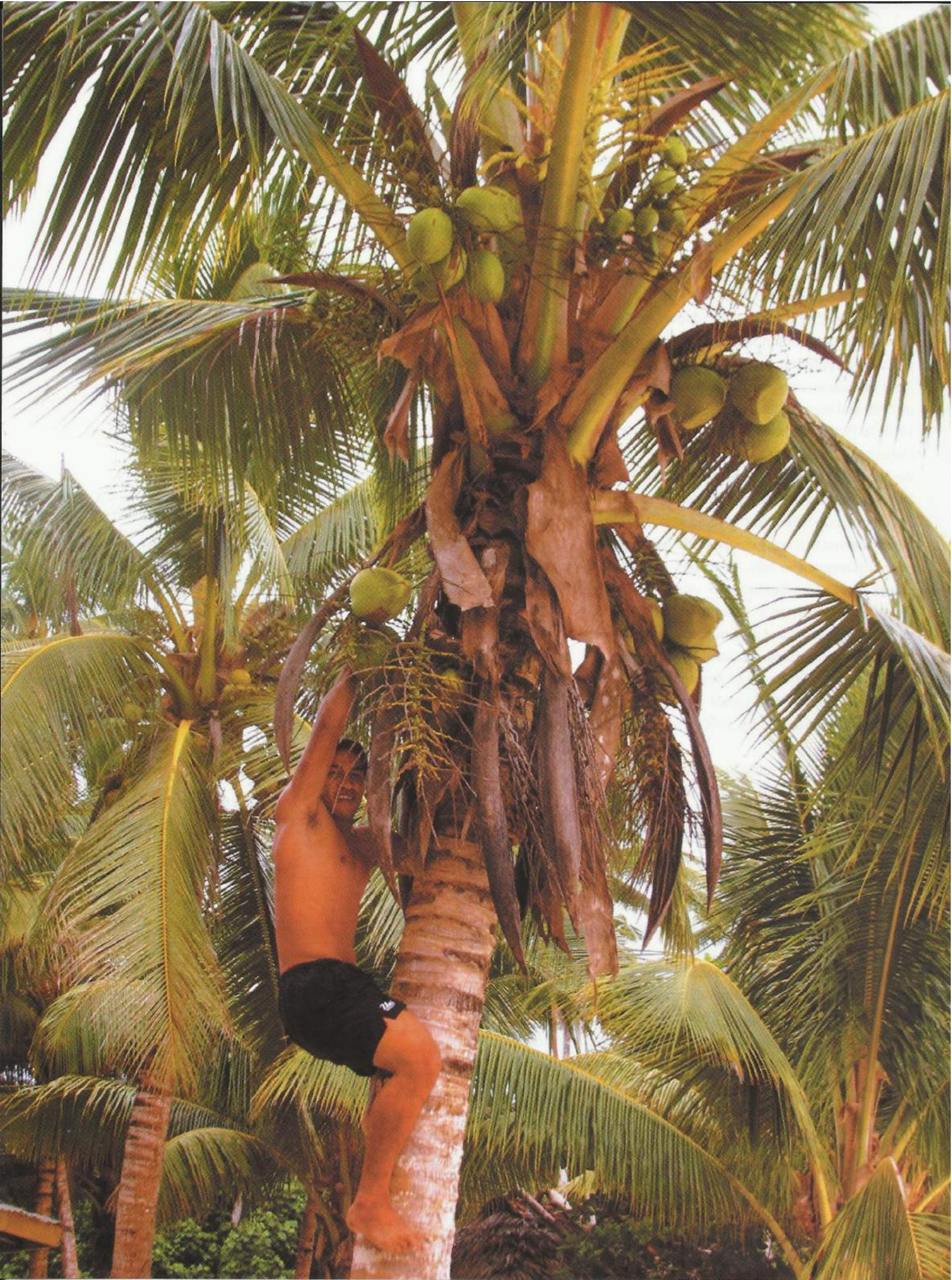
*School of Business and Tourism Studies*¹⁶

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

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

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

Source: National University of Samoa Registry, 2005



- c) The encouragement of intellectual independence;
- d) The provision at appropriate levels of education and training responsive to the needs of the people of Sāmoa;
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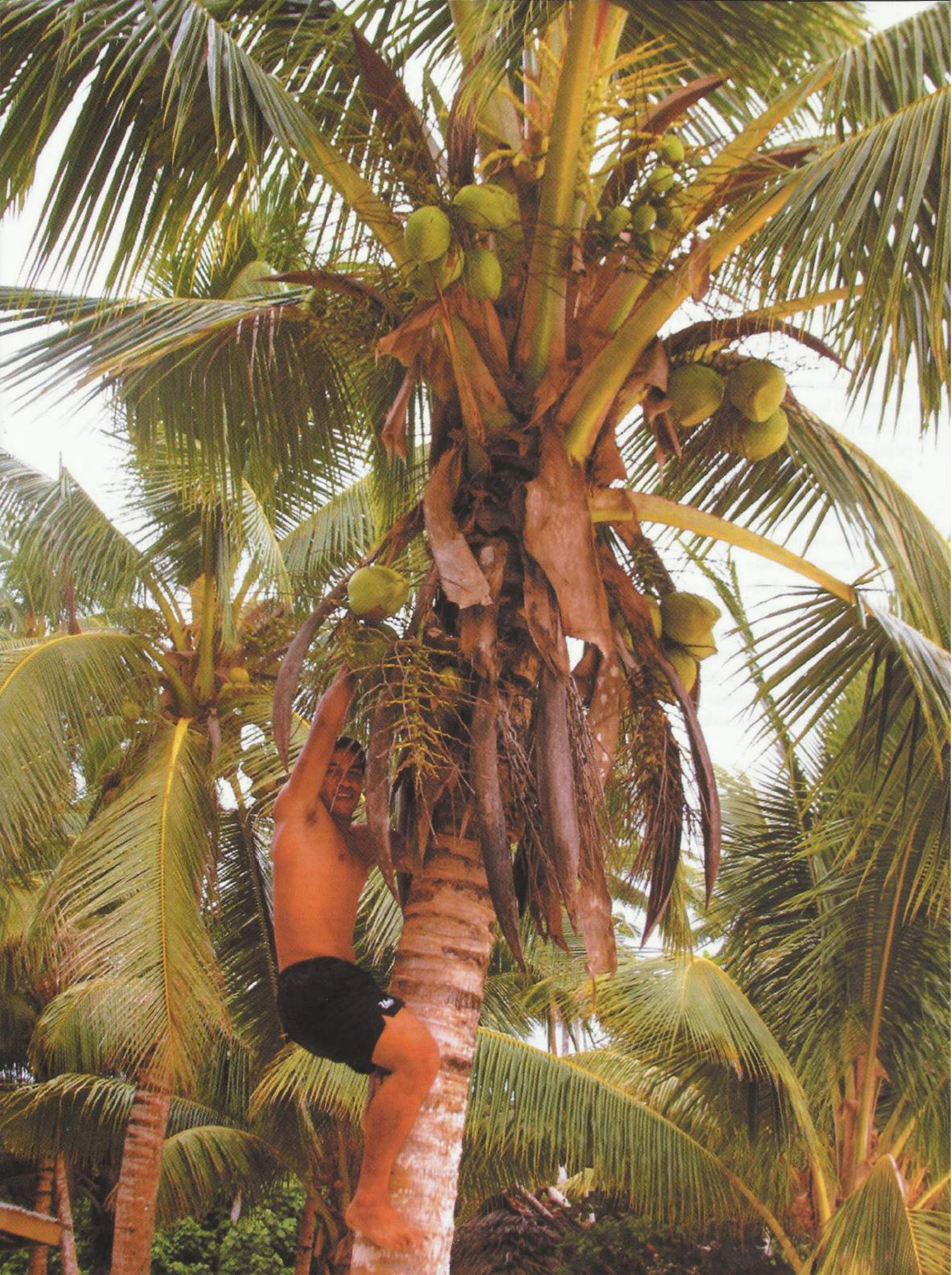
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| Dip. Commerce | 24 | 44 | 36 | 36 | 22 |
| B. Commerce | 19 | 29 | 42 | 53 | 38 |
| Cert. Science | 17 | 10 | 5 | 9 | 6 |
| Cert. Computing | 12 | 9 | 17 | 10 | 10 |
| Dip. Computing | 5 | 10 | 5 | 6 | 13 |
| Cert. Maths | 1 | - | 2 | 3 | - |
| Dip. Maths | 3 | - | - | - | - |
| B. Sc | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| Dip. ED | 40 | 28 | 63 | 57 | 57 |
| B. Ed | - | - | - | 6 | 6 |
| Dip. Nursing | 5 | 7 | 9 | 29 | 18 |
| B. Nursing | - | 5 | 5 | 28 | 20 |

Source: National University of Samoa Registry, 2005



School of Technology

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

School of Maritime Training

Certificate of Achievement

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

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

c) The NUS-Sāmoa Polytechnic Merger

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

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

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

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

Non Formal Education

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Source: MESC Statistical Digest, 2005

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

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

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

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

Teacher Education

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

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

a) The Teaching Profession

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

b) Teacher Qualifications

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

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

c) Teacher Supply and Demand

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Source: MESC Educational Statistical Digest 2005.

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

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

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

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

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

STUDENT QUALITY UNDERMINED BY TEACHER SHORTAGE REDUCES LIFE CHOICES



There are not enough teachers in the education system in Sāmoa and the problem is critical.

The impact of teacher shortage in the schools thoroughly undermines quality in education.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Methodology

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

2. Conclusions and Recommendations

a) Access and Equity must continue to be improved

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

b) Quality of Education Must Be Improved

Infra-structures

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

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

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

Learning outcomes

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

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

Production and adequate resources

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

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

On-going curriculum development

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

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

Teacher development

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

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

Effective and realistic policy

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

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

3. Improving Efficiency

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

CHANCE FAVOURS THE PREPARED MIND



PHOTO BY SKILL JOHNSTON

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

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

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

4. Improving Relevance

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

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

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

5. The Importance of a Quality Teaching Workforce

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

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

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

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

Endnotes

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