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# **Civil Society and Development: Pacific Island Case Studies**

A dissertation presented  
in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
in Development Studies  
at Massey University,  
Palmerston North,  
New Zealand.

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**1999**

## ABSTRACT

This enquiry set out to examine the role of civil society in economic and social development, and the relationship between the state, the market and civil society, in the island nations of the Pacific. The study also explored the notions of progress and development and identified the impact of the dominant development paradigm on traditional Pacific Island communities, cultures and economies. Case studies were undertaken of three segments of civil society in the Pacific Islands. A village community in Samoa, a non-government organisation in the Solomon Islands and a Pacific-wide social movement were the subjects of this enquiry.

The study found that state-led and market-driven approaches to development have led to significant development failures in the Pacific Islands and a neglect of civil society. It is argued throughout this study, with supporting evidence from the three case studies, that civil society can and does make a significant contribution to the economic and social development of Pacific Island nations but that contribution has largely been neglected. This thesis argues that the state, the market and civil society all have important complementary roles to play in the development of a nation and, by working together in a coordinated manner, they have the capacity to improve the quality of life and create good change for people of the Pacific and their communities.

It was concluded that civil society needs to assume a higher priority in development planning and practice, and that the participation of indigenous people, on their own terms, is central to good development practice. Furthermore, an explanatory model of the relationship between state, market and civil society was advanced. This model has the capacity to assist development education, policy formulation and programme planning. This study contributes to the discourse on civil society and alternative development and advances a range of proposals to improve development practice.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to the life and work of Luamanuvao Winnie Laban  
and to the memory of Margaret Ellen Swain (1917-1999).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is the product of a decade of work in the island nations of the Pacific. I acknowledge the insights, learning and wisdom I have gained from the hundreds of Pacific Islanders I have worked in partnership with, in many different settings. You have given me inspiration and hope for the future. You have much to teach us about sustainable development. Thank you.

*Fa'afetai i le aigapotopoto i Samoa. Fa'afetai tele lava i le Afioga a Patu Aivalu Tunupopo mo le alofa, ma le agalelei. Fa'afetai tinā pele Emi mo lau tofa mamao ma le fa'autaga. Fa'afetai Nu'uiali'i Mulipola Ma'ilo Saipele ua maliu. Fa'afetai fo'i toea'ina le Susuga ia Tupo Tunupopo. Fa'afetai i le Ali'i tusi tala le Susuga ia Professor Alapati Wendt.*

My thanks to Abraham Baeanisia, John Roughan and the staff of the Solomon Islands Development Trust, particularly Walter Ben Taurasi, Roland Batarii, Jennifer Wate and Sister Donna. My thanks also to David Gegeo who encouraged me to explore the notion of an indigenous epistemology.

During the last decade I have worked, with Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, as Coordinator of Consumers International's South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme. I acknowledge the support of Consumers International and the opportunity the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme has given me to work, and be part of the development of the consumer movement, throughout the Pacific Island nations.

I acknowledge, with gratitude, the support, guidance and wisdom of my supervisor, Professor John Overton, Institute of Development Studies, Massey University.

Two sections of this dissertation were published previously. Sections of an early draft of Chapter 2 were included in a paper presented to the Aotearoa New Zealand International Development Studies Network Inaugural Conference by John Overton and published as: Swain, P. and J. Overton, 1998. 'The Changing Face of Civil Society.' In *ANZIDSN Conference Proceedings*. Auckland: ANZIDSN: 18-22. Aspects of the material on consumer legislation in Chapter 6 were published in: Swain, P. 1995. 'Developing Consumer Law in the South Pacific.' *Consumer Directions*, October: 10-11.

I declare that this dissertation is my own work, except for those sections explicitly acknowledged, and that the main content of the dissertation has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other university. I assert the moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

P.M.S. June 1999.

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## GLOSSARY OF SAMOAN TERMS

<i>afakasi</i>	a person of mixed parentage (lit. half-caste).
<i>aiga</i>	family or extended family.
<i>ali'i</i>	<i>matai</i> , high chief or sitting chief.
<i>'aumaga</i>	the untitled men of a village.
<i>aualuma</i>	the (young) women of a village.
<i>fa'alavelave</i>	event (funeral, wedding etc.) requiring <i>fa'asamoa</i> .
<i>fa'alupega</i>	record of titles, ranks, ancestry (oral or written).
<i>fa'asamoa</i>	the Samoan way, custom, tradition, culture.
<i>faife'au</i>	church minister.
<i>fale</i>	house.
<i>fale o le faife'au</i>	church minister's residence.
<i>fale fonofono</i>	meeting house.
<i>fale o'o</i>	small house for meeting and resting.
<i>fale talimalo</i>	large village meeting house.
<i>faletua</i>	wife, wife of chief.
<i>faletua ma tausilua</i>	women's committee, wives of chiefs and orators.
<i>falesā</i>	church building
<i>fono</i>	meeting, village council.
<i>gafa</i>	genealogy.
<i>lotu</i>	prayer, church, spirituality.
<i>Malo</i>	the government, state.
<i>matai</i>	chief ( <i>ali'i</i> or <i>tulafale</i> ).
<i>meaalofa</i>	gift as part of customary exchange

<i>nu'u</i>	village.
<i>palolo</i>	seafood delicacy, worm of living coral.
<i>papalagi</i>	European(s) (lit. skyburster).
<i>pule</i>	secular authority of chief.
<i>pulenu'u</i>	village council, leader of fono, national village council.
<i>sa'ofa'i</i>	ceremony to bestow <i>matai</i> title.
<i>talanoaga</i>	conversation, a talk, discussion.
<i>taule'ale'a</i>	young man, leader of 'aumaga.
<i>tausi avā</i>	to support, wife of untitled man.
<i>tausi ali'i</i>	husband or wife of <i>matai</i> .
<i>taupou</i>	ceremonial village maiden, virgin.
<i>toea'ina</i>	elder, male.
<i>tulafale</i>	<i>matai</i> , talking chief, orator.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDAB	Australian International Development Assistance Bureau.
ANGOC	Asian Non-Government Organisation Coalition.
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development (formerly AIDAB).
CAC-PNG	Consumer Affairs Council of Papua New Guinea.
CASI	Consumers Association of the Solomon Islands.
CCF	Consumer Council of Papua New Guinea.
CI	Consumers International (formerly IOCU).
CI-ROAP	CI Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.
CUENB	Consumers Union of East New Britain.
DFTCA	Department of Fair Trading and Consumer Affairs (Fiji).
FBCA	Federal Bureau of Consumer Affairs (Australia).
GAD	Gender and Development.
IMF	International Monetary Fund.
IOCU	International Organisation of Consumers Unions.
LDC	Least Developed Country.
MTM	Mobile Team Member.
NGO	Non-Government Organisation.
NKDT	<i>Nasional Kommuniti Developmen Trust</i> (Vanuatu).
NZODA	New Zealand Overseas Development Assistance.
OBCA	<i>Ofis Blong Consuma Afeas</i> (Solomon Islands).
SAMOA Inc.	American Samoa Consumer Rights Organisation.

SIDT	Solomon Islands Development Trust.
SPAKS	<i>Sosaiete Puipuia Aia Tatau Konesuma Samoa.</i>
SPC	South Pacific Community (formerly South Pacific Commission).
SPCR	South Pacific Consumer's Report.
SPCPP	South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme.
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme.
TNC	Transnational Corporation.
VAGST	Value Added Goods and Services Tax.
VDW	Village Development Worker.
WID	Women in Development.
WIP	Women's Initiative Programme.
WTO	World Trade Organisation.
UN	United Nations.
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme.

## PREFACE

This dissertation begins with the assertion that the 'development project' (McMichael 1996) has failed in most Pacific Island communities and lays some of the responsibility for that failure at the feet of state-led and market-driven development and a neglect of civil society. The three case studies presented here demonstrate that a vibrant civil society can and does make a significant contribution to improving the quality of life for many Pacific Islanders. I argue that the state, the market and civil society each have important and complementary roles to play in the economic and social development of Pacific Island nations, and that civil society should be accorded a greater priority. My thesis involves description, analysis and prescription.

I have worked in the island nations of the Pacific for the last decade. For me the failure of the development project is not an abstract, distant event but a daily reality. Development failures have a profound impact on people throughout the region, including members of my extended family. In Samoa, for example, our elders die young of non-communicable diseases, our children sit with seventy others in a classroom taking instruction from an ill-trained teacher, our water supplies are irregular and unsafe and corruption is endemic. The consequences of the failure of development may be seen throughout the island nations of the Pacific. Many of these failures are avoidable. The development project, that promised so much to newly independent nations, has not been realised.

This enquiry is not only an academic study of the role of civil society in development, but a report on the day-to-day work of a social movement, a village community and a non-government organisation. The study of the South Pacific Consumer Protection (SPCPP) is a first-hand account of the development of a new social movement in the Pacific Islands. I have been coordinator of the SPCPP, along with my wife Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, since 1990. The case study is our story of work to create safe, fair and informed marketplaces in the island nations of the Pacific. Luamanuvao is a

*matai* from the village which was the subject of the case study of the *fa'asamoa*. In part, it is a story of our family. We have also worked closely for some years with the Solomon Islands Development Trust, the subject of the third case study. These are narratives written by an insider, stories about real people and their struggles for a better quality of life.

I have attempted to ground the abstract notions of civil society and development in the day-to-day experience of Pacific Island people. I have been deeply involved in each of the social organisations under study, and my close involvement has the potential to lead to bias and subjectivity. In the chapter on research methods I go into some detail to explain the means I employed to avoid these pitfalls. One method was to be transparent from the outset about who I am and my involvement in each of these organisations. This preface is part of that process of transparency.

I am a fourth generation New Zealander married to a Pacific Islander. I have a deep and abiding commitment to the development of Pacific communities. My background and work experience assisted the research project in many ways, as I was familiar with the case study sites and had already established rapport with many participants in the study. On the one hand my passion for the Pacific, provided me with the motivation and energy to complete this lengthy research project. On the other hand, my commitment, and familiarity with the subject and participants of this study had the potential to introduce bias and subjectivity.

Subjectivity is not always a weakness in research. Employing subjectivity is not a naïve, uncritical, idiosyncratic approach to research, but a valid research strategy. Case studies, written without some subjective human dimension, often appear sterile. I have attempted to bring some life to the case studies in this dissertation though putting some human flesh on the bones of what could have been dry narratives. I have aimed to inject some of my experience, empathy and passion for the people of the Pacific into this narrative.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE PACIFIC - DEVELOPING PARADISE

“So vast, so fabulously varied a scatter of islands, nations, cultures, mythologies and myths, so dazzling a creature, Oceania deserves more than an attempt at mundane fact; only the imagination in free flight can hope – if not to contain her – to grasp some of her shape, plumage and pain.” Albert Wendt (1976: 49)

#### INTRODUCTION

The development project<sup>1</sup> has failed in most Pacific Island communities. Most Pacific Island economies are sustained by overseas aid and remittances (Bertram and Watters 1985, Macpherson 1992, Poirine 1998), the Pacific environment is increasingly at risk (Brookfield 1989, SPPRG 1990: 160-188, SPREP 1992: 219-222, Emberson-Bain 1994b), the health of Pacific people is deteriorating (Schoeffel 1993, UNDP 1994: 24-28, Coyne 1999) and Pacific Island families, communities and cultures are fragmenting (UNDP 1994, Borugu 1995: 15).

After the long-term study of one Pacific Island nation Macpherson and Macpherson (1998) noted:

“In the 35 years since its independence in 1962 Western Samoa has moved from a situation in which it was economically and politically independent to one in which the loss of economic sovereignty has led to a *de facto* loss of political sovereignty.” (1998: 95)

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<sup>1</sup> McMichael (1996) defines the development project as “an organised strategy for pursuing nationally managed economic growth” (1996: 74). The development project in the Pacific Islands is discussed further in Chapters 2 and 8.

Western Samoa is one example of the Pacific-wide phenomena of development failure. A survey<sup>2</sup> of ten independent Pacific nations identified the following concerns facing the people of the Pacific at the end of the twentieth century:

- Change of diet from fresh local food to processed, imported, Western food, resulting in health problems such as: diabetes, obesity, heart diseases and alcohol abuse.
- Change to a cash economy, from subsistence gardening and fishing, with a consequent need to export products and labour to earn cash, resulting in dependence on single crops and economic vulnerability.
- Movement of population from outer islands and rural villages to urban centres and Pacific Rim cities, creating rural depopulation and urban overcrowding.
- Lack of the development of a sustainable economic base, in newly independent island nations following decolonisation, with subsequent dependence on foreign aid and remittances to fund basic services.
- Loss of traditional values and leadership, and the change of roles of men and women, due to economic changes, with the subsequent breakdown of families and communities.
- Loss of quality of the environment due to the disturbance of the fragile ecosystem by housing, power generation, logging and other extractive

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<sup>2</sup> These ten problems were identified through an extensive needs analysis and consultation undertaken during 1990-91 (SPCR, April 1991: 15-16) and subsequently validated through a Consumer Audit exercise in workshops and discussions in thirteen Pacific Island nations (Laban and Swain 1996: 8). Others have compiled similar lists, see for example SPREP (1992: 219-224), and Borugu (1995: 16).

industries. Rising sea level, caused by climate change, resulting in the loss of land from coral atolls and low-lying coastal areas.

- Dumping of poor quality imported products and hazardous waste from industrialised nations, creating unsafe marketplaces and environmental dangers.
- Fragmentation of cultures and customs, and loss of languages under pressure from the international marketplace.
- Change from a traditional, village-based communal lifestyle to a modern, urban, Western style of consumerism and individualism.
- Uneven sharing of wealth and benefits from development with the benefits going to a small local elite or overseas, whilst the problems remain at home and the people at the grassroots suffer. (Laban and Swain 1996: 8)

These concerns facing the people of the Pacific may be seen as a result of the failure of state-led and market-driven approaches to achieve environmental and culturally sustainable development. The development project has failed to provide a quality of life that meets the social and economic needs of Pacific Island citizens. The failures of state-led and market-driven approaches to development are now painfully evident and the social, environmental and economic consequences are obvious even to the casual observer. To grasp the reasons for the failure of development project in the Pacific, and to inform future development policies and practices, it is necessary to understand something of the history and nature of the region, and the development choices that were made in the past.

During the nineteenth century, the Pacific was viewed by Europeans as a region of great promise, a paradise. The idealisation of the Pacific Islands as paradise, and Pacific Islanders as noble savages, may be traced back to the

French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau. This romantic view was reinforced by Louis Antoine de Bougainville, and other early European explorers, who returned home with stories of natives living in the state of nature in an earthly paradise (St. Cartmail 1997: 18). These fictions have been sustained by European literature and art. Rupert Brooke, Robert Louis Stevenson, Paul Gauguin, Herman Melville, Louis Becke, and latterly, James A. Michener have contributed to this popular view of the Pacific as paradise.

The Pacific consists of the largest ocean in the world and the smallest island nations. The countries vary in size from the 500,000 sq. km. and 4 million people of Papua New Guinea to the 12 sq. km. of the Tokelau Islands home to less than 2,000 people. Melanesians have lived in the region for perhaps 20,000 years, establishing settled agriculture in Papua New Guinea some ten thousand years ago. Over the last three millennia, Micronesians and Polynesians have explored and settled all the inhabitable islands from Palau in the West to Rapanui in the East, from Hawaii in the North to Aotearoa in the South. The Pacific is region of great physical beauty, biological diversity and cultural wealth. It is indeed ironic that colonisers, missionaries and development experts have all set out to improve upon paradise.

The notion of progress, one of the great organising ideals of the colonial era, was introduced to the Pacific in the second half of the nineteenth century. One of the early advocates of progress, George French Angas, travelled throughout the Pacific in the 1840s. He extolled the potential of the region in his book *Polynesia* (1866), subtitled: *The Islands of the Pacific with an account of their discovery and the progress of civilization and Christianity amongst them*. It was the writings and lithographs of Angas, and others like him, that gave Europeans their first introduction to the Pacific islands and opened the region to the civilising benefits of progress. Here is an example of his vision for improving paradise:

“Soon, the “islands of the sea,” with civilization and Christianity going hand in hand to their aid, shall display a far greater change than they have hitherto done. Vast fields for enterprise will be found in that great land of New Guinea, teeming with all the wealth of the tropics; in the large and fertile islands of New Britain, New Ireland, and the Solomon groups; and also Fiji.” (1866: x-xi)

✓ A critique of the notions of progress, advancement and development, and their impact on traditional Pacific communities, cultures and economies are important themes of this enquiry.

✓ Whilst the Pacific held great promise, colonial administrators, missionaries, traders and plantation owners had limited impact on the way of life for most Pacific people for the first half of the twentieth century. By mid-century, however, the Pacific War and the strategic importance of the region during the Cold War brought change. The establishment of independent nation-states from the 1960s ushered in the development era, which profoundly changed the way of life of most people of the Pacific.

In the last half of the twentieth century, the development of Pacific nations has been led firstly by governments and latterly by business. The state and the market have dominated the discourse on development in the island nations of the Pacific. The dominant development paradigm, favoured by states and markets, has been essentially economic, focussing through central planning on agricultural improvement, industrialisation, the extraction of natural resources and the creation of state infrastructures. The role of the state in development, and its changing role with globalisation, is a second important theme of this enquiry.

The development of Pacific nations has been driven by ideas and experts from outside of the region, whilst the participation and involvement of citizens, outside of state agencies and marketplace organisations, has largely been

neglected. The aspirations of ordinary people, their families and communities, have not been considered of great importance in the development project. The view that local communities have little to contribute to development, and are not involved in the global community, is contested by Pacific islanders. Epeli Hau'ofa (1994) suggests that "academic and consultancy experts tend to overlook or misinterpret grassroots activities because they do not fit with prevailing views about the nature of society and its development" (1994: 148). The contribution of local Pacific Island communities to their own social and economic development is discussed in this study and represents a third significant theme.

During his work in the Pacific over the last decade, the researcher has seen, and been involved in, a range of development programmes that have made significant contributions to improving the quality of life of people and communities in the Pacific Islands. These programmes have each made some progress in addressing the problems listed above through facilitating local people to address local concerns. A common factor of these programmes was that they were not primarily state-led or market-driven. Rather, they tapped the energy and creativity of local people to shape the future of their own communities. This led to the obvious question: Is there a valid community-based alternative to the dominant development paradigm?

In part, this study is a search for that alternative.

## **THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN DEVELOPMENT**

Throughout the discourse on the theory and practice of development in the Pacific, the role of civil society<sup>3</sup> has largely been neglected. Furthermore, the participation of citizens, individually and collectively, in the development of their communities and nations has often been ignored. The many contributions of civil society to development have been neglected in favour of state-led and

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<sup>3</sup> The meaning of civil society is discussed at length in Chapter 2.

market-driven approaches. The contribution of civil society to social and economic development in the island nations of the Pacific is the fourth and major theme of this enquiry.

It is argued throughout this study, with supporting evidence from three case studies, that civil society can and does make a significant contribution to economic and social development in the Pacific. State-led and market-driven approaches to development have led to significant development failures in the Pacific and a neglect of civil society. Yet, it is also argued that the state, the market and civil society all have important complementary roles to play. By working together, in a coordinated manner, they have the capacity to improve the quality of life and create good change for people in the island nations of the Pacific.

## **THE SCOPE AND METHOD OF THE ENQUIRY**

This study sets out to examine the nature of civil society, and its role in social and economic development, in the Pacific island context, with the twin aims of contributing to development theory and improving development practice.

The central research questions this enquiry addresses are:

- Does civil society make a significant contribution to economic and social development in the island nations of the Pacific?
- If so, what is the nature of that contribution?
- What are the relationships between civil society, the state and the market?
- Does civil society represent a serious development alternative?

To address these questions, three segments of civil society were examined<sup>4</sup> *in situ* using a multiple site case study approach (Yin 1994: 44-53). An examination of the nature and history of the concept of civil society, and its relationship with development theory, was completed before the fieldwork to provide a theoretical framework for the enquiry. To provide intensive and extensive views of civil society in action, the researcher studied three segments of civil society in the Pacific Islands. A village community in Samoa, a non-government organisation in the Solomon Islands and a Pacific-wide social movement were the subjects of this enquiry.

It is argued here that civil society may include traditional forms of mutual assistance, non-government organisations (NGOs), social movements, philanthropic bodies and a variety of formal and informal social organisations that contribute to the common good. Definitions of civil society<sup>5</sup> are contestable and are shaped by the ideology and context of the definer.

The researcher employed a grounded theory approach (Strauss and Corbin 1990) and used qualitative research methods (Glesne and Peshkin 1992) throughout this enquiry. The three segments of civil society were examined, using five important research questions as the framework for the examination. Conversations were held with significant individuals and meetings convened with important groups in each setting. Archival material was also gathered and examined. The findings that emerged from the enquiry were recorded and are reported in three case studies. A cross-case analysis matrix was constructed to determine the important themes and patterns emerging from, and linking, the three case studies. Finally, a number of conclusions were drawn.

The findings from the case studies support the view that civil society makes a significant contribution to development in the Pacific. Furthermore, civil society, working in constructive relationships with the state and the market, has the

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<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of research methods employed in this study.

<sup>5</sup> See Chapter 2 for an extensive discussion of definitions of civil society.

potential to create good change for Pacific Island communities. The case studies also raised questions about the nature of progress, the importance of culture and historical context, and the participation of indigenous people in shaping their own development.

## **ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS**

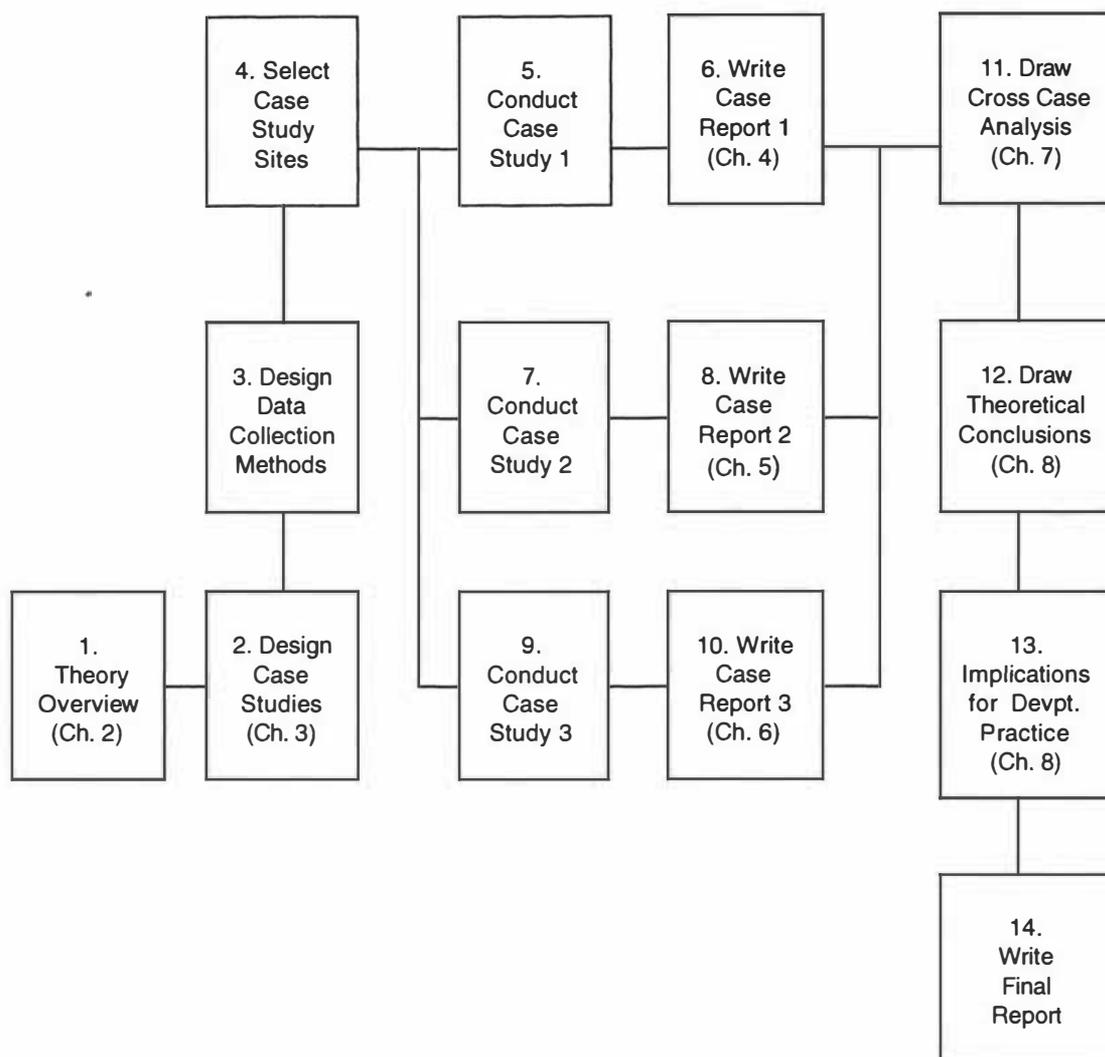
The thesis is organised into eight chapters roughly following the format of the multiple site case study method. (See Figure 1.1.)<sup>6</sup>

Chapter One briefly describes the background to this study its aims and focus. The scope and method of the enquiry are summarised. Next the research problem, the central research questions and the research methods employed are identified. Finally, the organisation of the thesis and the content of each chapter are described.

Chapter Two is the first of two chapters addressing civil society and development. It lays the theoretical foundations for the fieldwork and provides a structure for later discussions. The role of civil society in development is largely absent from the literature on development theory and practice in the Pacific. An examination was undertaken of the nature of civil society, the history of the concept and its relationship with development theory, to address this absence. In this chapter, civil society is located within the current development discourse and its role in resolving the development impasse is discussed. This chapter provides a theoretical framework for the subsequent fieldwork in which segments of civil society were examined in the Pacific.

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<sup>6</sup> See Figure 3.1 (Chapter 3) for an outline of the multiple site case study method.



**Figure 1.1.**  
**Multiple Case Study Design.**  
 (Adapted from Yin 1994: 49.)

In Chapter Three the research methods used in this inquiry are discussed. The multiple site case study method (Yin 1994), and a range of research techniques employed in each of the three case studies, are discussed in some detail. A plan and chronology of the study are also provided. Three case study sites were selected to provide local, national and regional views of civil society. Fieldwork was undertaken in Samoa, the Solomon Islands and a variety of other Pacific locations visited by the researcher during the course of this study. Finally the researcher reflects on the personal dimensions of this study and discusses the issues of rapport and subjectivity.

Chapter Four reports on the first case study, which examined the *fa'asamoa* in a Samoan village through a series of conversations and meetings with selected groups of villagers. This study set out to clarify the role of a traditional Pacific Island social organisation, as a segment of civil society, noting its contribution to development and relationship with the state and the market in Samoa. Aspects of this research were conducted in Samoan language and translations are provided for clarity where necessary.

In Chapter Five the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT), an indigenous non-government organisation (NGO) in the Solomon Islands, is the subject of the second case study report. The SIDT was studied through interviews with important people and archival research to clarify its role in development and relationship with the state and the market in the Solomon Islands.

The focus of Chapter Six is the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme (SPCPP), a regional programme of an international NGO, which has led the development of the consumer movement in the Pacific. The goal of the third case study was to clarify the role of civil society in development by examining the emergence of the consumer movement, a global social movement, in the Pacific region during the last decade. Interviews, archival research and personal observations were the important methods employed in this study.

The aim of Chapter Seven was to analyse the three case studies to determine if they shed any light on the role of civil society in development in the Pacific. Five key themes or patterns, that have the potential to explain something of the contribution civil society makes to development in the Pacific, emerged from the analysis of the three case studies. They represent the major findings of this enquiry. The important themes or patterns are identified and discussed in detail.

In Chapter Eight the discourse of civil society and development is revisited with the aim of drawing some conclusions from this study and contributing to that discourse and the discussion of development alternatives. The final chapter is divided into five sections based on conclusions about the context of development, the post-modern critique of progress and development, theories of alternative development, a model of state-market-civil society relationships, and the discourse on civil society and development. Also identified are areas for further research. The chapter concludes with comments about the contribution that this enquiry makes to the discourse on civil society and the implications of this study for development practice in the Pacific.

## CHAPTER 2

### CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT

#### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to sketch the history of the phenomenon of civil society<sup>1</sup> through examining competing notions of civil society and their historical contexts. The role of civil society within the current development discourse and its role in moving beyond the development impasse will also be discussed. Another aim is to examine issues from the literature on civil society and development that relate to this enquiry and identify any gaps in the literature. Furthermore, this chapter aims to develop a theoretical framework for the case studies of civil society and development in the Pacific Islands.

Civil society is at once a simple and complex concept. Simple, in that the term civil society is in common usage; complex, in that the notion of civil society is subject to ambiguity and complexity. As White, Howell and Xiaoyuan (1996) note:

"Any research [into civil society] is bedeviled both by the ambiguity of the term 'civil society' itself and the complexity of the historical processes it is used to describe." (1996: 2)

Civil society may be identified simply as a social sphere<sup>2</sup>, that is separate from, and independent of, the state and the market, a social space that is the terrain of social movements<sup>3</sup>. The discourse on civil society is complex, at the outset it

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<sup>1</sup> A number of writers (Cohen and Arato 1992, Keane 1988, Hall 1995, Gellner 1994) have each provided a detailed theoretical exegesis of civil society. This chapter aims to provide an overview of civil society preferring, like White et al. (1996: 3), "to test its usefulness as an analytical category for understanding emergent social realities."

<sup>2</sup> Sphere, in the sense of "a field of action, influence or existence" (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1990: 1170).

<sup>3</sup> The definition of civil society is contestable. This conception is provided to start this exploration of the nature of civil society; more complete and complex definitions of civil society will be discussed later.

is helpful to note that the preferred meaning of civil society appears to depend on a writer's theoretical perspective and context (place, and time). Other terms, such as the third sector (Fernandez 1994: 7), the third system, the third realm (Huang 1993), the third wave (Huntington 1991), the non-profit sector (Landim 1993: 8) and the voluntary sector (Clark 1995), are sometimes used synonymously. Yet, in spite of the debates surrounding it, and the subsequent complexity and ambiguity, the idea of civil society remains a useful analytic tool for this study.

The discourse on civil society has emerged and submerged, and re-emerged, over the last two hundred years. This discourse has three major themes. The first two themes may be referred to as the liberal and Marxian perspectives, a third, post-modern, perspective has emerged in recent years. In terms of development theory, these three perspectives roughly correspond with modernisation theory (Lewis 1955 and Rostow 1960), dependency (underdevelopment) theory (Baran 1957, Frank 1981 and Amin 1976), and emerging theories of alternative development (Korten 1984, Friedmann 1992 and Chambers 1983,1997).<sup>4</sup>

## **CLASSICAL CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE LIBERAL TRADITION**

The emergence of the notion of civil society is usually dated to the eighteenth century and attributed to the writings of the Scottish moral philosophers, Adam Ferguson and Aladair MacIntyre, and Adam Smith (Cohen and Arato 1992: 98, Gellner 1994: 61-80, Keane 1988: 35-71). John Locke and the early growth of liberalism were another early influence (Hall 1995: 5-6, Tester 1992: 7). However it appears that the concepts and theories of civil society are much older and more complex and may have their origins with pre-Christian Greek philosophers<sup>5</sup> (Giner 1985: 33-35, Tester 1992: 6-7, McLean 1997).

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<sup>4</sup> See Martinussen (1997) for a comprehensive guide to theories of development.

<sup>5</sup> McLean (1997: 9-69) traces the history of the idea of civil society from totemism through the age of myth to the Greek Philosophers Aristotle and Plato, through the medieval thought of Aquinas to the Enlightenment, and, via Confucius, to modern philosophical thought.

The Scottish moral philosophers proposed that civil society was a natural condition which led to freedom of the individual from the tyranny of Kings and cousins, and of ritual (feudalism and traditionalism). This early articulation of civil society is referred to by some as classical civil society, a "moral or ethical vision ... coterminous with the political realm *in toto*" (Seligman 1992: 16-22). Classical civil society was linked with the early development of capitalism and Protestantism. Seligman notes: "This idea of the individual, which stands at the core of civil society, was pre-eminently a Christian idea" (1992: 66).

Whilst classical civil society had a short life, as an idea for organising society, the emphasis on freedom from state control and liberty has remained a significant influence on the liberal-individualist tradition, particularly in North America. Interestingly, in the United States of America the classic idea of civil society has been revived and is now propounded by neo-liberal advocates of the free market (Crane 1994), social reconstructionists (McLean 1997) and neo-conservative anti-statists (Cohen and Arato 1992: 11).<sup>6</sup>

## **SINKING CIVIL SOCIETY: THE MARXIAN CRITIQUE**

In Europe, classical notions of civil society did not survive the critiques of Hume, Kant, Hegel and Marx (Tester 1992: 26-27). Marx used the idea of civil society as a tool to examine and understand how society works and the relationship between the individual and the state. By making it historical, Marx and Engels argued: "Civil society as such only develops with the bourgeoisie" and could not be a "natural artifice", as proposed by advocates of classical civil society. According to Marx, "civil society is basically a terrible lie" as the individualism of civil society, "puts man against man preventing the community of all men" (cited in Tester 1992: 15-18).

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<sup>6</sup> There are a range of civil society organisations advocating for their particular perspectives, and advertising publications, on the Internet, including: the Centre for Civil Society International ([www.friend-partners.org](http://www.friend-partners.org)); CIVICUS ([www.civicus.org](http://www.civicus.org)), and the International Society for Third-Sector research ([www.jhu.edu/-istr](http://www.jhu.edu/-istr))

Under the attack of Marx, and his inheritors, the discourse on civil society in Europe was submerged for most of the twentieth century, and the debate shifted to the relative merits of different ways of organising the state and the market. Whilst Marx buried the classical notion of civil society, and silenced the discourse for nearly a century, he did show us that the study of civil society is an important means of understanding the nature of society, and in particular the relationship of the individual to the state and the means of production (the market). Ironically, it was the collapse of states, founded on the Marxian critique of civil society, that led to the revival of the concept of civil society in Eastern Europe.<sup>7</sup>

## THE RE-EMERGENCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

In contrast to classical notions of civil society, there is a developing, post-modern, discourse on re-emerging civil society. This re-emergence of civil society is closely tied to its role in the collapse of authoritarian governments, on both the political left and right, and the process of democratization of Eastern Europe and Latin America (Cohen and Arato 1992: 30-82, Seligman 1993: 139-159).

The breakup of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the communist states of Eastern Europe has led to a critical re-examination of the relationship between the state, the individual and the market; and the re-emergence of "The Fragile Ethical Vision of Civil Society" (Seligman 1993: 139). In Latin America, after the failure of the revolutionary movements of the 1960s and 1970s, an alliance developed between left-party militants and representatives of civil society. Pereira (1993) argues that:

"This alliance was a crucial factor in mobilizing opposition to the military and its allies and bringing down authoritarian regimes in

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<sup>7</sup> Vaclav Havel, President of the Czech Republic and Playwright, was one of the intellectuals turned politicians who led the revival of civil society in Eastern Europe. See Havel (1997). Russian President Gorbachev (1997) was a later convert and advocate.

Equador (1979), Peru (1980), Honduras (1982), Argentina (1983), Nicaragua (1984), Uruguay (1985), Bolivia (1985), Brazil (1985), Guatemala (1985), Paraguay (1989), Chile (1990), and El Salvador (1992). If the emergence of civil society is a crucial factor in understanding regime change in Latin America, it seems reasonable that the concept can help us to understand regime change in other parts of the Third World." (1993: 327)

Some writers (Giner 1985, Gellner 1991, 1994, White 1995) have taken care to separate the idea of civil society from the political system of democracy, pointing out how democratic polities do not necessarily result in civil societies. The term democracy has been co-opted by the neo-liberal right to advocate for the primacy of the market and by the neo-Marxian left to advocate for the primacy of the state. Macdonald (1998) noted: "The interrelationship of economic liberalisation and democratisation in generating good governance is asserted, but is by no means proven" (1998: 26). Civil society is seen by some as a neutral, perhaps apolitical, term and as such it has come into favor in the discourse on the relationship of the individual and social institutions to the state and the market.

The re-emergence of civil society has resulted in freedom and greater democracy for millions in Eastern Europe and in the South.<sup>8</sup> At more theoretical level, the re-emergence of civil society is also having a major impact. Cohen and Arato (1992: 4-14) identify three key debates in contemporary political theory between: elite vs. participatory democracy; rights-oriented liberalism vs. communitarianism, and the defense of the welfare state vs. neo-conservative anti-statism. They argue for the development of an informed theory of civil society as a means of resolving these debates.

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<sup>8</sup> The term the South is used, in preference to the terms Third World, developing or underdeveloped, when describing nations or regions, unless in a direct quotation, to avoid the stigma associated with those terms.

The re-emergence of the notion of civil society has led to a review of the meaning of civil society and a variety of interpretations are reflected in a growing literature. Much of this literature is of European or North American origin and focuses on Eastern Europe following the collapse of state socialism (Gellner 1991, Hall 1995, Keane 1988, Tester 1992, 1994, Wolfe 1989). However, there is a developing literature on civil society in Latin America (Frantz 1987, Landim 1987, Pereira 1993, Fernandes 1994, Foley 1996.), Africa (Okelo 1990, Gibbbon 1993, Bratton and Van De Walle 1994, Robinson 1995, Ndegwa 1996.), the Middle East (Bayat 1997) and Asia (ANGOC. 1993, Korten 1996, Kothari 1996, Roxas 1995, Win 1998, Yamamoto 1995). Closer to home, the New Zealand Council for International Development's latest publication, *Partners in a Common Future*, devotes a chapter to emphasise "The Importance of a Strong Civil Society" (Davenport and Low, 1999: 82-92).

Few regions are excluded from the literature on civil society. A recent study examines the development of civil society during the era of market socialism in China (White 1996), and comparative studies examine the development of civil society in a range of nations in the South (Salamon and Anheier 1992). The notion of international civil society is now popular in various United Nations related publications (Ghils 1992, Otto 1996), and the term global civil society has been adopted by environmentalists (Lipschutz and Mayer 1996) and others (de Oliveira and Tandon 1994). Writers, concerned with gender and development, have also explored civil society in relation to women's issues and their place in the state and the market (Dahlerup 1994).

Missing from this literature is an examination of the role of civil society in the island nations of the Pacific. A recent study, *Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Community* (Yamamoto 1995), fails to mention the Pacific Islands, devoting 727 pages, excluding appendices, to an analysis of civil society in Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

As the term civil society has become popularised, and co-opted by both the right and the left of ideological debates, there is some danger that its meaning

will become confused and devalued as has happened with the term development (Sachs 1993a: 1-5, Esteva 1993).

It can be seen from this brief history of the idea of civil society that the concept has been a useful tool for understanding the nature of society in relation to the state and the marketplace. The meaning of civil society has changed, according to the context, and the perspective of writers, but has remained an enduring vision. A clear operational definition of the meaning of civil society is needed before its role in social and economic development is examined.

## **DEFINING CIVIL SOCIETY**

Defining civil society is not easy and most definitions are contestable. In this section the range of meanings given to civil society are reviewed and an operational definition provided. Early definitions of civil society, as "societal self-organising in opposition to the state" are seen by some as "negative" and display "fuzziness" (Hall 1995: 2). Later definitions offer a "positive characterisation of civil society in the belief that the sociological usefulness of the term can therefore be established" (1995: 2).

Definitions of civil society may be loosely classified into two sets of overlapping categories: political and sociological, liberal and communitarian. White (1996: 2-6) sets out to provide a "serviceable definition of civil society" and makes the distinction between sociological and political conceptions of civil society. He suggests the political conception comes out of the "Anglo-American liberal tradition of political theory" (1996: 4) and:

"this view of 'civil society' makes it virtually indistinguishable from a standard conception of a liberal democratic polity." (1996: 4)

By favouring a sociological definition White attempts "to delink the concept of civil society from any specific political project or ideological tradition" (1996: 5). Using a sociological approach to inform his search for civil society in modern

China, White aims to develop "a broader picture of social forces, which might hinder as well as foster democratization" (1996: 5). White defines civil society as:

"...an intermediate associational realm situated between the state on the one side and the basic building blocks of society on the other (individuals, families and firms), populated by social organisations which are separate, and enjoy some form of autonomy from, the state and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect or extend their interests or values." (1996: 3)

Nardin (1998: 29-34) notes that there can be liberal and communitarian interpretations of civil society, the former depending on an emphasis on individual liberty and the latter emphasising associational solidarity. The liberal views, advocated by Crane (1994) and others, argue for a commitment to an unregulated marketplace, competition and a minimal state. In this position the state simply acts as an umpire. Waltzer (1998: 21), taking the communitarian view, argues that there is a need for state power to support civil society institutions as the individualism of the liberal perspective does not support social solidarity, and: "Large numbers of people drop out of the market economy or live precariously at the margins" (1998: 13).

Waltzer suggests that the state and civil society can act to regulate each other's excesses. "For civil society, left to itself, generates radically unequal power relationships, which only state power can challenge" (1998: 23). Waltzer rejects the liberal model of civil society in favour of a sociological/communitarian definition:

"The words "civil society" name the space of uncoerced human association and also the set of relational networks - formed for the sake of family, faith, interest and ideology - that fill this space." (1998: 7)

The definition of civil society has been debated for more than two centuries. Giner (1985, 1995) suggests that there is no classical conception of civil society rather a Lockean interpretation, a Hegelian one, and that Hobbes, Marx, Gramsci and others have their theories about civil society. The only commonality is that each of these viewpoints refer to "the sphere of social life which falls outside of the state" (1995: 304).

Few writers are satisfied with a simple definition of civil society. Gellner (1994) provides the "simplest, immediate and intuitively obvious definition" (1994: 5) as a starting point for discussion.

"Civil society is that set of diverse non-government institutions which is strong enough to counterbalance the state and, whilst not preventing the state from fulfilling its role of keeper of the peace and arbitrator between major interests, can nevertheless prevent it from dominating, and atomising the rest of society." (Gellner 1994: 5)

He then argues, over two hundred pages, for a fuller definition, suggesting that the concept of civil society helps us to understand how a given society works and how it differs from other forms of social organisation.

"It (civil society) is a society in which polity and economy are distinct, where polity is instrumental but can and does check extremes of individual interest, but where the state in turn is checked by institutions with an economic base; it relies on economic growth which, by requiring cognitive growth, makes ideological monopoly impossible." (Gellner 1994: 211)

Tester (1992), who locates civil society within the process of modernisation, defines civil society in relation to the deconstruction of pre-modern naturalism (classical civil society):

"The imagination of civil society is best interpreted as a modern social and historical attempt to understand the possibility of the reproducibility of society in situations where the natural artifice has been drastically deconstructed. Civil society explained society when no explanation was possible by nature." (1992: 35)

Tester is no advocate for the re-emergence of civil society, rather he views it as an idea that has been and gone:

"The imagination of civil society was the precondition and the product of modernity. And so, just like the challenges associated with modernity, it could not avoid a most bleak destiny after the initial burst of enthusiasm." (1992: 176)

Not all writers are as pessimistic, in discussing the future of civil society. Giner puts forwards an eclectic, liberal definition:

"Civil society is a historically evolved sphere of individual rights, freedoms and voluntary associations whose politically undisturbed competition with each other in the pursuit of their respective private concerns, interests, preferences and intentions is guaranteed by a public institution called the state." (1995: 304)

Giner goes on to identify the positive and negative aspects of the five prominent dimensions any mature civil society exhibits, ie: "individualism, privacy, market, pluralism and class" (1995: 30).

Salamon and Anheier (1992), in a comparative study of the Third Sector (civil society) in Latin America, identified five factors that constituted civil society, namely:

"Structured organisations; located outside of the formal apparatus of the state; not intending to distribute profits from their activities to a

set of share holders or directors; self-governing, and involved in significant private voluntary effort." (1992: 25)

Salamon and Anheier's definition restricts civil society to not-for-profit, non-government organisations and does not include the informal sector and traditional forms of mutual assistance. Theorists and development workers, who support the alternative development<sup>9</sup> approach (for example: Friedmann, 1992 and Martinussen, 1997), see civil society as central to development (rather than the state or the market), and the household as central to civil society. Friedmann (1992) identifies four domains of social practice: the state, consisting of executive and judicial institutions; the corporate economy, with the corporation at its centre; the political community, centred on political organisations and social movements, and civil society, with the household at its core (1992: 27). The empowerment of civil society, through empowering households and individuals, is the aim of Friedmann's theory and practice of alternative development.

Martinussen, in his analysis of civil society in the development process, expands Friedmann's definition of civil society:

"The core of civil society is the household, but the concept refers also to the social life of citizens within the households, and the interaction of households in the local community and in the various other forms of social organisations outside of the formal political system and the corporate economy." (1997: 289)

Definitions of civil society by writers in developing countries take a slightly different perspective from Western academics such as Giner, Gellner, Tester and Salamon. The Third Sector is the preferred term for the discourse on civil society in Brazil (Landim 1993, Fernandes 1994). The perspective of Fernandes is shaped by the colonial and more recent history of Brazil. In an

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<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 8 for further discussion of alternative development theory.

attempt to avoid "dichotomous thinking" (1994: 8) over the private and public sectors, Fernandes proposes four cases resulting in the combination of private and public sectors:

"private for private ends = market.  
 public for public ends = state.  
 private for public ends = third sector (civil society).  
 public for private ends = corruption." (1994: 9)

Fernandes claims this framework avoids "the double negation of non-profit and non-government" (1994: 81). His view of civil society is a moral one based on his perspective as social researcher, in a organisation (*Instituto de Estudos da Religiao*) guided by liberation theology, amongst the poor in the *favela* of Rio de Janerio. He suggests that the "search for power and profit is not a motive for the Third Sector and not a valid reason for action. Values are taken as ends in themselves" (1994: 81).

The central role of values is taken further by Fernandes in his view of the relationship of the Third Sector (civil society) to the state and the market:

"Working with common values, the Third Sector reinforces the cultural and subjective conditions under which the state and the market must function." (1994: 81)

The importance of values and the wider role of civil society in a developing world context are stressed by a number of writers. Sylvan (1997: 4), for example, suggests that the task of civil society is to place the ethical limits on markets. Storey (1996), in his study of urban poor organisations and housing in Metro Manila, noted the active role a politicised civil society played at local and national levels.

"[T]hese organisations (civil society organisations) may play an increasing role in the democratisation of their countries, particularly

when civil society becomes 'politicised'. Subsequently, civil society as 'political/civil society' can play an essential role of representing the concerns and needs of those excluded from the decision making process." (Storey 1996: 41)

Fernandes identified four segments of society that make up the third sector (civil society) in Brazil:

1. Traditional forms of mutual help.
2. Social movements and civil associations.
3. Non-government organisations.
4. Business philanthropy.

Fernandes views the third sector as consisting of a mixture of formal and informal segments, the latter often not having clearly established boundaries. Traditional forms of mutual help, an essential component of civil society in Fernandes view, does not appear in Salamon's classification which relies on institutional formality. Fernandes identifies the contribution of traditional healing, care of the aged and other traditional forms of mutual help to social and economic development in Brazil. These contributions are not factored into economic or governmental indices of development (GNP, GDP) but make significant contributions to the health and wealth of a nation. The researcher's view of the segments of civil society in Samoa contrasts sharply with Fernandes view of civil society in Brazil. Both are views of the same phenomenon, from different geographical locations, and illustrate the different forms civil society may take. Bayat (1997) notes that: "the current focus on the notion of 'civil society' tends to belittle or totally ignore the vast arrays of often uninstitutionalised and hybrid social activities which have dominated urban politics in many developing countries. Clearly, there is more than one single conceptualisation of 'civil society'" (1997: 55). Writers from the South favour a broad definition of civil society in contrast to the more restrictive, formal definitions favoured in the North.

Fernandes is wary of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) as a synonym for the Third Sector, as most NGO's in Brazil are not indigenous and "tend to behave as agents of modernity" (1994: 41) appealing to urban, educated younger people and neglecting rural, uneducated and older people.

The Asian experience of non-government organisations is similar to Fernandes Latin American perspective. Asian NGOs, using a people-centred development approach (Korten 1984), are beginning to take a more critical look at the role of NGOs in the development of civil society and some view NGOs with suspicion and as agencies of modernisation. A publication of ANGOC, a major NGO in the Philippines, states: "Most of us [NGOs] serve primarily as intermediary service delivery conduits between donor agencies and dependent client populations" (ANGOC 1993: 25). Some NGOs are seen to act more as agents of the state, the marketplace or international financial institutions rather than as advocates for civil society:

"In slipping uncritically to dependency creating service delivery roles, NGO's too easily become barriers to citizen participation in the creation of transformational change." (ANGOC 1993: 26)

This sensitivity to, and suspicion of, the role of NGOs in civil society extends:

"To the extent that we presume to speak for the people, to serve as their surrogates, we actively inhibit the development of civil society as an effective and meaningful political force for social transformation." (ANGOC 1993: 26)

The above discussion demonstrates some of the complexities in clarifying the meaning of civil society. At this point it can be reasserted that the meaning of civil society depends largely on the context (time and place) and the relationship of the individual, in their society, to the state and the market. As Lindberg and Sverrisson (1997) note: "Civil society is, of course, a historical construct and it is manifested differently in different societies" (1997: 6).

The manifestations of civil society take the shape of both formal organisations and informal social groupings and practices and may include: neighbourhood associations, non-government organisations, church charities, traditional healing and cultural practices. Wolfe (1989b) captures the diverse nature of civil society, contrasting it against the abstract, impersonal institutions of the state and the market.

"Its [civil society] concern is with the social rather than the economic and political. Civil society points towards families, neighborhoods, voluntary organisations, unions, and spontaneous grassroots movements all of those units of social organisation defined by the fact that they are surrounded by even bigger and more abstract institutions. The crucial characteristic of civil society is that it is manageable, available to ordinary people, part of everyday life. To talk of civil society is to reverse the priorities of political economy. It is to assert that human beings and their desires can alter otherwise determinant structures." (1989b: 211)

Any definition of civil society is contestable, as the above discussion illustrates. However, to proceed with this study, a working or operational definition is required. This definition needs to be precise enough to guide this enquiry into the role of civil society in the island nations of the Pacific. A serviceable definition of civil society should allow or include the following elements: social organisations, formal and informal associations, an element of choice in membership (voluntary), a variety of forms which depend on context, separation from state and market, and concern with protecting and furthering the values and interests of the society. The writer favours a sociological-communitarian definition over the political-liberal approach, subsequently:

Civil society is defined as a social sphere of formal and informal voluntary associations, formed to protect and promote the interests of the society. It may take different forms in different contexts, and is separate from and independent of the state and the market.

In the context of the island nations of the Pacific, civil society has manifested itself in a variety of forms shaped by particular historical, social and cultural circumstances. Civil society, in the form of traditional forms of mutual assistance, has a long and, in many places, undisturbed history in the Pacific islands. Other segments of civil society including non-government organisations and social movements have a shorter history in the Pacific. Nation-states, emerging from colonial rule, also have a short history in the Pacific islands (the first independent nation-state was Samoa in 1962). The nation-state, or state, is a product of European history and can refer to as both a country as a whole or “a set of institutions within a country” (Mulgan 1997: 2). In this enquiry the term state is used to describe those state institutions that make the law (Parliament), that execute the law (the executive and public service) and those which interpret and enforce the law (courts and police). How the state is defined is contested and depends on the particular theoretical perspective one adopts (Mulgan 1997: 2-19). Defining the market is also problematic and subject to theoretical and political debate (see Berthoud 1993: 70-87). The state and market are subject to reification, these abstract notions are sometimes described as objects with a life and will of their own (eg: the invisible hand of the market). In this enquiry the market is defined simply as a place where goods and services are traded for cash. The term is used synonymously with the cash economy, to separate the market from the subsistence economy and traditional forms of bartering or exchange. The market has a short history in the Pacific with many people still living outside of the market economy (an estimated 90% in Vanuatu).

In the following case studies we examine three segments of civil society (a traditional community, a NGO and a social movement) in greater detail. First we discuss the development project, globalisation, and the relationship between civil society and development.

## THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AND GLOBALISATION

January 20<sup>th</sup> 1949 is cited by a number of authorities (see for example, Esteva 1993, Sachs 1993a, Rist 1997, McMichael 1998) as the date of birth of the development project. United States President Harry S. Truman said that day:

“We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. The old imperialism – exploitation for foreign profit – has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair dealing.” (Cited in Esteva 1993: 6)

McMichael (1996) defines the development project as “an organized strategy for pursuing nationally managed economic growth” (1996: 74). In his view the development project followed the collapse of colonialism and was supported by international institutions (United Nations, World Bank, IMF) and agreements (Bretton Woods, UNCTAD, COMECON.) The important ingredients of the development project were catching up with Western living standards, a national framework (plan) for economic growth, an international framework of aid, a growth strategy favouring industrialisation, agrarian reform, and the development of a local elite to manage the project (McMichael 1996: 74). The development project grew out of a particular time, the end of the Second World War, the collapse of European colonial empires, and particular places, former colonies. McMichael locates the development project on a timeline from the 1940s to the 1970s (1996: xx). This model of development favours economic growth over social development, modern over traditional and universal ahead of local. Furthermore it is statist in that it sees a strong role for the state in promoting and implementing development. McMichael’s notion of the development project is synonymous with the term modernisation and what has been referred to here as the dominant development paradigm.

Development came late to the Pacific (May 1998: 54) and the Pacific Islands were subject to colonial control for much of the twentieth century. In 1962, when Samoa was the first Pacific Island nation-state to gain independence, many Asian nations had been independent for a decade or more. The colonial period is not over in the Pacific, as a number of the smaller nations still are subject to colonial control<sup>10</sup> or remain linked to former colonial masters<sup>11</sup>. French Polynesia and New Caledonia are the largest polities still under colonial control though both are edging, albeit slowly, towards greater autonomy.

The economic growth model, replete with national development plans and an enlarged governmental infrastructure, was adopted in many Pacific nations but the extent of development has been uneven. Those larger nations with significant natural resources, such as Papua New Guinea and New Caledonia, have seen the greatest development activity. Resource poor and small island nations, such as Tuvalu and Kiribati, have experienced minimal development during this period.

In the Pacific Islands the national development project was at least twenty years behind Africa, Asia, Latin America and other regions, and only occupied a decade or two before globalisation arrived. Consequently, a number of island nations<sup>12</sup> are included today in the United Nations list of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

McMichael suggests that a second project started in the 1970s, initially overlapped the development project, continued through the 1980s and 1990s and will extend into the next century. He refers to this as the Globalisation Project. A new project which combines several strands: market-based development strategies; centralised management of the global market rules (by G7 states); implementation by multilateral agencies (WTO, IMF, World

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<sup>10</sup> For example: Pitcairn (UK), Rapanui/Easter Island (Chile), Palau (USA).

<sup>11</sup> For example: Tokelau, Niue and Cook Islands (New Zealand), American Samoa, Northern Marianas (USA).

<sup>12</sup> Including Tonga, Samoa, Tuvalu, Kiribati, and Vanuatu.

Bank); concentration of market power (by TNCs and transnational banks), and the subordination of nation-states to these global institutional forces (McMichael 1996: 177). Globalisation is seen as an outgrowth of the Developmentalism of the 1940s to 1970s (1996: xxi).

Sutcliffe (1999) suggests that “Globalisation is usually seen as the conversion of the world into a single economic space, one macro-economy, and so, perhaps as a result, into a single seamless society and culture” (1999: 11). It is evident that the world is becoming rapidly internationally integrated economically, however political institutions and political processes are slower to change. Globalisation has a limited role for the nation-state. In Sutcliffe’s view the political response to globalisation takes two forms: those who are pessimistic about the possibility of having any influence at the global level, and thus become fatalistic or oppose globalisation, which they see as the root of all problems; and those who look to democratise and participate in the enlarged political space that results from globalisation (1999: 12).

The globalisation project is located in a particular time, but place is less specific as it is viewed as a global phenomena. At the end of the 1990s many developed nations are part of international or regional free trade groupings (GATT, NAFTA, APEC.) and some opening economies in Eastern Europe and the developing world seek to participate in globalisation. However, there is no consensus on the benefits of globalisation and significant numbers of developing nations, or groups within nations (eg: the Chiapas in Mexico), are resisting their incorporation into the global economy<sup>13</sup>.

Where the development project favoured industrialisation and agricultural reform, and used Nationalism as a mobilising tool, the globalisation project favours participation in the world market and uses efficiency, privatisation, deregulation and entrepreneurialism as the preferred tools. Both these

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<sup>13</sup> See for example: Raghavan (1990), Evans (1994), Ransom (1997), and Fernandez (1998).

projects are economic, favouring economic growth over social development, modern over traditional and universal ahead of local.

Whilst there is an argument to be made that the development project, and underdevelopment<sup>14</sup>, began some fifty years ago, the origins of the development discourse can be traced back over two centuries. Civil society, a term that has come into vogue in the 1990s, has a similar lengthy history<sup>15</sup>.

The term civil society did not feature in the development literature until the late 1980s and early 1990s. This was because the early writing on the development project was mainly from the modernisation and underdevelopment schools of thought which both favoured economic, nationalist, statist perspectives. The popularity of the term civil society grew out of the writings of Eastern European intellectuals<sup>16</sup> who were involved in the social movements in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Russia and other former Soviet states which led to the collapse of state socialism (Cohen and Arato 1992: 31-36). At the same time as European writing and social action based, in part, on the notion of civil society emerged in the late 1980s, writers and social activists in Latin America (Oxhorn 1995: 250-275), Asia (Kothari 1996: 11) and Africa (Ngegwa 1996: 2-8) rediscovered civil society.

It is noteworthy that the re-emergence of the discourse on civil society, which had been submerged, by Marxian discourse for most of the century, coincided with the rise of the globalisation project in the 1980s. This was also the time of the rise of the third wave of politicised, indigenous non-government organisations which became well networked internationally through electronic media (faxes then e-mail), travel and international fora. Globalisation has

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<sup>14</sup> Like many third world intellectuals, Gustavo Esteva took a somewhat more cynical view of the dawn of the age of development when he wrote: "Underdevelopment began, then, on January 20, 1949. On that day, two billion people became underdeveloped." (Esteva 1993: 7).

<sup>15</sup> Discussed above.

<sup>16</sup> See Cohen and Arato (1992), Vaclav Havel (1992 & 1997) and others cited in Chapter 2.

given us the transnational corporation but it has also brought us global networks of citizens, NGOs and worldwide social movements.

According to Scott (1990): "A social movement is a collective actor constituted by individuals who understand themselves to have common interests and, for at least some significant part of their social existence, a common identity" (1990: 6). Lindberg and Sverrisson add that social movements are "usually seen as autonomous from the state and established political parties and rely on mass mobilization and participation to pursue their goals" (1997: 2). There has been some research on establishing the nature and scope of social movements in general (Amir 1993, Escobar 1992, 1995, Gibbon 1997, Lindberg and Sverrisson 1997, Wignaraja 1993), and increasing work on social movements in the Pacific (Crocombe 1983, Hempenstall and Rutherford 1984, Brison 1991, Crocombe 1992, Robie 1992, Baua 1992, vom Busch et al. 1994 and Larmour 1994). Several social movements have emerged in the Pacific region during the last decade and contributed to the development discourse. The popular movement to stop nuclear weapon testing (Johnson 1984, Firth 1987, Rampell 1992, Danielsson and Danielsson 1992), the environmental movement (McDiarmid 1992, Watts 1993), various indigenous peoples and sovereignty movements (Dakavula 1992, Ounei-Small, Pohiva 1992, McGregor 1994) and the women's movement (Emberson-Bain 1994, de Ishtar 1998) are examples of the phenomena of social movements in the Pacific region. To this list may be added the emerging consumer movement, which the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme<sup>17</sup> set out to establish.

At the time new social movements were emerging in the community sector, during the early 1990s, there were also changes in the state sector. A good governance agenda emerged as a counter to the poor performance of governments in many developing nations (Larmour 1996a, 1996b, 1998,

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<sup>17</sup> See Chapter 6.

MacDonald 1998). Larmour cites the Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs definition of good governance as: “open, transparent, accountable, equitable and responsive to people’s need” (1998: 1). The UNDP identifies the characteristics of good governance as: participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and a strategic vision (UNDP 1999: 1).

International financial institutions and major donors now require development project proposals to demonstrate how a project would contribute to good governance (NZODA 1998c: 7). Funding has become conditional on meeting good governance criteria (along with sustainable development, poverty and gender equity requirements). MacDonald notes: “the World Bank’s charter precludes its direct involvement in political issues, its governance policies are predicated on a free market economy as a precondition not only for economic development but as an integral component of the broader governance agenda” (1998: 24). A critic suggests the good governance agenda is a conspiracy “to crush once and for all the ideology of socialism and replace it unambiguously with the ideology of free enterprise world-wide” (Barya 1993: 16). The conspiracy is unproven though the good governance agenda is a universalist approach that is based on neo-liberal, market-driven development theory, policies and practices. The good governance approach is relatively new in the Pacific and MacDonald’s recent study of governance in Kiribati suggests that its application is problematic, he concluded:

“In this case, at least, the twin pillars of neoclassical economics and participatory democracy, which support the World Bank’s approach to governance, seem to be leaning in opposite directions.” (1998: 47).

The development project and later globalisation has led to changes for the state, the market and civil society in developing nations. Nation-states are weakening due to the conditions imposed on aid by international financial institutions (Migdal 1988: 231, Kavanamur 1998, Macpherson and

Macpherson 1998). Local markets are no longer isolated as goods and services, promoted by transnational corporations, are available in remote village stores and the global economy shapes local markets. Civil society is shaped by global social movements advocating for environmental sustainability, gender equity, poverty eradication and the rights of indigenous people.

## **CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT THEORY**

Wolfe (1990) suggests the three worlds of development<sup>18</sup>, as defined by Horowitz (1966), no longer exist. He talks of the market, the state and the third sector (civil society) as "the new trinity" (1990: 17). In Wolfe's view, development theory and practice has been dominated by political economy, the area of study where states and markets meet. Economics and Political Science have been, and remain, the key disciplines of development. Wolfe argues that Sociology has been neglected in development studies but "ought to be the guilty conscience of Economics and Politics" (1989: 211). This criticism is echoed by Asian (ANGOC 1993), African (Porter et al. 1991, Ndegwa 1996) and Latin American (Fernandes 1994) writers who point out the unsustainability (environmentally and socially) of the dominant development paradigm and globalisation.

Wolfe (1989) sees moral obligation as the critical factor in the development discourse. The individualist moral code of the market and the collective moral code of the state are both seen by Wolfe as simplistic and operating from a similar logic:

"Market and state share similar logics, and often with similar results. Neither speak well of obligations to other people simply as people, treating them instead as citizens or opportunities. Neither wish to

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<sup>18</sup> The first world of advanced capitalism, the second world of state socialism and the third world of developing countries.

recognise that people are capable of participating in the making of their own moral rules." (1989:12)

On the other hand civil society forces us to think about people and our obligations to each other. Wolfe outlines the dilemmas of being modern where we are free from ties of community and tradition and live instead with forms of regulation that are formal, specified and impersonal. This is in contrast to traditional (moral) societies living with common cultural values and strongly inscribed traditions that effectively denied democracy, individualism, self-development and equality. "In short one could have either individual rights without binding moral codes or binding moral codes without individual rights" (1989: 21).

This dilemma is faced by individuals in developing countries, who stand to lose their culture, community and self-reliance (see Rist 1997: 123-139) if they become modern, for it is difficult to maintain traditional obligations whilst living in the modern world. Modernisation theorists, (for example Lewis 1955 and Rostow 1960) who advocate leaving tradition behind, reinforce this view. Wolfe suggests civil society can help in the resolution of the dilemma of being modern:

"The contribution that civil society can make to development is thus one of finding a path between what is given to us by circumstances of time, place and culture and what we are capable of doing with those limits by the powers of social cooperation and choice. To incorporate a civil society perspective into development theory is to raise the question of how to balance the properties of the kind of world out of which one is developing with the properties of the kind of world which one wishes to develop." (1990: 26)

Watts (1995) is another critic of modernisation who charts the emergence of civil society in the development discourse and identifies its re-emergence with globalisation. During the 1960s and 1970s, when there was little questioning

of the dominant development paradigm, Watts noted a "minor attention to the role of civil society" (1995: 58). This was all to change during the 1980s with the collapse of state socialism in Eastern Europe, the mounting criticism of modernisation theory and the failure of many third world development projects.

Watts noted:

"By the 1990's, the convergence around social institutions, not the least the fascination with non-governmental organisations, citizenship and human rights, provides an opportunity to design, in the 'new' context of globalised markets and the re-emergence of civil society, new configurations of state, markets and civil organisations unencumbered by outmoded or ideological notions of central planning or unhindered free markets. What is so striking in this confluence of analytic is the centrality of civil society: markets have to be socially embedded, economic dynamism demands social capital, economies are built around trust, obligation, accountability." (1995: 58)

With the crisis of development in the 1990s and the emergence of the alternatives to development paradigm, civil society has become an important focus of current development theory and practice.

## **CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE DEVELOPMENT IMPASSE**

Over the last decade, advocates of the post-modern critique of development have argued that ideas such as progress and development are not universal (Norgaard 1994, Cowen and Shenton 1996: 12-17, Rist 1997: 211-217, Shanin 1997). Shanin, for example, identifies the idea of progress, and its derivative development, as "the major philosophical legacy left by the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries to the contemporary social sciences" (1997: 65) and he tracks the history and impact of the idea of progress on both Marxism and capitalism. Progress, Shanin argues, became the powerful

universalist ideology at the core of the colonisation and development projects of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The limits of progress, as an universalist doctrine, have become increasingly clear at the close of the twentieth century. Many environmental and social problems have resulted from development projects that have failed to deliver the progress they promised. Shanin suggests the ideology of progress "blinded us to the complexity of the social world [and] delayed our understanding of ecological issues (1997: 70). In Shanin's view:

"Real human history, accounting for the complexity of forms rather than their conforming to a pre-defined process of universalization and simplification, was being lost. The blueprint of progress/development/growth offered blank cheques to repressive bureaucracies, both national and international, to act on behalf of science and to present as objective matters which are essentially political, thereby taking choice away from those influenced most by such decisions." (1997: 70)

Shanin suggests the idea of progress solved two major riddles Europeans faced at the dawn of modernity. "The first was the rapid growth of evidence concerning the diversity of humanity" (1997: 66). The second "concerned the changing perception of time" (1997: 66). The idea of progress solved both riddles by demonstrating diversity was a product of societies going through different stages, and that time was linear (rather than cyclic). The task for social theory was "to provide an understanding of the natural sequence of stages from past to future" (1997: 67). The terms, progress, advancement, development and growth, changed with fashion but the idea of progress "proved remarkably resilient" (1997: 66). The Europeans, who first embraced the ideal of progress, saw their society as the most advanced and the model for others to follow. Once started, progress developed a life of its own. Shanin suggests that progress interacted powerfully with the Industrial Revolution and urbanisation in Europe and the spread of colonisation to underdeveloped

terrains. “Progress’, ‘development’, ‘growth’ and so forth became the main ideological *raison d’être* of statehood, the governability of people, and the enforcement of privileges” (1997: 69).

Progress was a central idea in both communism and capitalism. Sbert (1993) suggests that progress had “Two Offspring: Revolution and Development” (1993: 192) and he described the demise of both in some detail. Viewed as a concept that overarched both underdevelopment and modernisation theories, progress may be viewed, in the Foucauldian sense, as a meta-narrative.

Emmanuel N’Dione et al (1997: 368) identified eight common themes of the culture of progress and development in the South.

- an economic concept of time;
- the cult of statistics and competition between individuals;
- the universalizing claims of the development model;
- a certain image of individual success which development cultures transmits as a value;
- money as a universal yardstick for deciding what people and things are worth;
- the commodification of people and goods;
- the compartmentalization of life, specialization carried to extremes;
- the hegemony of international languages in explaining the world. (1997: 368)

The dominant development paradigm was based on the rejection of traditional concepts of time and human diversity in favour of universalising progress. Nation-states and traders have been the prime movers of developmentalism. McMichael (1998) echoes N’Dione’s critique of development when he noted: “These were the key sentiments of the development project: multinational universalism, viewing natural bounty as unlimited, and a liberal belief in

freedom of opportunity as the basis for political development. Human satisfaction was linked to rising living standards" (1998: 49).

Another critic of development, Arturo Escobar (1995), also identifies the universalising tendency of development, its reforming nature and repression of difference, when he states:

"Development assumes a teleology to the extent that it proposes that the 'natives' will sooner or later be reformed; at the same time, however, it reproduces endlessly the separation between reformers and those to be reformed by keeping alive the premise of the Third World as different and inferior, as having a limited humanity in relation to the accomplished European. Development relies on this perpetual recognition and disavowal of difference." (1995: 93)

According to Lindberg and Sverrisson, who chart third world differences and commonalities, diversity and difference is created by the separate histories of different regions and societies in the Third World:

"although the Third World shared a common fate in the past - colonisation, economic imperialism, neo-colonialism and the continued dominance of capitalist industrialized states - it does not possess a *common history*." (1997: 4)

Development theory and practice is facing increasing criticism. Watts (1995) lists the major critics of development and traces their history of dissent, from Gandhi, through Fanon, to the alternative development, alternatives to development and post development theorists of today, leading to what he sees as a crisis in development (1995: 44-47). Watts argues that this crisis is intrinsic to development itself. To work through the development impasse, Watts suggests:

"A key question might be to explore how the current impasse, the effort to reinvent development, is distinctive, a distinctiveness that I shall argue resides not in the existence of post-modern alternatives to development ... but in the confluence around civil society as the way out of development gridlock." (1995: 47)

Echoing Watts, Lindberg and Sverrisson (1997) argue that the role of social movements in the construction of civil society is central to resolving the development impasse. Referring to Africa, they suggest for development:

"the historic task ... today is ... the creation of a civil society distinct from the state, and a space for independent class and/or interest organisations which can voice the concerns of the people to the rulers of the day." (1997: 15)

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

This chapter has sketched the history of civil society, examined its nature, discussed the role of civil society in development theory and pointed towards its potential role in moving beyond the development impasse. The story of civil society has emerged, submerged and re-emerged over the last two hundred years. This story has three major themes: liberal, Marxian and post-modern, which roughly correspond with modernisation theory, dependency (underdevelopment) theory, and emerging theories of alternative development. Whilst initially located in the North, the discourse on civil society has now emerged in the South with fresh new stories grounded in local contexts and cultures.

Definitions of civil society may be grouped into two sets of overlapping categories, political and sociological, liberal and communitarian. Any definition of civil society is contestable. However, to proceed with this enquiry into the role of civil society in the island nations of the Pacific, a working definition has been developed:

Civil society is defined as a social sphere of formal and informal voluntary associations formed to protect and promote the interests of the society. It may take different forms in different contexts, and is separate from and independent of the state and the market.

In spite of its complexities, ambiguities and fragility, civil society remains an enduring vision and a useful analytical category for understanding social phenomena. A number of gaps and issues were identified in the literature which this enquiry aims to address. This chapter has aimed to bring some clarity, and provide a point of departure for some original thinking about the role of civil society in development in the island nations of the Pacific.

Three conclusions have been drawn from this review of the literature on civil society and development. Furthermore, there are some gaps and issues in the literature that this enquiry will attempt to address. The first conclusion is that much of the literature on civil society is at a rather high level of abstraction and has little relevance to the local communities it aims to describe. This study aims to ground the abstract notion of civil society in the real life of social organisations and provide an understanding of how civil society operates at the grassroots, in NGOs and in social movements.

A second conclusion is that there appears to have been few attempts, apart from Ndegwa (1996), to examine any segments of civil society in detail and to demonstrate how civil society works in relationship to the state and the market in resolving conflicts over development. The three case studies in this enquiry aim to address that gap.

A third conclusion is that indigenous constructs of civil society, in the form of traditional forms of mutual assistance, have not been subject to research. Most of the literature on civil society has focussed on Eastern Europe after the fall of state socialism. The literature from the developing nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America is patchy at best and the literature from the Pacific Islands is non-existent. This is a major gap, and one that this enquiry seeks to address.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **MULTIPLE SITE CASE STUDY METHOD**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Good research may be defined as "careful and diligent search, resulting in trustworthy and useful knowledge" (Glesne and Peshkin 1992: 4). This study sets out to carefully and diligently examine the nature of civil society, and its role of in social and economic development in a Pacific island context, with the twin aims of contributing to development theory and improving development practice. In this chapter the research methods used in this inquiry are discussed.

The first task was to choose a research method that would result in trustworthy and useful knowledge. The first section of this chapter is a discussion on the qualitative approach chosen and the reasons for that choice. The next section is a description of the preferred research approach of a multiple site case study. The particular methods used in each of three case study contained in this thesis are the subjects of the following three sections. In the final section the researcher reflects on the personal dimensions of this enquiry and discusses rapport and subjectivity.

#### **CHOOSING A RESEARCH METHOD**

There are many methods available to the social science researcher, and an early research task is to choose an appropriate methodology. In making this choice, the subject under study, the context of the research, the worldview (epistemology) of the researcher and what constitutes useful knowledge need to be considered.

Given the above discussion, qualitative methods have been selected as the preferred approach for this study. It should be noted however that, whilst this is primarily a qualitative study, the distinction between qualitative and quantitative methods is not always as sharp as defined in the textbooks and a pluralist mix of methods were used during the study.

After deciding to focus on qualitative methods, the next question was which qualitative method? A comprehensive research strategy was sought; one that would allow an examination of the phenomena of civil society in a number of different locations in the Pacific Islands, and that would provide both intensive and extensive views of civil society in action. The researcher was also seeking a strategy that was not restrictive or limiting but would allow for the unexpected to emerge.

✓ A number of texts on social science research and various qualitative research methods were studied and reviewed including: qualitative methods (Glense and Peshkin 1992, King 1994 and Berg 1995); social research methods (Babbie 1989, May 1993); grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990); field research (Burgess 1990); anthropological method (DeVita 1990); ethnography (Huntsman and Hooper 1996); participatory action research (Rahman and Fals-Borda 1991, Rahman 1993); participatory development (Wignaraja et al. 1991); fieldwork with indigenous peoples (Beauclerk 1988); action research and participatory rural appraisal (Chambers 1983, 1994, 1997) and case study research (Yin 1982, and 1994). Essays on research and development in the South Pacific were also examined (Mamak and McCall 1978).

After closely considering several qualitative methods for this research project, the case study method was chosen as the overall research strategy. The case study method offered a number of advantages and, according to Yin, the case study approach is not just a data collection method or design feature, but a "comprehensive research strategy" (1994: 13).

Social science research methods may be broadly divided into quantitative and qualitative approaches. These two approaches were examined to determine the most appropriate approach to research the subject of the role of civil society in development, in a Pacific Island context.

Glesne and Peshkin detail the differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods, outlining the assumptions, purpose, approach and researcher's role of both modes of inquiry. They note "quantitative methods are, in general, supported by the positivist or scientific paradigm, which leads us to regard the world as made up of observable, measurable facts" (1992: 6-7). In contrast, "qualitative methods are generally supported by the interpretivist paradigm, which portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex and ever-changing" (1992: 7).

The purposes of quantitative research are: "generalizability, prediction and causal explanations" (1992: 7). On the other hand, the purposes of qualitative research are: "contextualization, interpretation and understanding actor's perspectives" (1992: 7).

Quantitative research begins with hypotheses and theories whilst qualitative research ends with hypotheses and grounded theory. Put simply, quantitative research is concerned with what, when, where, and how much questions. Qualitative research is more concerned with how and why questions.

Researcher objectivity and detachment is central to quantitative method. An outsiders view is provided. Qualitative researchers, in contrast, are more predisposed towards empathy and interaction with the subject and participants, providing an insiders point of view.

This study is concerned with a complex social phenomenon (civil society) in context (the Pacific islands). The primary research questions are interpretive (why? and how?). Furthermore, the researcher, who is deeply involved in the context, is interested in what theory emerges from the study.

The following reasons<sup>1</sup> guided the choice of case study method:

- It can establish the how and why of complex human/social/cultural situations within context and across sites.
- It can deal with a variety of evidence and employ a variety of methods (documents, interviews, participant observations and other qualitative methods of data collection).
- It is a useful method for examining contemporary events.
- It can generalise to theoretical propositions.
- It can cover contextual conditions.
- Multiple case studies allow researchers to draw cross-case conclusions.
- Good research design and careful implementation can reduce weaknesses or criticisms of the case study approach.
- The method is congruent with the subject under study.
- The researcher had the generalist skills and knowledge required to manage the research method.

What exactly is case study research method? Yin has developed the following two-part technical definition of a case study:

1. A case study is an empirical inquiry that:

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Yin, 1994: 8.

- investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when,
- the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident.

## 2. The case study inquiry:

- copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result,
- relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result,
- benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (1994: 13)

This definition shows how the case study approach met the researcher's criteria for a research method (i.e. a comprehensive research strategy, allowing an examination of the phenomena of civil society in a number of different locations in the Pacific Islands, providing both intensive and extensive views and not restrictive or limiting allowing the unexpected to emerge).

The case study method has its critics. Yin (1994: 9-10) has identified four common prejudices against case study strategy: case studies often seem to lack rigor; have a narrow basis for generalisation (n=1); take too long, and are difficult to do well. However, it is argued here that good research design and careful implementation can counter these criticisms.

A sound data collection protocol involving multiple sources of evidence, a case study database and a clear chain of evidence can improve construct validity and reliability of a case study. In this study a data collection protocol was established before the fieldwork for each case study was undertaken and a broad database was established by collecting evidence from a range of sources including interviews, archival material and the researcher's personal observations.

Sample size is often raised as an issue of numerical reliability in quantitative research. Sample size is perhaps less critical in qualitative research which is more concerned with an in depth analysis, construct reliability and theoretical sensitivity. With a case study the aim is analytic generalisation which is a quite different aim from the statistical generalisation required of a quantitative study which requires a good sample size to provide statistical validity. A case study may be seen as an experiment, and multiple case studies as a series of experiments. In Yin's view "case studies, like experiments are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not populations or universes" (Yin 1994:10). The case study provides a generalising analysis rather than a particularising analysis.

The criticisms of the time-consuming nature and difficulty of case studies can be also countered by good research supervision and a well-constructed work programme.

Case study method has many advantages for studying complex human situations in developing nations. Chambers (1983: 64) notes: "Case studies stimulate and inform more than statistics." Case studies provide flesh to the bare bones of statistics.

"Where case studies of poor rural households are found, they often reveal a resilience, stamina and ingenuity which members of the urban elites would be proud to recognise in their own families. Case histories of families and individuals are one of the better ways of challenging what outsiders feel about the rural poor." (Chambers 1983: 64)

A multiple site case study design was the method chosen for this study to explore and explain the role of civil society in the development process in Pacific Island contexts. Multiple case studies provide opportunities for cross-case analysis allowing theoretical conclusions to be drawn between cases.

The researcher planned to conduct three case studies and use these to draw theoretical conclusions.

The phenomenon of civil society is closely related to the context of that society. Yin (1982: 85.) has outlined the complexities of studying phenomenon and context across sites and reviewed the inadequacies of various methodologies. He has demonstrated that a well designed and managed case study approach can be successful.

Flexibility of design is another important reason for choosing case study method. The researcher's work, of coordinating a regional development programme, has taken him to most of the island nations of the Pacific and he lives and works for up to three months a year in the Pacific. The researcher was able to utilise these opportunities to undertake fieldwork in a variety of sites. To some extent the choice of case study method was pragmatic: the researcher did not have the resources to devote a large period of time solely to fieldwork but was in a position to visit and spend time at a variety of locations. Consequently, the fieldwork for this study was both extensive and intensive.

The fieldwork was spread over two years with several periods of intensive work on site. This time-frame was helpful in that it provided periods of reflection which helped give breadth to this study, giving time to think through complex issues. The shorter, intensive periods of fieldwork at a specific site provided depth. Case studies in Samoa and the Solomon Islands and a further regional study that encompassed most of the island nations of the Pacific, reflected the intensive and extensive nature of this enquiry.

In this study, modifications were made to the traditional multiple case study approach (see Yin 1994: 49), to enable a fit with the Pacific Island context and the subject under study. Rather than start with a theory and specific hypotheses to prove or disprove, as suggested by Yin (1994: 49), this enquiry started with the development of a broad understanding of the theoretical considerations and ended with an emerging or grounded theory (Glaser and

Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990). Furthermore, data collection employed a variety of quantitative methods of data collection<sup>2</sup> developed specifically for the Pacific Island context of the study.

## **MULTIPLE SITE CASE STUDY DESIGN**

Prior to fieldwork, a flow-chart has was prepared (Table 3.1), based on Yin (1994: 49), to provide an overview of the method to be employed in this study. The flow chart not only provided a plan for the research project; it also provided a framework for the thesis. Following is a discussion of the case study process in some detail.

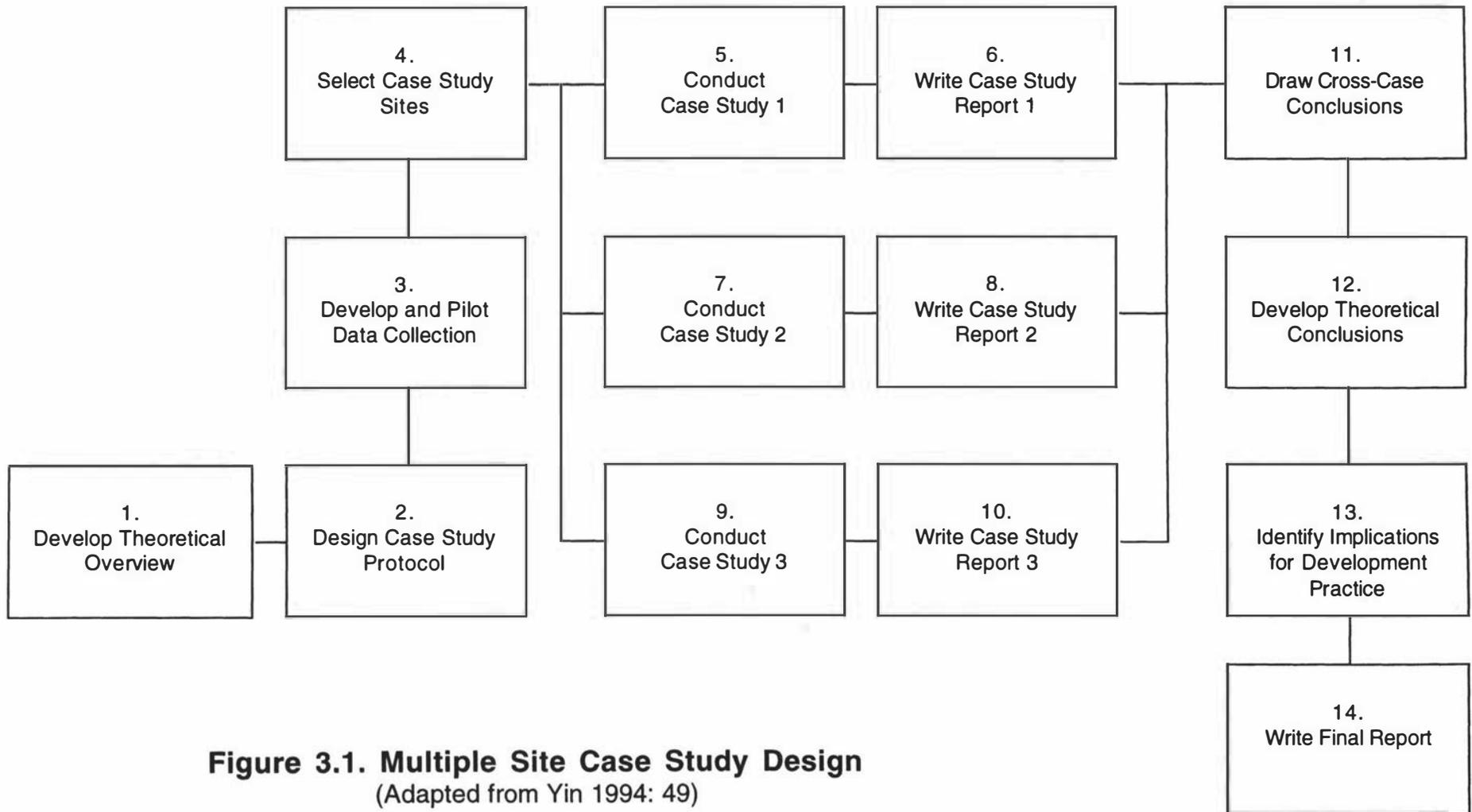
### **1. Develop Theoretical Overview**

Theoretical considerations guided the design of the study, including the choice of sites and data collection strategies. Yin suggests a case study method differs from ethnology in that time is spent on theory development prior to fieldwork.

Case studies can be used to develop or to test a theory. The degree of theory development, prior to fieldwork, will depend on the goals of the research. If one were planning to test a theory, or compare rival theories, through case study method, then considerable theory development would be required. If, however, the researcher was planning to identify what theory would emerge from the case (or cases) researched, then a less formal approach to theory development would be required. In this study the latter approach was taken.

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<sup>2</sup> Discussed below.



**Figure 3.1. Multiple Site Case Study Design**  
 (Adapted from Yin 1994: 49)

A wide-ranging examination of the theoretical issues surrounding the research topic (civil society) was undertaken<sup>3</sup> before research design was commenced. This provided the theoretical underpinnings for the research design, shaping data collection methods and case study site selections. This theoretical overview provided the basis for what Yin (1994: 30) refers to as analytic generalization (in contrast to statistical generalization) during the data analysis and later theory development stages of the study.

This study did not set out to test an already established theory; it aimed to develop theory that emerged from the fieldwork, guided by a broad understanding of theoretical considerations. In other words, the researcher did not go out to test a theory, nor did he enter fieldwork blind to theory, rather the researcher undertook field work with a theoretical sensitivity and noted what theory emerged.

## **2. Design Case Study Protocol**

A case study protocol sets out the procedures and rules for undertaking a case study. Yin suggests "The protocol is a major tactic in increasing the reliability of case study research and is intended to guide the investigator in carrying out the case study" (1994: 63). A detailed case study protocol was developed for this study and included an overview of the project, field work procedures, the case study questions, the structure of the case study data base, notes on the chain of evidence, and a guide to the case study report. This protocol was used as an *aide memoir* throughout the fieldwork to keep the research aims and structure in focus.

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<sup>3</sup> An extensive reading programme was undertaken and a first draft of Chapter 2, Civil Society and Development was written. The examination of the theoretical literature would continue throughout the fieldwork and the rest of this study.

### 3. Develop and Pilot Data Collection Method

Whilst reflecting on what data collection methods to employ in a Pacific Island context the researcher noted Robert Chambers (1983) observation:

"Different approaches are possible. The pooling of knowledge and mutual stimulation of a small casual group can be an excellent source of insight." (1983: 202)

Having spent time in many Pacific Island communities, the approach of sitting with a group, raising an issue and listening to what people thought, provided a possible data collection process, and made good sense to the researcher. However this approach begged the question: is it good research? Again, Chambers advice, to outsiders working in developing nations, to sit, ask and listen, provided an answer.

"Sitting, asking and listening are as much an attitude as a method. Sitting implies lack of hurry, patience, and humility; asking implies that the outsider is the student; and listening implies respect and learning. Many of the best insights come this way. Relaxed discussions reveal the questions outsiders do not know to ask, and open up the unexpected." (1983: 202)

Encouraged by these observations the researcher set about developing a process for data collection that would respect the local cultural context and yield the data required. Preliminary ideas were discussed with the research supervisor and a cultural mentor<sup>4</sup> and a data collection process drafted.

Four methods of data collection were selected to provide multiple sources of evidence and enable triangulation of data. Each data collection method was

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<sup>4</sup> Cultural mentors were employed in each case study site to ensure sensitivity towards cultural issues and protocols.

modified to operate in different Pacific Island settings. They are now considered in detail:

*a. Discussion: Fono or Tok tok*<sup>5</sup>

This process involves a small number of participants meeting together with the time and opportunity to discuss the research questions in detail. A time and place that was convenient and comfortable for participants was chosen to ensure a relaxed meeting. The *fono* or *tok tok* process respects local custom and established relationships, allowing a free flow of discussion. This usually involved a formal welcome and prayer, and sometimes food, before getting on with the business of the meeting.

An audiotape recorder was used to ensure the discussion was recorded, as custom allowed and only where permission was granted. The tape recordings were transcribed and translated, as required, after the meeting. At the end of the meeting the researcher presented a summary of the key points to the participants to check and validate his understanding of the meeting. At a later time a copy of the first draft of the case study report was provided to the key participants to read, make factual corrections and comment upon.

The researcher was aware of the complexities of information gathering in situations where he was an outsider. The *fono* or *tok tok* process was an attempt to collect data in a manner that was reliable and sensitive to the local cultural context. Again, Chambers has an important caution.

"[O]utsiders cannot help bringing with them whatever ideological baggage they have and it is difficult to avoid choosing and collecting evidence that fit with it. What they can do is travel lightly, asking open-ended questions, listening, observing, revising their

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<sup>5</sup> *Fono* is Samoan for a meeting or discussion; *tok tok* is Solomon Islands *Tok Pijin* for a meeting, discussion or conversation.

ideas, and above all doubting and criticizing themselves." (1983: 105-6)

With these thoughts in mind, to avoid cultural difficulties, and ensure local protocols are observed the researcher decided to recruit a cultural mentor and get local advice for each case study site. A cultural mentor was to be someone who could act as a local supervisor and provide guidance on cultural issues, local sensitivities and relationships. Relationships are central in Pacific Island society and for an outsider to be accepted and gain access to knowledge they need to have a relationship with group members and be seen as trustworthy. The researcher has worked in the Pacific Island nations for the last decade and has an ongoing relationship with a number of people who were asked to fill the role of cultural mentor.

For some years the researcher has been using a variety of facilitative training methods in the Pacific, to enable local people to share and analyse their knowledge of their lives and local conditions and empower them to act.<sup>6</sup> By using the *fono* or *tok tok* approach the researcher aimed to use these skills in a modified form for data collection. This was not a new idea and it has parallels in the focus group approach (Kruger 1988, Morgan 1988), and echoes Chambers (1994, 1997) techniques of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and rapid rural appraisal (RRA).

As with other empowering research methods, this research was not planned to be an end in itself. Outcomes of this research would contribute to improving development practice and informing development theory. Again, relationship was important here. Many of the people who participated in this study knew the researcher from previous work or contact over some years. He was not a stranger. The researcher had a relationship with a number of informants and trust was important from both sides. This study was seen by the researcher, and participants, as part of an ongoing relationship and not a one-off event.

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<sup>6</sup> For further clarification see the discussion of consumer education techniques in Case Study 3.

The researcher would be back, and the relationship would continue. The purpose of the research was carefully explained to participants and a promise was made to share the results of the study with them and seek their comment and correction of factual errors. This promise was fulfilled and the feedback and further comments were helpful and incorporated into the final drafts of the case study reports.

Because this approach to data collection is new to the researcher, and contained some potential difficulties, he decided to undertake a preliminary pilot study using the data collection methods before embarking on the study proper. The pilot study was undertaken in Samoa in January 1997 and a report prepared and discussed with the research supervisor. The findings of the pilot study were used to review the case study protocol, finalise the selection of case study sites and provided the researcher with a useful training experience.

#### *b. Conversation or Talanoaga*

The second source of data was focussed conversations with selected participants. The term *talanoaga*, (ie: conversation or discussion, Allardice 1985: 75), was used in the Samoan context. The participants were selected at each site, in consultation with the local cultural mentor, to supplement the viewpoints obtained at the *fono* or *tok tok*.

The term conversation or *talanoaga* was used rather than interview as the researcher aimed to promote a dialogue and to listen to what each person had to say about the issues raised. The approach was for the researcher to use open-ended questions and to place himself in the role of learner and listener rather than that of an expert interviewer. The researcher took time at the start of each conversation to discuss issues of local interest before introducing the topic. The topic would then be introduced with a general, open-ended question. For example:

“What I want to do is to learn from you a bit more about the *fa’asamoa* and how the *fa’asamoa* is today. What is the role of the *fa’asamoa* today, as you see it? What does the *fa’asamoa* do?”  
Aualuma (C1–02A)<sup>7</sup>

This informal approach made it clear to the researcher, and the participant, that this was a conversation between two people, not a one-way researcher-informant interview.

These conversations were structured by the same questions as the *fono* or *tok tok*. The conversations were audiotaped and transcribed as soon as possible after the event. A summary of the key points was reflected back to the participant at the end of the conversation to check for accuracy and to validate the data.

### *c. Archival Research*

The third source of data involved a review of relevant documents. At each case site a search was undertaken to locate important documents relating to the subject of the study. Published and unpublished documents, from government agencies and community organisations, were scanned and the most relevant copied for later analysis. Newspapers, magazines and scholarly research reports were consulted also. These documents were analysed using the key research questions as the framework for analysis and they provided much of the secondary information for each case study. The findings of this analysis was included in the case study database and included in the case study report. Archival material is often treated casually in Pacific countries and is subject to the vagaries of the tropical climate, insects and the occasional passing cyclone. Furthermore, non-government organisations are often focussed on the day-to-day problems of survival rather than preserving their past records. In spite of these difficulties the researcher was able to collect a

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<sup>7</sup> Audiotaped *talanoaga* are referenced by the name of the informant and the tape number, see Appendix 1, p. 273.

sufficient amount of archival material for this study to provide an adequate chain of evidence.

#### *d. Researcher's Observations*

The fourth source of data was the researcher's observations. These were recorded daily in a journal or audiotaped during fieldwork. Time was taken at the end of each day during fieldwork to reflect upon the research process, the subjects raised and record any observations. These reflections were included, when appropriate, in the case study reports.

There was a different balance, between each of the four methods of data collection, in each of the three case studies. Case studies one and two relied primarily on data collected from *fono/tok tok* and *talanoaga*, case study three was based primarily on archival research but included some *talanoaga*.

#### **4. Select Case Study Sites**

Three case study sites were selected to provide a view of different segments of civil society at local, national and regional levels. The final selection of case study sites was made in consultation with the research supervisor and after the completion of the pilot study. The two case studies undertaken on site in the Pacific were:

Case Study 1, at the village of Nu'uaiga<sup>8</sup> in Samoa, aimed to examine traditional forms of mutual help at the local village level. The *fa'asamoa* is literally the Samoan way of doing things and refers to traditional practices and customary behaviour. The case study site was a village close to the urban centre of Apia where the influences of the state and the marketplace are impacting on traditional life.

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<sup>8</sup> A pseudonym to protect villager's confidentiality.

Case Study 2 examined the Solomon Islands Development Trust, a non-government organisation in the Solomon Islands. The Solomon Islands Development Trust has operated for sixteen years throughout the thirteen provinces of the Solomons, working to improve the quality of village life.

Case Study 3 examined the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme, a regional development programme, which aims to create safe, informed and fair marketplaces, and has operated throughout the Pacific island nations since 1990. The South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme works with governments, non-government organisations and peoples organisations in the region, in the interface between the state and the marketplace, and has led the development of the consumer movement in the Pacific.

### **5, 7, 9. Conduct Case Studies**

It was planned to conduct the fieldwork in Samoa for Case Study 1 during the first half of 1997, Case Study 2 late in 1997 and Case Study 3 early in 1998. Some modifications were made to this schedule, due to the need to coordinate fieldwork trips with the researcher's travel and work commitments in the Pacific. Case Study One was completed according to schedule and subsequent visits to Samoa in 1998 and 1999 supplemented the original fieldwork. Case Study Three was completed during late 1997 and early 1998, as the opportunity to visit the Solomon Islands to complete Case Study Two could not be arranged until mid-1998 when the final field work was completed. A key informant from the SIDT was undertaking a research fellowship at the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies at Canterbury University and the researcher took the opportunity to visit and meet with the informant in Christchurch to follow up aspects of the SIDT case study.

### **6, 8,10. Write Case Study Reports**

Case study reports were written immediately after each study was completed and prior to the commencement of the next fieldwork excursion. Drafts of case

study reports were sent to key informants who were given the opportunity for comment and to correct factual errors. The comments from participants proved helpful and were used in revising and editing the final reports. Revisions were then made of each report incorporating secondary sources of information. Final drafts were completed and edited before the cross-case analysis was undertaken and final conclusions were drawn.

### **11. Draw Cross Case Conclusions**

On completion of the three case study reports, the reports were reviewed, compared and contrasted to establish what cross-case conclusions could be identified. A Cross-Case Analysis Matrix (Table 7.1, p. 214) was constructed as a tool to facilitate pattern matching and the gathering of themes.

### **12. Develop Theoretical Conclusions**

The three case study reports and the cross-case conclusions were finally examined to determine what theoretical conclusions had emerged from this study. The emerging ideas were reviewed in reference to the theoretical overview of civil society and development, outlined in Chapter 2, to determine what contribution, if any, this study could make to development theory. The findings from the enquiry were located within the discourse on civil society and development and alternative development theory.

### **13. Identify Implications for Development Practice**

The implications of the results of this study for development practice and policy were identified and discussed in this section. This final section draws out the conclusions from the study and identifies areas for further research.

## 14. Write Final Report

The completed thesis was written in a format that broadly follows the sequence of the multiple case study design.

### CASE STUDY 1 METHODS

#### Introduction

During the first case study the *fa'asamoa* was examined *in situ* in a Samoan village. There were a number of methodological issues that were unique to this case study, which are discussed in this section. The use of *fono* and *talanoaga* as the primary data collection methods are discussed first. This is followed by a brief discussion of the researcher's access to the village and his relationship with the people of Nu'uaiga which raised issues of outsider and insider perspectives and the ethics of undertaking fieldwork in this context. Also discussed is the notion of cover stories, the processes used to validate research findings, cultural sensitivity and the important research questions.

#### *Fono ma Talanoaga*

The first case study relied to a large extent on *fono* and *talanoaga* to provide primary data. (Secondary sources, such as scholarly publications, books and newspapers, were consulted to provide background material, historical information and a contemporary perspective.) The *fa'asamoa* is essentially an oral culture and the researcher's use of *fono* and *talanoaga* was employed to ensure the research processes were culturally appropriate to the Samoan village setting. The first *fono*, and those *talanoaga* with older villagers had greater formality than with younger villagers.

The *fono* with the *faletua ma tausí* was held in the *fale o'o* of the chief and the traditional formalities were completed at the start of the *fono*. Formal greetings were exchanged, a prayer was offered and tea and cake served. The

relationship between the researcher and the village was discussed in some detail and we engaged in polite conversation about current village affairs before the topic of the *fono* was raised. After the researcher had outlined the purpose of the *fono*, and his first question, the women discussed their ideas amongst themselves in quiet tones before the eldest (more senior) woman made a formal response. This process continued throughout the *fono* until the researcher had exhausted his questions. The *fono* concluded with formal speeches of thanks and a prayer.

The *fono* with the 'Aualuma was less formal. It was held in one of the open *fale* in the village where all could see, and listen to, what was going on. Gender relationships are well defined in Samoan society and the public nature of the *fono* observed the protocol of male-female interactions. Like their elders, the younger women checked with each other (with non-verbal communications) to ensure that they were all in agreement with the responses. The responses from the 'Aualuma were provided with less formality, than with the *faletua ma tausi*, but the village *taupou* provided most of the responses.

Each of these groups spoke with one voice. This phenomenon at first concerned the researcher, as it could be viewed that individual, minority views were excluded. However, after discussing this phenomenon with the cultural mentor, it was clear that this was the consensual aspect of the culture of the *fa'asamoa* in action. The researcher subsequently observed the same process in a number of settings in the Pacific. Before a response is made to an enquiry the speaker checks with others in the group, verbally or non-verbally. The response is thus a group consensus rather an individual perspective or opinion as would be found in a *papalagi* (European) setting. This phenomenon is also seen in the *fa'asamoa* in the relationship between the *ali'i* (sitting chief) and the *tulafale* (talking chief) in formal settings. The *tulafale* may make all the speeches but he is talking on behalf of the *ali'i*.

Researchers need to be alert to the nuances of communication in unfamiliar cultural settings and mindful of the cultural mindset they bring to their work.

The Mead-Freeman debate, over the validity of Margaret Mead's fieldwork in American Samoa (see Freeman 1983), is one example of how researchers are subject to cultural miscommunication.

### **Access to Nu'uaiga**

The researcher selected the village of Nu'uaiga as the location for the first case study because his relationship with the people of the village offered an uncomplicated setting for starting the fieldwork. Early in 1997 the researcher approached Ali'itele, the high chief of the village, for permission to undertake a research project in the village. The following extract from the researcher's fieldwork journal tells the story of gaining access and illustrates some of the complexities encountered.

"I have been a visitor to this village for over a decade, and my wife (Luamanuvao) is a *matai* of the village. We visit Samoa regularly, spend time in the village, attend the church and participate in village and family activities. My relationship with the chief and his family were critical factors in gaining his cooperation and access to the village.

The first question I had to resolve (when setting up the fieldwork) was whether to go by myself to the first meeting. I discussed the issue with Luamanuvao and we decided we would go to the first meeting together. Polynesian society is essentially collective and communal; few activities are private. A research project, such as I am embarking upon, did not belong to me. Luamanuvao was of the village, I was her *tausi ali'i*, and part of the community. The people of the village would not view me as a researcher from outside, but as Pita who was working on some project. From a Samoan perspective, by signaling that I was seeking the assistance of the

village, I was placing the project in the public domain. The project was ours not mine.<sup>9</sup> Fieldwork Journal (6-1-97).

The ownership of the products of research and intellectual property has been something of an issue of contention for indigenous people (Shiva 1997, Hansen 1999). Recent attempts by transnational corporations to patent the genetic material of indigenous people are an extreme case of ownership of indigenous property (see Te Pareake Mead 1997). The researcher made it clear to participants in this study that the research findings would be made widely available and that participants would have the opportunity to comment on and correct early drafts of the research reports.

The first meeting set the scene for later encounters. Again, the following comments were recorded in the fieldwork journal.

“When we arrived for the meeting with Ali’itele his wife, and a local church minister and his wife, were sitting in the chief’s *faleo’o*. We were hosted with iced lemon drink and ice cream and discussed village matters. Ali’itele mentioned that I had come to talk about a project, which was discussed in generalities with the Minister before he took his leave. (Nothing is private!) Ali’itele then encouraged me to tell him more about the research project.

I told him that I wanted to understand more about the *fa’asamoa*, particularly how the village system operated and its relationship with the government and with the business community. I said that most development appeared to focus on big projects with big budgets (such as the new government offices) and that development aid has gone mainly to government or business and that I was interested in the contribution that the traditional

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<sup>9</sup> In Samoan language the word *lau* means your as well as mine.

community, through the *fa'asamoa*, made to the development of the nation. I said that I was starting a research project to study these things, and I asked if he would help me." Fieldwork Journal (6-1-97).

Ali'itele asked a number of questions about the project and then gave his blessings for it to proceed. He also agreed to act as a cultural mentor for the case study in Samoa. Throughout the research, Ali'itele's advice and support was critical. He provided access to key informants and set up meetings that would have been difficult, if not impossible, for the researcher to arrange without his blessing. Preliminary findings were checked with Ali'itele for validation and he read and corrected early drafts of the case study report.

## **Relationships**

Relationships are central to Polynesian society. For an outsider to be given access to cultural knowledge they need to establish good relationships with key actors in village society and be seen as trustworthy. Whilst the researcher is a *papalagi*, and not of the village, he was not considered by the villagers a complete outsider because of his relationship by marriage and his regular involvement in village affairs over a long period. The researcher's relationship with Ali'itele was an important factor in gaining access to the village and the cooperation and good will of informants.

## **Cover Stories**

When conversing with people and just hanging around during fieldwork, the researcher became aware of the different levels of meaning (truths) available in any comment or communication. There was often a cover story, a sort of official version of the truth, given in the public domain. Often this was what unsuspecting *papalagi* would be told. Then there were the other truths, hidden by the cover story, which provided alternative meanings. The following anecdote, recorded in the researcher's fieldwork journal, illustrates this phenomenon.

“After attending a family funeral, and listening to the fine eulogies which had extolled the virtues of the departed Uncle X, I joined the procession to the graveside. One of the other uncles broke our post-funeral silence with the comment; “They said how X visited the faifeau (Minister) every morning and held family prayers every evening. Listening to the speeches you would think that X was an angel with wings. Notice that none of them said what he did between the hours of ten in the morning and two in the afternoon. On the order of service it said he was a plumber, and my father taught him his trade, but in truth he was a billiards player. That is how he made his living, hustling in the billiards saloons. He said to my father that he was making more money from billiards than plumbing. So Dad said you had better give up plumbing. X spent his working life playing billiards, but no one said that at his funeral.”  
Fieldwork Journal (2-6-98).

The researcher became attuned to the different levels of meaning during fieldwork. Because much of the expression in the *fa'asamoa* (Samoan language) is through metaphorical expressions and reflections of past events it was sometimes difficult to understand all the subtlety and nuances of communication. Regular checking with the cultural mentor helped to correct any misperceptions.

### **Validating Research Findings**

To ensure that factual errors and researcher bias had not crept into the fieldwork report, the first draft of the case study was given to three selected participants to read and comment upon. This proved to be a useful exercise. There were some errors in transposing the Samoan language from the tape recordings and a few spelling mistakes identified and corrected. The participants all agreed that the report was a fair reflection of the *fa'asamoa* and they were very positive in their feedback. They were all touched that someone

took the time to record their stories and were keen that their family history was recorded more fully.

The process of validating research findings by sharing the preliminary findings was time consuming, as it required a return visit to Samoa, but important in the context of participatory research and honouring indigenous knowledge.

## Research Questions

The following five research questions were used in this case study to structure *talanoaga*, researcher observations, archival research and the analysis of documents.

- What is the role of the *fa'asamoa*? (Purpose, structure, philosophy, missionary influence, pre-contact history, colonial impact, direction of changes, activities, rural/urban differences etc.)
- How does the *fa'asamoa* relate to the state? (Relationship with *Fono*, government agencies, officials, politicians, legal status, areas of tension, areas of cooperation etc.)
- How does the *fa'asamoa* relate to the market? (Relationship with local traders, transnational corporations, areas of tension, areas of cooperation etc.)
- How does the *fa'asamoa* contribute to development in Samoa? (Impact on social and economic development of the nation. Note any measures or outcomes, rural/urban differences, women/gender issues, environmental issues etc.)
- What do participants see is the future role of the *fa'asamoa*? (Check role of traditional forms of mutual support in development past/present/future.)

## CASE STUDY 2 METHODS

### Introduction

During the second case study the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) was investigated. There are a number of methodological issues that were specific to this case study, which are discussed in this section. The researcher's access to the SIDT is discussed first. This is followed by a discussion on the use of *tok tok* and archival research as the principal means of data collection. The section concludes with some comments on validating the research findings and the important research questions.

### Access to SIDT

The researcher visited the Solomon Islands during late June and early July 1998 to facilitate a training project<sup>10</sup> and to complete the bulk of the fieldwork for this case study. This was the researcher's third visit to the Solomon Islands and he had established a working relationship with the Director and staff of the SIDT over a period of seven years. As with the first case study, the establishment and maintenance of a trusting, reciprocal relationship proved central to gaining access to the case study site and completing the fieldwork in the Solomon Islands.

Prior to visiting the Solomon's a letter was sent to Abraham Baeania, the Director of the SIDT, outlining the research proposal and requesting permission to undertake the research. Upon arrival in Honiara a visit was made to the SIDT to confirm the arrangement. Permission was given to undertake the study; the Director also provided an overview of the operations and philosophy of the SIDT and made suggestions regarding potential participants in the study.

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<sup>10</sup> A four-day Teacher training workshop was facilitated, as part of the SPCPP work programme, during a two-week visit to Honiara.

The researcher's involvement in facilitating a workshop at the SIDT's training facility, during the week prior to undertaking fieldwork, provided a good introduction to the fieldwork. The SIDT staff had become reacquainted with the researcher and comfortable with him in their setting. The researcher was seen as someone who was in the Solomon Islands to make a contribution to development programmes and not primarily concerned with gathering information for research. Some researchers, who had come to Honiara to study the SIDT had gathered information and made no attempt to share their findings or contribute to the life of the community. This has left a legacy of suspicion about the motives of researchers. The researcher was told, "We know your work and you can be trusted" (pers. comm.) These comments eased the researcher's concerns and he experienced no difficulties in recruiting participants for his enquiry.

Following the workshop the researcher spent a week at the SIDT headquarters in Honiara collecting documents, interviewing staff and just hanging about<sup>11</sup>. This latter approach resulted in a series of informal opportunities to collect background information and gave flesh to the bare bones of the data collected. As in most fieldwork, chance meetings arose from the researcher making himself available in non-formal settings. These casual meetings often provided unexpected and useful material.

Two days after the researcher's first meeting the Director suffered a family bereavement and had to travel to his village in Malaita to fulfill cultural and familial obligations. This unfortunate event was compensated by the visit to Honiara of Dr John Roughan, Adviser to the SIDT, who was undertaking sabbatical leave at Canterbury University as a Fellow at the MacMillan-Brown Centre for Pacific Studies. Dr Roughan was a key actor in the establishment of the SIDT, and with Abraham Baenesia, had been intimately involved in its development. Dr Roughan's two-week stay in Honiara coincided with the researcher's visit and provided an opportunity to compensate for the Director's

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<sup>11</sup> It would be an exaggeration to call this activity participant observation, but the researcher did participate and observe.

absence and he became a key informant in the case study. Subsequently, the researcher made a visit to Christchurch in October, after the first draft of the case study report was completed, to interview Dr Roughan a second time and follow up some aspects of the case study.

## Data Collection

### 1. *Tok tok*

Key informants from the SIDT were identified, in consultation with the Director, and interviewed in Honiara. The interviews were structured conversations, following the *talanoaga* approach developed in the first case study. The term *tok tok* is used in the Solomons for any discussion or conversation and the researcher adopted this term for his interviews. The research questions (below) provided the framework for each *tok tok*. Specific questions followed up material gathered from the archival research. Most *tok tok* were audiotaped and later transcribed. The tapes were coded and dated and placed in the researcher's archive. *Tok tok* that were not audiotaped were recalled by the researcher and later recorded on a Dictaphone or in a fieldwork journal. All the *tok tok* were conducted in English, with only some brief exchanges in *tok pisin*, as the informants were more fluent in English than the researcher in *tok pisin*.

### 2. *Archival Research*

The researcher had collected a number of relevant publications before visiting Honiara. At the SIDT time was spent with the publications officers to add to the collection of materials published by, and about, the SIDT. Academic journals were also searched and yielded a number of articles on the SIDT and about development issues in the Solomon Islands, particularly forestry and the environment. This material was reviewed and relevant material copied or collected and the researcher established an archive of written materials on the SIDT. This provided much of the background information for the case study and served to create a chain of evidence to support oral data collected *in situ*.

## **Validating Research Findings**

The researcher promised to provide a first draft of the case study report to the Director of the SIDT to check for accuracy. A copy was sent to John Roughan who took it to Honiara and discussed it with Abraham Baenesia. The researcher visited John Roughan on his return to New Zealand and discussed the case study report in some depth. Several factual errors were corrected and John Roughan said that the SIDT staff was satisfied with the accuracy of the case study.

## **Research Questions**

The following five research questions were used in this case study to structure *tok tok*, archival research and the analysis of documents.

- What is the role of the Solomon Islands Development Trust? (Aims, objectives, philosophy, history and direction of development, programmes, staffing etc.)
- How does the Solomon Islands Development Trust relate to the state? (Relationship with government agencies, officials, politicians, legal status, areas of tension, areas of cooperation etc.)
- How does the Solomon Islands Development Trust relate to the market? (Relationship with local traders, transnational corporations, areas or tension, areas of cooperation etc.)
- How does the Solomon Islands Development Trust contribute to development in the Solomon Islands? (Impact on social and economic development of the nation. Note any measures or outcomes, rural/urban differences, women/gender issues, environmental issues etc.)

- What do participants see is the future role of the Solomon Islands Development Trust? (Check role of NGOs in development past/present/future.)

### **CASE STUDY 3 METHODS**

The third case study examined the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme and its role in the development of the consumer movement in the Pacific region. There are two methodological issues that require further amplification, the methods of data collection and the researcher's role in the subject of the case study. The important research questions are also listed.

#### **Data Collection**

In this case study there was greater dependence on archival research and document analysis for data collection, than the previous two studies. The researcher gathered relevant documentation to establish an archive of published and unpublished material on the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme. This archive formed the evidence on which the substance of the case study was based. Conversations with a Coordinator of the SPCPP supplemented the archival records.

#### **Researcher's Role**

The researcher was one of the two South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme Coordinators who have worked on the programme since 1990. His intimate knowledge of the history and development of the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme made a significant contribution to the case study.

The close relationship between a researcher and the subject of the research has the potential to introduce bias into an enquiry. In an extreme case this may lead to hagiography resulting in an uncritical report of the subject under study.

The reverse is also possible, when the researcher is overly modest and amplifies the smallest blemish to produce an over-critical report. In this study an attempt has been made to maintain a middle path. The aim of this case study was to examine the role of the SPCPP, rather than assess the performance of the organisation, consequently researcher bias was less of an issue.

This researcher has acknowledged his involvement with South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme from the outset of the research and the potential for bias and subjectivity. He has aimed to reduce bias by carefully referencing factual material, acknowledging the potential for bias and through good research supervision. It is argued, following this approach, that a careful and diligent researcher can produce trustworthy and useful knowledge.

### **Research Questions**

The following five research questions were used in this case study to structure interviews, archival research and the analysis of documents.

- What is the role of the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme? (Aims, objectives, philosophy, establishment, development and place in the wider consumer movement, impact on the Pacific, programmes, staffing etc.)
- How does the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme relate to Pacific Island states? (Relationship with government agencies, officials, politicians, areas of tension, areas of cooperation etc.)
- How does the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme relate to the market? (Relationship with local traders, transnational corporations, areas or tension, areas of cooperation etc.)

- How does the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme contribute to development in the Pacific Islands? (Impact on social and economic development of the Pacific. Note any measures or outcomes, rural/urban differences, women/gender issues, environmental issues etc.)
- What do participants see is the future role of the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme? (Check role of social movements and International NGOs in development past/present/future.)

## **RAPPORT AND SUBJECTIVITY**

When undertaking qualitative research, establishing and maintaining relationships with participants is essential for achieving rapport. A researcher runs the risk of over-identification, with the subject under study, if they become too involved. On the other hand, researcher detachment may signal lack of interest to participants. A balance needs to be found between involvement and detachment. The quality of a researcher's self-awareness is important in managing their personal impact on the research and avoiding blind subjectivity.

Glesne and Peshkin (1992: 96) note that "the ideal of rapport is developing sufficient trust for the conduct of a study." Establishing and maintaining rapport involves gaining the confidence and trust, of participants in a study, to acquire information. Glesne and Peshkin who argue that friendship can lead to "the hazards of sample bias and loss of objectivity, also discuss the distinction between rapport and friendship" (1992: 98-100).

Qualitative research has, by its very nature, a subjective dimension. Personal factors are an integral part of qualitative research. Subjectivity is a strength, but also a potential weakness, of this approach. As Glesne and Peshkin note: "The issue is not whether personal factors will be present, but when, which ones, and with what impact" (1992: 100). Because the relationship between a researcher and an informant is essentially asymmetrical, a recognition of the

power, gender and cultural dimensions of research activities is important to ensure that this asymmetry does not lead to exploitation, abuse or poor research practices.

Peshkin, in discussing his personal approach to qualitative research, writes about the virtuous nature of subjectivity and how subjectivity may be employed as an unavoidable but positive feature of research method:

“My subjectivity is the basis for the story that I am able to tell. It is a strength on which I build. It makes me who I am as a person and as a researcher, equipping me with the perspectives and insights that shape all that I do as a researcher, from the selection of topic clear through to the emphases I make in my writing. Seen as virtuous, subjectivity is something to capitalize on rather than to exorcise.”  
(Peshkin 1992: 104)

Employing subjectivity is not a naïve, uncritical, idiosyncratic approach to research, but a valid research strategy. In making that point, Peshkin argues that subjectivity should not be confused with subjectivism (judgement based on personal feelings).

“By means of subjectivity, I construct a narrative, but it must be imaginable by others, and must be verifiable by others. The worth of my narrative cannot rest on its goodness or rightness in some private sense. It cannot be illusion of fantasy that has no reality outside of my own mind.” (Peshkin 1992: 104)

One way of managing the subjective element in qualitative research is for the researcher to be utterly transparent from the outset about who they are, what values, attitudes and preconceptions they bring to a research project. Good research supervision, that addresses the power, gender and cultural dimensions of research, is a second strategy for managing subjectivity.

Prior to embarking on this research project, the researcher<sup>12</sup> discussed the issues of his relationship with research participants, the subjects under study, and subjectivity with his research supervisor. Furthermore, these topics were regularly reviewed during fieldwork. Rather than attempt to undertake an objective piece of research based on the positivist paradigm, the researcher declared his subjectivity at the outset and aimed to construct a verifiable narrative (Freedman and Coombs 1996).

In each case study site the issues of rapport and subjectivity were manifest in slightly different ways and addressed by different strategies. For example, in the Samoan village a cultural mentor was recruited to assist the researcher to understand the nuances of the *fa'asamoa* and his place as an outsider with some inside connections. The researcher also employed transparency and regular supervision to monitor his research methods and to address any power or gender dimensions at each fieldwork site.

Oliver Sacks writes of the sterility of modern case studies (in his field of neurology) and the need for depth to really appreciate something of the human condition:

“[M]odern case histories allude to the subject in a cursory phrase, which could as well apply to a rat as a human being. To restore the human subject to the centre we must deepen a case history to a narrative or tale: only then do we have a ‘who’ as well as a ‘what.’”  
(1986: x)

To tell in depth stories of civil society in the Pacific, the researcher has attempted to follow Sacks’ advice and bring some life to these case studies

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<sup>12</sup> The researcher is a fourth generation New Zealander who has worked for a decade in the island nations of the Pacific, he is married to a Pacific Islander and has a deep and abiding commitment to the development of Pacific communities. The researcher’s background and work experience assisted the research project in many ways, as he was familiar with the case study sites and had already established rapport with many participants in the study. On the one hand this passion for the Pacific, provided the researcher with the motivation and energy to complete this research project. On the other hand, the researcher’s commitment, and familiarity with the subject and participants of this study had the potential to introduce bias and subjectivity.

through putting some flesh on the bones of what could have been dry narratives.

## **SUMMARY**

This enquiry employed a multiple site case study design, and used qualitative methods of data collection, to examine the role of civil society in social and economic development in a Pacific Island context. Culturally appropriate data collection methods were designed for, and employed in, case studies in Samoa and the Solomon Islands. The researcher's empathy and interaction with the subject and participants of the case studies provided an opportunity for an insider's viewpoint. The chapter concluded with the researcher's reflections on the personal dimension of this enquiry and the issue of subjectivity.

## CHAPTER 4

### **NU'UAIGA MA LE FA'ASAMOA**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Traditional forms of mutual help are still intact in many Pacific island communities. The *fa'asamoa* in the Samoan islands; *vaka i taukei* in Fiji, the *wantok* system throughout most of Melanesia and *te katei ni Kiribati* in Kiribati are four examples of this phenomenon.

The goal of this case study is to clarify the role of civil society in development through examining the *fa'asamoa* in a Samoan village, noting its contribution to development and its relationship with the state and the market. Whilst the term civil society is not in common usage in Samoa, the *fa'asamoa* may be seen as the major segment of civil society in the Samoan context. Church based organisations, non-government organisations and social movements are also evident, but play lesser roles in Samoan civil society.

Samoa<sup>1</sup> consists of two groups of politically divided islands. The western group is comprised of two large islands, Upolu and Savai'i, and the small islands of Apolima, Manono, Fanuatapu, Namua, Nu'utele, Nu'ulua and Nu'usafe'e. The eastern group is made up of five islands: Tutuila, Aunu'u, Ta'u, Olosega and Ofu in the Manu'a group, and two coral atolls Rose and Swains Islands. Apart from the atolls, the Samoan islands are mountainous, volcanic and heavily forested except for a populated coastal strip and where lava fields cover the surface. The 163,500 people of Samoa live on a land area of 2,935 square kilometers, American Samoa's 200 sq.km. is home to 54,600 people squeezed into a narrow coastal strip (SPC 1995). The people of Samoa are ethnically and culturally classified as Polynesian (Meleisea

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<sup>1</sup> The western group of islands, formerly known as Western Samoa, are now the independent nation of Samoa. The eastern group are the United States territory of American Samoa.

1987: 15) and share one language. People of European, German and British, Chinese (Davidson 1967: 31-75, Gilson 1970: 162-187) and Melanesian (Meleisea 1980) origins have lived in Samoa since the nineteenth century and contributed to the *afakasi* and *papalagi* populations of Samoa<sup>2</sup>.

The *fa'asamoa* is literally the Samoan way of doing things and refers to traditional practices, customary behaviour and mutual assistance in the village context and beyond. The *fa'asamoa* is both a social structure, organising the shape of the community, and a set of cultural processes and protocols that determine the pattern of village activities.

To examine<sup>3</sup> the *fa'asamoa*, the researcher conducted a series of *fono* and *talanoaga* with the people of Nu'uaiga,<sup>4</sup> a village on Upolu near Apia, the capital of Samoa.

Following this introduction, the case study report begins with an outline of the context of Samoan village life with particular reference to Nu'uaiga. Next the role of the *fa'asamoa* today is explained through the words of the people of the village, later they put their views of the future of the *fa'asamoa*. The relationship between the *fa'asamoa* and the state and the market is the subject of the next two sections. The final section summarises the contribution of the *fa'asamoa* to development.

## THE VILLAGE CONTEXT

Samoan oratory is resplendent with metaphor, imagery and references to historical events. Samoan proverbial expressions (Schultz 1985) capture the shape and spirit of Samoan life. Three such expressions sum up the nature of village organisation:

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<sup>2</sup> Samoan words, apart from place names and direct quotations, are in *italics*, see page x for a glossary of Samoan terms.

<sup>3</sup> This is the first of three case studies on the role of civil society in development. Details of the methods used in this case study are discussed in Chapter 2.

<sup>4</sup> Nu'uaiga is a pseudonym for the Samoan village where the case study was conducted. Names of individual informants have been changed to protect confidentiality.

"*la oloolo pito va'a.*"

"*O le ala i le pule o le tautua.*"

"*So'o le fau i le fau.*" (Allardice 1985: 218)

The first expression translates as: "let each part of the boat be smoothed", meaning each person has their own place and tasks to perform. The second as: "the way to authority is through service", reminding people that before they can lead or participate in leadership they must first prove themselves by serving their family and village. The third expression is: "join fibre (of the *fau* tree) to fibre" referring to the weaving together of many individual weak elements to form a strong entity, such as the *'ietoga*, the fine mat, the most prized possession of any Samoan family, and meaning strength in unity. Samoan village life is structured, hierarchical and communal.<sup>5</sup>

The *nu'u* (village) is the main unit of social organisation in Samoa. Each village is governed by a *fono* or council of *matai*, the heads of the extended families, *aiga*, of the village.

*Matai* derives from *mata i ai* meaning being set apart or consecrated (Meleisea 1992: 15). Chiefly titles are bestowed at a *saofa'i*, titling ceremony, on individuals chosen by the elders of the family. Potential *matai* must have the requisite genealogy, but must also have served their families well and have demonstrated leadership and wisdom in village and family affairs. Two kinds of *matai* titles exist: *ali'i* and *tulafale*. *Ali'i*, also known as sitting chiefs, derive their authority from sacred origins and aristocratic lineages. *Tulafale* are also known as talking chiefs or orators, holding the genealogy of the *aiga*, and acting as the voice of their *ali'i* at ceremonial occasions.<sup>6</sup>

In a Samoan village untitled men (*taule'ale'a*) and women belong to two groupings. The young men belong to the *'aumaga*. The *'aumaga* are referred

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<sup>5</sup> Samoan village life and society has been described in detail by Kramer (1994), Davidson (1967), Gilson (1970), Lockwood (1971), Meleisea (1992) and others.

<sup>6</sup> For a comprehensive description of Samoan chieftainship and hierarchy see Meleisea, 1995:19-36 or Kramer (1994a: 24-47), Davidson (1967: 15-30) and Gilson (1970: 29-64).

to as *o le malosi o le nu'u* (the strength of the village). All the girls and young women of the *nu'u* belong to the *aualuma*. The *aualuma* is referred to as the honour of the village. *O le teine o le 'i'oimata o lona tuagane* (a girl is the pupil of her brothers eye), this proverb refers to the closeness of the relationship between brother and sister. The young women and young men of the village are as brothers and sisters. In traditional times each group had its own house in the *nu'u*. The house of women was called *Nu'u o Tamaitai*.

Samoans traditionally married outside of their village, a woman moving to the village of her husband. A fourth influential group in each village, but not of the village, consists of the wives of the *matai* and is known as *Komiti a Faletua ma Tausi*, the Women's Committee. This is how the *Komiti a Faletua ma Tausi* of Nu'uaiga describe their role and relationship with the other groups.

"Fa'afetai lava i le saunoaga ma le manaoga ua momoli mai, a'o le tulaga i totonu o lo matou nu'u e tusa lava o tina matutua po'o faletua, o le autu lava lea i totonu o se fa'alapotopotoga po'o se mafutaga ase nu'u poo se alalafaga, o'i latou foi la ia e saunoa mai i tausi ma le malosi o le nu'u e fa'amaopoopo i totonu o se nuu ma se alalafaga se finagalo ua tasi iai. E tusa o faletua lava le autū, ona pito lea iai o tausi. E ese lava le itū a tamaita'i, sa'oao ma le aualuma, o'i latou foi na e fa'amaopoopoina tamaitai o le nu'u. A maopoopo mea e fai e tina aemaise o'i latou foi e faufautua i le pule a ali'i ma faipule, ia e lelei le nu'u, mautū, maopoopo, ma mamalu mai le lelei o le pulega a faletua ma tausi ma le 'aumaga. Ia o le fa'amalamala'aga lena, a lelei tina i totonu o se fa'alapotopotoga a se nu'u, o le lelei fo'i lea o tamā o le nu'u auā e avatu e tina se fautuaga lelei i tamā ma maopoopo ai le nu'u. O le tele o isi nu'u, e taufa'apēnā fo'i lo matou nei nu'u, e tau le fiafia e ō mai i mea e fai, e mana'o e nofonofo e lē fia ō mai e fia fa'amaopoopo se mea, ia ae a lelei le pule a ali'i ma faipule mai luga o tinā, o le maopoopo fo'i

lenā o se nu'u. O le matou nu'u e feololo ma o lea lava e maopoopo, ae lē matuā atoatoa fo'i I nisi taimi, ia o le fa'aaliga lea ma le fa'aaloalo lava." (Faletua ma Tausi: CS1-04)

"In terms of the Committees in the Villages, each village has its own structure, as follows: Council of Chiefs and Orators of the Village, electing its own Mayor (Fono a Ali'i ma Tulafale, filifili ai le latou Pulenu'u); Women's Committee (Komiti a Faletua ma Tausi); Ladies of the Village Committee (Aualuma, Sa'oao ma Tamaitai), and Adolescent Men's Committee (Komiti a le 'Aumaga). These Committees all work together according to the decisions, pertinent to the affairs and welfare of the Village, made by the Council of Chiefs and Orators. When it comes to decision making every Committee voices its opinion and listens before a decision can be finalised. Usually in all villages in Samoa it is the Women's Committee that is relied upon as the backbone of any village. Each village project is derived from the strong influence of the Women's Committee on other sectors of the village." (Faletua ma Tausi, translation: CS1-04)<sup>7</sup>

In summary, the four key traditional groupings within the village are:

- a. *Fono*, or Village Council: all the chiefs and orators of the village. The *Fono* is the principal authority, making all key decisions affecting the village, delegating tasks, and monitoring results.
- b. *'Aumaga*: all untitled men, undertaking the manual work required in the village, serving the *Fono*.

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<sup>7</sup> References to quotations are identified by the audiotape numbers. Quotations throughout this case study are attributed to the individuals or the groups they represent. Table 4.1 (over) provides a summary.

c. *Aualuma*: women of the village and undertaking 'women's' work in the village.

d. *Komiti Faletua ma Tausi*: the wives of matai, organising all the women's activities.

Pseudonym	Samoan Grouping	English Equivalent
Ali'itele	Matai (Ali'i)	High (sitting) Chief
Tula	Matai (Tulafale)	Orator (talking) Chief
Toea'ina	Toea'ina	Elder (male)
Faletua ma Tausi	Faletua ma Tausi	Women's Committee
'Aumaga	'Aumaga	Untitled Men's Group
Aualuma	Aualuma	Unmarried Women

**Table 4.1 Pseudonyms and Affiliations of Informants.**

A fifth organisation in each village is the church. Christianity is symbolised in the village by the large church and the grand *fale o le faife'au*, the pastors house, which is the largest and only two-storied residence in Nu'uaiga. The church buildings demonstrate the wealth and power of the church and the pride of the village in their Christian devotion. The church Minister (*Faife'au*), like the *Faletua ma Tausi*, are in the village but not of the village and he does not have a say in the fono. The *Fono*, *'Aumaga*, *Aualuma* and *Komiti a Faletua ma Tausi* all have parallel church as well as village responsibilities. Status in the church hierarchy mirrors village status and groupings: Church Elders are

invariably senior *matai*, and the *Mafutaga a Tina* (Church Women's Fellowship) is the *Komiti a Faletua ma Tausi* by another name.

Prior to the introduction of Christianity, *aiga* had household gods, *aitu*, and the *ali'i* had spiritual as well as chiefly duties (Meleisea 1995: 21). *Tagaloa*, the creator of the Samoan cosmology, was referred to as an *Atua*, the title given to the Christian god introduced in the 1830s. The linkages between the traditional organisation of a Samoan village and the church today are very close. Spirituality pervades all village activities, prayer and church are part of everyday life, not something that is reserved for Sundays.

The people of Nu'u'aiga do not separate the spiritual from the secular. Village and church responsibilities, activities and tasks are closely intertwined. However, there is a subtle separation. The church Minister, as the spiritual leader of the community, is set aside in an elevated status and, as a temporary resident in the village, has no real say in the *fa'asamoa* of the village which remains under the control of the *fono*.

This separation of spiritual (*lotu*) and secular (*pule*) authority at a Samoan village level is also evident in the Tokelau Islands (Huntsman and Hooper 1996: 99-100), Tuvalu (Besnier 1995: 41) and other Polynesian settings. At the national level, the separation of church and state is not so clear. *Fa'avae i le Atua Samoa* (Samoa is founded on God) is the legend on the Samoan coat of arms and Samoan politicians are prone to using religious language for their own political ends (Field 1997: 7).

A theme emerging from this study of village life is the notion of a place of belonging. All Samoans claim a place of belonging; a place that provides them with identity. *O Samoa ua taoto, ao se i'a mai moana, aua o le i'a a samoa ua uma ona 'aisa*. Samoa is like an ocean fish divided into sections, reads a famous Samoan proverb; referring to the custom of dividing up a fish for distribution and to the ordering of the lands and titles of the Samoan Islands. Land and identity are closely intertwined in the Samoan world.

The structure of Samoan society is set out in a *fa'alupega*<sup>8</sup>, the list of *matai* titles and ceremonial greetings, recited when chiefs meet. Formal greetings acknowledge the title, rank, village and connection between those present linking them with their mutual ancestors. The *fa'alupega* has been committed to print (LMS 1958) but is still principally an oral record, held in the memories of *tulafale*, and subject to debate and revision (Ma'ilo, pers. comm. 1997). Political boundaries between the independent nation of Samoa and the United States Territory of American Samoa are ignored in *fa'alupega*. These recent political divisions are seen as ephemera when compared to a record that links living people with Tagaloa and the other Polynesian Gods of creation.

Meleisea (1995: 20-22) identifies four distinct periods of the development of the *matai* system: Prehistoric, from Creation to Tongan domination; Tongan Domination, the three hundred years to the end of the fifteenth century; *O le Tafa'ifa*, the time of the four royal titles to 1900; and the Christian Period, from 1830 which overlapped the third period. Pre-Christian Samoan society differed greatly from the modern *matai* system, according to John Williams and other observers at the time of contact (Meleisea 1995: 20). The historical development of the *fa'asamoa* is of great interest to many Samoans and subject to debate (Tamasese 1995: 37-52, Melesiea 1987: vii), but it is not the primary concern of this enquiry. However, it is noteworthy that the *fa'asamoa* was not (and, it will be argued later, is not) an unchanging tradition.

Nu'uaiga is one of the villages of the sub-district of Vaimauga, part of the principal district Tuamasaga, on the island of Upolu. Samoan society is a complex hierarchy (Meleisea 1995: 22-25) with a place for everyone, and everyone in their place. Samoans inquire of strangers: "*O fea lou nu'u?*" (Where is your village?). People are identified according to their place of belonging and links with *aiga*, ancestors and titles, rather than with personal status or achievements.

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<sup>8</sup> Several *fa'alupega* are available based on the *fa'alupega* compiled by the London Missionary Society, Malua (1958), a revision is currently underway.

Knowing who you are and where you fit may be the difference between life and death as the senior orator of Nu'uaiga pointed out to the researcher when he recited this *gafa* (genealogy).

"Tupua Mataafa ia Sina o lologo ma fa'atausala o le lfi tele. That's the joining together of the connections of the country of Chiefs and Orators. Tuiluluma ia faatausala o le lfi tele, o la ta nono'a ma la ta soa'a, Tui Manu'a le ia tama ia la talanoa o lana fetaupea'i po'o va i lagi, nofo si aitu ia va i lagi, o manu, tui tau ia manu, o fainu'ulasi ma ua le galu, Tuitele ia Uale galu, o folo o le La, Sina atalaga ia Folo o le La, o le la Manaia ma le teine o Le tutu'u, Galumaifele ia Letutu'u, o Gauifaleai , Malietoa Laauli ia Gauifaleai o Lenatoitele, Manua o le Sagalele ia Lenatotele o Vaetamasoali'i ma Atomauga o le Tuitoga. Tuiaie selenato ia Vaetamasoali'i o Tui a le tama alelagi. Tuitamaalelagi ia Vaetoifana, o Salamasina, le Tupu o Samoa mai Saua e o'o i Falealupo. That's our Queen, Salamasina is the Samoan Queen from Manu'a to Falealupo. She held the four titles: Tuiatua, Tuiaana, Malietoa ma Vaetamasoali'i."

"That is the genealogy of the whole body of our country I give it to you for your information. If you know those addresses, you know the in and out of the fa'asamoa. If there is anything happens somewhere. For instance; if you come over there and (are) driving that car and (it) hits someone, then the only thing they must do is try to kill you. But once you know these things, then you say: "How about spare me for a few minutes. I come from ... "Then you mention where you come from, then you mention those things, once you mention Malietoa ... Ali'itele is the one who comes from the Malietoa line, once you mention Malietoa Laauli, then Ali'itele will be there too and that is your safe side. People will stand up and say: "If it was without that, we would kill you." But now its finished, thank you very much. Quite safe. That's why I determined to give it to you for your information." (Tula: CS1-05A).

In the above, as in many utterances by skilled orators, the sub-text carries the intended message. The researcher's wife is related to Ali'itele, in that way the researcher is connected to Ali'itele, and through that link to the quoted genealogy that connects all Samoans. The orator was saying, in a discursive manner: "You are not a stranger, you too are connected, you have a place of belonging."

The village of Nu'uaiga is comprised of some fifty households with a total population of five hundred and sixty-five individuals scattered over an area of around 20 hectares. In traditional times the village ran from the village by the sea to the plantations in the hills. Now much of the village is urban with plantations reduced to household gardens and paved roads cutting through the original village. Much of the village land is still in traditional ownership with title vested in the current holders of *matai* titles. However significant sections of land are now in freehold title (*papalagi* or European land) and alienated from the village. Some land was given to the state for recreational purposes (Apia Park) but the villagers still consider it their land.

"It's gifted for the government, so the government owns it. But it's in the community of Nu'uaiga ... and if they want to do anything apart from the park ... maybe build a hotel here ... then Nu'uaiga walks in, no way! We give the land just for the sports, no hotel, if not we want our land back. Development of the sports, that why we gave that land." ('Aumaga: CS1-03A).

Most villagers live in a communal household unit (*aiga* or extended family) of three or four generations. The *aiga* the researcher is most familiar with currently has twelve permanent residents, consisting of four older adults (aged 45-65), a *matai* and his wife, his elder brother and a cousin (male); seven younger adults (18-30), two sons and two daughters of the *matai*, the wife of one son, and a son and daughter of the cousin. The baby of the married son and his wife complete the household. Others of the household, but not currently in residence, include a son in New Zealand completing a university

degree. Another son lives in Australia. Casual residents observed include extended family from Savaii and Tutuila, and Peace Corps volunteers. Other *aiga* from New Zealand, the United States or elsewhere visit from time to time and contribute financially to village projects.

The village does more than provide its residents with a place to live; Nu'uaiga provides a place of belonging for resident and non-resident *aiga*.

## THE ROLE OF THE *FA'ASAMOA* TODAY

"The role of the *fa'asamoa* ... is to bind the Samoans together."  
(Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

The *fa'asamoa* can be described in a short simile (above), or in an extended bilingual monologue:

"Ona e fa'apea lea, susu lava tamali'i ma failauga. You cover the whole thing in one word. Ia o a mai oe? How are you? O loo manuia lava fa'afetai vaeane le pa'ia. O anafea na e sau ai, when did you arrive? Na ou sau ananafi, I arrived yesterday at two o'clock in the afternoon. Na ou taunu'u mai ananafi i le ta o le lua i le afiafi. You get that all now? Ia o fea e te sau ai nei? Where were you from, from New Zealand? O fea sa e iai? Where were you. Sa ou i Apia, sa ou i Matautu, sa ou i Tutuila, it is always like that. Where were you? Sa ou i Tutuila, sa ou i Niusila. And when did you arrive in the country? Na e taunu'u mai anafea i le atunu'u? Na ou sau talaatu ananafi. I arrived here the day before yesterday. Ua fa'afia ona e sau i Samoa? How many times have you come to Samoa? Ua fa'avalu ona ou sau i Samoa. My eighth trip to Samoa. O lea le mea e te fia sau ai i Samoa? Why do you always like to come to Samoa? Ou te fia iloa lava le gagana a Samoa. I very much like to learn or to know the Samoan language, the chiefly language not the common language but the chiefly language. Ou te

fia iloa lava le gagana faatamali'i a Samoa, ae le o le gagana fo'i lea faalautele, common language faalautele. Do you know some of those language? Ete silafia la ni nai upu mai ia gagana e lua? Ioe ua ou iloa. Yes I know some words from both languages. O ānā upu? What are those words, in the common language. Ua e sau. I come, you come, yes I come. Who came with you. O ai na lua o mai. Well I came alone. How many times you come to this family, more than twenty or thirty. I come here very often. Ete iloa nisi o lenei aiga? Ioe ou te iloa uma lava tagata o lenei aiga, o tagata matutua ma tagata laiti. I know all of them, big and small. Ou te iloa lelei a latou, I know them all. O a mea ete manao e 'ai pe a e sau i Samoa? What are the good food for you when you come to Samoa? I live like a Samoan too, I eat any kind of food, I eat bananas, taros, ufi, anything. I live like a Samoan, as my family is a Samoan family. I know all the ins and outs of the Samoan families. Ou te iloa lelei mea uma ma vaega eseese. Ins and outs means vaega eseese. I know all the ins and outs of the Samoan language. Ou te iloa lelei vaega eseese o le aiga fa'asamoa ma le gagana Samoa. Those are the things you ought to know." (Tula: CS1-05A)

Both these definitions of the *fa'asamoa*, provided by village elders, are powerful and are open to a variety of interpretations. The first, a simple simile of binding, in Samoan reflects the actions of: *fufusi* (embrace) or *fau'au* (bind together). It also evokes the previously quoted metaphor, "*So'o le fau i le fau*", providing vivid images of communal life. The second, a complex bilingual monologue, is a primer in the *fa'asamoa* directed at the researcher. The orator's discourse always had a subtext. It reflects a living culture, the process of the *fa'asamoa*. Knowing your place, greeting people correctly, taking part in a community, understanding the complexities of communication. "Those are the things you ought to know."

The *fa'asamoa* may be simply defined as the "Samoan way – custom, tradition, culture" (Allardice 1985: 62). To the Samoans however, the

*fa'asamoa* is all pervasive, part of everyday life, high occasions, life and death, the centre of their being. The *fa'asamoa* is used as noun, verb and adjective. Because of the complexity of the term, metaphorical expressions are frequently used to explain the nature of the *fa'asamoa*, what it is, how it operates and how one should behave in particular situations.

Differences were noted between the nature of the *fa'asamoa* in rural villages and the urban areas. Rural villages are seen as "Strong in the *fa'asamoa*" (Aualuma: C1-02A) more like the *fa'asamoa* of days gone by. Strength of the *fa'asamoa* is demonstrated by the adherence to old customs and the severity of social sanctions.

"The role of the *fa'asamoa* in Nu'uaiga today is a bit different from the countryside because over here we don't have much curfew like the last 20 years. Where in the country the village laws are very tight." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

In rural villages the sanctions for breaking village rules are more severe than in the urban setting.

"Some rural villages still have very hard punishments ... not like here in town, our village has punishment but not like in the outbacks." (Aualuma: CS1-02A)

In Nu'uaiga, an urban village close to town, the cash economy, increasing urbanisation, and the loss of productive land to housing are factors that are changing the *fa'asamoa*. In the words of the High Chief:

"The *fa'asamoa* is changing with the cash economy coming in and you don't have the land any more for plantations. The lands we [were] using for plantations are now being occupied by people. Most the people coming in and staying on those lands. For the last forty or fifty years there were not so many people, now the

population is growing very rapidly and the lands are nearly all occupied by people and there is not enough land for planting. Only when you go out further into the bush or country there are land for plantations." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

These changes have had an impact on the daily life and activities of all villagers but notably the young whose roles and responsibilities have changed.

"The young generation has all gone over rather than going fishing for the village community or going feeding pigs like they used to do the last thirty or forty years they are not doing it any more. Each family has to do its own part, to play their own role like feeding their own pigs." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

The young men in Nu'uaiga identify differences between rural and urban lifestyles, and can easily recognise their rural peers by their clothing, manner and lack of material goods. This is seen as having both positive and negative consequences.

"The problem is here we don't have much of that land, like the people out there. The [rural] 'Aumaga goes to the plantation. Most of the 'Aumaga here they all work in town, they don't have to go to the plantation or go fishing, they work." ('Aumaga: CS1-03A)

"Does that change things in the village?" (Researcher)

"It changed the lifestyle for the people here in town compared to the people out there. You can see they drive cars around. Just ordinary 'Aumaga has a truck, wears good clothes, has a Seiko watch on his wrist. If you go out there you don't see those stuff on the 'Aumaga out there ... You can easily picture the boy from town and the boy

from the rural areas. And if they do come in to town you can easily tell the difference. No, he's not from town..." ('Aumaga: CS1-03A)

The young women are also sensitive to changes from the past and the difference between urban and rural life is reflected in clothing, language and lifestyle.

"We see many changes right now ... Its much more European right now ... The lifestyle from outside ... We see the changes, in the lifestyle, the clothes we wear, the language..." (Aualuma: CS1-02A)

Whilst the cash economy has come to the urban communities, that does not mean that rural communities are poorer. Loss of plantation land has left some urban dwellers dependent on remittances from abroad and cash from family members who work for wages. Urban poverty is more common than rural poverty in Samoa.

"The matai out there [in a rural village] if he has got a big land with a big plantation on it or even two fishing boats its a lot of money that matai out there compared to the matai here. If the matai here doesn't work, stays home, no plantation, doesn't go fishing, he waits for his children to feed him. That's the difference between that matai out there working his butt out, do the plantation and going fishing every morning. While the matai here just play poker all day and waits for his children to come home with the money." (Aumaga: CS1-03A)

The high chief summed up the changes in the *fa'asamoa* from previous times and the difference between urban and rural *fa'asamoa*:

"We live like modern Samoans in town." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

In spite of these changes, and some adaptation to urban life, the authority (*pule*), a central plank of the *matai* system, appears undiminished:

"The matai are still having the authority over the people in the village ... the matai system is always strong. In the fa'asamoa, the matai are still the leaders in any village." (Aualuma: CS1-02A)

There is a strong assertion of the centrality and value of the *fa'asamoa* from the younger members of the community:

"even though we have adapted to the urban lifestyle but the fa'asamoa is just natural, we were born with it so we can't take it away. Its our own identity. Its still being a Samoan. We still hold that in our hearts, we are proud of it, our own custom our own culture. We do not want to change it, we love it, even though we have had these changes." (Aualuma: CS1-02A)

The older women noted the influence of the cash economy, urbanisation, and contact with *papalagi* on the *fa'asamoa*. They reflect on the adaptations that have been made and the need to encourage the young people to maintain their *fa'asamoa*. The strength of the *fa'asamoa* in rural villages is seen as an important exemplar for the young people in the urban village to strive for.

"O le aganu'u iinei i Samoa, o tagata e nonofo i le taulaga ua malosi le tu mai fafo, a'o nuu nei e nonofo mai tua o lo'o malosi ai le faasamoa, o lo'o faia pea e'i latou le faasamoa moni e pei ona sau ai mai anamua, ao nu'u nei e nonofo i le taulaga ua pei lava latou ua mālō ai le aganu'u mai fafo. Ua itiiti lava le aganu'u a Samoa i totonu o le atunu'u ae ua malosi tu ma aganu'u mai fafo. aemaise lava le tupulaga laiti ma le talavou ao nu'u mai tua atu o le taulaga o lo'o malosi pea le tu ma le aganu'u fa'asamoa moni lava." (Faletua ma Tausi: CS1-04A)

"The *fa'asamoa* and *aganu'u* in Samoa today appears to be slowly changing because of practice and behaviour from outside influences. This is now seen in urban villages, including our own village, where people and families have access to jobs, where money can be earned and with the impact of tourists and overseas visitors influencing the youth in urban villages. We have to encourage them to keep up with some of the aspects of the *fa'asamoa*. People and youth in villages in rural areas including villages in the islands of Savai'i, Apolima and Manono, are very strong with the *aganu'u* and *fa'asamoa*, because they live the *fa'asamoa* at all times. There is no change in their ways of living the *fa'asamoa* accordingly and upholding their culture as from the beginning." (Faletua ma Tausi, translation: CS1-04A)

The leaders of the village are reflective on the changes that have occurred during their lifetimes. The village has become urban, plantations are now replaced by housing, communal activities such as fishing and livestock management are disappearing and the subsistence economy is being replaced by a cash economy. But, in spite of these many changes, all agree the *fa'asamoa* is still strong.

The discourse on the *fa'asamoa* in the village of Nu'uuaiga appears to operate on two levels. A cover story<sup>9</sup>, subscribed to by all informants, represents the *fa'asamoa* as an unchanging, traditional way of life existing today with unbroken links through the ancestors to the ancient gods of Polynesia. A second story, and all the evidence, speaks of the changing role and adaptations that the *fa'asamoa* had made since the coming of the *papalagi*

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<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 3 for a discussion on cover stories.

and the major changes occurring today. The historical evidence (Meleisea, 1995: 20) supports the view that the *fa'asamoa* has never remained static but has gone through many changes. These two, contradictory stories, were both related without apparent conflict.

The last hundred years has seen many changes in Nu'uaiga. The colonial period was followed by urbanisation, the development of a cash economy, the advent of wage-work, loss of plantation land and changes in the roles of men and women. These changes have accelerated in Nu'uaiga during the thirty-six years since independence. The *fa'asamoa*, rather than remaining an unchanging tradition, appears to have adapted to these changes and remains strong in the urban setting of the village of Nu'uaiga.

The *fa'asamoa* of today, as described by the people of Nu'uaiga, provides a source of identity, a place of belonging and a way of life in the late twentieth century. It defines roles and responsibilities for all members of the village community and acts as an agency for the transmission of culture, social control and cohesion.

The *fa'asamoa* still links the people of the village to their ancestors and their land, providing them with a strong sense of who they are and where they stand in a rapidly changing world. The *fa'asamoa* provides a framework meaning on which the village community is founded and lives from day to day.

The *fa'asamoa* provides the people of Nu'uaiga with a place of belonging, a sense of identity and meaning. Paradoxically, this has allowed the community to cope with development, because the people know where they fit in the world and what is important to them. Whilst some families have left the village, to make their homes in Pacific rim cities, they retain their village links and still gain their identity and meaning from the village and see it as their place of

belonging. This is manifest in their contributions to village projects and through remittances<sup>10</sup> to village based *aiga*.

The people of the village act as guardians of the *fa'asamoa*, and whilst they may say that it remains as it always was, they acknowledge the adaptations and changes that have occurred. Perhaps the stability and flexibility of the *fa'asamoa* is a major strength, enabling the people of Nu'uaiga to cope with the conflict, contradictions and complexity of development.

### **THE FA'ASAMOA AND THE STATE**

"How does the *fa'asamoa* fit in with the government? What is the relationship with the *fa'asamoa* with the government?"

Researcher's question to the Aualuma (CS1-02A).

The *fa'asamoa* has an important role *vis a vis* the state, providing both a structure and process for mediating the relationship between the state and the citizens in particular villages, districts and nationally. This relationship is important for development at the national and village levels, as development assistance is invariably channeled by aid agencies and donor governments through the state. The following comment from a village elder Toea'ina, illustrates the nature of the relationship between *fa'asamoa* and state.

"The role of the *fa'asamoa*, from what I know, is to bind the Samoans together. So that they can go hand in hand with the government, and of course helping the government out in a lot of ways as far as economical matters are concerned in the villages and also the community. But they are always doing it in their own way of Samoan negotiations. That is the role, the role of the *fa'asamoa* to bind together with the government in any way they can

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<sup>10</sup> See: Bertram and Watters (1985), Watters (1987), Marcus (1981), Munro (1990) Macpherson (1992); and for a recent evaluation of the role and impact of remittances see: Poirine (1998).

help the government, the village councils are doing that. Now we have become independent we have to work with the government."  
(Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

The state has a short history in Samoa when viewed in the context of the *fa'asamoa*. The pre-contact history (Meleisea 1995: 19-29) of Samoa records few periods of political unification under traditional leadership and Samoa did not achieve nationhood until independence in 1962. Under colonial administration Samoa was a vassal state to foreign powers (Hempenstall and Rutherford 1984: 22). Robert Louis Stevenson observed the contest of the great powers for Samoa, and became involved when the Germans supported Tamasese against the British backed Mata'afa. Despite the elegance of his prose, Stevenson's view of the Samoans did not disguise his paternal attitude about their readiness for independence.

"They are Christians, church goers, singers of hymns at family worship, hardy cricketers ... but in most other points they are the contemporaries of our tattooed ancestors who drove their chariots on the wrong side of the Roman way. We have passed the feudal system; they are not clear of the patriarchal. We are in the thick of the age of finance; they are in a period of communism. And this makes them hard to understand." Stevenson (1892: 1-2)

Paternalism was a theme that underpinned the European colonisation of Samoa. This paternalism continued under German and New Zealand administrations (Davidson 1967: 76, Gilson 1979: 222, Meleisea and Schoeffel 1987: 111). The modern nation-state of Western Samoa did not emerge until after independence in 1962.

This relationship between the *fa'asamoa* and the state was problematic before Samoa became an independent nation. There was substantial conflict between some villages and the colonial administration which climaxed in the Mau movement and agitation for independence (Field 1984). The relationship

between the colonial power, as state, and the village of Nu'uaiga was viewed in the past as "colonial paternalism" (Davidson 1967: 76) and development as patronage. This is reflected in the views of the older villagers:

"You see in the time of the colonial system the government would do it and pay the people in that time when they had projects like working on the roads to plantations and that sort of thing, and the government rely on paying the people just like the labourers overseas." (Toea'ina.: CS1-06A)

Since independence the relationship between the village and the state has changed and become more consultative and co-operative with mutual benefits of development stressed. However the relationship remains problematic to some extent because of the longevity and strength of the *fa'asamoa* and the short history and weakness of the state<sup>11</sup>. The structures and processes of the *fa'asamoa* have become the central mechanism for negotiating the relationship with the State.

"But the changes now is that the government representatives will negotiate with the villagers and the villagers will say to cut the costs for that project we will do the labour free for you and you supply the materials. That is another change that is helping the government along. That is an example of the changes in the *fa'asamoa* and those ideas I think are coming from the people that have been educated in New Zealand and they like to give this to the villagers so that they wouldn't have any ideas at all about what they were going to do. It is their contribution to their government by doing it free because they know it would help them out..." (Toea'ina.: CS1-06A)

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<sup>11</sup> See Migdal (1988) for a discussion on strong societies and weak states.

"Right. So, in that way the relationship between the government and the *fa'asamoa* is a mutually supportive relationship where they both help each other for shared projects and shared objectives?" (Researcher's question to Toea'ina: CS1-06A).

"Yeah, that is exactly what is happening. And of course the government is really appreciating that because there is a lot of projects that it usually finances. And of course negotiated with the village council. And they get this sort of help that will cut costs, from the governments point of view, as far as finance is concerned. The *fa'asamoa* realises that doing this, that sort of approach means that it gives them in the long run a very good thing because they are going ahead with their plantations and things like that, they can earn the money to control their plantations with that sort of help which they give free to the government." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

The boundaries between the state and the *fa'asamoa* are guarded fiercely by villagers. The recent dispute between the village of Vaiusu (Robertson 1997) and the Government has resulted in shootings, arrests and the villagers erecting barricades around disputed land. The mechanism for negotiating the relationship between village and state is spelt out clearly by the 'Aumaga using land as an example:

"For instance, the development of the roads, the government can't just walk in with the bulldozers and start the workmen to work. They have to go through the *fa'asamoa*, talk to the matais, the communities if they can use the land for the development of the roads. Even the development of the airport, those lands are owned by the people of that community out there. Even this small airport at Fagali'i, they had to talk to the Fagali'i people. The *fa'asamoa* involves a very big deal here in Samoa, especially in the development of the country. The only thing they don't have to do any negotiation in lands or anything is the Government lands itself.

They don't own all the land in Samoa that is why the *fa'asamoa* is always involved." ('Aumaga: CS1-03A)

Land and chiefly titles are two issues that are at the heart of the most passionate Samoan disputes. The long-standing dispute over land in the village of Vaiusu is closely watched by the people of Nu'uaiga because it provides a test case about the relationship between the state and a village and the ownership of disputed land.

"If they [the state] can't deal with the *fa'asamoa* first then they are going to have those problems in development and it is going to delay the whole project like that. A big Government project coming up, they (are) going to delay it because they have to do it in the *fa'asamoa* way first before they actually start the job. Even though the land is owned by WESTEC, but the land is inside the community of those people (Vaiusu). And if the people wants their land back, I don't think there is a policeman that will want to stand in the way if the whole people walk in. So they have to deal with the Government in the *fa'asamoa* way." ('Aumaga: CS1-03A)

This conflict is important to the people of Nu'uaiga because it strikes at the heart of the *fa'asamoa*: land, a place of belonging. Something that the 'Aumaga declares will be defended to the death if it is not negotiated safely through the *fa'asamoa*.

"If the government wants a project to do here in this community and we have a member of this community inside the Parliament. So they contact him. He contacts the community. It's our Member who comes and talks to the Fono. In the village fono he tells us what the government wants and everybody is looking for that day when the government is going to walk in. It works like that. Before they get in here the whole village, the whole community knows about it. And they have to fono, to meet and agree, about it. If they want to dig up

this side of the land everybody in the village meeting will have to have their say about what is going on ... before the government people walk in. They have to do it that way, its the only safe way. Its very safe." ('Aumaga: CS1-03A)

"And if they didn't do it that way?" (Researcher's question to 'Aumaga: CS1-03A)

"Oh you're going to see a lot of sapelus [ie: bush knives, machetes] running around. Ha ha. Even the government people just can't walk in. They know exactly the Samoan way. If I am the bulldozer driver, I'm not going to drive my bulldozer inside just like that. No way, they are going to kill me. If you drive that bulldozer in my village I will kill you. Ha ha." ('Aumaga: CS1-03A)

This boast was not idle. Land and titles are at the centre of many Samoan disputes and the state is wary when it comes to seeking land for development projects. The relationship between the *fa'asamoa* and the state is peaceful when boundaries are clearly established, but it becomes delicate and sometimes volatile when boundaries are blurred. A largely cooperative and consensual relationship has developed between the *fa'asamoa* and the state since the colonial period, but it is still subject today to conflict over land issues that had their origins in the colonial period.

The state can only govern with the support and cooperation of the *fa'asamoa*. state power is seen by the *fa'asamoa* as transitory. "*O le i'a a vai Malo.*" (Governmental power is like a river eel, slimy and slippery, and therefore hard to hold. Schultz, 1985: 28). The *pule* (authority) of the *Malo* (government of state) rests on the foundation of the *pule* of the *fa'asamoa*. When the government has a particular project that needs the cooperation of a village they must work through the *Pulenu'u* (a national grouping of village council heads) or the local Member of Parliament directly to the village *fono*. This provides a route from the state to the key decision makers and land holders,

the chiefs and orators, of the village. The organisation and protocols of the *fa'asamoa* provide a safe process and a recognised structure for mediating the relationship between the state and the village community.

*Se'i totō le niu i le tua'oi* (Plant the coconut tree on the boundary). The clear demarcation of boundaries is a feature of the *fa'asamoa*. Boundaries are clearly marked to define physical landscapes, by planting trees or building rock markers. Social spaces are just as clearly marked. Plantation lands, village locations, *matai* titles, social groupings within the village, relationships between villages, and the line between the *fa'asamoa* and the state are well defined. Disputes arise when boundaries are crossed, moved or challenged.

The structures and protocols of the *fa'asamoa* are seen by the people of Nu'u'aiga as critical for negotiating the boundaries between the village and the state and for mediating the sometimes problematic relationship between the people of the village and the representatives of the state.

## **THE FA'ASAMOA AND THE MARKET**

Traders, searching for supplies of coconut oil, sandalwood, and *bêche de mer*, whalers, reducing their quarry to oil, and blackbirders hunting people, were the first representatives of the global market to arrive on the shores of Samoa. Nu'u'aiga, situated close to the anchorage of Apia, has witnessed first-hand the history and development of the marketplace in Samoa.

Trade in the nineteenth century was essentially extractive with local raw products exchanged for store goods, tools, cloth and imported foodstuffs. Foreign economic penetration was initially resisted by Samoans who were reluctant to give up their land and unwilling to become plantation labourers. Commercial settlers, intent on developing trade and industry in Samoa, wanted a stable centralised government that would support these objectives (Gilson 1971: 188). However, the Samoan polity was not unified with civil war

breaking out from time-to-time and unruly Europeans giving Apia the title "the Hell of the Pacific" (Campbell 1992: 96).

The political, and thus economic, control of the Samoan islands was part of a larger struggle by the great powers of Germany, the United States, Great Britain and France, for influence in the Pacific. German and British interests backed opposing factions in Samoan politics in attempts to gain control over the chaotic situation in Samoa. In 1899, after a long and complex struggle, an Anglo-German agreement was signed in Berlin (without Samoan agreement) giving German administrative control over Western Samoa and the United States power over Eastern Samoa. Britain gained concessions from Germany in Tonga and the Solomon Islands (Gilson 1971: 432).

German trading companies, *Godeffroy und Sohn* and *Deutsche Handels und Plantagen-Gesellschaft der Sudsee Inseln zu Hamburg* (D.H.P.G.), "transformed the economic history of the Pacific Islands" (Campbell, 1992: 97) dominating Pacific trade and set up their headquarters in Apia. Plantations were established to produce coconut products to maintain this trade, using imported Chinese and Melanesian labour, after the German colonial administration was established at the start of the twentieth century bringing order to the Samoan marketplace. New Zealand troops invaded German Samoa in 1914 and maintained a colonial administration until independence in 1962.

From first contact, to late in the twentieth century, the market has had only minor impact on the lives of most Samoans. Ten years after independence, a study of Samoan village economy noted few changes in the subsistence economy:

"All the evidence presented so far points in one direction: Samoans are generally content with the life they lead. They have little interest in the outside world which intrudes on them in the form of the market sector. They likewise have little evident concern for the future, little

interest in productive investment, little willingness to 'develop'."  
(Lockwood, 1971: 206)

The change from subsistence to a mixed economy, part subsistence and part cash economy, has accelerated in the last twenty years and is a key factor in the development of the market sector in Samoa today. These changes have happened in the lifetime of the elders of the village of Nu'uaiga. Ali'itele, the High Chief, describes the changes:

"Probably in Nu'uaiga there is no one fishing at the moment in this whole village. Even though we are living right by the sea there are no fishermen in Nu'uaiga, our fishing place is down at the market. We buy fish, we buy foodstuff from the market like taros. In the last ten to twenty years all of our village [would] go over to the bush at Magiagi. That's where we have our plantations. Planting taros, breadfruits all those staple foods. Even at Apia Park, that is where we used to plant taros but we don't do that any more. We depend much on our work and our jobs in the government to get the money to buy the food and we live like modern Samoans in town." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

Cash in Nu'uaiga comes from three main sources: wages from family members working in government jobs; remittances from extended family who have migrated to Pacific rim nations and private enterprises such as a village store. In line with the collective nature of the *fa'asamoa*, the resources of a family, including the wages of individual family members, remittances and business profits, are pooled and spent on goods and projects that benefit all the *aiga*.

"The cash economy is now being in Nu'uaiga and all the villages surrounding, and even in the country. The cash economy is not only the people here working in the government but also the families overseas sending money to the people around the two islands of

Upolu and Savai'i and that's when you see the thatched-leaf houses disappearing and the iron roofed houses [emerging]. From cash work over here in town and the people over in the other countries." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

"Remittances?" (Researcher)

"Not only that, families like us have a shop to help our own family for feeding. We each donate, my children buying the food, so we can depend on it. Our money will go straight to the shop to help the economy of the family. For Samoan *fa'alavelave* its still the same thing, we still do it the old Samoan way of doing *fa'alavelave* up to now." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

In the *fa'asamoa*, individual wants are subsumed for collective needs. The whole family contributes to the village shop and profits are used to meet family obligations. The shop is a collective rather than private enterprise. Income is also generated abroad. *Aiga* in North America, Australia and New Zealand contribute cash and goods to the Nu'uaiga economy forming "instrumental family networks spanning locales" (Marcus 1981: 50) or more controversially<sup>12</sup> "transnational corporation[s] of kin" (Bertram and Watters 1985, Overton, 1996: 8). Remittances express "an enduring two-way relationship of reciprocity" (Watters, 1987: 37) maintaining social bonds and supplementing the village economy and may be seen as "representing revenues from invisible exports to industrialized countries" (Poirine 1998: 105).

In Nu'uaiga the loss of plantation land to housing has reduced the ability of the village to be self-sufficient. Cash is required to purchase daily food for the *aiga*. This has contributed to the rise of the market and the need for villagers to negotiate a relationship with the representatives of the business community.

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<sup>12</sup> See Munro (1990: 63) and Bertram and Watters (1990: 67).

"The fa'asamoa is changing with the cash economy coming in and you don't have the land any more for plantations?" (Researcher)

"The lands we were using for plantations are now being occupied by people, most of the people coming in and staying on those lands for the last forty or fifty years. There were not so many people then, now the population is growing very rapidly and the lands are nearly all occupied by people and there is not enough land for plantation. Ah. Only when you go out further into the bush or country there are lands for plantations. (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

The *fa'asamoa* has an important role *vis a vis* the market; providing both a structure and process for mediating the relationship between traders and the consumers in particular villages and districts. This can involve traders from outside of the village or from within the extended family network; either way, they must come in through the *fa'asamoa*.

"When the businesses come in, usually the businesses, especially the private businesses and the business people themselves they go into the villages to associate with the fa'asamoa for their own businesses and they do that in the business way. That's another change to from the olden times. If a business person deals with the village he has to cough up money." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"There is another side when the business person belongs to the village, that is another time when the fa'asamoa comes in. Because the village always deals with their own member, when he is in business, it doesn't matter if he is a big business man or a small business man they are always willing to give him a hand. That is another positive thing how the fa'asamoa relates to business people and businesses." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

All plans, business or otherwise, have to be discussed at, and approved by, the *fono*. The *fono* is the key decision maker in business matters, as it is with government matters, whether the proposal is from a villager and outsider or from a transnational corporation. In the words of the 'Aumaga:

"They [business] have to use that same thing as the Government. They have to talk to the high chiefs, to the member of Parliament of that community. For example if you and I wanted to put a very big business in the middle of Nu'uaiga we would have to come up with a good proposal to give to the people of the community, to the high chief. If they agree to our proposal, how much money we are going to pay you for this part of your land and how many years we are going to use it. If they agree with it, the old man will give us a green light to go then that's it. That's the connection of the fa'asamoa with the business, like Yasaki, they have to talk to the people." ('Aumaga: CS1-03A)

The nature of business ventures has changed with development policy and shifts in ideology. Cooperatives were introduced to Samoa in the late colonial period and promoted by the first Prime Minister Fiame Mata'afa during early independence. The development of cooperatives was seen as an alternative to foreign investment and means of introducing people, with a communal tradition, to business affairs (Crocombe 1983: 106) as illustrated in the following:

"Have you seen examples of where a village has set up a business themselves as a way of supporting the village community itself?"  
(Researcher)

"What I saw is that they usually have these sort of societies. They form a society, a village society and then they put in perhaps a store and then they have their memberships and all the members put in how much money they put in and then they form a committee to look

after that store. And then they do all their purchasing from there. At the end of the year they give back some money according to your purchases, but the capital that went into there stays with the society. With all your purchases you get 5 or 10 sene credit. I have seen lots of societies like that in Mo'ota'a that have been going for years." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"Nu'uaiga had one (a cooperative society) here but the United Nations took over the buildings so they divided up their capital, that's what happened. I used to work there too for quite a long time, it was quite a successful business. And it worked in the Samoan way, *fa'asamoa*. They not only have them in shops but in fishing with boats six or seven get together and form a society and go fishing and sell their fish for money. When one needs money to fix their boat or something it comes from their society." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

Cooperatives are examples of the *fa'asamoa* principles of cooperation and working together being used in a business sense that assists the whole community economically. Cooperatives have given way to private sector development in Samoa. This shift has something to do with the uneven success of cooperatives but it is also driven by a shift in aid donor ideology:

"[T]here is a growing acceptance that development of a vigorous private sector is crucial to the achievement of sustainable improvements in living standards ... only the private sector has the ability to be an engine for growth." (NZODA 1996: 19)

A Small Business Centre, funded by New Zealand ODA, is now actively promoting small businesses in Samoa and private sector development is a key strategy of overseas development agencies (NZODA 1998a: 7, Shadrake 1996). The Samoan Government has declared its support for small business development as an alternative to depending on overseas aid to fund economic

development. With official encouragement, small businesses are increasing but not always to the prescribed pattern. Village businesses all seem to develop a *fa'asamoa* dimension, with the need to feed people of the village appearing at times more important than the profit motive. The owner of a village store comments:

"Our business [the village store], it depends on our people from the village whether they want to buy something from our shop ... when they come for anything without money that they pay it late then we give them food for their feeding that night and probably when pay day comes then they will come back and pay ... sort of helping one another that is another part of the shop in the village." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

In Nu'uauiga the profit motive is not central, social concern, relationships, reciprocity and *alofa* are all part of the *fa'asamoa* approach to small business management as Ali'itele recounts:

"We all understand that this village is more or less like a family ... like one family to help one another ... they always come back because this is where they get what they easily want, what they need when they don't have any money." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

Big businesses in town are also important to the village, particularly when large amounts of goods are required for customary exchange at a *fa'alavelave* (funeral, wedding, *sa'ofa'i* etc) and credit needs to be advanced.

"They influence the village too when there is a funeral in our family and we haven't got the cash ready to buy all the pusa eleni and the kegs of beef for that *fa'alavelave* we can go and open an account in say Chan Mow or any big shop in town and we can get all the things. Then after the *fa'alavelave* then we get the money ... you know the *fa'asamoa* ... the cash will come in to us ... envelopes from

our families and friends ... we go back and pay our account for doing the whole thing ... that's how the big shops and business influencing the village affairs." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

"So the businesses provide credit?" (Researcher)

"It depends how you work and how trustworthy your credit is, how your person is." (Ali'itele: CS1-01A)

Developing a relationship with a village may require a businessman to make a financial contribution (*meaalofa*) to the village through the *fono*. Outsiders are at a disadvantage, with villagers preferring to develop a business relationship with partners from the village. This preferential treatment of people from the village in business relationships may result in some nepotism but it does reinforce intra-village accountabilities and provides a check on outsiders whose business ventures may harm the village. Again, the *fa'asamoa* provides the structure and process for negotiating the development of business projects balancing the village interests against the need for a business to make a profit and survive as the following extended (edited) conversation between the researcher and a village elder illustrates:

"When the businesses come in, usually the businesses, especially the private businesses and the business people themselves they go into the villages to associate with the *fa'asamoa* for their own businesses and they do that in the business way. That's another change to from the olden times. If a business person deals with the village he has to cough up money." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"When the business person belongs to the village, that is another time when the *fa'asamoa* comes in. Because the village always deals with their own member, when he is in business, it doesn't matter if he is a big business man or a small business man they are always willing to give him a hand. That is another positive thing how

the fa'asamoa relates to business people and businesses."  
(Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"If an outsider comes to do business with the village they just purchase the services or goods they want by putting the money up front and buying it from the village and that would be likely to be a palagi or someone from right outside of that district?" (Researcher)

"That's right." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"And when someone works with the village it is because they have a relationship with the people of that village and they are part of that village community." (Researcher)

"That's true." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"And in that business relationship it is the village helping one of their own. And who in turn do they help the village as well? And feed resources back to the community." (Researcher)

"Yes they do because they ... If a palagi comes and goes to the village and he meets up with a fono and goes and negotiates with the fono that is another thing too, that can help them out but not in a way that will cut costs." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"That is the idea, that is [a] change from the olden times to these times, that is another, actually what you can see is happening these days, before they didn't have that they went fishing and didn't sell anything at all, they would just give it to the others who didn't have any fish they would share it amongst the village. If they had a very big catch they would share it. Things like palolo that comes once a year, in the olden days they don't sell palolo at all. When our family in Savai'i caught a lot of palolo they would put some one on a bus or some thing to bring some to this part of the family, that's what they

did in the olden days. Nowadays they sell it in the marketplace or give us one or two and the rest goes they want some money to look after themselves economically, they want some money themselves." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"So that's what we have been talking about with the businesses is the economic development. With the fa'asamoa in the old days economic development was like sharing amongst your whole extended family and connections because they would also share at other times when you had extra things or you had a wedding or a funeral there would be sharing that way backwards and forwards." (Researcher)

"That's right." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"So does that strengthen the bonds between the community?" (Researcher)

"That's exactly it." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"Today when people fish the palolo (a prized seafood) and use it for money for the money economy, does that weaken the bonds in the extended family? When they don't give it away, does that break down the strength of the family?" (Researcher)

"No. I don't think so, because if they don't. If they catch a lot of palolo they say: OK we will share this part with the family, and the other part we are going to sell it. That's the modern way." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"Sort of balancing obligations?" (Researcher)

"Balancing yes, the people that live in the town, that don't go fishing a palolo, they understand it, because they know it is not breaking the link because they always bring some for the family. In the old days you couldn't keep the stuff." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

"So that's the balance that people are making between their traditional obligations to each other and their need for economic development and the need for an economic basis for their own families." (Researcher)

"That's it, that's exactly it." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

The elder pointed out the importance of balancing out traditional obligations with the need for economic development of the community. Throughout this exchange it is interesting to note the tension between business values (profit, individual gain) and traditional Samoan values (sharing, *alofa*, reciprocity) and how they are resolved. This tension has been identified as the basic conflict between market-led and people-centred approaches to development. (Laban and Swain 1996: 61)

Business relationships take on a particular *fa'asamoa* shape. The need to ensure that other villagers do not go hungry is put ahead of profit, and local business opportunities go to local people. Traditional obligations are met by those involved in business but balanced by pragmatic considerations. Whilst the current economic ideology has shaped the nature of business ventures, the cultural values of the *fa'asamoa* show through and flavour Samoan business practices. Balances are achieved between sharing and selling; between reciprocity and profit. Financing, management and work in a business are shared responsibilities whether the prevailing market ideology is cooperative or private sector development.

As with the relationship between the *fa'asamoa* and the state, relationships with the market are mediated through the structures and processes of the

*fa'asamoa*, ensuring that business developments balance the interests and obligations of the village with the need for profitability.

## THE FUTURE OF THE *FA'ASAMOA*

Contrary to anthropological evidence, Samoan history contains no tradition of migration from some other place to the Samoan Islands. *Samoa* may literally be translated as the sacred (*sa*) centre (*moa*). Samoans say they come from Samoa. When the European explorers arrived the Samoans called them *papalagi* (sky bursters) because they had literally arrived from outer space. In the two hundred years of contact Samoan society and the *fa'asamoa* has been subject to the impact of: whalers, traders, blackbirders, missionaries, colonial administrators, development experts, transnational corporations and many outside agencies. In spite of these influences Ali'itele, the high chief of Nu'uaiga, says emphatically: "The *fa'asamoa* remains strong." (CS1-01A)

Perhaps one of the greatest strengths of the *fa'asamoa* has been its ability to absorb outside influences without diluting its fundamental nature. Some of the people of Nu'uaiga are anxious about the future of the *fa'asamoa* and predict changes in the future. However, all informants said the heart of the *fa'asamoa* will remain. The village elder's comments are pertinent:

"About the future now. We have talked a bit about the *fa'asamoa* in the past and the *fa'asamoa* today, what about the future? (Researcher's question: CS1-06A)

"I think it will change. But this *fa'asamoa*, amongst people that are growing up, it changes but it doesn't break it. What I mean is that when its is getting all modern, people going to school and getting educated, but I doubt will change it in the future. You still see that thing with the Samoans stick with it, even the part Samoans, the father is *Papalagi* and the mother is Samoan, the link with these

children will stay with generation to generation" (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

The impact of the outside world is a concern for the older women of Nu'uaiga and they see that parents have the primary responsibility, with God's assistance, to ensure that their children are brought up in the *fa'asamoa*:

"Fa'afetai lava mo le fesili. Ia o le vaitau lenei i fanau ia ua tauau lava ina galo atu le fa'asamoa a'o le mea e tatau ona fai, ia malosi lava le fa'asamoa e a'oa'o ai e le tamā ma le tinā, auā a malosi le tamā ma le tinā e a'oa'o lana fanau, a'oa'o i le aganu'u ma le fa'asamoa pei ona sau ai aso la, ia o le fa'amalamalama'aga lenā, ia ma le isi mea, tatalo i le Atua e aumai ai le fesoasoani sili i le fanau mo lenei mea ua oo mai i tupulaga i lenei vaitau, ia ae tatau lava ona tautala malosi le tamā ma le tinā i le fanau, auā o lenei vaitau i le fanau ua tauau ina le usiusita'i i mātua, ua tauāu ina pūlea e o latou loto o lea la ia malosi le tamā ma le tinā e tautala pea iai ma a'oa'o i le aganu'u ma le fa'asamoa, ia o si talatalaga pu'upu'u lea ma le fa'aaloalo lava." (Faletua ma Tausi: CS1-04)

"At this time in Samoa the future of the fa'asamoa within our children, sons and daughters, appears that they are easily influenced from the outside world and can be inclined to lose their aganu'u and fa'asamoa. It is the parents responsibility to be strong in teaching their children from the early age of the aganu'u and the fa'asamoa. They must be well explained the structure of the faasamoa and how important it is in their lives. It is imperative that parents do things together with their children, worship together and ask God to help the children to grow in his guidance and appreciate their heritage. The strength of upholding the aganu'u and the fa'asamoa lies with the parents and their families." (Faletua ma Tausi, translation: CS1-04)

The weight of tradition, particularly contributions to *fa'alavelave*, bears down on some of the younger people but with age, experience and sharing the load it feels lighter. The youth of the village, the *'Aumaga* and the *Aualuma*, both emphasised their commitment to the *fa'asamoa*. The *'Aumaga* commented:

"In the *fa'asamoa* right now it is getting thinner than the way it used to be. It comes thick, you can feel the thickness of it, the heaviness of the *fa'asamoa* when it comes to the *fa'alavelave*. You can feel the *fa'asamoa*, the very heavy, the tough of the *fa'asamoa*. But now it is getting thinner. Every time a *fa'alavelave* comes up you know what to do. You know exactly what's your job to do, it is not as heavy as those days. I think it is the cost of living that was making the *fa'asamoa* very tough in those days. And hardly anyone worked in those days, only one person in each family worked. Now almost everybody works in the family. That's when the *fa'asamoa* getting thinner when it comes to *fa'alavelave*." (*'Aumaga*: CS1-03A)

Gradual changes in the *fa'asamoa* and adaptations to meet new challenges, are predicted by elders who see that their role is to train the next generation through transmitting the values, and teaching the protocols of the *fa'asamoa*.

"I see 'bit' changes not 'big' changes. Why I say that because all my children and my grandchildren they know very well myself. They know very well what I do like them to do, and they always come first and see me for their school in *fa'asamoa*, then I tell them this is how we do it, number one, number two... etc. They never go wrongly because they go by steps." (Tula: CS1-05A).

The orator, Tula, demonstrated this point by giving the researcher a profound bilingual lesson on "the things that you need to know":

"O mea na sa tutupu, things happened in those days, o mea na sa fai, O mea na ou te mana'o lava a'u ina ia e iloa lava fai, a o alala

tagata i le maota, e muamua lava tautala oe, we welcome you, ia Susu maia, as I said Susuga is a very good word for you to use every time, because it refers to everyone. Susuga and Afio mai and Maliu mai they refer to three parts. O mea na ou te manao lava ina ia e iloa. Those are the things that I would like you to know exactly before you leave. Ia e iloa fafo ma fale, you know the in and out of the Samoan custom. A poto le tagata ae na te le iloa le faasologa o lauga e lē poto, e valea, auā e te'i ua eseese mea e tatau ona fai ai le fa'afetai i le Atua, a'o lea ua tautala i le āva, steps offering thanks to God. Ia o mea fa'apena e tatau la ona e iloa lava e oe, you should know all those things. Ia ma le isi mea, ia lelei lava lau pronunciation, ia lelei lava lau tautala, ia pronounce the words correctly, ia fetalai lelei lava, ia saunoa lelei, saunoa sa'o, saunoa tonu. Those are the things that you need to know." (Tula: CS1-05A)

The future shape of the *fa'asamoa* depends on the current generation, as it has for all generations. There may be superficial changes but the heart of the *fa'asamoa* is predicted by the village elders to remain constant.

"It all depends on how the people move. If our people still keep to the *fa'asamoa* then the *fa'asamoa* will last. If the future generations don't want the *fa'asamoa* to come in, they will forget it. But I can see that some of the *fa'asamoa* will be maintained. Like the clothes, fine mats, those sort of things even our legends, history. Some changes, but not as a whole thing is going out. Samoa still maintains its own customs. It's going forward. Many things of the old will be, what you say, motivated to meet the present situation of life. You see the movement of the dancing of the *fa'asamoa* from olden times up to now is a big change. So you can see lots of changes." (Toea'ina: CS1-06A)

The people of Nu'uaiga observe changes in their society, as aspects of the *fa'asamoa* break down in some villages. This causes some disquiet but also

provides an opportunity for reflection and for elders to assert the fundamental obligation to feed and care for the young and the elderly of the village.

"It is changing slowly, very slowly it depends on how the family is moving, like us we still look after the young generations like the olden times. The old ones we still feed them but you can see the changes now in some other families around town they are sending their old people over to the Catholic church where they have the centre where they keep them there and feed by the church. But the *fa'asamoa* we can feed our old ones up till death we don't have any boundaries of when to stop we can only stop when they are gone. It happens in our family that we keep our old ones until they die. But now you can see a change some old people are sent over to those places." Ali'itele (CS1-01A)

Whilst acknowledging changes and adaptations of the *fa'asamoa*, in the same breath, the people of Nu'uaiga will say that it is unchanging. The continuity and flexibility of the *fa'asamoa* give it strength and longevity. The *fa'asamoa* seamlessly links the children of Nu'uaiga today to Tagaloa in the past, providing them with meaning, a place of belonging today and a map to the future.

"Not changing [the *fa'asamoa*]. We never change it, because we are the same people. Same as the past, that's why I mentioned those people, Tui Atua married Sina ... up to the present time, we are their heirs." (Tula: CS1-05A).

## **THE *FA'ASAMOA* AND DEVELOPMENT**

Development in Samoa may be viewed from two different perspectives, top-down or bottom-up. From the top-down, development may be seen as another aspect of the Samoan experience of European imposition by exploration, missionisation, colonisation and development. Development is something that

is led by outsiders - *papalagi*. The agents of development may have changed over time but the process is still the same. It is no longer the colonial powers that are determining how Samoans may live, and whilst the government is involved in development planning, it is now the international financial institutions, United Nations agencies and aid donors that have the final word. Korten and Klauss (1984) suggests this production-centred approach to development was a product of the industrial era.

“Its values, systems and methods were geared to the exploitation and manipulation of natural resources to produce an ever-increasing flow of standardized goods and services and to the creation of a massified consumer society to absorb them.”

(1984: 299)

The German run plantation economy, of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the car-part assembly plants and tourism ventures of today may be seen as part of the same history of top-down, *papalagi* driven development.

From the bottom-up a different view is obtained. The village community takes an alternative view of development. Nu’uaiga has absorbed and utilised a number of the benefits of development: roads, electricity, piped water supplies and medical services; but rejected others: nuclear families, individualism, profit seeking and secularism. The values, priorities and methods of the *fa’asamoa* are people-centred rather than production orientated. It is easy to label village life as pre-industrial but perhaps it gives us a glimpse into the post-industrial era.

Korten suggests the post-industrial era faces different conditions and requires a different approach to development than the industrial era required. He argues for a people-centred approach to development concerned with: “...enhancing human growth and well-being, equity and sustainability” (1985: 299). These central concerns of Korten’s approach to development are

reflected in the *fa'asamoa*, with its concern for people and their belonging ahead of material concerns.

Friere (1970, 1972, 1993), Escobar (1992, 1995), Chambers (1983, 1997) and others argue that development driven from outside is modernisation by another name. The idea that development should come from within is not new. That we should look to the past to determine how we should approach the future was an idea dismissed as regressive by McLuhan in the 1960s.

“The past went that-a-way. When faced with a totally new situation, we tend always to attach ourselves to the objects, to the flavor of the most recent past. We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future.” (McLuhan 1967: 74-75)

Modernisation theory, which has driven much of development in Samoa, has encouraged Samoans to embrace the new and reject the past. As the English historian A. N. Whitehead<sup>13</sup> noted: “The major advances in civilization are processes that all but wreck the societies in which they occur.” Unlike many other nations, the traditional society in Samoa was not completely wrecked by the advance of civilization. The *fa'asamoa* provides an echo of what was, and a sign of what may be.

This study has demonstrated how the *fa'asamoa* makes a significant contribution to development in the village community and beyond. Rather than acting as the dead hand of tradition, it is argued here that the *fa'asamoa* is a living culture, adapting to the modern world, and enabling the Samoan people to create their own meaning about development. The *fa'asamoa* provides the people of Nu'uaiga with a structure and process that enables them to negotiate with the agents of development and make their own judgments about what developments are in their best interests.

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<sup>13</sup> Cited in McLuhan (1967: 7).

## SUMMARY

The *fa'asamoa* provides Samoans with a set of cultural values, a sense of identity, a place of belonging and a framework for creating meaning. The *fa'asamoa* also defines roles and responsibilities for all members of the village community and is a means for the transmission of culture, social control and cohesion. The programme of village activities, the planning of work, the distribution of resources, and the marking and celebration of significant events are all organised through the *fa'asamoa*. Physical and social boundaries are defined and enforced through the *fa'asamoa*. Furthermore, the structures and processes of the *fa'asamoa* provide a means of mediating and negotiating relationships with other agencies including the church, the state and the market. The power of the *fa'asamoa* is such that, over time, these agencies take on the shape and qualities of the *fa'asamoa*.

The *fa'asamoa* gives the Samoan people clarity about who they are and where they stand in the world enabling them to make pragmatic judgments about which aspects of development they can usefully adapt for their own ends and what should be rejected. The *fa'asamoa* has survived for at least two millennia facing, over the last two hundred years, the challenges of explorers, traders, missionaries, colonisers, modernisers, independence and the development project. Globalisation is a new challenge. The *fa'asamoa* has outlived many of these challenges and remains the basic framework of meaning on which Samoan society is founded and lives day to day.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE SOLOMON ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT TRUST

#### INTRODUCTION

Non-government organisations (NGOs) are the public face of civil society in many developing nations, but NGOs are a relatively new phenomena in the Solomon Islands. The first wave of NGOs to arrive in the Solomons were international agencies and church based organisations, such as the Red Cross, CARE and the Save the Children Fund, which were involved in disaster relief work prior to independence. Some of these agencies stayed on after a disaster and established development projects that supported or supplemented government development programmes. These represented the second wave of NGOs. A third wave of NGOs were established post-independence, these organisations were primarily driven and staffed by Solomon Island citizens and may be referred to as indigenous NGOs. This study examines the Solomon Islands Development Trust, a successful, indigenous NGO.

The Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) has pioneered a range of innovative programmes and indigenous approaches to development contributing to the new politics of the South Pacific during the 1980s and 1990s. As vom Busch et al. (1994) note: "The Solomon Islands Development Trust is widely regarded as the most effective national NGO in the Pacific" (1994: 123). It is argued in this chapter that the Solomon Islands Development Trust has made a significant contribution to the emergence and development of civil society in the Solomon Islands and represents a significant alternative to state-led and market-driven approaches to economic and social development in that nation.

To understand the nature and work of the SIDT we first need to look briefly at the context from which this organisation arose. The Solomon Islands is a widespread archipelago of 992 islands covering 80,000 sq/km of sea and

stretching roughly 1,800 km west to east and 900 km from south to north across the Pacific Ocean on a northwest southeast axis from 5°S to 12°S and 155°E to 170°E. The 29,785 sq/km. of land ranges from large forested mountainous islands to tiny coral atolls. Home to 395,200 people (SPC 1999), the Solomon Islands are ethnically and culturally classified as Melanesian (Campbell 1992: 18-23, Crocombe 1983: 14). The people of the Solomons however are very diverse. Some outlying islands have Polynesian communities (Rennell, Bellona and Tikopia), there are Micronesian (Gilbertese) communities on Guadalcanal and also small populations of European and Asian origin. Eighty-seven distinct languages (100 dialects) are spoken in the Solomons and whilst English is the official language, *tok pisin* or Neo-Melanesian is more widely used.

The Solomon Islands may have been inhabited for over 20,000 years and settlements have been dated to 1,300 BC from remains in Fotoruma Cave on Guadalcanal. Expatriate anthropologists, linguists and historians have studied the people, customs, languages and history of the Solomons, however their writing has been largely confined to academic publications. Indigenous scholars are now examining their society from within (see for example Gegeo 1998).

After the initial Spanish discovery, and failed attempts to find the fabled King Solomons mines in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Solomon Islands had little mention in global history until they were the site of major land, sea and air battles marking a turning point of the Second World War in the Pacific.<sup>1</sup> Since independence in 1978, there has been a growing interest in the recent history of the Solomon Islands which is now written by indigenous Solomon Islanders and widely published.<sup>2</sup>

The communal social organisation of the Solomon Islands is referred to as the *wantok* system. Extended family groupings or clans that share the same language, customs and geographical location are commonly referred to as

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<sup>1</sup> Solomon Islanders refer to WWII as *Bikfala Faet*. The Big Death (1988) is an oral history of this conflict compiled and published by the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education.

<sup>2</sup> See, for examples: Laracy (1989) and Crocombe and Tuza (1992).

*wantoks* (one talk, one language). *Wantoks* have reciprocal obligations to each other including the responsibility to feed, shelter and financially support their *wantoks* when they visit. Urban dwellers, who have migrated to Honiara the capital for employment and joined the cash economy, find it particularly burdensome when large numbers of *wantoks* arrive and they are obliged to provide for them. A tension exists between individual wants and communal obligations as the economy makes the transition from subsistence gardening and fishing to a cash economy.

## THE SOLOMON ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT TRUST

The Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) set up its first office on 5 May 1982, four years after the Solomon Islands gained its independence from Great Britain. The roots of the SIDT go back to before independence, when a number of indigenous Solomon Islanders and expatriates were thinking about, and planning for, the type of society that they wanted after the end of colonial rule.

One expatriate, John Roughan, who would become a central figure in the development of the SIDT, arrived in the Solomons from the United States twenty years before independence to work in the community.

"The roots of the SIDT basically is the roots of my own involvement with the villagers. Started in the late fifties. I came to the Solomons in 1958."  
(John Roughan, CS2-04)

John Roughan said that he arrived with: "the typical normal baggage of someone coming from the First World ... I came and saw poor people" (CS2-04). However this view changed over time. "It took me many years to realise that these people were money poor but quite rich" (CS2-04). He worked for a number of years in various provinces of the Solomons became a citizen and married a woman from Malaita. His work with communities involved a range of projects to develop crops of coconuts and cocoa to generate income. But he discovered that money making brought its problems:

"One of the things that became clear in the later part of the sixties, that the introduction of more money seemed to create more problems. It assisted in responding to some issues but created other problems." (CS2-04)

After some years of work at the village level in the Solomons, John Roughan took time out to study, reflect and write about his experiences. The results of this study<sup>3</sup> was to become the theoretical and practical basis for the development of the SIDT. The writing of Paulo Friere (1970, 1972) and the Liberation Theology of Gustavo Guitérrez (1973) and Clodovis Boff (1993) were early influences.

"Liberation theology especially, that was important. Friere, the idea of alternative thinking about development, more experientially rather than theoretically, brought the realisation that the dominant model was failing in the Solomons." (CS2-06)

A key component of development, identified by John Roughan in his early research, conducted in Are'are, Malaita, and later practice in the Solomons, was the concept and process of participation.

"One of the major building blocks is participation, it became clear that participation is vital to development. People have to own the process. Another vital area is that it is a process. The journey is as important as getting to the end of the journey and in this one you never get to the end of the journey." (CS2-04)

The belief in participation, coupled with the idea that development included more than economic activities, was developed by John Roughan in the sixties and remains a central theme of the work of the SIDT.

On completing his doctorate, John Roughan returned to the Solomon Islands in 1980 and started the groundwork to establish a local non-government

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<sup>3</sup> John Roughan's (1976) doctoral dissertation at the University of Hawaii was titled: *Organising the Village for Development*.

development agency. This was a new type of organisation for the Solomons, part of a third wave<sup>4</sup> of NGOs. During this time there was considerable discussion in the Solomon Islands on how to exploit the natural resources to develop the nation and achieve self reliance (Oxenham 1981). Roughan was already arguing for community empowerment as an important process for development (1981: 93).

The Foundation of the People of the South Pacific (FSP), an American based NGO, provided John Roughan with a corner of the FSP office in Honiara to work from and he set about developing a process of consultation, community participation and planning for the creation of a local NGO. The development of the fledgling organisation was directed by a board of trustees comprised of Solomon Islanders drawn from local institutions (Roughan 1997: 158).

The result of this initial work was a founding document: *Statement of Resolve* (SIDT 1982). This document was drafted late in 1982 and became the blueprint for the work of the SIDT for the next decade.

“The Trust did not see itself as an agent of change simply by pushing self-help, grassroots, community projects. It made little sense to the Solomon Islands Development Trust to fund poultry projects, for instance, when villagers’ very life sources – forests, streams, rivers, and reefs – were being destroyed by commercial logging and destructive fishing practices.” (Roughan, 1997: 158)

From the beginning development was understood "as primarily a political, social and educational process, and only secondarily as an economic issue" (SIDT 1982). The stated aim of the SIDT was "strengthening the quality of village life" in the Solomon Islands (SIDT 1982). The SIDT approach to development started with a focus on the village, utilised the process of participation and acknowledged the political nature of development.

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<sup>4</sup> See below for further discussion on the first and second waves of NGOs in the Solomon Islands.

Returning to the village for direction, accountability and inspiration was to remain a central tenet in the SIDT's people-centred approach to development. In John Roughan's words: "It was the villagers that brought me up sharply with everyday actions" (CS2-04).

The SIDT's first programmes were of a practical nature. Information on various development topics were shared through village based workshops with villagers led by trained Mobile Team Members (MTM). The Director<sup>5</sup>, Abraham Baeanisia, and the first four fieldworkers were recruited in 1983 and started work in four provinces: Western, Malaita, Guadalcanal and Temotu. Ten years later 250 fieldworkers were working in all 13 provinces.

The MTM's were of the village communities, they worked in, and spoke the local languages. A MTM could work a maximum of twelve days a month and they were paid SI\$3 per day for "sharing their development training and understanding with the village through participation" (SIDT 1997a: 6). The limit of 12 days of paid work a month was imposed because it was believed that the MTM worker's villageness was maintained by limiting their paid work. The SIDT view was that more than 12 days of paid work a month would distance the MTM from the village community and they would be seen by other villagers as an outsider in the cash economy rather than a villager living a subsistence lifestyle.

The programmes which the SIDT have implemented, to strengthen the quality of village life, have evolved to their present form over sixteen years of work and regular review. From the start, programmes were grounded in the village and took their lead from village needs. Early outreach programmes organised campaigns for: rural water supply and sanitation (1984-86); disaster awareness and preparation (1986-88); population education and resource management understanding (1989-91); and malaria prevention (1992-95). Participatory learning tools such as the Village Quality of Life Index were developed and refined through village workshops (Roughan 1997: 159).

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<sup>5</sup> The SIDT is staffed by indigenous Solomon Islanders, John Roughan has worked as an adviser, other expatriates have provided technical skills until locals could be trained.

The village workshops undertaken by MTMs covered topics such as gardening<sup>6</sup>, nutrition, water supply, sanitation, health, literacy, malaria prevention, housing and many other topics designed to improve the quality of village life. Supporting and supplementing the MTMs were the SIDTs training programmes, drama groups, magazines and comics in *tok pisin* and local languages, and radio programmes.

The SIDT developed an extensive programme of village based workshops throughout the Solomon Islands. Over a decade, some 4,900 village level workshops were held with around 250,000<sup>7</sup> village people participating in these programmes.

"I found in the Solomon Islands, to get that journey going, there had to be much more sharing of information. It is vital that people have to know. The first 12 years of SIDT, from 1982 to 1994, this is what we did. We actually went out and spoke to people with our mobile teams, 50 of these MTs all over the nation gave 4900 workshops village level over a ten year period. Which is significant, not something small. We shared with people the understanding of what development is, what it does, the quality of life issues, population issues, enhancement of the quality of life, leadership, commitment. It became clear that the people did like the idea of being informed, being brought into the loop." (CS2-04)

This was an impressive achievement of communication in a nation of around 350,000 people, scattered over 992 islands, speaking 87 languages (100 dialects), with transport limited in many areas to canoe and bush tracks, no television and one radio station.

The SIDT had developed an efficient organisation and an effective process for information sharing in a geographically difficult, linguistically diverse and culturally complex terrain. However, the SIDT was not satisfied that information

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<sup>6</sup> The SIDT developed the concept of a *supsup gaden* to encourage Solomon Islanders to cultivate a household garden to provide good nutrition for their families (see Swain 1992).

<sup>7</sup> Over 70% of the population, at the time, attended a SIDT run village workshop.

sharing was achieving the objective of strengthening the quality of village life. To check this suspicion out, a major survey, was conducted by the MTMs, with support from others from within SIDT and some outsiders.

"In 1994 we did a survey throughout the nation. 86% of those interviewed went to one of our workshops, pretty high. Did they like it? They thought the workshops were wonderful. Did they learn anything? Yes. They learnt an awful lot. Did they put any of this into practice in the village? The silence was a bit deafening." (CS2-04)

The survey confirmed the suspicion in the SIDT that the information sharing approach to development was effective in communicating important health and social messages but it raised doubts whether measurable change was taking place. This led to a review and reappraisal of the whole approach the SIDT was taking to development.

"We couldn't measure it. We are sure something did go on. I am positive of that. But we had no instrument that could measure it. Can we continue simply giving workshops telling people what they should be doing, not knowing whether they do it or not for the betterment of their lives? So we went back to the drawing board. In 1995 we brought all our people in and had a weeks workshop for ourselves." (CS2-04)

The review confirmed some important aspects of the SIDT approach, such as the need to work at a village level and the importance of information sharing, but it exposed some weaknesses, including the need to be able to measure change.

In John Roughan's words, the review concluded: "Information sharing was necessary, and I am more convinced it is, but it is insufficient. Absolutely necessary. Totally insufficient." This confirmed his suspicion that: "Our job is not to give workshops, our job is to strengthen the quality of village life" (CS2-

04). To some extent the SIDT had been caught in an activity trap and the organisation had lost sight of its primary goal.

The review led to a recommitment to the primary goal of the SIDT, a reorganisation of the structure, and a change of emphasis and sharpening of the approach to meeting that goal. Sharing information remained important, but measuring development outcomes became a priority. These changes were signaled by a name change.

"Rather than touring villages, sharing information and conducting workshops, our village personnel would attempt to transform their own villages more through work and demonstration and with much less emphasis on talking. Henceforth, SIDT's village level workers would be named VDW, village demonstration workers. *Nem MTM nomoa nao distaem mifala karem niu nem VDW.*"<sup>8</sup> (SIDT 1997a: 27)

The stated aim of the Solomon Islands Development Trust remains "Strengthening the quality of village life" in the Solomon Islands (SIDT 1996a: 2). This aim is now achieved through the efforts of some 250 grassroots workers based in the rural villages of the Solomon Islands. These Village Demonstration Workers<sup>9</sup> are of the village and are required to demonstrate their ability to provide leadership of change in their village community through their family meeting the following requirements: using an improved raised kitchen and an improved toilet, sleeping under treated mosquito nets and cultivating a *supsup* garden. These four criteria were the bottom line for workers and demonstrate to other villagers that SIDT workers not only talk but act on their own advice. This philosophy is summed up by the *tok pisin* saying: "*man talem, duim*".<sup>10</sup>

"So from 1996, no more going around preaching, telling, getting on the soap-box and orating. You, that means everybody in the

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<sup>8</sup> Translates as : "Name MTM is no more, now the new name is VDW."

<sup>9</sup> The term Mobile Team Member was replaced by Village Demonstration Worker to underscore their place and role in the village community.

<sup>10</sup> Literally: "Do what you say", or "Walk the Talk".

organisation from the Director all the way down to the sweeper, you must put into practice in his or her lives four non-negotiable areas. They are measurable indicators. You can go into a village and see it. Is it there or not? Yes." (CS2-04)

As people meet the four initial criteria, the plan is to gradually introduce further criteria to address further development issues.

The structure of SIDT is decentralised with thirteen centres. Based in the Honiara headquarters at *Minim Nao Haus*<sup>11</sup> is the Director, a training team, publications staff, theatre groups, conservation and eco-forestry teams, plus administration and support services. Thirteen Provincial Coordinators and Deputy Coordinators organise some 250 Village Demonstration Workers operating from 13 Provincial centres in the nine provinces of the Solomon Islands: Guadalcanal Province (Honiara Centre, Tina Centre North, Piapia Centre South.); Malaita Province (Harumou Centre, Anokelo Centre); Western Province (Western Centre 1, Western Centre 2); Central Province (Manago Centre); Temotu Province (Lata Centre); Isabel Province (Havihua Centre); Choiseul Province (Nuatabu Centre); Makira Province (Arohane Centre) and Rennel/Bellona Province (Renbel Centre). The current (1998) organisation of the SIDT outreach programmes is illustrated in Appendix 2.

Village Demonstration Workers (VDW) are supported, in their efforts to strengthen the quality of village life, by a series of specialist teams, based at the Honiara headquarters of SIDT. The roles of these specialist teams are outlined below.

### **SIDT Media Department**

The Media Department produces a range of publications for specific audiences.

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<sup>11</sup> *Minim Nao Haus* translates literally from the *tokpisin* as house of understanding.

- *Link*

*Link* magazine, the lead publication of the SIDT, aims to "inform villagers about what is happening around them and getting the villagers views voiced" (SIDT 1997a: 9). The magazine was started in 1987 with the first issue published on the 5th of May that year. The first edition of *Link* was produced by editor, Romano Nongebatu, assisted by VSO volunteer Sara MacDougall and Scottish artist Kenny MacArthur. Forty-seven editions of the bi-monthly magazine later, all aspects of publication, and a number of other publications, are in the hands of indigenous Solomon Islanders.

Literacy levels are low (estimated 20%) in the Solomons and *Link* magazine has a high proportion of illustrations, photographs and cartoons, drawn by local graphic artists. Many items are written in *tok pisin* and designed to communicate to the local populace. An average print run is 3,000 copies. VDW's are given free copies of *Link* to share with villagers, and all schools are also given free copies. *Link* is on sale throughout Honiara and there is a growing list of overseas subscribers.

The magazine, like other SIDT publications, is intergrated into SIDT's programmes. Each edition focuses on a current issue. For example, during a period of active opposition to overseas logging contractors in 1995, four editions were published on the topic<sup>12</sup> raising public awareness and providing an alternative perspective to government and business controlled newspapers.

Recent issues of *Link* magazine have dealt with the impact of currency devaluation and the Asian economic crisis on the Solomon Islands economy. Price surveys that track the rise in price of rice and other basic foods in urban and provincial stores give local people an appreciation of the day-to-day impact on consumers of national economic policy. The magazine informs and educates readers in rural and urban communities.

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<sup>12</sup> *Link* 35, Alternative to Commercial Logging; *Link* 36, Pavuvu Island; *Link* 37, Return Visit to Pavuvu; *Link* 38, Logging: Is it helping or is it hurting?

Roland Batarii, a *Link* magazine journalist, provided a succinct summary of *Link's* function:

“*Link* acts as a mediator between the village people and the government and the politicians or whoever. Because the politicians’ views are expressed in this magazine, and when we give that to the village people, the village people read it and understand what the views of politicians are. And then we take the views from the village people and we publish them and when the politicians take a look at that, then they understand what the views of the village people are. Sometimes it is very hard for the village people to come and talk direct to the politicians or the Prime Minister it is very hard. *Link* provides the voice of the villagers to the politicians.” (CS2-02)

*Link* magazine often expresses an alternative viewpoint to that of the government. Whilst this has angered some politicians, the freedom to publish has not been constrained as has been the case in Samoa, Tonga and Fiji (Sword and vom Busch 1994). Roland Batarii notes:

“We can write anything about the government or churches or whatever, it doesn’t matter. We have the freedom of expression in this country.” (CS-02)

*Link* magazine provides a public forum for the voice of the villagers to be heard, information on important social, health and economic issues for villagers, and a setting for a development discourse in the Solomons.

- *Komiks*

*Komiks* have been developed to provide important information for non-readers and the semi-literate. Few people in the Solomons can read with confidence and *Komiks* provide an alternative means of communicating important health and social messages to the majority of the population. *Komik* titles have included: *Stori Abaut Pipol an Lan*; *Hao Fo Luk Aftarem Sup Sup Gaden*

*Blong lu; Viatmin A; CDF Nasinol Elekson Awearness Komik; Luk An Save Gud Bifo lu Vote; Thinkim Fiusa Blong lu, and Raoa Long Haus* (Domestic Violence).

The topics covered in *Komiks* are part of an integrated programme in which the VDW's, the *SIE!* theatre group and other SIDT teams work together. For example, *Stori About Wanfala Vilij*, which warns of the dangers of logging, is the most popular of the *Komiks* produced by SIDT and has been reprinted a number of times. *Stori* illustrates in cartoons and *pisin*, an important social issue that is also the subject of a drama performed by the *SE!* theatre group. Following a performance of the drama in a village, the SIDT workers will discuss the dramatic action with the villagers and use the *komik* to further illustrate the story. Literate villagers will be encouraged to read the *komik* out loud, for the benefit of their non-literate family and community.

Literacy workers and VDWs also use the *komiks* to help teach reading and writing in the village. Because indigenous resource materials are rare in Solomon Islands schools, *komiks* are an important educational resource and their free distribution to all Solomon Island schools is an important vehicle to carry valuable social, health and environmental messages.

- *Mere Save*

*Mere Save* (Women's News) is published twice yearly by SIDT Media Department. This publication is written in *pisin* by Solomon Island women for Solomon Island women and focuses on changing lifestyles both in town and in the village. Social, health and other issues that are women's business are addressed in *Mere Save*. The women's theatre group, *Mere Akson*, uses *Mere Save* as a resource for discussing women's issues with women following drama performances in the village.

- Other Publications.

SIDTs Media Department produces an *Annual Report* and a calendar each year plus occasional publications. The *Annual Report*, or *Summary Report*, is an accountability statement which reviews the previous years work at SIDT and includes a financial report and expenditure analysis, an update on programmes and activities, and statistical reports on indicators of improvements in the quality of village life. The 1996 Annual Report, for example, graphed the annual incidence of malaria over the last decade demonstrating the steady reduction of the rate over the five years from 1992. Also recorded was the summary of the achievements of the VDW's in meeting their four key criteria: improved kitchens and toilets, Supsup gardens and families sleeping under treated mosquito nets.

The *SIDT Calendar* contains a range of useful information for villagers and town dwellers. The 1998 calendar included information on paper making, the life cycle of a butterfly, eco-timber production, the ngali nut project, eco-tourism, SIDT's outreach programme and the VDW's criteria along with maps and other information about the Solomon Islands.

### **Theatre Teams**

Following the establishment of *Link* magazine in 1987, SIDT looked for new ways of communicating information to the largely non-literate village populace. In 1988 the *SEI!* Theatre Group was started, ten years later SIDT has two permanent theatre groups: *Mere Akson*, a woman's team, and *SEI!* Theatre Group, plus a range of temporary theatre groups established for specific projects. Theatre has proven to be an effective and powerful means of communication that develops understanding and promotes participation in development.<sup>13</sup> As Walter Ben Taurasi, a long-time *SEI!* member notes:

“Drama play is one of the powerful thing[s] of passing information down to the community level in the Solomon Islands.” (CS2-03)

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<sup>13</sup> See Mavaracodatos (1995, 1997) for a discussion of Theatre for Development.

*SEI!* was formed in 1988 by eight young people who were trained to act out in a dynamic form “serious development, social, cultural and environmental problems village people were facing” (SIDT 1997a: 12). The performances are more than entertainment for villagers, they are part of an integrated approach to particular development problems. Drama is a means to encourage participation.

“Drama is powerful, because when we went down to the village and put on a programme we have lots of people gathering around that evening to see the performance and after the performance we shared our information and asking questions and talking about what they get out of the drama play.” (CS2-03)

Performances would be followed by community discussions on the drama and the issues the dramatic performance raised. The drama would raise the key points of an issue which would be processed in detail in a discussion following the performance.

“The play takes about twenty minutes, sometimes the discussion would go on for two or three hours.” (CS2-03)

The SIDT theatre groups have developed dramas on a wide range of topics including: the environment (logging, conservation, resource management); health (malaria prevention, nutrition, sup sup gardens); family (family violence, family planning and population awareness, youth suicide); political issues (voter education) and consumer education.

*Mere Akson* was started by twelve women in October 1994 during National Women’s Week. The aim of the group is: “to work together with women in other NGO’s and women’s organisations to find solutions to support and strengthen women’s role in family, community and country” (SIDT 1997a: 25). More specifically:

“It works to empower and preserve culture, it reinforces and strengthens our cultural life in order to pass on this knowledge of cultural identity to the next generation, to address issues such as domestic violence, women’s rights, malaria and AIDS education and literacy education for women.” (SIDT 1997a: 25)

Some issues, such as family planning and women’s health, require sensitive treatment. In a culture where men’s business and women’s business are treated separately, and where gender related *tambu* exist, there is a need for a means of communicating from time-to-time with women only audiences. This led to the development of *Mere Akson* the women’s theatre group. *SEI!* and *Mere Akson* work together on many projects but have the capability to undertake separate work as the situation requires.

Lovelyn Eddie, a lead actress in *Mere Akson*, noted that their dramas have empowered women to have a greater voice in the development discourse.

“Mere Akson’s Decision Making drama is one that talks about how only men make decisions by themselves without women. Whenever a company comes to the country to do logging, fishing activities, the men are always there to say yes without listening to women and children. This is true in most of the places we performed.” (cited in SIDT 1997a: 25)

Drama productions have evolved to meet changing needs. In 1995, when opposition to the overseas logging operations on Pavuvu Island was at its peak, the drama group created dramas to raise public awareness about the devastation brought by clear felling the rainforest, the call was: “Stop the Logging”. In 1998 the logging dramas continue but the theme has changed to: “Turning Wealth to Cash” as eco-forestry is now promoted. Walter Ben Turasi comments on this recent work:

“The *SEI!* theatre and *Acton Mere* are talking about loggings and the bad effects and the good process of logging. We have been

touring Isabel Province trying to aware the people about logging. Rather than people getting big multi-million dollar loggers to cut down their forest and sell it and have the less money. We are working with Isabel Sustainable Forest Management because this project is helping people harvest their trees and sell it and then the whole money is given to the land owners. With EFU we are doing drama plays to help what Greenpeace and SIDT are doing.” (CS2-03)

Prior to the 1997 General Election in the Solomon Islands the SIDT theatre teams developed a special drama: *The Power of the Chair*. This drama was part of a major political education project mounted by SIDT which also included surveys, three issues of *Link* magazine, two *komiks*, community based workshops and radio programmes (Roughan 1998: 16). The play dramatised the power the villager had to give or withhold the parliamentarian's seat through their vote. Gaining political office in the Solomons has frequently involved the incumbent or prospective politician in treating, bribery and promising voters benefits when political office was achieved. Complicating the situation the *wantok* system, in which people have reciprocal obligations to their kin, encourages loyalty that has often been abused by politicians. *The Power of the Chair* dramatically illustrated those tensions and, for the first time in the Solomons, brought the role of villager as citizen into the public domain. Roughan noted the discussions that followed each performance of *The Power of the Chair* were the first political education “village people had ever witnessed in the whole 17 years of national independence” (1998: 16).

### **Conservation in Development**

The Conservation in Development programme was started in October 1992 as a partnership between the SIDT and two international NGOs: the Maruia Society, of New Zealand, and Conservation International, from the United States of America. The programme was funded from a variety of overseas governments, foundations and conservation organisations. The Solomon Islands Government, through the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment

Division, also supported its establishment. Staffing was provided through New Zealand's Volunteer Services Abroad.

The aim of the Conservation in Development programme is "to implement Integrated Conservation and Development ... on customary land ... in order to demonstrate a sustainable harvesting of natural resources at the communities in the rural area and maintain the conservation concept on a long term bases" (SIDT 1997a: 21).

Makira Province, a largely untouched area, was selected for the initial project. The MTMs, with support from the theatre groups, conducted a series of workshops with all the village communities to explain the project and gain support for the concept. The communities agreed to develop a series of income generating enterprises as an alternative to logging. The enterprises developed included: ngali nut oil production, ecotourism, papermaking and printing, honey production and butterfly ranching. These activities are now generating income for the village communities and have enabled the villagers to withstand the benefits promised by multinational logging companies.

In 1996 the SIDT Annual Report announced:

"The Conservation and Development is now in its third year of teaching villagers how to change local natural wealth to much needed income. But to do it in a way that does not destroy the very existence of the local resource through exploitation. The department has a dual focus: conservation of the environment and at the same time income generation from the environment. It unites in one department all SIDT's non-timber forest productions." (SIDT 1996a: 2)

## Projects established by Conservation in Development:

- Ngali Nut Oil Production.

The nuts from the Ngali tree are gathered from the bush, cracked and processed in a hand operated mill (SIDT 1996b: 4). Much of this work is done by women. The people of Central Makira produced and sold overseas 1,000 litres of Ngali nut oil in 1996 which returned SI\$32,000. The 1996 Annual Report noted: "Much of this income went to women." One of the benefits of the project is that it has demonstrated that villagers do not have to shift to Honiara to make money. The women of the Bauro coastal area of Makira said: "Now we are getting money from our resources ...The money we get from the ngali nut benefits all of us. We buy clothes, cooking utensils, pay our kids school fees, and our living has started to improve over the past. Each one of the villagers benefited individually. \$10 is a big thing for a village woman" (SIDT 1996b: 7).<sup>14</sup>

- Paper Making.

Three villages: Balai in West Kwaio on Malaita; Nazareth and Bareho in the Western Province, have developed paper making to generate an income in a project assisted and sponsored by the New Zealand Government through its Official Development Assistance programme (SIDT 1996b: 10-11). In 1996 the three villages made a combined profit of more than SI\$35,000. The paper is produced from waste leaves which are gathered, sorted and cooked over an open fire in a natural wood lye made from cooking ash. After washing, the paper is formed on screens and dried in the sun. No two sheets of the high quality paper are they same. The Solomon Islanders have a strong carving tradition and wood-blocks, carved with local images and custom designs, are used to print the locally produced paper. The final product is marketed in the Solomons by the SIDT and overseas by Pacific Paperworks of Wellington, New Zealand (SIDT 1997b).

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<sup>14</sup> In 1993 the Gross Domestic Product per capita in the Solomon Islands was A\$947 (SPC 1995).

- Ecotourism.

The Solomon Islands are not a mass tourist destination. This is a major attraction for the more adventurous tourist. In 1997 only 12,000 tourists visited the islands (SITB 1998). The SIDT has entered into the ecotourism market organising small groups to visit remote areas to see the natural beauty, plentiful wildlife and cultural diversity of the Solomons. Ecotourism is a new venture for the Solomon Islands Development Trust but with VDWs located in villages throughout the nation. The SIDT is in a good position to develop this market in a way that is sensitive to environmental and cultural considerations. Several groups from Australia and New Zealand have toured Makira Province to visit upland jungle and the Marovo group in Western Province to view coastal areas staying overnight in village communities (SIDT 1995b: 3 and 16). Villagers who gain some income from providing accommodation, meals, and guiding and selling handicrafts host these small groups (SIDT 1996b: 12).

- Honey Production.

Honey production has been established in a number of villages, in central Makira on the weather coast, where ngali nut oil production or ecotourism is not feasible (SIDT 1995a: 4). The bush honey of the Solomon Islands is disease free, of very high quality and is finding a ready local market. The marketing and export of honey is in the early stages of development and there are hopes of a lucrative niche market for Solomon Islands honey.

- Butterfly Ranching.

The newest venture under development by the SIDT is butterfly ranching. The term describes the activity in which villagers identify the natural habitat of the many unique and colourful butterfly species of the Solomon Islands and enhance those habitats to increase the numbers of butterflies. To generate income for villagers, some butterflies are collected and mounted for sale and ecotourism groups are routed through the ranches. This

venture is developed under the oversight of the Conservation in Development Unit which is ensuring the activity is developed sustainably and does not have a negative effect on butterfly species or their environment.

### **Eco-Forestry Unit**

The SIDT has campaigned for years against foreign logging companies that were exploiting the rich timber resource of the Solomons, damaging the environment and taking most of the proceeds off shore and leaving the landowners and the environment poorer (SPREP 1992: 78). This logging was part of the Government's large-scale, capital-intensive development policy (Frazer 1997). Because forestry is a major economic resource in the Solomons, the need for developing sustainable forestry options was critical as unsustainable options are difficult to resist (Bennett 1995). Several sustainable forestry options have been explored by government and non-government organisations (Cassells and Scheyvens 1999). The Eco-forestry Unit (EFU) is a practical alternative that is designed to create wealth from natural resources and preserve the environment through empowering the local community to participate in sustainable forest management.

The programme, which started in April 1995, is a joint venture between the SIDT, Greenpeace, Komuniboli Training Centre and the Imported Tropical Timber Group (ITTG) of New Zealand. The programme involves fifteen communities on five islands with several now reaching production stage. The first trial shipments of eco-timber from this programme left the Solomon Islands for New Zealand in September 1996. The programme has strict criteria for landowners to become involved and the standards used for forest management are based on the ITTG and the Forest Stewardship Council's criteria for forest management (SIDT 1997a: 29). Key aspects include:

- There must be clear, undisputed rights and ownership of the forest lands.
- Full clan support for eco-forestry.

- A community organisation that involves men and women, which can make decisions, resolve disputes, and equitably share the benefits.
- A land-use plan that clearly identifies reserves and *tambu* areas, gardens, buffer zones and the eco-forestry production area.
- Minimal environmental impact (generally no roads or soil disturbance).
- Monitoring.

The programme starts by developing awareness in the village community through SIDT staff working with the local people. Training programmes are undertaken to learn and develop the practical skills required to harvest logs and maintain equipment. The eco-forestry management courses are of six weeks duration. In 1996 two courses were run for 24 trainees, including four women, representing eight communities. Course subjects included: natural forest management; safety techniques; regeneration techniques; timber grading; basic book keeping; quality timber milling operations; first-aid procedures, administering social survey instruments, and chainsaw maintenance (SIDT *Annual Report* 1996).

Technical assistance is necessary but not sufficient in itself. Particular attention is paid to marketing and coordination of each project to make it financially viable and environmentally sustainable. The eco-timber programme is now recognised in the region as a viable alternative to large scale logging (Vuetilovoni 1998).

Village communities are involved in every aspect of the development of each eco-forestry project, this is time-consuming in the short-term but ensures that all villagers are involved and participate, leading to better outcomes for all. There have been many lessons and successes identified (SIDT 1997a: 29) over the last four years including:

- A team with several partners working together provides the basis for a strong programme.

- Having partners with different expertise such as training, marketing and coordination is a successful approach.
- Shifting the focus from “buying a portable sawmill and start cutting” to “training, management and marketing” has been an important learning.
- It has taken three years so far but it has been important to go slow.
- The biggest barrier for eco-forestry projects setting up on customary land is land disputes.
- The process that participating communities go through to come to the decision to say no to commercial logging and to start eco-forestry projects and to carry out land use planning on their land is critical.
- One of the challenges is to involve women more in the projects, particularly in forest management and book-keeping.

The eco-forestry programme is one of a range of village based income generating projects, developed by SIDT. Non-timber products include ngali nut oil processing, fibre paper making, eco-tourism, honey production and most recently butterfly ranching. Each of these projects are founded on SIDT's goal of strengthening the quality of life of the village community. Walter Ben Turasi summarised the purpose of the eco-forestry programme:

“We want to show people about conservating (sic) or doing some kind of planning with the environment. By doing the eco-forest system you are making a big plan for the future. So your children, when they grow up, may harvest the same resources you harvest and they are living on the resources that have been planned and managed properly. The ecoforest unit is the alternative.” (CS2-03)

### **Women's Initiative Programme**

The Women's Initiative Programme (WIP) was established in 1986 to “educate women on development issues and strengthen their capacity to participate more effectively in decision making in their communities” (Lateef, 1990: 43).

The women MTMs, and later VDWs, “are the backbone of WIP for women’s development in Solomon Islands” (SIDT 1992: 10).

In 1991 it was reported (SIDT 1991: 4) that Women’s Outreach Programmes in seven provinces ran workshops in 92 villages with 8,080 women participating. These village workshops were on nutrition, health, sanitation, sewing, Supsup gardens and improving kitchens. That year the WIP workers also ran a series of leadership training programmes for women in four provinces covering 29 villages with 1,422 women participating. In 1992 Australian organisations (AIDAB’s Special Women’s Fund, Freedom from Hunger Campaign and Community Aid Abroad) funded a series of women’s workshops on nutrition, leadership, home management, population and resource management “it’s basic thrust is to keep village women informed about their fast-changing lives” (SIDT 1992: 10).

In 1992, as part of the WIP strategy of “Empowering village women through information sharing” (SIDT 1992: 11). SIDT launched *Mere Save* (Women Know) the *pisin* publication aiming “to make women aware about what is happening in and around their community and abroad which is of great concern to them” (SIDT 1992: 11). The establishment of the women’s theatre group *Mere Akson* in 1994 added another dimension to programmes available to women.

Scheyvens (1995) examined the WIP in 1992 and expressed disappointment as it “appears to have fallen into the trap of many programmes for women in that it focuses on teaching women domestic skills”. She proceeded to suggest that this is “a characteristic of the welfare approach to, GAD” (1995: 250). These may have been valid criticisms in 1992, from a feminist perspective. However, outsiders need to be cautious about making conclusions about gender roles and mindful of the particular context of gender-culture relations in the Solomons.

Scheyvens (1995: 250) admits that many of the initiatives introduced by SIDT have resulted in changes for women in a culture where men make most of the

decisions. Whilst the pace of change may not have been fast enough for all, SIDT's recent focus on the feminisation of development is an indication of the direction of change to which the WIP has made significant contributions.

### **The Training Team**

The Honiara based Training Team has the responsibility of ensuring Village Demonstration Workers have the skills, knowledge and appropriate values to make a significant contribution to their village communities. The Training Team is comprised of five men and two women who are amongst the most experienced fieldworkers in the SIDT and have well developed training skills. The Training Team has an ongoing role of in-service training to develop the skill of current VDWs and new workers. They also are involved in specific projects such as training staff for voter education and the administration and coordination of surveys.

When the SIDT made the major transition from MTMs to VDWs, the Training Team had the important role of training workers and reorienting their village based practice and philosophy. Over a ten-month period they ran a series of two-week training course for 251 village workers and 24 headquarters staff. The courses provided:

“[T]raining in the basics of SIDT's new approach to increase the quality of village life, participatory training methods, how to be effective agents in the drive to reduce malaria infection throughout the nation, how to administer survey instruments, arming VDWs with sufficient information about the importance of Vitamin A and practicing making their monthly reports.” (SIDT 1996a)

The Training Team is also involved in training workers in non-government organisations from other Pacific Island nations that share the SIDT's development philosophy and practice. In 1998 they trained NGO workers from Papua New Guinea, Kanaky (Noumea) and Vanuatu in Honiara and ran in-country training programmes in Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea.

## Funding

Funding is always a major challenge for NGOs. Seeking funds, covering expenses and maintaining good accounting records are daily tasks for NGO managers. To ensure accountability and transparency to donors and the public, SIDT's finances are audited by an independent auditor, and held in the Honiara office where they are available for public scrutiny.

The SIDT budget has grown from less than US\$50,000 in 1982 to over US\$350,000 in 1997. In 1996 65% of income came from overseas NGOs and aid agencies in nine nations (Australia, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Japan, Denmark, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Canada). 29% of income was generated from SIDT's own efforts and contracts, and the remaining 6% from government.

The 1:2 proportion of self generated income to donations is very high for an indigenous NGO and has increased in recent years.<sup>15</sup> This self generated income gives the SIDT greater financial independence than many NGOs which are solely dependent on donations. A spread of income between a wide group of funders also contributes to stability and reduces dependence on one source. For example in 1996 the largest funder, the Dutch Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation, contributed 29% of income, which was the same as SIDT generated itself.

Most donations are tagged to specific programme activities. For example in 1996: the Australian Foundation for Asia and the Pacific funded the theatre teams; the New Zealand High Commission funded seed planting for eco-forestry work, and the anti malaria campaign was funded by United Kingdom ODA and the Foundation for the People of the South Pacific.

The SIDT philosophy of fund raising is spelt out in a 1992 *Link* magazine article (Roughan 1992) in which three rules were advanced: Rule 1: Do Work First - this means: "demonstrate your commitments and abilities to do what you

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<sup>15</sup> Funds raised from own sources: 1991 9.2%, 1992 4%, 1993 2%, see Annual Reports.

can with your own resources which, after all, is what development is all about before you seek outside money”; Rule 2: Make Reports - “preparing a report requires the group takes time to reflect on their experience in ways they otherwise might neglect makes it more likely that they will identify and clarify what they have learned”; Rule 3: Share the Reports – “this enables others to know what has been achieved and how they may draw on your services”. The article concluded:

“In the end our goal is our own development. Outside funding is only a means not the end. By following these rules we will not only be more effective fund raisers, but we will build our capacities to do more with our own resources. We will be developing ourselves.”  
(Roughan 1992: 11)

It is unusual to see such an explicit funding philosophy, that so clearly links the funding approach with an organisations development objectives. It is the writer’s observation that many Pacific island NGOs are dependent on funding from outside aid donors and are caught in a project funding trap (no funds – no work; no work – no funds). This leads NGOs to spend much of their time and effort writing funding proposals and fretting over where the next dollar will come from.<sup>16</sup> Roughan’s three rules, advanced above, suggest a way out of this dependency.

The Solomon Islands Development Trust’s expenditure is consistent with their objective of strengthening the village community. Around 80% of annual expenditure is targeted at village-based programmes. The proportion of 20% for administration and organisation expenses has been maintained throughout the 1990s.<sup>17</sup> This proportion of overheads to programme funding is low in comparison with other Pacific island NGOs and consistent with the most efficient NGOs (see Smillie 1995: 151-3)

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<sup>16</sup> Smillie (1995) provides an in-depth analysis of the complexities of NGO funding in *The Alms Bazaar*. See Chapter VIII, Management, Memory and Money, pp. 147-164.

<sup>17</sup> 1996 was an exception as the SIDT headquarters was rebuilt and expanded as a special project taking 23% of funding that year.

The SIDT has been able to develop a secure financial base for its programmes by having an explicit philosophy of funding, based on integrity, honesty and clear development objectives, diversifying their donor base, increasing the proportion of self-generated income and developing and maintaining an accountable and transparent financial system. It is perhaps because of these factors that the SIDT has been free from the corruption and financial mismanagement that has dogged many Pacific Island NGOs.

## **THE SOLOMON ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT TRUST AND THE STATE**

When it was established, four years after independence, the Solomon Islands Development Trust was the Solomon Islands first indigenous NGO. Non-government organisations were a new phenomena and the relationship between the SIDT and the Solomon Islands Government took some time to develop into one where there was understanding of, and respect for, the role of an indigenous NGO.

The history of NGOs in the Solomons follows the well charted path from disaster relief to development education<sup>18</sup>. The Solomons Government had welcomed international disaster relief and welfare organisations as the first wave of NGOs. In John Roughan words:

“When we got independence, 20 years ago, the non-government sector did not exist here as we know it now. We had the relief and welfare services, CARE, Red Cross etcetera, and when we had a disaster the Government would say: “Come in and help, but no politics.” And the NGOs said “ Fine, we are just here to help the people.” And the government got resources they wouldn’t have gotten and the emergency NGOs came in. No politics, and every one played by those rules.” (CS2-04)

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<sup>18</sup> The pattern of NGO development in the Solomons follows that outlined by Smillie in *The Alms Bazaar* (1995). He charts the development of Southern NGOs, in Chapter IV, and Northern NGOs role in disaster relief in Chapter VI. See also Korten (1987:145-159) on three Generations of NGOs (cf. Roughan’s three waves) and Hill (1994) for typology of Pacific Island NGOs.

The second wave of NGOs were international and regional organisations that stayed on after disaster relief work and saw a need for development projects in the Solomons. They offered their support to the Government of the newly developing nation asking, in John Roughan's words:

“can we stay here and wait for the next disaster? The Government said “What are you going to do?” “We'll work on projects.” “That's not bad, resources come in. But no politics.” (CS2-04)

The third wave of NGOs arrived in the Solomons shortly after independence. These were different organisations from the first two waves, with new ideas, new leaders, different goals and a different approach to their relationship with government.

“The Government looked at it (the third wave NGOs) and said: “We certainly need NGOs but no politics.” And the NGOs said: “No politics? We are citizens of this country, this is our birthright. Whether a NGO or a church organisation this is our birthright. You cannot tell us no politics.” (CS2-04)

The Solomon Islands Government was confronted with non-government organisations that viewed development as political, and NGO workers who saw their roles as more than that of relief or welfare workers. This did not fit the government's view of what a NGO should be.

In the early 1980s, both the SIDT and the Government were working for the development of the Solomon Islands but from different directions. The SIDT was decentralised, working closely with village communities, providing information about development issues, through a participatory process of community empowerment, aiming to strengthen the quality of village life. At the same time the Government was following a National Development Plan, drawn up by international development experts aiming to utilise the Solomon's natural resources (logs and minerals) and creating a centralised public service in Honiara (Oxenham 1981).

To these clear differences in approach must be added the complex cultural context of the Solomon Islands. In a “very polite society, [where] public confrontation is a tabu” (CS2-04) it is not surprising, given the divergent approaches to development, that relationships between the SIDT and the Government became tense. Contributing to the problem was the way SIDT approached development and the attitude of politicians to NGOs, identified by Roughan:

“So when SIDT creates alternative ways of looking and questioning the development wisdom of their 'superiors' [the response was] how dare you question Government. [And the reply.] You are our servants. Public servant is the term but they don't see themselves as public servants. But masters.” (CS2-04)

Furthermore, in Roughan's view, the government had failed to acknowledge the role of villagers as landowners and citizens in a democratic state.

“The focus in Melanesia anyway is the village, because they are the resource owners, that is the reality of the situation. They actually own the Solomons. The Government owns a pitiful little, when it comes to land. From that strength should flow some strength in the political process and decision making about their lives. But it hasn't come that way, just the opposite, the ones who are the resource owners are the least involved in their decision making.” (CS2-07)

During much of the 1980s the Government viewed the SIDT as an anti, rather than non, government organisation which was constantly critical of government attempts to develop the nation. The relationship was polarised. The SIDT viewed the Government as out of touch with the people, headed in the wrong direction and some individual politicians as corrupt. John Roughan recalls: “This was difficult for these new governments to handle. This was a new animal, they knew the disaster relief NGO, and the one giving out money for projects. This was new. Lets watch it” (CS2-04).

In 1988 the Solomon Islands Government, frustrated by the criticism of SIDT, asked the the United Nations Development Programme to review NGO Government relations. Russell Rollason, Executive Director of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, was commissioned to undertake the review. The objective of his mission was:

“to strengthen the interaction between NGOs and the Government in the Solomon Islands in order to advance that country’s national development.” (Rollason 1988: 4)

A detailed review was undertaken, and an eighteen page report (Rollason 1988) compiled, resulting in six proposals and seven recommendations. The most relevant aspect of the report to this discussion was on the concern, expressed by the government, “that NGOs are too critical of government [which] focuses on one indigenous Solomon Islands NGO – Solomon Islands Development Trust” (1988: 11). On this issue the report concluded:

“In a democracy, a critical voice helps create healthy government. SIDT’s critical voice is well based and can contribute to the maintenance of a healthy democracy as well as ensure that exploited people in remote areas or sensitive issues receive the attention necessary.” (Rollason 1988: 11)

This conclusion was a vindication of the SIDTs critical approach to development issues and an affirmation of the role of indigenous NGOs in a newly emerging democratic state. Whilst the report proposed that NGO-government relations should be “improved and expanded” (Rollason 1988: 15) and suggested various mechanisms for achieving these objectives, the key conclusion was establishing that indigenous NGOs have a valid role to play in the development of a nation including raising a critical voice when appropriate.

Whilst the Rollason report vindicated SIDT’s approach, it did not lead to better relations with the government. Walter Ben Turasi commented on the conflict,

suggesting that the government viewed the SIDT's approach to development as subversive rather than constructive.

"For the past government we are always having conflicts because they are always saying that the SIDT is trying to aware people on issues that the government does not like passing information down to the people because the people may not understand what is going on in the government situation." (CS2-03)

Over the following decade relationships with successive governments continued to be tense. The examples of forestry development and voter education are illustrative of this tension.

In 1994-95 the SIDT mounted a campaign against overseas logging companies that were clear felling large tracts of rainforest on Pavuvu Island and Makira. (Roughan 1997: 161) As part of a public awareness campaign, the SIDT disclosed that Prime Minister of the day, Solomon Mamaloni, had a financial interest in the logging operations on Makira and that other politicians were also involved. There was a lively, and at times acrimonious, public debate on logging. Again the government attempted to circumscribe the role of NGOs (Mamaloni 1995). This period marked the nadir in the relationship between the SIDT and the Government. Roughan noted:

"The Pavuvu incident exposed the basic difference about the meaning of progress and development between what the government meant and what the NGO community was prepared to work for." (Roughan 1998: 14)

The anti-logging campaign had a number of successes because many rural people supported the SIDT. Furthermore, the SIDT was offering alternative income generating projects to participating villagers. The eco-forestry programme began to produce returns for villagers, who subsequently turned away from overseas logging companies. Berjaya, a Malaysian conglomerate, moved their logging operations from Makira to Surinam in South America.

During 1997-98 the Asian Economic Crisis (Swain 1998a, 1998b) had a major effect on the price of logs and contributed to the withdrawal of a number of overseas logging operations. John Roughan noted the environmental benefits of economic uncertainty:

“This meltdown in SE Asia has been positive for us, for our forests.”  
(CS2-04)

The large scale logging industry in the Solomon Islands is now in decline, (Vulum 1998: 20-21) whilst the small scale eco-forestry projects continue to provide good returns for villagers and sustains their environment (Vuetilovoni 1998: 39-40). These outcomes vindicated the SIDT's approach to the sustainable development of natural resources. But being right did not improve their relationship with government.

During 1996 and 1997, prior to the August 1997 General Elections, the SIDT mounted a major voter education programme<sup>19</sup> involving village based workshops, performances of *The Power of the Chair*, the drama about choosing a member of parliament), community discussions, publications (SIDT *Link* 43, 45, two *Nasinol Elekson Awearness Komiks* SIDT 1997c, 1997d), and radio programmes.

The SIDT also undertook a series of nationwide surveys, conducted by the VDWs. These surveys were presented to the public in the form of a People's Report Card<sup>20</sup> which showed voters (dis)satisfaction with government policies. The voter education campaign concentrated on raising issues for public discussion and aimed to raise the level of political debate from the personal qualities of politicians to their performance and their policies. It also dealt directly with treating, vote buying, promises of favours and other corrupt practices. The government responded by blocking SIDT access to the radio, twice cutting off voter awareness radio programmes whilst they were in progress (Roughan, 1998: 16).

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<sup>19</sup> See Roughan 1998: 14-21 for a comprehensive analysis of the 1997 elections.

<sup>20</sup> People's Report Cards are prepared annually, see *Link* 45: 5.

Two SIDT surveys, conducted during 1996 and 1997, predicting a change in government proved to be accurate (SIDT 1997e: 3-7). The Mamaloni Government, which had held power for all but one year of the past decade, was replaced by the Solomon Islands Alliance for Change (SIAC) Government. At the time of writing<sup>21</sup> the (SIAC) Government had been in power for a year and the relationship with the SIDT was greatly improved, compared with previous governments.

In March 1998, the SIDT completed a major survey commissioned by the SIAC Government and funded by the New Zealand High Commission in Honiara. The National Survey on Government Investing in People's Lives (SIDT 1998a) sought to investigate what the people thought the government should invest in. The VDW's undertook the fieldwork and 12,635 people throughout the Solomons completed the survey. The findings were significant <sup>22</sup> and provided the government with important data for development planning, as summarised by Roughan:

“We didn't use the word development but the word investment. We asked them if they had the governments ear, and you wanted investment, where would you put the investment dollar? In their eyes they wanted it into gardens, help with their gardens, loans was right at the bottom, what they wanted was markets and shipping. These people are not stupid. They can produce wealth and to turn it into cash they need these two things, the infrastructure of markets and shipping.” (CS2-04)

This survey signaled a significant change in the Government's approach to development through encouraging participation in planning. In his introduction to the report the Director of SIDT, Abraham Baeanisia wrote:

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<sup>21</sup> October 1998.

<sup>22</sup> Early childhood and primary education was placed well above secondary and tertiary education. Village Health Workers, good water supply, kitchens and toilets above hospitals. Gardens and fishing above plantation production. Markets and shipping ahead of credit and loans.

“A striking feature during the survey was the unbelievable expression of the ordinary villagers when told that the SIAC Government is not only going to listen to them but is going to use their information as the basis for its National Development Planning. They could not believe their views and ideas would be that important to any government. “It’s never been done before.” (SIDT 1998a: 1)

Reflecting on the relationship between the SIDT and the Government, John Roughan noted: “Its been a learning experience for both sides” (CS2-04). Over much of the first fifteen years the SIDT has had a conflictual relationship with successive governments as they debated what was the nature of development and the role of indigenous NGOs *vis a vis* government. The government, at the same time, was also trying to define its role in a post-colonial world. Roughan noted:

“These are young nations. I don't think that they have been prepared that well by their colonial masters. They had been given a structure to govern, but they don't know how to use this structure well to govern. They are still learning.” (CS2-04)

The relationship between the SIDT and the State in the Solomon Islands has matured from one of criticism and conflict to an improved and expanded relationship of dialogue, partnership and cooperation, much as Rollason (1988: 15) advised a decade previously. Walter Ben Taurasi also noted the changed relationship with government when he said:

“Maybe now the government understands the real purpose of SIDT. So now we are coming together at one point that we are working for the people. SIDT and the government has a good relationship now. We are working side-by-side with the government now.” (CS2-03)

In the context of this better relationship, the Government has sought to contract the SIDT to use their VDW network to deliver some services to rural

communities and conduct surveys. The SIDT has taken up some of these opportunities, and declined others. For example, they took up the task of undertaking the national survey, and turned down the delivery of teachers pay cheques, because: "We would become a postal service. We don't think it will strengthen the village community" (CS2-04).

The SIDT is aware of the need to maintain a critical voice and choose carefully which areas they cooperate with government. This way the independence of the organisation is preserved and a balance is achieved between criticism and cooperation. Whilst contracting with the government for specific projects, the SIDT continues to review and critique the government's performance, and publish an annual People's Report Card. The SIDT experience of the last sixteen years has illustrated that an indigenous NGO, independent of government, and with a critical voice, can indeed contribute to the creation of good governance (Larmour 1996a, 1996b, 1998).

## **THE SOLOMON ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT TRUST AND THE MARKET**

Most people in the Solomon Islands are outside of the cash economy, many of those in the cash economy are at its margins still relying on subsistence gardening and fishing for their daily needs and selling their surplus products, some handicrafts or labour for cash to supplement subsistence. Perhaps ten to fifteen percent of the people are fully integrated into the cash economy but that number is rising.

Because of the communal nature of the *wantok* system, cash is not individualised. An individual may earn money from their labour but the money does not belong to them alone. In the same way as villagers share food, grown on a communal basis, money is often shared. As Solomon Islanders become integrated into the cash economy they are subjected to a clash between their cultural values and the values of the marketplace<sup>23</sup>. One of the obvious areas of tension is when *wantoks* visit a relation in town who has the cultural

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<sup>23</sup> See Chapter 7 for a discussion on cultural values and marketplace values.

obligation to feed and shelter them but is receiving a wage that is only sufficient for their nuclear family.

The focus of the SIDT on strengthening the quality of village living places much of their work outside of the market economy. A growing amount of the VDW's work is preparing villagers for their inevitable entry into the market economy, alerting them to the problems and providing them with skills and knowledge to deal with the market economy.

A range of information sharing programmes have assisted villagers and urban dwellers to deal with the problems they faced in the marketplace. The change in diet of urban dwellers led to a series of health related problems including diabetes, obesity, vitamin A deficiency, hypertension, other non-communicable diseases and alcohol abuse. SIDT programmes addressed these issues in villages and urban centres. MTMs were also trained to provide consumer education<sup>24</sup> and *SEI!* Theatre group has performed consumer protection dramas. The SIDT surveys however showed that information sharing and developing informed consumers was necessary but not sufficient to address the problems of a developing market economy.

John Roughan's early development work had alerted him to the problems money making brought to village communities and the need for educational programmes. The SIDT experience had also shown that increased wealth did not necessarily lead to good development.

“Income generation. The assumption is that if people have more money they will live better. I'm sorry it does not necessarily work that way.” (CS2-04)

The SIDT looked to the village for direction, for how to balance the need to generate income against maintaining the integrity of the village community. An important learning for dealing with this dilemma was understanding the integrated nature of village life. John Roughan states:

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<sup>24</sup> The SPCPP conducted a training programme for MTMs in March 1994 (SPCPP 1994a).

“Village life is always an integrated thing. Economics, of course you need economics but it cannot be the dominant, domineering force.”  
(CS2-04)

In the early 1990s, SIDT programmes shifted the emphasis from information sharing to developing a series of programmes that aimed to balance economic pragmatics with cultural and environmental imperatives. Conservation in Development projects and eco-forestry (discussed above) aimed to generate income whilst maintaining important cultural, social and environmental values. It was noted:

“We need more than preaching, so we put our money where our mouths were and we started these different sections. They are modestly successful. You log your own place.” (CS2-04)

This new approach marked a shift from educating people about the problems of the marketplace to entering the marketplace, generating an income for village communities and achieving a balance between conflicting values. In the past, the SIDT could have been accused of protecting village people from the realities of the marketplace; today they are directly involved in the market economy. In Roughan's words:

“People pressed us to see what can we do. That is when we began our Conservation in Development Programme in Makira. In the southern part of Makira they had Berjaya, the conglomerate from Malaysia, and in the northern part of Makira they had Solomon Mamaloni's outfit, and in the middle there was this area that was untouched at that time. So we decided to go in there. Let's give the people an alternative chance to use their resources in a more sustainable way. Rather than just talking about it lets show them they can do something about it. So we started Ngali nut production, the production of pressing Ngali nut oil out for the market with out destroying all their forests.” (CS2-04)

The SIDT has an indirect relationship with the market. Early programmes aimed to educate villagers, as consumers, of some of the problems they would encounter, as they shifted from subsistence to a cash economy, and equipped them with appropriate skills and knowledge. Later programmes are equipping villagers with the skills and knowledge to compete in the market economy and at the same time preserve and conserve their natural resources.

## **THE SOLOMON ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT TRUST AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Solomon Islands Development Trust has introduced to the Solomon Islands a people-centred approach to development that has aimed to strengthen the quality of village life. The SIDT approach is consistent with Korten's framework for people-centred development (Korten 1984: 299-309), exhibiting the key characteristics of an alternative development paradigm namely decentralisation of decision making, the creation of enabling settings, the development of self-organising structures and processes, local resource control, and power building. The SIDT uses different words (participation, empowering, strengthening the quality of village life, village demonstration workers, *yumi togeta*) but they have the same meaning as Korten's words.

This SIDT approach to development is unashamedly political and has often been at odds to the economic growth model advocated by the Solomon Islands Government, supported by foreign aid and international financial institutions. John Roughan updates a frequently repeated metaphor for development, about teaching people to fish, to explain the political nature of SIDT's approach to development.

“It's more than giving fish, everyone knows that. Its more than simply teaching them to fish. Understanding the context, where this 'teaching them to fish' operates, has to be part and parcel of our work. And that's very political. Political in the wider sense, and that is why we have got into the area of grading politicians, giving them report cards.” (CS2-04)

The SIDT has practiced and preached participation as one of the foundations of its approach to development. Participation in the sense that SIDT's VDWs are an active part in many village communities. Participation in the sense that the community is listened to and consulted. Participation in the sense that the SIDT has stood with village communities against overseas logging and mining companies bent on exploitation. Participation in the sense of working with village communities to create income from natural resources. Participation in the sense of providing villagers with a voice in the development discourse.

“This research is giving us the signals. SIDT has to become more and more a listener. Being out there with them, participating with them, listening to them.” (CS2-04)

Over sixteen years the SIDT has developed new approaches to development, that fit the particular context of the Solomon Islands. New, innovative programmes have been developed out of the needs expressed by villagers that utilise local resources, and rise from the indigenous culture, of the Solomon Islands. The SIDT has been a leader in alternative development. Roughan noted: “We have to create the models ourselves for what we are looking for” (CS2-04). Furthermore:

“There had to be an alternative, the alternative had to be based on informing the people that there is an alternative. By the very fact that you inform people that there is an alternative you are informing them what is happening in their lives.” (CS2-06)

This alternative approach to development has been driven from within, by placing the villagers at the centre, in contrast to the government's approach which has been largely driven by outside agencies and influences. Gegeo (1998) notes the problems of development led from outside that ignores indigenous knowledge and local needs:

“A strong argument has been made that development dictated from the outside rather than anchored in the knowledge base of the

target population is in principle modernization disguised: it will not be fully concerned with local needs.” (1998: 289)

Gegeo argues further, that incorporating indigenous knowledge into rural development discourse is not enough and that “how a group theorizes about creating new knowledge” (1998: 290) must also be included. He suggests an indigenous epistemology is required:

“Indigenous epistemology refers to a cultural group’s ways of thinking and of creating and reformulating knowledge using traditional discourses and media of communication and anchoring the truth of the discourse in culture. Indigenous epistemology guides the social construction of indigenous knowledge, and indigenous knowledge is the result of the practice of indigenous epistemology.” (1998: 290)

The SIDT’s approach to development has been participatory, process orientated and village focused. VDW’s are local people who work face-to-face with their communities, in their own language, making use of indigenous knowledge and their own way of thinking about the problems they face and planning how they can work together for change. These are all elements of Gegeo’s notion of an indigenous epistemology that he argues should “constitute the core of development models in the third world”. (1998: 290)

Using the term world view synonymously with epistemology, Roughan argues that Solomon islanders face the dilemma of two, often conflicting, world views:

“Everybody has a world view, how they look upon how the world works. In the village these people have a world view. And you as trainers have world view. But you are also training for another world view, that has hit the Solomons and is a extremely strong world view: Market, Government. In a sense you have to live in two worlds: The world that you know that you take with your mothers milk, which we want you to reflect upon, and that other view. The training team

has to marry both those two world views to get that over to our personnel in the village.” (CS2-06)

Classic modernisation theory (see Rostow 1960 and Lewis 1955) argues that the tradition must be discarded and western values and social structures embraced; the price of becoming modern is the loss of tradition. Gegeo's idea of an indigenous epistemology is based on a rejection of modernisation theory. In his view, the loss of tradition is too high a price to pay.

“The change that I mean is that which villagers themselves bring about. It may involve borrowing from outside knowledge or ideas, but in a very essential way it emerges from their own perspectives, cultures and languages.” (1998: 291)

The Solomon Islands Development Trust may not use the term indigenous epistemology but the writer would argue that the work of the SIDT reflects an indigenous epistemology in practice.

The SIDT has been subjected to regular review and accountability by the communities it serves. A rigorous approach to accountability has been taken with regular reporting back to village communities for validation of the direction projects. Programme goals are made explicit, village focussed and outcome orientated. Annual reviews, and at least one major evaluation, have required the organisation to examine closely its programmes, direction and organisational structure. Financial accountability and transparency has been taken seriously with all income and expenditure audited and a matter of public record.

The SIDT has addressed two of the defining issues of development in the 1990s: women/gender and environmental sustainability. The SIDT has been a leader in environmental sustainability in development and, whilst facing some criticism, has made progress with women's/gender issues in development. The SIDT approach to development has addressed gender issues within the particular context of gender relations in the Solomon Islands. Scheyvens

noted (1995: 249) that in one provincial area the WIP team leader only had an annual budget of SBD\$1,000. She concludes her discussion on the SIDT with the observation:

“Concentrating on domestic skills in the WIP, having an all-male theatre group and appointing men rather than women to positions of authority, are all easy options. For example, by arranging for a single gender touring theatre group SIDT may be avoiding conflict with parents or husbands of staff over their rights to travel and SIDT can also avoid having to implement precautionary measures to ensure the women’s safety. By taking this easy option, however, SIDT has chosen not to challenge the social forces which dictate that women have less freedom to travel than men and, therefore, SIDT has failed to enhance women’s life opportunities.” (1995: 251)

Scheyvens conclusion, based on gender analysis, that SIDT has failed to enhance women’s life opportunities is perhaps no longer valid. It appears that since Scheyvens completed her study there have been some significant changes in SIDT’s approach to gender issues. For example: the 1996 *Annual Report* listed the expenditure on Women’s Initiative Programme as SBD\$41,150, a greater than three-fold increase per province from 1993; in 1994 *Mere Akson* the women’s theatre group was established; Women now participate along with men in the eco-forestry training programmes and, the editor of *Link* magazine is a woman, Jennifer Wate. These results demonstrate that there has been a concerted attempt by SIDT to enhance women’s life opportunities.

SIDT Director Abraham Baeania refers to “feminisation of the investment dollar”<sup>25</sup> in the *1996 Annual Report*. John Roughan explains further:

“With that is a shift away from the masculinisation of development which has been the major paradigm in the Solomons since the

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<sup>25</sup> Abraham Baeania discussed the feminisation of development in some detail with the writer, his views parallel Roughan’s stated here.

beginning of the so called development era. They have seen development in masculine terms. If we do a little exercise in village groups to ask them what are the technologies have been introduced into their villages. Outboard motors, fibre-glass canoes, chainsaws, water tanks, sewing machines they come up with about a dozen ones. Now which are specifically for men. Which ones are specifically for women, and which are mixed. Men all of them. Mixed: sewing machine and water supply. Women none. There is not one specific technology for women, and this is not by accident, or not by some corrupt design. The development dollar has been masculinised. What we have done in our little way is to say: lets feminise the development dollar.” CS2-04)

Paper making, ngali nut oil extraction, butterfly ranching, eco-tourism, and the VWD's goals of improving toilets and kitchens, families sleeping under treated mosquito nets and Supsup gardens established close to houses to improve nutrition and ease child care, are activities with a high involvement of women and are given as examples of SIDT's commitment to “feminise the development dollar” (SIDT 1996a).

Scheyvens suggested that SIDT was taking the easy option in working with women because it had: “chosen not to challenge the social forces which dictate that women have less freedom” (1995: 251). Another view is that the SIDT has put cultural analysis ahead of gender analysis. That view is supported by the stated aim of *Mere Akson*:

“It (*Mere Akson*) works to empower and preserve culture, it reinforces and strengthens our cultural life in order to pass on this knowledge of cultural identity to the next generation, to address issues such as domestic violence, women's rights, malaria and AIDS education and literacy education for women.” (SIDT 1997a: 25)

A 1995 *Link* magazine editorial (1995b: 2) summarised the SIDT's approach to development and introduced the notion of civil society into the local development discourse. Expanding the goal of strengthening village communities, the editorial suggested how NGOs could "strengthen the nation". The metaphor of a stool with three legs was advanced. Cartoons showed a balanced stool, labeled nation, supported by three sturdy legs labeled: business, government and civil society (churches, people, NGOs). A second stool tilts over precariously, unbalanced by two large legs close together (business and government) supported by a frail third leg (churches, people, NGOs). The editorial stated:

"A strong, growing nation rests on the dynamic tension between three legs – government, business and civic society.<sup>26</sup> When these are strong, independent and a proper distance from each other, then the nation-stool is doing its job. The stool is safe to sit upon."  
(SIDT 1995b: 2)

This stool illustrated the ideal case scenario, a balanced development. The second illustration represented the situation in the Solomon islands, in 1995 when logging was at its height, and where: "Business interests dominate government concerns" (SIDT 1995b: 2).

"The second drawing forces us to think about something else. Civic society – churches, NGOs, people and their organisations – are vital for a healthy nation. They are not there simply to use up the nation's goods and services but they act as a vital part of running the nation well." (SIDT 1995b: 2)

This editorial, and illustrations, neatly summarised, in terms that villagers could easily comprehend, the SIDT's position *vis a vis* the state and the market. It also illustrated the role NGOs have of strengthening civil society.

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<sup>26</sup> The term civic society was used here, later articles used the term civil society.

NGOs can play important roles in a society at times of social and political transformation. Landim (1987) noted the critical roles NGOs played during the 1970s and 1980s in strengthening civil society in Latin America “in the consolidation of democratic forms of government” (1987: 37). SIDT has played a similar role in the Solomon Islands in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Solomon Islands Development Trust has achieved a unique place in development practice in the Pacific by establishing and maintaining a series of programmes and an organisation that meets the specific needs of the challenging, complex and difficult community it serves. It has contributed to development discourse in the nation by promoting and practicing an alternative indigenous approach to development. In doing so the SIDT has created a model for other indigenous non-government organisation in the Pacific islands and beyond.

## **THE FUTURE OF THE SOLOMON ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT TRUST**

Like many NGOs, the SIDT is primarily focussed on day-to-day concerns but the regular reviews and accountability mechanisms require the SIDT to regularly consider future developments. The founding *Statement of Intent* (SIDT 1982) provided a blueprint for the future that was largely realised over the following decade. The major review in 1994-95, that resulted in the refocussing of the organisation, set the plan for the next years.

With the founders now nearing retirement age, what does the future hold for the SIDT? John Roughan suggests that the organisation will further decentralise with some of the specialist teams standing alone but linked to the parent organisation.

“I see a place for the SIDT. What its nature would be in the years to come? I see it starting things off nurturing them and when they are strong enough let them go out.” (CS2-04)

The theatre groups have the potential for standing alone and creating their own funding base. The number of groups are expanding and attracting significant funding from overseas donors for their work.

“The theatre is getting very strong, they have three groups here in the office and thirteen groups around working in the villages and I would love to see that attached to SIDT but working on their own.”  
(CS2-04)

The publications unit is another possibility for independence, earning funding through sale of publications.

“We, as an organisation, would love to see Link magazine become an independent unit, put out a product, sell it. It would become a voice. We would not be administering its finances. That takes another person who has these gifts, the fire in their belly.” (CS2-04)

Is it time for some of the maturing programmes to leave the safety of home?

“This is a home atmosphere, but how long are you going to stay at home?” (CS2-04)

Balanced against these potential separations of various units is the need for integration of SIDT programmes. At the moment the various specialist teams work closely together on specific campaigns or projects, for example: the anti-logging campaign and the eco-forestry project. Further dividing the organisation would make programme integration more difficult.

The SIDT faces a future that other successful expanding NGOs have had to come to terms with. Edwards and Hulme (1992) identify three strategies NGOs can employ to scale up their activities:

“*additive* strategies which imply an increase in the size of the programme or organisation; *multiplicative* strategies, which do not

imply growth but achieve impact through deliberate influence, networking, policy and legal reform or training; and *diffusive* strategies, where spread is informal and spontaneous.” (1992: 15)

They further identify four strategies for organisational growth and for NGOs creating a wider impact:

- Working with government.
- Organisational growth.
- Linking the grassroots with lobbying and advocacy
- Advocacy in the North.

To which Chambers (1992: 40) adds a fifth category:

- Spreading and self-improving.

In reflecting upon these strategies for organisational development, it can be seen that the SIDT has scaled up over the first decade through additive and multiplicative strategies which have increased the number of VDWs (earlier MTMs) spreading their programmes and influence throughout the Solomon Islands. Recent work with government has further expanded the programmes and influence of the SIDT.

Chambers developed the spreading and self-improving approach, after reflecting on the success of rapid rural appraisal (RRA) and participatory rural appraisal (PRA) in the 1970s and 1980s. He refers to methods of scaling up that spread without formal training and get better and better the more they are used. Some of the approaches developed by SIDT (eg: theatre groups, eco-forestry) are spreading throughout Melanesia, albeit with training support from SIDT, and give an indication of the future influence and direction of the Solomon Islands Development Trust.

In assessing the SIDT's contribution to development discourse, in the past and for the future, a comment should be made about language. Much that is

referred to as development does not translate well into the eighty-six local languages and every day experiences of villagers in the Solomon Islands. The SIDT is now eschewing the word development and favouring other terms, such as investment, to describe their work.

“We began to realise that if we want development, and we don't want to use the word anymore, we want to use the term 'quality of life'.” (CS2-04)

The Solomon Islands Development Trust pioneered the third wave of indigenous NGOs in the Solomon Islands, the determination to discard the term development is an indication that the SIDT may be moving towards a post-development era.

The SIDT was conceived by a group of indigenous Solomon islanders, and expatriates, thinking about and planning for the type of society that they wanted after the end of colonial rule. Today, after twenty years of independence, Solomon Islanders are arguing that indigenous knowledge, and especially an indigenous epistemology, should “constitute the core of development models in the third world” (Gegeo 1998: 289). The Solomon Islands Development Trust has shown how that may work in practice and demonstrated the critical role non-government organisations can play in the development of civil society.

## **SUMMARY**

The Solomon Islands Development Trust has developed an extensive organisation which has brought development education programmes to two thirds of the population of the Solomon Islands at the village level. The SIDT is dedicated to strengthening the quality of village life through participatory programmes that empower villagers to understand the nature of development, improve their daily living through practical advances, and create incomes from the natural resources whilst maintaining the environment and the cultural integrity of each community.

Relationships with the state have largely been conflictual as the SIDT's people-centered, political approach to development has been in opposition to successive governments large-scale, capital-intensive economic approach which has aimed at developing natural resources for sale overseas. With the recent change of government, the relationship between the SIDT has improved, now there is greater understanding of the importance of the critical voice NGOs can play in civil society and the development of a democratic state. The SIDT remains watchful as the political terrain in the Solomon Islands is fragile and subject to rapid change.

This inquiry concludes that the Solomon Islands Development Trust has achieved, over sixteen years, some significant results in a geographically challenging, culturally complex and politically difficult terrain. Furthermore, the Solomon Islands Development Trust has created unique approaches to development, grounded in indigenous knowledge and an emerging indigenous epistemology, that have profoundly contributed to the development of civil society in the Solomon Islands and have the potential to make significant contributions elsewhere in the region.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE SOUTH PACIFIC CONSUMER PROTECTION

### PROGRAMME

#### INTRODUCTION

The goal of this case study is to clarify the role of civil society in development by examining the emergence of the consumer movement, a global social movement, in the Pacific region during the 1990s. The focus of the case study is on the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme (SPCPP) which has led the development of the consumer movement in the Pacific during the last decade.

The consumer movement is one of a number of new social movements<sup>1</sup> that have emerged in the 1990s in parallel with the growth of globalisation (McMichael 1996: 217). The environmental movement (SPREP 1992, Watts 1993), the women's movement (Emberson-Bain 1994a, Scheyvens 1995, de Ishtar 1998) and the popular movement to end nuclear weapons testing (Johnson 1984, Firth 1987) are examples of the phenomenon of new social movements which have had an impact in the Pacific region.

Many of these social movements manifest themselves in the form of non-government organisations or through incorporating the agenda of the social movement into an existing organisation. The Solomon Islands Development Trust, for example, has incorporated environmental and women's issues into their programmes (see Chapter 5). The Women's Centre in Fiji is an example of a NGO that grew out of the Fiji Women's Rights Movement. New social movements in the Pacific often are linked to parallel global organisations. The women's movement is particularly well networked globally. Emberson-Bain (1994a) edited a collection of writings on women's initiatives in the Pacific

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<sup>1</sup> See Escobar (1992, 1995), Wignaraja et al. (1993) and Lindberg and Sverrisson (1997) for a discussion on new social movements.

Islands with support from AIDAB (Australian International Development Assistance Bureau), ISIS International (a women's publishing collective based in the Philippines), DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) and IWDA (the International Women's Development Agency). This publication demonstrates the global links of the women's movement in the Pacific. It will be shown in this case study that the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme is another example of a globally linked new social movement emerging in the Pacific Islands.

The case study begins with a history of the establishment and development of the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme and a discussion of its activities and results. The relationship between the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme and Pacific Island states, and the market, are the subjects of the next two sections. The final section discusses the contribution of the SPCPP and the emerging consumer movement to social and economic development in the Pacific region.

Whilst the history of the consumer movement in Europe, North America, Australia and other industrialised nations has been well documented (Foo Gaik Sim, 1991), recent developments in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Pacific have received little attention (Foo Gaik Sim, 1991: 62, Idris 1992: 82, Ndegwa 1996). This study aims to contribute to the history of the consumer movement, and to an understanding of the development of civil society, through providing a record of the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme and an analysis of the growth of the consumer movement in the island nations of the Pacific.

## **THE SOUTH PACIFIC CONSUMER PROTECTION PROGRAMME**

The South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme was established in 1990 with the aim of "creating, safe, informed and fair marketplaces and communities in the island nations of the Pacific" (SPCPP 1991a: 2). The SPCPP is a sub-regional programme of Consumers International's<sup>2</sup> Regional Office for Asia

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<sup>2</sup> Founded in 1960, and formerly known as the International Organisation of Consumers Unions (IOCU), Consumers International (CI) is a federation of over 243 consumer organisations in 112 countries.

and the Pacific (ROAP). The establishment of the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme may be traced back to three factors, the initiative of the international consumer movement, the support of regional governments, and the backing of United Nations agencies.

United Nations backing for the global development of consumer protection came after many years of lobbying by members of IOCU (Foo Gaik Sim, 1991: 99). In 1985, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UN General Assembly A/RES/789/Add.2) which became the framework for the development of consumer protection in nations that had no laws, policies or agencies to protect consumers.

The first objective of the Guidelines was: "To assist countries in achieving or maintaining adequate protection for their population as consumers." Another objective was: "To further international cooperation in the field of consumer protection" (UN General Assembly A/RES/789/Add.2). With these two objectives in mind, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations passed a resolution in July 1988 calling for regional seminars to discuss the Guidelines and assist nations to implement the Guidelines (UNESCAP 1989: 3).

Consumers International's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) was established in Singapore in 1974 and moved to Penang, Malaysia, in 1975 (Foo Gaik Sim, 1991: 74). Whilst ROAP had promoted many developments in consumer protection in Asian nations, little effort had been made in the Pacific. (Foo Gaik Sim, 1991: 62) This was to change with the establishment of the SPCPP in 1990.

To develop a "greater understanding and cooperation on consumer issues in the South Pacific region" (FBCA 1990a: 1) the Australian Government, through the Federal Bureau of Consumer Affairs (FBCA), with support from CI-ROAP, convened a South Pacific Consumer Affairs Workshop in Sydney, Australia, in February 1990. The workshop brought together government officials from nine

Pacific Island nations, and Australia and New Zealand, with staff from ROAP. The subsequent South Pacific Consumer Affairs Workshop Report (FBCA 1990) identified the major consumer problems in the Pacific (FBCA 1990a: 8-9) and listed "Actions and Responsibilities" to address the problems (FBCA 1990a: 10-11). Workshop resolutions called on the United Nations, through the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP 1990) to establish, with assistance from IOCU, a sub-regional programme for developing consumer protection in the South Pacific.

Getting the agreement and support of Pacific nations was an important first step to establish a consumer programme in the Pacific. The next step was to gain support and approval from the appropriate United Nations agencies. UNESCAP and the United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA) convened a Regional Seminar on Consumer Protection for Asia and the Pacific, 9-11 June 1990, in Bangkok, Thailand. The Seminar passed 45 recommendations (UNESCAP 1990: 3-7) for the implementation of the UN Guidelines in the Asia-Pacific region. Recommendations 25 to 28 and 39 (below) were to provide the formal basis for establishing a consumer protection programme in the South Pacific and a preliminary work programme.

"Recommendation 25.

Governments should support the holding of a sub-regional workshop on consumer education and protection for South Pacific Island countries before the end of 1991, noting that:

- a) Prior to the workshop a process of consultation should be undertaken with government and non-governmental organizations regarding the content, process and location of this workshop,
- b) The involvement of IOCU is sought for the co-ordination and facilitation of the workshop,
- c) The support of UNDP, ESCAP and governments in the region is sought to support this workshop and subsequent education programmes,

d) To encourage localization and cultural sensitivity, it is recommended that the workshop be hosted by one of the South Pacific Island countries, in order to promote greater awareness of consumer protection and education in our region and to emphasize greater local participation;

Recommendation 26.

Participants should note the need for Pacific Island countries to have access to quality consumer protection information, and include Pacific Island countries on mailing lists and information networks;

Recommendation 27.

The Australian and New Zealand Government consumer agencies should be encouraged to involve Pacific Island countries in the development of standards, with a view to developing a regional policy on standards;

Recommendation 28.

Member countries of the South Pacific Forum should endeavour to have the Guidelines placed on the agenda of the next Forum meeting for discussion.

Recommendation 39.

A joint ESCAP/IOCU training, information and education institution based in Penang, Malaysia with a sub-office in the South Pacific should be established. To that end, ESCAP and IOCU should explore the possibility of obtaining bilateral and multilateral assistance." (UNESCAP 1990: 3-7)

At the ESCAP meeting, the Australian Government offered to fund the establishment of a consumer protection project in the South Pacific and IOCU ROAP volunteered to host and manage the project. These offers were

accepted. To get the project moving, ROAP recruited two Coordinators<sup>3</sup> who drew up a draft Plan of Action (SPCPP 1990a). This plan was accepted and the Coordinators then signed a formal Letter of Agreement, with the Director of ROAP, stating the objectives of the SPCPP and expected outcomes (SPCPP 1990a: 2). The South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme was now established (SPCPP 1990c: 6).

In fulfilment of ESCAP Recommendation 25a, and to establish a basis for future work, an extensive needs analysis and consultation was undertaken by the Coordinators throughout the island nations of the South Pacific. During late 1990 and early 1991 the Coordinators made visits to Fiji, Western Samoa, the Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. A needs analysis questionnaire was widely distributed to groups and agencies not visited by the Coordinators (SPCPP 1991a: 15-16).

The Coordinators presented the results of the needs analysis, consultation, and an action plan, to the 13th IOCU World Congress in Hong Kong in July 1991. The presentation identified the problems consumers face in the Pacific and spelt out five long-term goals, the programme focus and five principles (below) which were designed to guide the work of the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme.

#### Long-Term Goals:

1. Establish relevant legislation, appropriate to the peoples of the Pacific.
2. Establish, consolidate and develop consumer organisations in the Pacific Region.
3. Develop and implement consumer education programmes for communities, schools, government workers, people's groups and traders in the Pacific Islands.

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<sup>3</sup> The Coordinators of the South Pacific Consumer Protection from 1990 were Luamanuvao Winnie Laban and Peter Swain, the author of this dissertation.

4. Extend a consumer information service into all Island nations in the Pacific.
5. Establish and extend a funding and resource base for achieving the four goals above. (SPCPP 1991d: 3)

Focus:

The Pacific Island nations of the South Pacific Forum are to be the initial focus of this programme, with extension to other Pacific nations as opportunities and resources permitted." (SPCPP 1991d: 4)

Principles:

**Partnership.** Programmes will be developed through a process of consultation and participation with consumers. Needs will be assessed through face-to-face discussions, goals agreed to and maximum participation of all those involved and effected by the programme.

**Localisation.** Programmes will be locally based and facilitated by local people where possible. Relevance to the day-to-day concerns of local people will be a major feature of programmes.

**Cultural Fit.** Programmes and processes must respect local traditions, customs and cultures. They must also be linguistically appropriate, respecting and affirming the languages, the cultures and the beliefs of the peoples of the Pacific.

**Targeting.** As resources are limited, priority should be given to those groups most in need, bearing in mind the need to ensure equitable resource sharing. Programmes should make the best of existing resources (human, physical and financial), link with other projects and organisations, and work towards sustainable development.

Monitoring. Programme outcomes and expenditure will be subject to regular review and available for scrutiny. Members of communities, involved in the programme, will be encouraged to participate in the monitoring process. (SPCPP 199d: 4)

At the World Congress, the IOCU General Assembly subsequently passed the following resolution, proposed by Mr Jone Naisari, Chairman of the Consumer Council of Fiji, supporting the establishment of the SPCPP.

"The IOCU General Assembly:

Recognising the commitment of IOCU to promote the protection of consumers worldwide through research, information and education activities;

Welcomes the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme as an important new initiative in regional development;

Affirms the Australian Federal Government;

Calls on governments, regional and international organisations to support and resource the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme; and

Asks the Executive of IOCU to consider the establishment of a permanent programme and base for IOCU in the Pacific at the completion of the current three-year Project." (IOCU 1992b: 111)

Having assessed the needs, developed an action plan, gained the support of United Nations agencies and IOCU, and with sponsorship from the Australian Government, the SPCPP was ready to get on with the task of developing consumer protection in the island nations of the South Pacific.

At the time of writing (1999) the SPCPP has completed two, three-year strategic plans (SPCPP 1990a and SPCPP 1992c) and work was well advanced on the third strategic plan (SPCPP 1996c). A series of national consumer education workshops have been conducted in thirteen Pacific nations, consumer laws enacted, consumer organisations established and a wide range of indigenous resource materials developed. Significant

improvements in consumer protection in the Pacific have been achieved and well documented by the SPCPP in the quarterly South Pacific Consumer's Report. A summary of the major achievements of the SPCPP in consumer education, consumer law, consumer information and consumer organisations follow.

## **CONSUMER EDUCATION**

The first consumer education initiative was a regional Consumer Education and Law Workshop held in Apia, Western Samoa in February 1992. (SPCPP 1992a). The five-day workshop brought together fifty-one participants from thirteen Pacific Island nations. Two sub-workshops ran in parallel and met regularly to share their respective learning and plans. The objective of the consumer law workshop, to develop a model consumer law appropriate for the Pacific Island context, was achieved. (The developments in consumer legislation are noted below.) The objective of the consumer education workshop was:

"For participants to understand the context of consumer concerns; to share and develop consumer education resources, and to develop the knowledge and skills to lead consumer education activities in their own communities." (SPCPP 1992a: 4)

This first consumer education workshop set the agenda for the SPCPP's workplan and established a network of consumer contacts throughout the region. Consumer education was to become a major focus of the SPCPP and a long-term plan was developed to establish consumer education programmes in each Pacific island nation. The idea was to facilitate a series of national consumer education workshops, training local consumer educators throughout the region, by working systematically country-by-country.

These national workshops had several goals. The first was to train community workers and educators throughout the region to run introductory consumer education programmes in their own communities. A second goal was to

develop a cadre of consumer educators, who had developed a shared analysis of the problems facing consumers, and could then organise and act together to resolve local problems. A third goal was to identify important organisations, in the government and non-government sectors, and develop working relationships. Opportunities were also taken for wider public education through the available print media, radio and television coverage of workshops. Furthermore, senior officials were called upon to open each workshop and they were invited to take the opportunity to articulate their government's policy on consumer protection.

Twelve four-day consumer education workshops have been conducted jointly with local organisations as follows: Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, November 1992 (SPCPP 1992b); Majuro, in the Marshall Islands, April 1993 (SPCPP 1993a); Rarotonga in the Cook Islands October 1993 (SPCPP 1993b); Honiara, in the Solomon Islands, March 1994 (SPCPP 1994a); Port Vila, Vanuatu, July 1994 (SPCPP 1994b); Suva, Fiji, December 1994 (SPCPP 1994c); Nuku'alofa, Tonga, June 1995 (SPCPP 1995a); Pago Pago, American Samoa, October 1995 (SPCPP 1995c); Tarawa, Kiribati, April 1996 (SPCPP 1996a); Funafuti, Tuvalu, October 1997 (SPCPP 1997a), Alofi, Niue, March 1998 (SPCPP 1998d) and Koror, Palau, June 1999 (SPCPP 1999b).

Further workshops for specific groups have also been held in: Alice Springs, Australia, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people, September 1995 (SPCPP 1995b); Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on Consumer Protection for government and non-government workers, December 1996 (SPCPP 1996d); two in Nadi, Fiji, in September 1996: one on Pharmaceuticals in the Pacific, for regional pharmacists, (Snell, Dartnell and Kaur 1996) the other for consumer leaders (SPCPP 1996b), and a workshop for regional nutritionists in September 1998, at the South Pacific Commission in Noumea, New Caledonia.

The national consumer education workshops were based on: a process of experiential or action learning (SPCPP 1992d: 16; Laban and Swain 1996: viii); community development principles (Hope, Timmel and Hodzi 1985), the

pedagogy of Paulo Freire (Freire 1970, Freire 1972, Freire 1993) and the facilitator's cultural knowledge of the Pacific.

The Coordinators have developed workshop processes that are participatory and link the participants with their culture, history and context. A range of exercises and activities has been developed, and refined over time, that draw on the strength of indigenous people. These exercises aim to empower them to make changes through exploring and developing an understanding of the macro and micro aspects of the impact of consumption patterns on their communities and developing pragmatic responses. A small selection of these exercises are discussed below.

Workshops start with an exercise to affirm the strength of the participant's cultural knowledge and identify their place of belonging. A poem is then written and read by the facilitators, which affirms the cultural strength of participants and their communities. The following poem written at a workshop in Tuvalu is illustrative.

#### Tuvalu Symbols of Strength.

We, the people of Tuvalu, are strong.  
We gain our strength from the *fala*, the pandanus;  
A symbol of family, health, culture and of our community.

We gain our strength from our *kaiga*, our extended family;  
Symbol of producers and consumers, working together in unity.

We gain our strength from our *vaka*, our canoes;  
Symbols of our history, transportation and communication.

We gain our strength from the *niu*, the tree of life;  
Symbol of food, shelter, medicine, handicrafts,  
meeting our basic needs.

We gain our strength from the *Falekaupule*, our big house;  
A symbol of meeting and feasting,  
of family, community, and of cultural activities.

We gain our strength from the *Maneapa*, our village council;  
A symbol of decision making and the unity of our nation.

We, the people of the many islands of Tuvalu, are strong.  
(SPCPP 1997a: 5)

Throughout the workshops the facilitators aim to capture both the hearts and minds of participants through a variety of learning processes and activities that are designed to elicit emotional as well as intellectual responses. Song, dance, poetry, role-plays, slide shows and story telling were all employed. As one facilitator noted:

"Pacific Island people are from oral cultures. We constantly tell stories, sing, dance and tell more stories. Training programmes need to capture the imagination, to be fun and informative at the same time. Our people respond with their hearts as well as their heads. We do not separate things: the past, the present and the future are one." (pers. comm.)

Social analysis techniques such as a Consumer Audit (Laban and Swain 1996: 6-8) are employed to encourage participants to research, discover and understand the social, economic and historical factors that created the issues consumers confront in their communities. These exercises provided a big picture in which the consumer could be located. Consumerism is thus seen and understood as part of a wider social, economic and historical context.

In each Pacific island the details of the problems that face consumers differ slightly (Laban and Swain 1996: 8) but the main thrust is consistent and forms the basis of wide discussions about development and the problems families and communities faced. The Consumer Audit exercise introduces a broad

conceptualisation of consumerism which workshop participants soon identify as part of the wider development discourse.

Marketplace exercises, that recreate the daily experience of consumers, are undertaken in workshops to provide real life exposure to the problems consumers face doing their shopping in local marketplaces. Typically, small groups would be sent out to the market with money and instructions to buy food for a main meal for a family of seven. Groups would be sent to different locations (local market, village store, supermarket etc.) the resulting purchases and subsequent discussions would illustrate the difficulties and choices people faced in their day-to-day shopping.

Where the Consumer Audit reveals the big picture of wider issues, the marketplace exercise provides a cameo of the consumer's experience. Subsequent discussions and activities draw on both these views allowing workshop participants to develop an analysis of consumerism at both macro and micro levels.

The examples discussed above are illustrative of a number of exercises undertaken during a four-day workshop. In all workshop activities experiential learning processes are employed and didactic instruction is kept to a minimum. Many workshop participants have low levels of literacy and English is rarely their first language. Workshop activities, discussion and comments are frequently conducted in the local language. The facilitators affirm the use of local languages early on in a workshop and have developed training processes that encourage linguistic diversity.

“We say: “If we do not understand your language, that is our problem. This is your workshop, use the language that you feel most comfortable with and you can communicate to others.” We find that working in partnership with someone to translate for us is sometimes required, but mostly we get to understand the meaning of what is said and we all communicate in a multilingual way.” (pers. comm.)

In the later workshop activities the participants develop indigenous consumer education resource materials and plan how they will take their learning back to their organisations and communities.

Over six-hundred community-based consumers educators have completed the four-day consumer education workshops, many of whom are now running consumer education programmes in their own communities. Local groups, assisted by the SPCPP, now run consumer education activities in twelve Pacific Island nations. Following the success of the national approach to training consumer educators to work in community organisations, a project was developed to introduce consumer education into secondary schools in the Pacific region (SPCPP 1996c: 10).

The first step of the Consumer Education in Schools Project was to develop a consumer education resource book for secondary schools. *Cola or Coconuts?* (Laban and Swain 1996), a consumer education resource book for Pacific Island students, was edited by Luamanuvao Winnie Laban and Peter Swain. The first draft of the book was prepared by the editors, reviewed and re-written at a five-day workshop in Apia by a group of five Pacific Island school teachers from Fiji, Tonga, the Solomon islands and Samoa. A final draft was completed, illustrated, desk-top-published and supervised through the printing process by the editors. An initial print run of 1,000 in 1996 was followed by a second run of 2,000 in 1997, and a third run of 500 in 1998 to meet demand from Pacific island schools. The production of *Cola or Coconuts?* was funded by the Canadian Government, through the Canada Fund, and the book was launched by the Canadian High Commissioner to New Zealand (SPCPP 1997d: 4).

The second step was to negotiate with education departments in Pacific Island nations to introduce consumer education into the school curriculum. The teachers that were involved in the writing of *Cola or Coconuts?* became the important contacts and organisers for introducing consumer education into their national school curricula. Most of these people were working in curriculum development units or had teacher training roles and as such were able to have significant influence on curriculum developments in their own nations.

Establishing and maintaining working relationships with key workers has been a significant factor in the successful development of consumer education programmes at the community level and in Pacific island schools. Those involved in the writing of *Cola or Coconuts?* were first to ask for teacher training programmes and further programmes were arranged through those who had participated in earlier national training programmes.

The third step was to run a series of country-by-country training programmes for teachers. The first teacher-training programme was held in Fiji in September 1997. Two hundred teachers were trained in four two-day workshops in Nadi, Suva, Labasa and Rakiraki in a joint venture with the Ministry of Education, supported by the Consumer Council of Fiji. Staff from these agencies was also trained to deliver future teacher training programmes. Consumer education is now part of the Fiji school curriculum with prescriptions established for years 3 to 8. The second programme involved forty-six teachers who completed a five-day workshop in Samoa where consumer education is part of the Home Science curriculum and is integrated into other subjects including Social Science, Science and Economics. The teacher training programmes utilised a training process and philosophy similar to the national community based programmes but reformatted for classroom exercises and activities (SPCPP 1997e: 1, 8-9).

Further teacher training programmes were conducted in the Solomon Islands in June 1998 (SPCPP 1998a), Papua New Guinea in August 1998 (SPCPP 1998b), Kiribati in December 1998 (SPCPP 1998c) and Tonga (SPCPP 1999a). Further workshops are planned for Vanuatu and the Cook Islands in 1999.

Consumer Education has been the central focus of the SPCPP, and taken a major proportion of time and other resources, because it was seen to have the greatest impact over time on the largest number of people. In contrast, consumer legislation, information services and organisation were seen, by the Coordinators, as important parts of an integrated approach to developing consumer protection rather than the central focus.

## CONSUMER LEGISLATION

Before 1990 there was little effective consumer legislation enacted in the island nations of the Pacific. The few existing laws, that related to consumers, had been adopted wholesale from previous colonial or territorial administrations and were dormant. For example, the Republic of the Marshall Islands had a consumer law enacted at the time of independence as part of a portfolio of laws provided by the outgoing United States administration. This law was discovered by local officials, who had no knowledge of its existence, until an inquiry by the SPCPP prompted them to check the existing legislation.

In 1991, following lobbying from the SPCPP, the South Pacific Forum Leaders Meeting at Pohnpei endorsed the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection as the framework for developing consumer protection measures in the region and supported the regional approach to consumer protection. Later the Forum Secretariat made a commitment to monitoring developments in consumer protection legislation. The Forum Communiqué reads:

"The Forum supported efforts to develop a more regional approach to consumer protection matters. In this context it welcomed the holding of a further regional seminar on Consumer Protection in Western Samoa later this year. All member governments undertook to examine closely the United Nations Guidelines on Consumer Protection." (SPFS 1991: 3)

A strategy to develop and enact consumer laws<sup>4</sup> in the region, appropriate to the Pacific Island context, was part of the SPCPP plan of action. The first step was to draft a model consumer law for the Pacific and then make it available to all island nations.

A group of lawyers, legal drafters and consumer advocates, led by Rajeswari Kanniah the Legal adviser from ROAP, developed a model consumer law for

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<sup>4</sup> For a history of the development of consumer legislation in the Pacific see Swain (1995, 1997a).

the Pacific during the Consumer Education and Law workshop in Apia in February 1992. In her report on the law drafting exercise (SPCPP 1992a: 22-26) Kanniah noted:

"Participants of the law workshop realised right from the beginning that the Pacific context and culture had to be the basis for such a model law. It would have been quite simple to just draft a model fair trading law based on the Australian or new Zealand example as has been the case in other legislation adopted by Pacific nations. However ... they just remain on paper with no administrative authority taking charge or enforcing the law." (1992a: 22)

The drafts produced by the consumer law sub-workshop were discussed with the participants in the consumer education sub-workshop and "what emerged was a consensual draft that both lawyers and educators at the workshop believed would be a model for their countries to adapt according to the needs and specific circumstances of each country" (1992a: 23).

Subsequently, Papua New Guinea (1993), the Solomon Islands (1995) and Samoa (1998) have enacted laws, based on the model law. The model law has been refined further and consumer laws have been drafted by the SPCPP for: American Samoa, the Kingdom of Tonga, the Cook Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia.

A set of Consumer Protection Regulations, to complement the model law, have also been drafted and made available to: Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Western Samoa, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, the Cook Islands, Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Solomon Islands. The regulations lay out consumer expectations of corporations including: ethical standards, competition issues, marketing practices, product standards, labelling of products, provision of information, complaints procedures and guarantees.

In 1995, a new strategy was developed by the SPCPP to protect consumers from corporations that operated across national borders in the region. The

South Pacific Consumer Protection Convention (SPCPP 1996f) was a new initiative to encourage corporations in the region to operate in ways that protect the interests of consumers. The convention was designed to compliment national laws and international conventions. The briefing paper to the draft Convention noted:

"The South Pacific Consumer Protection Convention is designed to promote a marketplace where businesses operate responsibly and consumers' rights are protected. Under the Convention, corporations operating in the region will be required to address: ethical standards, competition issues, marketing practices, product standards, labelling of products, provision of information, complaints procedures and guarantees." (SPCPP 1996e)

Before the 1997 South Pacific Forum Leaders Meeting, copies of the draft Convention and a briefing paper were sent to the Heads of all South Pacific Forum Member Governments and they were invited to place the issue on the Forum agenda. Governments were also lobbied by local consumer organisations. Other issues took precedence but the SPCPP maintains the South Pacific Consumer Protection Convention is a long-term project and is continuing lobby for its ratification.

The development of consumer protection legislation in the Pacific needs to be viewed in the context of the prevailing development discourse. The type of consumer law enacted often reflected the ideology and concerns of the day. It can be seen that early legislation had a colonial flavour (eg: Fiji and Marshall Islands) as the laws were drafted by former colonial administrators, reflected their values and were designed to promote progress. Recently, neo-liberal imperatives have influenced the shape of consumer laws and have favoured competition and a deregulated marketplace (eg: Fiji's Fair Trading Decree, Samoa's Fair Trading Act.). Another recent influence has been the aim of development agencies (donors) to promote good governance and equip developing nations of the South with all the infrastructure and accountability systems that are available in developed nations of the North. New laws have

developed an indigenous flavour with local contexts and cultures, the rights of consumers have been acknowledged and the participation of the non-government sector in the drafting process encouraged (eg. SPCPP Model Law). These later laws have aimed to empower consumers.

In the realm of consumer protection a tension exists between the state, the market (including trans-national corporations) and consumers. If one sector dominates, that dominance is reflected in the emphasis of a consumer law. The South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme has worked to bring a consumer perspective into the law drafting process that had been previously dominated by the advocates of business.

In summary, since 1992 there has been a number of developments in consumer legislation designed to protect the rights of consumers and to create a safe, informed and fair marketplace in the independent island nations of the Pacific. A model consumer law has been drafted and refined as island nations have redrafted it to meet their specific contexts. Consumer protection regulations have also been drafted, as has a regional convention. All of these initiatives have been instigated, promoted and supported by Consumers International's South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme.

A 1997 article (Swain 1997a) on the development of consumer protection legislation in the Pacific, concluded with the following statement which is also an appropriate conclusion to this section on consumer law.

"The lesson learnt from our Pacific experience is that governments and non-government organisations need to work together to establish effective legal frameworks to protect consumers. Without the commitment of a non-government organisations to "to establish relevant consumer legislation, appropriate to the people of the Pacific" it is unlikely that any progress would have been made. We have also learnt that effective consumer legislation is a necessary condition for consumer protection, but it is not sufficient in itself. Consumer laws need to be complemented with relevant education

and information programmes for consumers and traders; appropriate compliance, enforcement and redress procedures; and the development of consumer organisations consistent with the local context and culture." (Swain 1997a)

## CONSUMER INFORMATION

The SPCPP aims "To create and provide consumer information services, developing indigenous materials, and publishing them in local languages" (SPCPP 1997f: 16). To that end, the SPCPP has produced a range of publications including brochures, booklets, fact-sheets, cards, books, a quarterly publication and an Internet home page.

The first publication was *The Informed Consumer: A Consumer Education Resource Book for Pacific Islanders* (SPCPP 1991b). This booklet aimed to provide a practical tool for consumer activities and was comprised of a series of fact-sheets based on the problems identified in the initial needs analysis and consultation. *The Informed Consumer* was subsequently translated into Samoan (SPCPP 1991c), *Tok Pisin* (CAPNG 1995) and Palauan (PCAA 1994).

The quarterly *South Pacific Consumer's Report* (SPCR) is a regional newsletter, published by the SPCPP with articles and news of consumer issues in the Pacific. It has run to twenty-eight editions (May 1999) and has a mailing list of over one thousand five hundred. The first edition of the *SPCR* was published in October 1990 by the Federal Bureau of Consumer Affairs in Canberra and edited by Stephen Fynmore with the SPCPP Coordinators as contributing editors. Eleven further editions were published by the FBCA. Following Stephen Fynmore's departure from the FBCA in 1995, the SPCPP took on the responsibility of editing and production whilst the FBCA printed and distributed the *SPCR*. From 1996, the SPCPP has had full responsibility for writing and publishing the quarterly.

*Behind Our Smiles* (Laban 1995a), a consumer education resource book for Pacific Island women was edited by Luamanuvao Winnie Laban and published by the SPCPP. The book was inspired by the need to have resource materials, with a Pacific Island flavour, for the many women who had attended consumer education workshops and had shared their experiences. *Behind Our Smiles* has been acclaimed internationally for its unique cultural approach to addressing the concerns of women consumers.

The SPCPP has produced a range of brochures, cards and consumer information factsheets to provide information on important consumer concerns, which have been widely distributed throughout the region. These publications have been translated into a number of Pacific island languages: Samoan, Tok Pisin (PNG, Solomons and Vanuatu dialects of pidgin English), Fijian, Hindi, Palauan, Tongan, Tuvaluan and Niuean.

In 1997, the SPCPP established a home page on the Internet (see: [www.spcpp.org.nz](http://www.spcpp.org.nz)). This first attempt at publishing through electronic media was designed to broaden the audience for consumer information about the Pacific Islands. In the first month the website was online, 882 hits were recorded on the site. The website is updated monthly and a steady stream of hits and e-mail is generated, indicating the value of this new form of publishing.

The SPCPP has published a wide range of consumer information through a variety of media, from face-to-face communication to electronic media, and in a variety of Pacific Island languages, to inform people of the problems that face Pacific consumers and the actions they can take to create a more informed, safer and fairer marketplace.

## **CONSUMER ORGANISATION**

In 1990, the Consumer Council of Fiji was the sole consumer organisation in the island nations of the Pacific. An aim of the SPCPP was "To support the development of organisations that can advocate on behalf of consumer's

interests, and link Pacific consumers with the global movement" (SPCPP 1996c: 16).

A network of contacts in each nation was established, during visits for the needs analysis and consultation, then extended when consumer education workshops were held. Communications were maintained through adding contacts to the mailing list of the *South Pacific Consumer's Report* and through written communication. There is now an extensive network of over 1,500 consumer contacts, in sixteen Pacific Island nations, including: women's, youth and community groups, churches, schools, local leaders and government officials.

The need for consumers to be organised was discussed at each workshop and in many cases, the workshop participants formed the core of a new consumer organisation. As an alternative, it was also suggested that existing organisations could add a consumer agenda to their current objectives, rather than establishing a new consumer organisation. Through this process six grassroots consumer organisations have been established and many established non-government, church and community based organisations have developed a consumer protection agenda. Six consumer organisations, in Papua New Guinea, Samoa (2), American Samoa and Fiji (2), are now members of Consumers International<sup>5</sup>.

Government agencies have also been encouraged to develop a consumer protection role. Consumer Councils have been established by Governments in the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, the existing Consumer Council of Fiji has been strengthened and Fair Trading or Consumer Affairs Departments established in Fiji, Samoa, Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Cook Islands and Tonga, and a Consumer Protection Bureau in American Samoa.

In 1996, a Consumer Partners Programme was promoted to encourage further involvement of existing organisations that did not have consumer protection as

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<sup>5</sup> "Consumers International is an independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to the protection and promotion of consumers interests worldwide through institution building, education, research and lobbying of international decision making bodies" (SPCPP 1996c:16).

their primary objective. The Samoan environment organisation *O le Siosiomaga Society* was the first to join the SPCPP Partnership Programme. To establish links with the global consumer movement, selected Pacific island consumer leaders have been funded to attend regional and international fora on consumer protection. These have included: Consumers International's World Congresses in Hong Kong, 1991 (iocu 1992b); Montpellier, 1994 (IOCU 1994); Santiago, 1997 (CI 1997b); the South Pacific Consumer Leaders Forum in Fiji in 1996 (1996b), the International Conference on Consumer Protection held in New Delhi in 1997 and the International Conference on Food Security held in Penang in 1999.

Selected Pacific Island consumer leaders have undergone training placements in consumer agencies in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. These placements are designed to extend their knowledge of how consumer organisations operate, to gain skills to contribute to their own organisations and to develop a pool of leaders for the consumer movement in the Pacific islands. Two Samoan consumer workers visited the Australian Consumer's Association in Sydney and other Australian consumer organisations in 1995 and 1997. Consumer advocates from Kiribati and Fiji completed training placements in 1997 with the SPCPP, with attachments to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, the New Zealand Consumer's Institute and the Commerce Commission. In 1998, similar training placements were completed by consumer advocates from the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. Late in 1998, the SPCPP organised a training attachment for a person from the Solomon Islands with the Consumer Council and other consumer protection agencies in Fiji. This was the first training placement within the Pacific Islands and it illustrated the organisational maturity of the CCF and the ability of consumer organisations in the Pacific island to train other Pacific islanders in a local context.

The years 1990 to 1999 marked an expansion of consumer organisations in government and non-government sectors, and the development of an active consumer movement in the independent Pacific island nations.

## RESOURCES

The philosophy of the SPCPP has been to direct resources towards projects in the island nations that provided the greatest "value for money; value for people, and value for the environment" (SPCPP 1997a: 1). In line with the programme principles of equity and accountability, and the limited availability of funding, the Coordinators made an early decision to keep the SPCPP office overheads<sup>6</sup> low and develop a lean and sustainable administration, which focussed on results. Working from a rent-free home office and having one full-time coordinator has reduced administration costs. (A second coordinator worked on a part-time basis.) Both coordinators brought to the SPCPP a variety of skills and developed new skills on-the-job to maintain the sustainability of the programme.

The major funding partner of the SPCPP has been the Australian Government. For the first six years the Australian Government through the Federal Bureau of Consumer Affairs provided annual core funding of A\$50,000 for the SPCPP, about half the budget, the SPCPP raised other funds each year for specific projects from funding agencies such as CIDA, AusAID, New Zealand ODA, Pacific Conservation and Development Trust, Australian Law Council, Australian Consumers Association, Anne Fransen Fund (the Netherlands), New Zealand Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Commonwealth Foundation and the Canada Fund.

In 1996, Federal Bureau of Consumer Affairs was restructured after the Australian Government changed. A 1996 report (FBCA 1996) had recommended the SPCPP funding should be continued but funding should move from the FBCA to another government agency. The SPCPP sent a three year funding proposal to AusAID and, after a further review and active lobbying from consumer groups, Pacific island governments and the Australian Consumer's Association, AusAID became the principal sponsor of the SPCPP. A contract (AusAID 1997) was entered into between AusAID and Consumers

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<sup>6</sup> Office overheads were kept to under 5% of total budget.

International on behalf of the SPCPP to fund specific activities for a three-year period from January 1997 to December 1999.

The long-term funding partnership between the Australian government and Consumers International's SPCPP has allowed for continuity in the development of consumer protection in the Pacific over the decade of the 1990's. Long-term funding is unusual for development projects and the longevity of this relationship has been maintained by good will, on the part of the Australian government, and the SPCPP paying particular attention to planning and accountability, developing good working relationships with funders and strong support from programme partners.

## **THE SOUTH PACIFIC CONSUMER PROTECTION PROGRAMME AND PACIFIC ISLAND STATES**

The South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme established and maintained relationships with the state in two ways: firstly as partners in development programmes and secondly as programme funders. The governments of the island nations of the South Pacific were encouraged to become partners in the development of consumer protection programmes. The partnership of Australia, and to a lesser extent, New Zealand, Canada and other governments, was sought as programme funders. Partnership and localisation are two of the declared principles of the SPCPP and the application of these principles has characterised relationships with governments in the Pacific region and funders. The SPCPP aimed to work with Pacific Island governments to build state institutions and develop state policies in order to promote consumer protection.

The Coordinators intention from the start was to develop a cooperative relationship with Pacific island states, working with government agencies, non-government organisations and funders to develop consumer protection for all Pacific island citizens. The vision statement in the SPCPP's third strategic plan spelt out that intention:

"By the year 2000, the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme aims to have consumer protection legislation covering all citizens; organisations providing consumer advocacy, and consumer education and information services available in all the independent island nations of the South Pacific." (SPCPP 1996c: 4)

The first action of the SPCPP was to undertake an extensive needs analysis and consultation. Meeting important government officials and establishing relationships with decision-makers and officials responsible for enacting consumer protection measures was an early priority of the SPCPP. Visits to meet important government officials were made to the independent nations of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, Samoa, Tonga and the Cook Islands. Contact was also made through correspondence with Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Tokelau Islands, American Samoa, and Nauru.

Relationships between the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme and Pacific Island states have been, in the main, cordial and cooperative. The small size of many nations often allowed easy access to senior politicians and officials. During the needs analysis and consultation visits the Coordinators met with many Pacific Island Prime Ministers, Presidents and Ministers of State and were able to lobby them directly to promote the establishment of consumer protection measures. These relationships were maintained by correspondence, briefing the leaders on progress, and return visits. Senior politicians and officials were subsequently invited to officially open consumer education workshops and speak on their government's policies for consumer protection.

All SPCPP activities in Pacific nations were planned as joint-ventures with Pacific island government agencies or non-government organisations. An extract from the welcoming speech at the first consumer education workshop held in the Solomon Islands illustrates the partnership principle in action:

"One of the important principles of the SPCPP is Partnership and this workshop is a joint-venture between the Government, a local NGO (the SIDT) and an international NGO (IOCU). Cooperation is important in this type of project and we are very happy that our three organisations have worked well together, and in the true spirit of the Pacific family, working to serve the interests of our people, especially the marginalised." (SPCPP 1994a: 9)

The SPCPP played an important role in this particular workshop bringing together government and non-government sectors. In a personal communication, Mrs Fineanganofu, the Solomon Islands Secretary for Commerce and Primary Industries who opened the workshop noted that this was the first occasion that the government and non-government sectors had worked together in a joint venture. Subsequent consumer education activities in the Solomons followed this lead.

The most frequent activities undertaken by the SPCPP with governments included: consumer education programmes for government officials, school teachers and community organisations; drafting consumer protection legislation; supporting the establishment of government agencies for consumer protection: setting up local consumer information services, and training staff.

Because of the size of many Pacific Island nations, and the lack of development in the non-government sector, there are few alternatives to working with government agencies. Niue and Tuvalu, with populations of two thousand and ten thousand citizens respectively, are cases in point. In these countries, the government has a central role in most activities on the islands. Apart from the church, there are few NGOs of any significance in these nations. Consequently, the SPCPP initially worked with the governments in the smaller island states to establish a consumer protection presence. In most cases, this would consist of one official with a part-time responsibility for coordinating consumer protection measures. Over time, this modest start could develop further and lead the establishment of a government agency for consumer protection as happened in Kiribati.

In Kiribati, population 78,300 (SPC, 1995), one officer in the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism was given the part-time responsibility for consumer protection after the first strategic plan for the development of consumer protection in Kiribati was written (SPCPP 1996g: 5). Later, after a consumer education workshop was completed and a law drafted, a full-time Consumer Affairs Officer was appointed and the appointee trained by the SPCPP in New Zealand (SPCPP 1997g: 10-11). In 1998, an additional Assistant Consumer Affairs Officer was appointed. Because of resource constraints, that will probably be the extent of consumer protection infrastructure in Kiribati and would be sufficient to maintain a modest, but adequate, programme of activities.

Larger Pacific nations, such as Papua New Guinea and Fiji, have the populations and resources to establish government organisations and statutory agencies to protect consumers, and also have the conditions for a non-government sector to develop. In Fiji three consumer protection organisations exist: the Consumer Council of Fiji (CCF), a statutory body funded by government, which has been operating since 1975; the Department of Fair Trading and Consumer Affairs (DFTCA) which was established in Fiji in 1995 to enforce fair trading and consumer protection laws, and the Fiji Consumer's Association (FCA), a fledgling NGO, set up in 1996. The CCF is a full member, and the DFTCA is a government affiliate member, of Consumers International. The SPCPP has a close working relationship with each of these agencies. In 1997, the SPCPP was invited to facilitate an organisational development review of the CCF that resulted in the production of a corporate plan for the period 1998-2000 (Labati 1997). The SPCPP maintains a role of reviewing CCF progress against this plan.

The SPCPP is a non-government organisation but it has worked extensively with government agencies in Pacific Island nations. Indeed the Consumer Council of PNG, and a range of government agencies in smaller Pacific nations, were established following SPCPP initiatives. The activities and responsibilities of state organisations and civil society institutions, frequently overlapped, particularly in small island states. The SPCPP has a declared

mission to empower consumers; where non-government consumer organisations are undeveloped, the SPCPP has empowered the state to protect consumers.

The small size of most Pacific nations, and the history and nature of the Coordinators involvement in the region were other important factors in the relationship of the SPCPP to Pacific states. Relationships were often personal or familial. One Coordinator, a Samoan woman, with Tuvaluan ancestors, has been involved in Pacific Island community issues for many years. Both Coordinators are familiar and comfortable with Pacific cultural practices and have spent many years in the region.

Chambers (1995) uses the term “the primacy of the personal” to describe the need for development NGOs to shift from a top-down, North to South orientation and to adopt “a participatory philosophy and practice [to achieve genuine] participatory development” (1995: 212). In “An agenda for personal action” (1995: 213), Chambers spells out in some detail the actions development professionals should take “to become aware, committed, honest and courageous in serving and empowering the poor, and enabling others to do the same” (1995: 212). This agenda requires NGOs to review their policies, practices and performance in the following areas: accountability, behaviour, management, disbursements, trust, error and truth, diverse experience, experiential learning and reversals of power. An informal crosscheck between Chambers agenda, and the SPCPP’s policies, practices and performance, suggests that the SPCPP has met most of his requirements for participatory development.

The SPCPP adopted a participatory approach from the outset and actively worked to put that into practice. Consumers International could be identified as a Northern NGO but the SPCPP, as a sub-regional programme of CI’s Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific staffed by people of the region and promoting an indigenous approach to consumer protection, has managed to avoid the stigma of the label Northern NGO. The SPCPP is perceived as a Pacific NGO that has enhanced relationships between the SPCPP and Pacific

Island states. It is axiomatic that people relate to people, not to institutions, organisations, positions or roles. As one Coordinator noted:

"Pacific island people don't relate to Consumers International or the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme; they relate to Luamanuvao and Peter." (pers. comm.)

For a decade, the SPCPP has developed and maintained productive working relationships with governments in most Pacific Island states to advance the objectives of the programme. These relationships have been characterised by participation and partnerships in which the Coordinators relationship with Pacific Island politicians and officials has been a significant factor. Furthermore, the SPCPP has sought and secured funding from the governments of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and other Pacific Rim states to establish and maintain policies and programmes that promote consumer protection in the private and public sectors.

In contrast to the neo-liberal aim of getting the state out of as many activities as possible, and the declared anti-state position of some NGOs, the SPCPP has chosen to work with Pacific Island governments with the twin aims of building state institutions and developing state policies to promote consumer protection. In this way the SPCPP has involved Pacific Island states in strengthening civil society. Often NGOs have conflicted relationships with the state (eg: SIDT, see previous chapter). In contrast, the SPCPP has sought to augment the state in particular areas and strengthen its capacity to resist transnational corporations and the globalisation of the marketplace.

## **THE SOUTH PACIFIC CONSUMER PROTECTION PROGRAMME AND THE MARKET**

The SPCPP has related to the market as "a place and a principle" (Berthoud 1993: 74). This has meant, firstly, relating to individual traders and shopkeepers that trade in Pacific Island marketplaces, and secondly relating to the abstract phenomenon of the market. Through its publications, media

releases and public pronouncements the SPCPP declared the preferred marketplace for the Pacific, and challenged the marketplace to respond. The stated aim of the SPCPP was "to create safe, informed and fair marketplaces and communities in the island nations of the Pacific" (SPCPP 1997f: 16). Individual traders have commented on this aim, in the main agreeing that it was worthy, but the abstract market has not responded.<sup>7</sup>

During the initial needs analysis and consultation in Pacific nations, and on subsequent visits, the SPCPP Coordinators met with trader organisations, usually the local Chamber of Commerce, to discuss consumer protection and raise awareness of consumer rights. Some of these trader groups were initially hostile to outsiders introducing consumer protection and educating consumers. Perhaps this was because traders benefited from an unregulated marketplace with uninformed and naïve consumers. Other traders welcomed the introduction of consumer protection measures and consumer education and awareness programmes because they said it would help to discourage unscrupulous traders.

Discussions with traders would usually begin with a statement from the Coordinators such as:

"Consumer protection is good business, and good for business. If a trader provides a good quality, safe, well-labelled product at a fair price then consumers will be satisfied and come back again. However, if a trader provides poor quality, unsafe, poorly labelled products at unfair prices then consumers are unlikely to buy and will not return. Consumer protection is good for business and traders have to play their part too. Consumers and Traders are part of the same community and we all have to work at being responsible citizens." (pers. comm.)

Traders could easily agree with these sentiments, and the Coordinators would encourage mediation between consumers and traders and discourage an

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<sup>7</sup> The market appears to have deaf ears as well as an invisible hand!

adversarial approach to resolving consumer conflicts. Several traders and storeowners attended consumer education workshops and, apart from receiving some good humoured banter from other participants, they participated fully in workshop activities and frequently promised to improve consumer measures on returning to their stores.

The prevailing neo-liberal development ideology, promoted by transnational corporations, international financial institutions (IMF and World Bank), regional governments and some aid agencies<sup>8</sup>, aims at getting the state out of the market and to deregulate the marketplace (Larmour 1996a, 1996b, 1998, UNDP 1997, NZODA 1998a: 7). The SPCPP has taken the position that, in developing Pacific island nations with small cash economies, large subsistence sectors and few laws, regulations or agencies to protect the interests of consumers, this approach to development is problematic. The SPCPP has actively worked to involve Pacific Island states in regulating, educating and policing the marketplace.

The market has been a central concern of the SPCPP. Whilst individual traders have had some contact with the SPCPP, the market, in the abstract sense, has been approached indirectly through the SPCPP working to change the marketplace behaviour of consumers, and the consumer policies, laws and institutions of governments in Pacific nations.

## **THE SOUTH PACIFIC CONSUMER PROTECTION PROGRAMME AND DEVELOPMENT**

The SPCPP has made significant contributions to development in the island nations of the Pacific through establishing a discourse on consumer protection, promoting a consumer movement and scaling up activities to creating an awareness of the problems consumers face and what actions they may take for change. When the SPCPP was established in 1990, there was one consumer organisation and one, largely ineffective, consumer protection law in place (see Figure 6.1). Eight years later, significant advances have been made in

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<sup>8</sup> See for example NZODA 1998a: 7.

enacting consumer legislation and educating, informing and organising consumers (see Figure 6.2).

Country	Consumer Law	State Agency	Consumer NGO	Con. Ed. Community	Con. Ed. Schools
Fiji	Basic Law	CCF	-	-	-

**Table 6.1. State of Consumer Protection in the Pacific 1990.**

Country	Consumer Law	State Agency	Consumer NGO	Con. Ed. Community	Con. Ed. Schools
Am. Samoa	Enacted	CPB	SAMOA inc	1995	-
Cook Is.	Drafted	DLCT	-	1993	1999
Fiji	Enacted	CCF/DFTCA	FCA	1995	1997
FSM	Drafted	-	-	-	-
Kiribati	Drafted	MLCI	-	1996	1998
Marshall Is.	Enacted	CCRMI	-	1993	-
Niue	Drafted	DCA	-	1998	-
Palau	Drafted	-	-	1999	-
PNG	Enacted	CACPNG	PCA CUENB	1992	1997
Samoa	Enacted	FTD	SPAKS	1992	1997
Solomon Is.	Enacted	OBCA	CASI	1995	1997
Tonga	Drafted	MLCT	-	1994	1999
Tuvalu	Drafted	MTC	-	1997	-
Vanuatu	Drafted	-	NKDT	1995	1999

**Table 6.2. State of Consumer Protection in the Pacific 1999.**

A significant discourse on consumer protection has been established throughout the island nations of the Pacific<sup>9</sup> and the term consumer has now entered the vernacular<sup>10</sup>. This discourse is not confined to academics but is on radio and television; in schools and community organisations; between politicians and voters, and in villages throughout the Pacific.

The SPCPP has mobilised Pacific people in an attempt "to create safe, informed and fair marketplaces and communities in the island nations of the Pacific" (SPCPP 1997f: 16). This reflects the SPCPP's role in the development of the consumer movement; a social movement that aims to provide a countervailing force to the market, to enhance social and economic equity and to contribute to the development discourse. This case study has illustrated the catalytic role that the SPCPP has had in the development of a consumer movement in the Pacific. The SPCPP has, through consumer education programmes and other activities, stimulated individuals, communities, government agencies and non-government organisations to participate in the development of a consumer movement in the Pacific. Further research is required to gauge the extent of popular participation in consumer protection and the level of consumer awareness in the Pacific.<sup>11</sup>

The SPCPP has promoted a discourse on consumerism in the Pacific and linked the emerging social movement with the global consumer movement. Lindberg and Sverrisson (1997) note that early analysis of social movements was limited to "the fixed orbits of nation-states and their respective civil societies" (1997: 2). Globalisation of social issues and the links between local issues and global concerns has led to the development of international social movements and an emerging global civil society. This is another characteristic of the consumer movement in the Pacific, which is linked, through Consumers International, to a global movement.

Social movements are a segment of civil society that, as Sylvan (1997) notes, provides a countervailing force to the market: "The task of civil society is to

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<sup>9</sup> See the results achieved by the SPCPP listed in this chapter.

<sup>10</sup> For example: *konesuma* in Samoan and *konesiuma* in Tuvaluan.

<sup>11</sup> This is an obvious topic for further research.

place the ethical limits on markets. The principal actors in this new focus are social movements" (Sylvan 1997: 4). The South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme deliberately set out to create a social movement, where none existed, and to encourage governments, civil society institutions and citizens to join a consumer movement to check, and as an alternative to, market-driven development.

The SPCPP has not increased the size of the organisation in an attempt to scale up its activities and create a wider impact; an early choice was made to keep the organisation small and the overheads low. Multiplicative strategies, "which do not imply growth but achieve impact through deliberate influence, networking, policy and legal reform or training" (Edwards and Hulme, 1992: 15) have been employed by the SPCPP, and have proven effective, as the preferred strategy for expanding influence and widening impact. Three of the four strategies Edwards and Hulme suggest NGOs can use to create a wider influence have been adopted: working with government; linking the grassroots with lobbying and advocacy, and advocacy in the North.

The strategy of working with governments has been already discussed in some detail but some further comments are added here. In small Pacific Island nations, the government dominates development discourse and programmes and the non-government sector is often small, weak, marginalised or non-existent. Larger Pacific island nations, with a significant NGO sector, frequently require all development project funding to be approved by a government controlled committee. In the Pacific, development organisations frequently face the choice of working with government or not at all. The SPCPP made the early choice to work with governments and that choice has proven to be critical to progress in the promotion of consumer education, passage of consumer protection legislation and the establishment of consumer protection agencies.

Consumer education programmes in schools have all been run as joint ventures with government education agencies. Some mission and church schools have been included in the programmes but the government often has

the responsibility for school curricula and the inclusion of consumer education has had to be negotiated with governments.

In the realm of consumer legislation, government involvement has been critical. Governments were approached directly by the SPCPP and asked to enact consumer protection legislation, which was promoted as part of a comprehensive approach to consumer protection. NGOs and interested community groups were invited to lobby their government to enact consumer laws. The laws that were passed in Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Samoa were all the result of government initiatives (after being supplied with a model consumer law and with considerable prompting from the SPCPP).

Consumers International, whilst an independent non-profit organisation, offers government consumer protection agencies government affiliate membership. Of the six CI members in the Pacific region, three are government affiliates. Because of the relative stability of state funding, compared to the vagaries of NGO funds, government consumer protection agencies have proven to have a greater longevity than consumer NGOs.

The strategy of linking with grassroots organisations and advocacy has been a major tactic of the SPCPP. Over 600 grassroots consumer advocates, from thirteen Pacific Island nations, were trained by the SPCPP over a five-year period. Most of these people came from women's, youth, church, other community groups or traditional village organisations. The approach of empowering rural and poor urban consumers has been central to the work of the SPCPP (IOCU 1994: 61) and consistent with the programme principles of partnership and localisation (SPCPP 1996c: 4-5).

The SPCPP has supported the establishment of consumer NGOs in a number of Pacific nations (Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Fiji, Samoa and American Samoa) however few have lasted. Difficulties in raising sufficient funds to maintain the organisation and pay staff, lack of volunteers and other factors have led to the demise of some consumer NGOs whilst others have

maintained a low key presence. Greater success in empowering grassroots consumers has been achieved through piggy backing consumer programmes onto existing NGOs, women's, youth and community groups and traditional village organisations. The Solomon Islands Development Trust, discussed in Chapter Five, is a good example of the effectiveness of this strategy.

The strategy of advocacy in the North has been employed by the SPCPP for fundraising, training consumer leaders and to gain support for a Pacific voice in international fora. Northern consumer NGOs have been lobbied by the SPCPP for funds and to support funding applications to aid agencies and donors. Examples include: Consumentenbond, a Dutch consumer NGO, which funded two projects in Papua New Guinea; the Australian Consumers Association (ACA) which contributed funds to projects, provided training placements for Pacific consumer leaders and lobbied the Australian Government to continue funding the SPCPP; the Canadian Government which funded the publication of *Cola and Coconuts?* and a number of small projects, and the New Zealand Ministry of Consumer Affairs, which have funded some projects, including sponsoring Pacific Island delegates to international fora, and provided training placements. A Pacific voice is now heard regularly at international consumer fora<sup>12</sup>.

Chambers (1992: 40) fifth category, for scaling up the work of NGOs, of spreading and self-improving could also be applied to the SPCPP. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that consumer education ideas have been spread by those that have attended SPCPP programmes. Schools in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Kiribati and the Solomon Islands are spreading consumer education programmes but whether they are self improving educational strategies is a matter for conjecture or further research. The SPCPP set out to spread the word about consumer protection, measuring how far the message has reached is beyond the scope of this study but a suitable topic for further research.

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<sup>12</sup> For example, in 1997 Pacific islanders presented papers at CI meetings in India, Malaysia and Chile.

The Coordinators approach to development has been to empower consumers through education and information activities, by supporting the establishment and growth of local organisations, maintaining a small organisational structure with low overheads and through not creating dependence on the SPCPP. By the end of 1998, many of the goals of the SPCPP had been achieved and the Coordinators began to consider whether to continue the SPCPP beyond 1999. A process of consultation was initiated in early 1999 with the aim of determining the future of the SPCPP<sup>13</sup>.

In conclusion, the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme has established a discourse on consumer protection, led the development of the consumer movement in the Pacific during the last decade and scaled up activities. These advances have been made in partnership with communities, governments and non-government organisations. The SPCPP has established institutions, educated and informed consumers and traders, promoted policies and laws which have contributed to creating safer, fairer and better informed marketplaces in the island nations of the Pacific. This has been achieved by working with governments, linking with the grassroots and through advocacy in the North.

In 1990 when the Coordinators started their work on the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme, they had not studied what Esteva 1993 refers to as "the distorted history" (1993: 8) of development, nor had they examined Martinussen's (1997) competing theories of development. Their intention was to understand the day-to-day problems that faced consumers in the Pacific islands and to work pragmatically with consumers and their communities to make some "good change", what Robert Chambers (1997: xiv) refers to as, development. After a decade of work, the Coordinators believe some good changes have been achieved.

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<sup>13</sup> At the time of writing a final decision had not been made.

## SUMMARY

The South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme has created a discourse on consumer protection and led the development of the consumer movement in the island nations of the Pacific during the 1990s through systematically working with government and non-government sectors. This case study has illustrated the significant advances that have been initiated and implemented by the SPCPP in educating consumers; providing relevant consumer information, often in local languages; enacting legislation and regulations to protect consumers, and developing a regional network of consumer organisations.

Relationships between the state, the market and the consumer movement, as a segment of civil society, has been a constant theme throughout this case study. The SPCPP has worked with Pacific Island governments to build state institutions and develop state policies to protect consumers, and with Pacific Rim states to fund that work. The SPCPP has established cooperative working relationships with the state through a pragmatic focus on outcomes for consumers.

The market has been approached indirectly by the SPCPP through influencing and changing the marketplace behaviour of consumers, education and information programmes, and assisting governments develop state policies, laws and institutions that protect and promote the interests of consumers. The prevailing neo-liberal development ideology promoted by transnational corporations, international financial institutions, regional governments and some aid agencies, aims at getting the state out of the market and deregulating the marketplace. This ideology has contributed to the weakening the state (Migdal 1988: 231) in state-society and state-market relationships during the post-colonial period in the Pacific region. Aid policies are currently favouring private sector development (NZODA 1998: 7), and a reduction of state involvement in the market. The South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme, working in developing Pacific island nations with small cash economies, large subsistence sectors and few laws, regulations or agencies to

protect the interests of consumers, has viewed this approach to development as problematic and promoted an alternative approach. Civil society, manifest in the consumer movement, is central to the approach to development promoted by the SPCPP, and is seen as having an important role as a countervailing force in a tripartite relationship with the state and the market.

## CHAPTER 7

### CROSS CASE ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

#### INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the three case studies, presented in the previous chapters, to determine if they shed any light on the role of civil society in development in the island nations of the Pacific. First, a word on methodology.

A multiple-case study method was employed in this study because it has the capacity to identify any patterns or common themes between similar phenomena at different sites, and contribute to explanation building. As Yin (1994) notes:

“In a multiple-case study, one goal is to build a general explanation that fits each of the individual cases, even though the cases will vary in their details.” (1994: 112)

Yin identifies four dominant modes of case study analysis, pattern matching, explanation building, time series analysis, and programme logic models (1994: 106-119). Time series analysis and programme logic models focus on testing single dependent or independent variables in an experimental or quasi-experimental approach. Pattern matching and explanation building approaches are employed in this study as they are designed to “explain a phenomenon” [by stipulating a set of] “causal links about it” (1994: 110-111) which may lead to major contributions to theory building. The pattern matching and explanation building case study analysis procedures are mainly relevant to explanatory case studies such as this current study.

A common case-study protocol and set of research questions shaped the fieldwork, data collection and writing of the three case studies, of segments of civil society.

The protocol and questions provided a framework for the inquiry, a shape for the reports and a structure for the cross-case analysis.

### **Cross-Case Analysis Matrix.**

To simplify the process of comparison a Cross-Case Analysis Matrix (Table 7.1) was devised (see next page). In this matrix the key concerns and research questions, that were addressed in each case study, are listed down the vertical axis and the three case studies across the horizontal axis, creating a matrix of cells. A statement, summarising the perspective obtained from each case study, against each key concern or research question, was written and inserted into each cell. The completed matrix provided a useful tool for comparing and contrasting the findings of the three case studies. Apparently unrelated issues began to form a mosaic and a number of patterns emerged.

The Cross-Case Analysis Matrix graphically illustrated obvious areas of difference between the three case studies and demonstrated the areas of commonality. The common themes and patterns that emerged, from the construction and analysis of the Cross-Case Analysis Matrix, were identified, defined, and are discussed below.

### **Themes and Patterns**

In this inquiry three sectors of civil society, in three locations, were studied in some depth. A number of common themes and patterns emerged from an analysis of the three case studies. Five important themes or patterns, that have the potential to explain something of the contribution civil society makes to economic and social development in the Pacific, were identified and are discussed in detail below. In summary the five important themes or patterns are:

**Table 7.1. Cross Case Analysis Matrix**

	<i>Fa'asamoa</i>	SIDT	SPCPP
<b>Segment of Civil Society</b>	Traditional form of mutual assistance	National, indigenous, third generation NGO	Regional NGO social movement
<b>Location and Context</b>	Samoa, local, village based	Solomon Islands, national HQ, village programmes	Pacific wide, NZ based, regional & national projects
<b>Organisation &amp; Networks</b>	Traditional roles and responsibilities, national, regional and international connections	National HQ, decentralised village based operations, regional and international connections	International, regional, linked to local networks, regional and international connections
<b>Aims Objectives</b>	Provides a place of belonging & meaning; strengthens community	Strengthen the quality of village life	Establish safe, informed and fair marketplace and communities
<b>Methods</b>	Provides direction, structure, process and programme for daily living, village projects	Programmes of development education, wealth creation, community development, politicisation	Education, information, legal, organisational and community development programmes
<b>Principles</b>	Communal, consensual, cooperative, reciprocal, spiritual	Participatory, empowering, bottom up, practical, sustainable	Partnership, localised, equitable, cultural fit, accountable
<b>Relationship with State</b>	As citizens through Fono, established structure and process, clear boundaries and relationships	Problematic, conflictual, contractual, developing consultative processes, clear role/relationship	Cooperation with government agencies, structure and processes established
<b>Relationship with Market</b>	Direct, as consumers and traders in village and town	Indirect, through education, publications, advocacy and lobbying	Indirect, through education, information, law and policy development
<b>Contribution to Development</b>	Structure and process to negotiate with agencies of development, contributes to village and national projects: health, social, cultural, economic. An indigenous development paradigm	Devpt. Education programmes: health, wealth, social and environmental. Alternative approach to development. Indigenous knowledge & epistemology valued	Established consumer protection discourse, developed social movement, consumer education, information, laws, organisations in Pacific cultural framework
<b>Approach to Scaling Up</b>	Linking and spreading through international kin networks	Additive, multiplicative and spreading, advocacy with North, networking	Multiplicative, advocacy with North, spreading and networking

- Each of the three segments of civil society made a significant contribution to development and was shaped by its particular social, cultural, geographical, political and historical context.
- Each case study reflected a specific approach to addressing development that was pragmatic, comprehensive, and integrated social, political, economic, cultural and other objectives.
- Each approach to development was driven by a clear set of principles that were based on local knowledge and an indigenous epistemology but were open to incorporating relevant ideas and practices from outside.
- Each segment of civil society developed a process and structure for negotiating their relationship with the state and the market.
- Each segment of civil society represented an alternative approach to the dominant development paradigm and demonstrated a potential to scale up.

## **CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEXT**

This inquiry found that each of the three segments of civil society studied made a significant contribution to development and was shaped by its particular social, cultural, geographical, political and historical context. This finding has two aspects; each will be examined in turn.

Firstly, there was the contribution to development. That non-government organisations and social movements are segments of civil society and make significant contributions to development is hardly a surprising finding. The Solomon Islands Development Trust and the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme were established for just that purpose and both have made significant contributions to development through making good changes

in their respective areas of influence<sup>1</sup>. Of interest here are the factors that contributed to success, because not all NGOs are successful and many fail to make significant contributions to development. Edwards and Hulme note: “the impact of NGOs on the lives of the poor people is highly localised, and often transitory” (1992: 13).

Both the SIDT and the SPCPP undertook significant periods of consultation, needs analysis and relationship building before they set goals or established programmes. These processes laid the foundations for later work. The SIDT and the SPCPP were also both based on an explicit set of development principles and the early leaders were experienced in community development practice. Furthermore, they have each maintained transparent systems of planning, accountability and evaluation. Both have established and maintained long-term relationships with funding agencies. Community participation has been encouraged and facilitated by both organisations as an integral part of their operations. Less obvious factors include the longevity of the organisations, the continuity of leadership and the efforts made to integrate cultural and gender issues into all aspects of each organisation. Finally, the work of the SIDT and the SPCPP has been relevant, timely and as much concerned about the process of development as the outcomes. These are some of the factors, identified in the case studies, which have led to success.

That the *fa'asamoa* was found to make a significant contribution to development is a more controversial finding, as tradition is often seen as inhibiting rather than fostering development. By taking an inclusive definition of civil society<sup>2</sup>, it has been argued that traditional forms of mutual assistance in the Pacific may be seen as important segments of civil society. The *fa'asamoa*, a traditional form of mutual assistance in Samoa, was found to be actively contributing to the social and economic development of the village of Nu'uaiga rather than acting as the dead hand of tradition. Consequently the

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<sup>1</sup> These contributions have been discussed in detail in the respective case studies.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter 2.

*fa'asamoa* was found to make a significant contribution to development. The *fa'asamoa* was seen to be a living entity that adapts to the changing world and enables Samoan people to create their own meaning about development and to make their own development choices. This process of adaptation was found to be reciprocal. The *fa'asamoa* has changed and adapted to the modern world, but it, in turn, has changed and shaped the nature of those elements of the outside world that have arrived on the shores of Samoa. Government agencies, churches, businesses and non-government organisations operating in Samoa all develop a *fa'asamoa* dimension over time.

The active valuing of tradition and culture in development, as demonstrated in the case study of the *fa'asamoa* and in the work of the SIDT and the SPCPP, is in conflict with the views of the theorists of modernisation<sup>3</sup> (Lewis 1955, Rostow 1960) and dependency<sup>4</sup> (Baran 1957, Amin 1976, Frank 1981). Both modernisation and dependency theorists see the disappearance of traditional and pre-capitalist forms of social organisation as inevitable and desirable. In practice, modernisation has led, and continues to lead, to the loss of many traditional societies throughout the world in both capitalist and socialist polities (Beauclark 1988).

In the light of the failure of the development project (McMichael 1996: 241), the place of tradition in the development discourse is subject to rethinking. Keesing (1989) has pointed out how the Pacific past has been recreated to support modern political ideologies. Turner (1997) argues: "the discourse of tradition is a political discourse, for the content of tradition is frequently contested" (1997: 346). The anthropological debate about the invention of tradition<sup>5</sup> (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) is obliquely related to this discussion.

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<sup>3</sup> Martinussen defines modernisation as "a structural change process whereby the traditional and backward Third World countries developed towards greater similarity with the Western, or rather, the North-Western world" (1997: 38).

<sup>4</sup> Martinussen notes that dependency theorists aimed to promote "national independence and self-centred economic progress" but he argues that "the final objective was the introduction of socialism" (1997: 39).

<sup>5</sup> The invention of tradition appears to be an oxymoron which could be alternatively expressed by the term myth making.

The central point, however, is that any discussion around tradition should be approached cautiously. Tradition has been identified by modernists as an impediment to progress and development, and thus should be eliminated. In contrast, tradition (*kastom* in the Melanesian context) has been created to support the political agendas of nationalists. As Keesing (1989) notes: "In the rhetoric of postcolonial nationalism (and sometimes separatism) and the struggles of indigenous Fourth World peoples, now minorities in their own homelands, visions of the past are being created and evoked" (1989: 19). Care needs to be taken to ensure any arguments in favour, or against, tradition are not accepted uncritically.

Modernisation and dependency theorists theorists advocate a universalist approach to development, based on stages of development, dictated from outside. This is in sharp contrast to people-centred (Korten 1984, 1996), alternative (Friedmann 1992), participatory (Chambers 1983, 1997) and indigenous (Gegeo 1998) development theorists and practitioners who value tradition and argue that development is best driven by local concerns and knowledge. The findings of this enquiry fit alongside those theorists who argue that development is context specific, does not follow prescribed stages, is best driven from inside and that there is a place for tradition and culture.

The many contributions made to development by the *fa'asamoa* to the village community are discussed in the case study. Perhaps its greatest contribution is existential, in that the *fa'asamoa* provides Samoan people with a sense of meaning and a place of belonging in a confusing and changing world. In a similar way the Solomon Islands Development Trust, through a range of development education programmes, has assisted over two-thirds of the village population of the Solomon Islands to make some meaning of the changes wrought by development on their environment and life style. The South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme, at a regional level, through education and information programmes has sought to raise the awareness of Pacific people of the impacts of consumerism on their way of life and to think deeply about the meaning and impact of the choices they face each day.

Challenging people to think deeply about who they are and where they fit into the wider world is an important feature of the development education programmes of the SIDT and the SPCPP.

The existential contribution of these segments of civil society to development was at first a surprising finding. On later reflection this was less surprising, as people are more likely to seek meaning in their daily relationships and associational life than find ultimate meaning in the state and the market. This finding is consistent with Wolfe's (1989b) view of the role of civil society in encouraging moral obligation between people and within communities. The central role of the church, in the re-emergence of civil society in Latin America (Friere 1970, 1972, Gutiérrez 1973, Boff 1993, Fernandez 1994) and Eastern Europe (Havel 1992, 1997), also supports the view that peoples' search for meaning is an integral part of realising development, and that civil society has an important role to play.

Each of the three segments of civil society, examined in this enquiry, made good changes, in their own unique ways, and thereby significantly contributed to development in their different communities.

Secondly, there is a need to see development in context. Let us now consider those communities and the role of the particular social, cultural, geographical, political and historical contexts in shaping civil society institutions. It may be rather obvious that social organisations are shaped by their local context. However, development literature is full of examples of projects, organisations and programmes that have been successful in one place and failed in another.<sup>6</sup>

The *fa'asamoa* grew out of and was shaped by, a particular context, as were the Solomon Islands Development Trust and the South Pacific Consumer

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<sup>6</sup>Gegeo (1998) provides examples of development failures in the Solomon Islands, see also Ndegwa (1996) and Porter et al. (1991).

Protection Programme. The people of Samoa, and the *fa'asamoa*, have been shaped by the culture, geography, politics and history of that land. The size, closeness of the Samoan Islands<sup>7</sup>, and their distance from neighbours, has resulted in a homogenous, distinctive and resilient culture. One language is spoken and, whilst Samoans can be found throughout the world, the village remains the centre of each extended family.

Samoans have particular ways of working, communicating and decision making. For example: all village meetings begin and end with prayer, time is taken to formally acknowledge all participants, their genealogy and their relationships with lands and titles. Before getting down to business, time is set aside to discuss matters of general interest and refreshments may be served. If the correct protocols are not observed there is poor participation, little discussion and no decisions can be made. Understanding the local context, including protocols, ways of working and decision making, is critical for engaging in successful development work in Samoa.

In contrast to Samoa, the Solomon Islands is a diverse nation. Many languages, different customs and cultural diversity characterise the people of the Solomons. The greater size, variety of land forms and closeness of neighbours has influenced the heterogenous nature of Solomon Island society. These contextual issues have also shaped the Solomon Islands Development Trust and how it operates with a decentralised structure, teams of village workers with local knowledge, language skills, and a variety of programmes developed for specific locations. The SIDT is an organisation that has grown and shaped itself to meet the unique requirements of the Solomons.

The SPCPP operates in a different context again. The vastness of the Pacific Ocean and the smallness of the islands can lead to the perception that this is a

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<sup>7</sup> Traditionally inter-island transport was by *fautasi* (long rowing boats) and all islands of the Samoa group were easily reached. Aeroplanes are the preferred mode of transport today.

remote and difficult region to work in: tiny islands separated by hostile seas. Epeli Hau'ofa (1994, 1998) advances a different view of Oceania as:

“...a large world in which people and cultures moved and mingled, unhindered by boundaries of the kind erected much later by imperial powers. From one island to another they sailed to trade and to marry, thereby expanding social networks for greater flows of wealth. They travelled to visit relatives in a wide variety of natural and cultural surroundings, to quench their thirst for adventure, and even to fight and dominate.” (1994: 153-4)

The SPCPP has operated on the basis of Hau'ofa's expansive view of the Pacific as a sea of islands linked by an ocean that has been a busy highway for millennia. It was across this sea of islands that the SPCPP took twelve months to complete a comprehensive needs analysis and consultation to make a thorough study of the region, before embarking on programme delivery. Taking time provided opportunities to develop relationships, to find out what people thought the problems were and to establish what processes were required to set goals and plan a programme. The fact that one of the coordinators was indigenous to the region, could link her genealogy to two island groups, and her family history to several more, and had worked in the region for over twenty years was important in establishing relationships. The coordinators were seen as of the Pacific, part of the context, not as outsiders.

The success the SPCPP has had in getting consumer laws enacted, establishing education programmes and organising consumers over a decade was based on an understanding of the context in which the work was to take place. Time was made to meet people, understand their concerns and develop relationships, before getting down to business.

Western-orientated development often ignores local contexts. The three segments of civil society were each shaped by their particular social, cultural, geographical, political and historical context and in turn used an

understanding of the local context to shape their programme aims and processes of working. Affirming, nurturing and working as part of the local context is seen as critical for creating good change in the island nations of the Pacific.

## **PRAGMATIC, COMPREHENSIVE, INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT**

Each case study reflected a specific approach to addressing development that was pragmatic<sup>8</sup>, comprehensive<sup>9</sup>, and integrated<sup>10</sup> social, political, economic, cultural and other objectives.

The SIDT and the SPCPP each sought pragmatic, practical answers to real problems and, whilst they were both well informed theoretically, they were not driven by ideology. Supsup gardens, improved toilets, raised kitchens and treated mosquito nets are practical responses the SIDT has developed to deal with the problems of food security, nutrition, sanitation and communicable diseases. The SPCPP developed practical education and information programmes in local languages, consumer laws and organisations to create safer, better-informed and fairer marketplaces. In a similar way the *fa'asamoa* deals with the day-to-day issues that face villagers: how to generate an income, to care for the elderly, to look after the village environs, celebrate important events, provide activities for young people and transmit the culture from generation to generation. The three segments of civil society each provided pragmatic responses to real concerns.

The three approaches to development were also comprehensive. They did not deal with single issues separately but took an approach that viewed individual problems as part of a larger whole. Consumer laws, for example, were promoted by the SPCPP as part of the wider issue of consumer protection, which also required education, information and community organisation

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<sup>8</sup> Pragmatic: "dealing with matters with regard to their practical requirements or consequences".

<sup>9</sup> Comprehensive: "complete, including all or nearly all elements, aspects".

<sup>10</sup> Integrate: "combine (parts) into a whole." (Concise Oxford Dictionary 1990.)

responses. During consumer education workshops, the first day was devoted to developing an understanding of problems Pacific Island consumers face within a wider social, economic and historical context. Furthermore, consumer protection was viewed within a larger context of globalisation, the current development discourse and the history of the Pacific.

The SIDT has spent a large amount of time and energy on the single issue of logging, but it was treated in a comprehensive manner as part of the wider development discourse. The SIDT undertook a wide variety of programmes that dealt with health, nutrition, education, wealth creation, the environment, women, men and children. In fact all aspects of village life. This comprehensive approach to development was consistent with Solomon Islands villagers world view (their indigenous epistemology) which views all things as connected, part of a seamless whole.

Development programmes that have focussed on single issues have largely failed in the Solomons. For example, the overseas logging ventures that sought to extract timber, promoting the economic benefits of this venture, but did not consider the social and environmental consequences have largely failed (SPREP 1992, Frazer 1997, Bennett 1995, Vulum 1998, Kubutaulaka 1998). In contrast the SIDT's comprehensive approach to creating wealth from natural resources, whilst sustaining cultural, social and environmental values, has been successful (Roughan 1993, 1997, Vuetilovoni 1998, Cassells and Scheyvens 1999). A comprehensive, long-term approach to development is an important factor in the success of the SIDT's programmes in village communities throughout the Solomon Islands.

The Samoan proverb *O Samoa ua ta oto, ao se i'a mai moana, aua o le i'a a samoa ua uma ona 'a'isa* (Samoa is like an ocean fish divided into sections) was quoted in the case study of Nu'uaiga to illustrate the comprehensive nature of the *fa'asamoa*. Whilst the separate parts of the *fa'asamoa* may be identified, they are but different aspects of the whole. The *fa'asamoa* approach to development is comprehensive in that all aspects of village life are linked

together. The decision making bodies (*fono* and various committees) work together and the communal, consensual and cooperative methods of discussion and decision making ensure that all groups within the community have a voice and place in community programmes and activities.

The SPCPP combined legal, educational, information and organisational objectives, and worked in joint-ventures with government agencies and community organisations to incorporate a consumer protection agenda into existing programmes. The three segments of civil society combined social, political, economic, cultural and other aspects into an integrated development programme. A review of articles published in the *South Pacific Consumer's Report* over an nine year period illustrates the wide variety of information made available to Pacific Island consumers<sup>11</sup> and the integrated nature of the SPCPP approach to consumer protection. Health issues, such as the increase of non-communicable disease, were linked to economic and social changes such as the migration from rural areas to urban centres, the change from subsistence to a cash economy and the change of diet from fresh local food was linked to imported processed food.

The Solomon Islands Development Trust has also aimed to combine many aspects of development in their range of projects. The Conservation in Development programme is a good example. Conservation values are combined with income generation, village politics, and land tenure issues, gender roles and all the facets of strengthening the village community. The octagonal model of the SIDT programmes (Appendix 2) clearly illustrates the integrated approach to development of the SIDT.

Developed over millennia, the *fa'asamoa* may be regarded as an indigenous development paradigm, a complete, integrated programme of living. The *fa'asamoa* is the pattern for social, cultural, economic, political and cultural aspects of Samoan life.

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<sup>11</sup> See Chapter 5.

The development project has often been driven by ideology. The idea of progress drove colonialists to impose Western forms of governance and technology on colonised people, in the belief that they knew better than the natives (Escobar 1995: 93, Shanin 1997, Gegeo 1998). More recently, neo-liberal economics (economic rationalism) has driven much of recent economic development in the Pacific and sought to change the so called irrational economic behaviour of traditional societies. Outside ideas and practices have often failed. Poirine (1995) notes, "that standard economic theory does not always apply well in Pacific Island cultures [and that economists need to] learn to adapt the assumptions of their economic models to that culture. People are rational everywhere, but their rational behaviour has to be understood in the context of a particular culture, even if this culture is changing over time with economic development" (Poirine 1995: 47). Development should not be isolated from context it must be integrated and rational to locals. Each of the three case studies reflected a specific approach to addressing development that was pragmatic, comprehensive, integrated social, political, economic, cultural and other objectives and was rational to local people.

## **PRINCIPLES, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND INDIGENOUS EPISTEMOLOGY**

Each approach to development was driven by a clear set of principles that were based on local knowledge and an indigenous epistemology but were open to incorporating relevant ideas and practices from outside. These three factors are now discussed. The three sets of principles, listed in Table 7.1, have a consistency that reflects the cultural values of the Pacific. Cooperation, participation, reciprocity, a sense of community and a thread of spirituality run through each set of principles. These values have often been referred to as the Pacific Way, a term coined by Ratu Sir Kamasese Mara, to reflect the unique set of values and aspirations linking Pacific Island communities (Tupouniua et al 1980: 1). These Pacific Island values have often been in conflict with the values brought to the Pacific by missionaries, settlers, colonists and traders and through the mass media today (Crocombe 1983, Crocombe et al. 1992).

Furthermore, the transnational corporations, that dominate the marketplace today, operate on a set of values, based on individualism (see below), which are in sharp contrast to communal Pacific Island values.

Wolfe (1989) suggests that one of the key values found in civil society, but absent from the state and the market, is the importance placed on our obligations to each other. Moral obligation is the term used by Wolfe to describe the intimate ties that bind people in communities to each other. Wolfe argues that self-interest and individualism are promoted by the market, and that when we rely on the impersonal state to regulate our lives we distance ourselves from others. He reminds us of the precious gift of society: "Society does not carry out our obligations to others for us, but instead creates the possibility that we can carry those obligations out ourselves" (1989: 23).

The SPCPP makes explicit two sets of conflicting values evident when Pacific Island people are confronted by the modern marketplace (Laban and Swain 1996: 51). The values of the Pacific Way and the values of the Way of the Marketplace are clearly in conflict (see Table 7.2. below).

**Table 7.2. Different Ways.**

<b>The Pacific Way</b>	<b>The Way of the Marketplace</b>
Communal	Individual
(Extended family, clan, village)	(Individual, nuclear family)
Consensual	Confrontational
(Participation and shared decision making)	(Take it or leave it)
Cooperative	Competitive
(Seeking positive outcomes for all)	(Winners and losers)
Reciprocal	Profit Seeking
(Sharing creates obligations to each other)	(Only obligation is to money)
Spiritual	Secular
(Sacredness of food and products made by people)	(Only the dollar is sacred)

This table has been used by the writer in consumer education workshops to illustrate the clash of values when the marketplace confronts Pacific Islanders and Pacific Islanders confront the marketplace. The two sets of values make clear the dilemma Pacific Island people face when shopping or seeking redress for a faulty product. Because Pacific Island people value highly their relationships with others, they are unlikely to seek a refund or replacement for an unsatisfactory item. Relationships are seen as more important than products and Pacific people are prone to put the relationship with the shopkeeper ahead of their rights as a consumer. This makes them vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous traders.

In consumer education workshops, the SPCPP workshop leaders raise the dilemma: "If you are a passive consumer and do not seek redress you will be ripped off; if you are an assertive consumer you are going against your cultural values and will feel uncomfortable and embarrassed and lose out that way."<sup>12</sup> Role-plays are used in the workshops to find ways to resolve this dilemma. Pacific Island people soon find that they do have ways, which are consistent with their cultural values and behaviour, of ensuring that they are not exploited. It is only when they understand that what they are facing is a clash of values that they feel empowered to seek redress or make good choices about their shopping.<sup>13</sup>

The principles or values the three segments of civil society examined in this study were made explicit. Values had an important role in shaping the direction and methods used in these development programmes. This, however, is not always the case. Principles and values are not always made explicit, consequently a development programme may have a hidden ideology. Microcredit programmes (UNDP 1997, NZODA 1998a, NZODA

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<sup>12</sup> This is parallel to the modern-tradition dilemma raised by Wolfe and discussed above (pp. 35-36).

<sup>13</sup> Workshop leaders also remind participants that traders have responsibilities to ensure their goods and services are safe and fairly priced and, furthermore, that the state has a role to regulate the market and enforce consumer protection laws.

1998b) are an example of this phenomena. We are told, in a recent NZODA publication:

“The concept of Microcredit is going from strength to strength in the South Pacific with new programmes established in Fiji, Tahiti, Solomon Islands and Samoa. A Microcredit specialist is to be appointed by AusAID, and the Asian Development Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Bank are considering setting up schemes in the Pacific.” (NZODA 1998a: 6)

Microcredit is set to become a major programme area in developing countries. A 1997 microcredit summit in New York “has pledged that 100 million poor people should be able to access Microcredit programmes by the year 2005” (NZODA 1998b: 6). This sounds desirable, but the underlying values of microcredit are not made explicit in the promotional material, though there are some clues. People are encouraged through microcredit programmes to borrow small amounts of money to set up a business. It is argued that development will be achieved through individual entrepreneurship, and free enterprise. A close examination of the programme information reveals that microcredit programmes are based on a market-driven approach to development and result in a particular type of social organisation that is in conflict with traditional Pacific social values (see Shadrake 1996, and Liew 1997, cited in UNDP 1997: 47). Furthermore, these small business ventures may be problematic, in small Pacific Island economies such as Samoa, as Macpherson and Macpherson (1998) noted:

“The government attempts to promote, with the assistance of aid donors, small business ventures as an alternative to agricultural activity. The promoters of these ventures often overlook the fact that small business in small and contracting economies are vulnerable because of under-capitalisation and the low incomes of potential clients and customers. They also appear to overlook the difficulties

of conducting business among kin which have brought many small businesses in Samoa to their knees. (1998: 92)

Microcredit favours the values of the Way of the Marketplace over those of the Pacific Way. Microcredit programmes are clearly located within the neo-liberal ideological tradition. But microcredit is presented by advocates in a neutral, non-ideological fashion. This disguises a hidden ideology. Shadrake (1996) came to a similar conclusion in his Samoan research when he noted: "This thesis shows the primacy of neo-liberal thinking in New Zealand's overseas small-business development practice ... despite its stated concern for women and, to a lesser extent, for culture ... neo-liberalism can adopt perspectives of development which appear to spring from a concern for social welfare, and turn them to its own ends" (1995: iv).

In contrast to programmes with a hidden ideology, the SIDT, the SPCPP and the *fa'asamoa* are based on explicit sets of principles and founded on indigenous cultural values and local knowledge. These principles are made explicit in programme materials, publications and communications.

During the development decades of the 1960s and 1970s many modern ideas were brought to the Pacific and to Africa, Asia and Latin America (see McMichael 1996, Rist 1997). This was in the hope that modern ideas would solve the problems of the Third World and bring them up to the developed First World of capitalism or the Second World of state socialism. Rural development (Oxenham 1981, Bamford 1986, Howes and Sattar 1992), community development (Hope, Timmel and Hodzi 1985) and appropriate technology were some of these ideas and projects. Whilst the projects of modernisation frequently had worthy aims, and often produced early results, many ultimately failed because they were outside ideas driven by overseas experts (Porter 1991, Ferguson 1997). Whilst the intentions were frequently commendable, modernisation projects carried a sub-text that read: "We know better than you." They were also inherently patronising and racist as they denied local

knowledge (Shiva 1997, Gegeo 1998) and implied that “the natives are backward” and something needed to be fixed (Escobar 1995: 93).

It is now clear modern ideas have not solved the problems of the Third World, the evidence would suggest that the quality of life of many of the citizens of the developing world has deteriorated rather than improved (Macpherson and Macpherson 1998). The post-development literature provides many examples which question the basic assumption of modernisation. The idea of progress has been challenged by Sbert (1993), Escobar (1995), Cowen and Shenton (1996) and Shanin (1997). The ability of traditional societies to provide for the material needs of their communities has been long argued by Sahlins (1997) whilst the poverty and hunger of many modern societies is now well documented (Young 1995, Kaplan 1996).

In his reflection, on arriving in the Solomon Islands, John Roughan noted that he came “with the typical normal baggage of someone coming from the first world. I saw poor people” (CS2-04). It took him some time to realise “that these people were money poor but quite rich” (CS2-04). Their wealth was in land, resources, local knowledge and an understanding of their world built up over millennia. Not only had the village people in the Solomon Islands developed an understanding of the plants, animals, fish, geography and cosmology of their world, they had also developed a particular world-view that Gegeo would later refer to as an “indigenous epistemology” (1998: 290).

Oliver Sacks (1996) writes of the same phenomenon in Micronesia.

“Bill himself came to Pohnpei as a volunteer Jesuit missionary, prepared to teach the natives about agricultural management and plant conservation. He had arrived with a sort of arrogance, he told me, flushed with the hubris of Western science, and then had been astonished, humbled, by finding in the local medicine man a vastly detailed and systematic knowledge of the plants on the island – they recognized dozens of different ecosystems, from the mangrove

swamps and seagrass beds to the dwarf forests at the summit. Every plant on the island, Bill said, was considered significant and sacred; the vast majority were seen as therapeutic. Much of this he had discounted as mere superstition when he came to Pohnpei, but now he was more inclined to think in anthropological terms, and to see what he had first called 'superstition' as a highly developed 'concrete science' (in Levi-Strauss's term), an immense system of knowledge and principles wholly different from his own." (Sacks 1996: 92)

The botanist, Bill, had been confronted by another world view an indigenous epistemology that confronted and challenged his Western education. Like many other outsiders Bill had thought the natives were ignorant and superstitious; unlike many outsiders he took the time to reflect on his own prejudices, question his preconceptions and open himself up to another perspective. Sacks continues:

"Having come to teach, he found himself instead listening and learning, and after a while started to form fraternal or collegial relationships with the medicine men, so that their complementary knowledge and skills and attitudes could be joined." (Sacks 1996: 92)

Bill recognised that local knowledge had validity, formed a parallel paradigm to the Western scientific tradition and that he could learn much from the local people.

"...here their powers had been moulded by a different tradition – more concrete, less theoretical than ours, so that their knowledge was intimately bound up with the bodily and mental and spiritual balance of their people, with magic and myth, the sense that man and his environment were not separable, were one." (Sacks 1996: 92)

This reflection provides an insight into the nature of an indigenous epistemology, which Gegeo defines as:

“a cultural group’s way of thinking and creating and reformulating knowledge using traditional discourses and media of communication and anchoring the truth of the discourse in culture.” (Gegeo 1998: 290)

What was unrecognised, during the development decades, was that many development programmes and projects of modernisation were based on a western discourse and values, used western media of communication and were anchored in western culture. Escobar (1997) noted that: “Indigenous populations had to be ‘modernized’, where modernization meant the adoption of the ‘right’ values – namely those held by the white majority or a *mestizo* majority and, in general, those embodied in the ideal of the cultivated European” (1997: 89-90). The western epistemology was often seen as value free and sometimes welcomed as modern. At the same time tradition was replaced because it was seen as backward or impeding progress. Shiva (1997) lays much of the blame for the loss of local knowledge on the Western scientific tradition: “The reductionist and universalizing tendencies of such ‘science’ become inherently violent and destructive in a world which is inherently interrelated and diverse” (1997: 161-162). To become modern, in Tollefson’s words, third world people “must break free of ‘traditional’ institutional structures” (1991: 82, cited in Gegeo 1998).

The hegemony of modernisation theory was at its peak in the Solomon Islands during the late colonial and early post-colonial periods. Gegeo noted, at that time, local people only participated as labourers, consumers and observers:

“Rural development was promoted not in response to the needs of the villagers, but according to what the expatriate colonial leaders presumed to be the best for the Solomon Islands under a model applied elsewhere in the British Empire.” (Gegeo 1998: 296)

The SIDT approach to development, based on local knowledge and a growing indigenous epistemology, challenged the prevailing development paradigm promoted by the state, transnational corporations and international financial institutions.

The Solomon Islands Development Trust and the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme have both valued local knowledge and acknowledged an indigenous epistemology of the context in which they operate. This is reflected in the processes used in programme development, the delivery of programmes, the leadership of the organisations and the relationships established and maintained with indigenous communities. These values are not the product of naïve romanticising about culture or a mythical past, but have developed after long experience, some failures, and a willingness of the leaders to learn from the local people and from the failures of the modernisation project.

An important aspect of the notion of an indigenous epistemology is that it does not exclude the possibility of borrowing or utilising outside ideas, knowledge or materials (Clarke 1990). However, to be consistent, outside ideas and materials must be utilised in a way that reflects local viewpoints, ways of doing things, culture and language. Gegeo gives the simple example of a man building a house from imported materials but in a location, style and design that is “tailored to provide the comfort and sense of confidence, dignity, and rootedness the family requires” (1998: 291).

In a similar, though more complex, way the SIDT and the SPCPP have taken a number of social survey tools (eg: Village Quality of Life Index (Roughan 1993, D1: 7-9), electoral survey (SIDT 1997d & 1997e) marketplace exercises (Laban 1994: 44-45) and consumer audit (Laban and Swain 1996: 6-7), training processes (participatory exercises, theatre, songs, poetry) and means of communication (*Komiks*, magazines, radio broadcasts, consumer rights cards, posters etc.) and utilised them in ways that reflect local knowledge and are consistent with an indigenous epistemology.

The *fa'asamoa* may be seen as maintaining local knowledge and an indigenous epistemology through two centuries of outside influences, and whilst it has absorbed a number of outside influences, the central nature of the *fa'asamoa* has remained intact (see above Chapter 4 and Meleisea 1987, 1992, 1995).

The findings of this enquiry have led the researcher to reflect on the problematic nature of the notions of development and progress. When set alongside the challenges Sachs (1993a), and others<sup>14</sup>, lay down in the *Development Dictionary*, the findings of this enquiry makes it difficult for one to use the terms development and progress without major reservations or qualification. Sbert (1993), for example, suggests that: “the new star of modernity or progress overshadowed the importance of wisdom as existential, cultural experience” (1993: 199). Which begs the paradoxical question: can we have development without development?

In the face of this dilemma Oliver Sacks provides a way forward, which has relevance to the world of development studies, in his reflection on the nature of the plant kingdom.

“We have this almost irresistible sense of a steady evolutionary advance or progress, but there is no evidence of any such tendency, and global progress or purpose in nature itself. There is only, as Darwin himself insisted, adaptation to local conditions ... We must look at the total picture of life on earth, of every species, and then we will see that it is not progress which characterises nature but rather infinite novelty and diversity, an infinity of different adaptations and forms, none to be seen as ‘higher’ or ‘lower’.” (Sacks 1996: 306-7)

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<sup>14</sup> See Sachs' Introduction (pp.1-5), Esteva's chapter Development (pp. 6-25) and Sbert's chapter Progress (pp.192-205).

The notion that development may be different in different places and take diverse and novel forms, because it has adapted to local conditions, is consistent with the ideas of local knowledge and an indigenous epistemology. If we accept this notion, then we must also question universalist approaches to development, the idea of stages of development and the notion of progress<sup>15</sup>.

The success the SIDT, the SPCPP and the *fa'asamoa* have achieved, through incorporating local knowledge and an indigenous epistemology into development programmes, whilst being open to outside ideas and practices, is in sharp contrast to the failure of the dominant development paradigm to create good change in the Solomon Islands, Samoa and elsewhere in the Pacific. These findings have raised serious questions about the very nature of development, which will be explored in the following chapter.

## **RELATING TO THE STATE AND THE MARKET**

Each segment of civil society, examined in this enquiry, had developed a process and structure for negotiating their relationship with the state and the market. Those relationships will be discussed further in this section.

The development project (McMichael 1996), that followed the colonial period and the achievement of independence in most Pacific island states, was initially a time of hope and high expectation. For most Pacific nations the transition to independence was relatively peaceful<sup>16</sup> because the colonial powers had supervised a transition period, including elections, and trained a local elite in state-building to take over control of the new nation-state. The hope was for an orderly progress in the development of modern nation-states in the former Pacific colonies.

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<sup>15</sup> This discussion will be expanded in the next chapter.

<sup>16</sup> See Hempenstall and Rutherford (1984) for case studies of dissent during the Colonial period and Campbell (1992) for a general history of the colonial and post-colonial periods.

Nandy (1993: 265) suggests two forces mitigated against this easy progress: the failure of most third world societies to develop viable nation states along the lines of western models and the resilience of the cultures of those societies. It was into this context that the SIDT, the SPCPP and the *fa'asamoa* developed processes and structures for negotiating their relationship with the state<sup>17</sup>.

The SIDT had a long period of conflict with the new state in the Solomon Islands before the role of non-government organisations was acknowledged as valid and it was accepted that NGOs could make a useful contribution to national development. This was a common experience of NGOs in developing nations (Frantz 1987, Fowler 1991, Kamrava 1993, Charlton and May 1995, Clark 1995, Sollis 1995). During this period the Solomon Islands Government had made little progress with its rural development programmes. In contrast, the SIDT was having considerable success in its village development programmes, which brought into question the viability of the state in this largely rural nation. The state made various attempts to discredit the work of the SIDT, but the SIDT resisted the state by challenging its hegemony of development and by asserting that indigenous NGOs had a valid development role. The conflict between the state and the SIDT continued unabated for nearly fifteen years. It was only after a change in government that the relationship between the state and the SIDT began to improve and some cooperative ventures were undertaken.

In Samoa, the *fa'asamoa* has a clear means to negotiate with the state through *fono* and village councils. Since independence in 1962, the *fa'asamoa* has continued to dispute state hegemony over issues such as land tenure, the limits of village authority and the imposition of taxes. This illustrates Nandy's point (above) about the resilience of culture. The inter-weaving of the *fa'asamoa* with all facets of Samoan society, including the state, has both

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<sup>17</sup> The processes and structures are discussed in detail in the case studies (Chapters 4, 5, 6).

strengthened and weakened the state. The state needs the validation and the support of the chiefs and orators, of a particular village, to carry out even simple public works, such as improvements to roads. In most cases the state-*fa'asamoa* relationship is negotiated in a cooperative manner that strengthens the state. However, where state and village interests are in conflict, such as the land dispute at Vaiusu, then there is resistance against the state. Consequently the viability of the state is questioned and the state's power weakened.

In contrast to the problematic relationships the SIDT and the *fa'asamoa* have with their respective states, the SPCPP, operating at a regional level, has had a more straightforward cooperative relationship with Pacific Island states. This is perhaps because the SPCPP has funded a number of activities that states would have been expected to fund such as, drafting consumer protection legislation, training teachers and other public servants, and supporting the establishment of state agencies for the protection of consumers. The SPCPP has encountered some resistance in the slow passage of consumer protection legislation, the lack of cooperation of some officials and the low priority accorded to enforcing traders to comply with consumer protection laws. Furthermore, the politeness and respectfulness engendered by Pacific Island cultures means that people may say yes when they actually mean no. The cover story may be one of cooperation but the underlying message is one of subtle resistance.<sup>18</sup>

This study has found that the relationship between the three segments of civil society and their respective nation states has frequently been problematic. Nandy (1993) suggests that this difficulty may be due the hegemony of the European concept of the nation-state and its limitations in non-western settings:

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<sup>18</sup> Development workers in the Pacific require a good understanding of the complexities and nuances of Pacific Island cultures.

“It is only now, 45 years after the Second World War, that some social analysts have again begun to take seriously the growing inability of the nation-state to serve the needs of civil society in large parts of the world.” (1993: 267)

The finding that the SIDT and the *fa'asamoa* have had problematic relationships with the state, whilst the SPCPP's relationship has been essentially cooperative in nature, has led the researcher to propose that the relationships between civil society and the state may be viewed as a zone of resistance or cooperation. In this zone there may be a contest, or cooperation, between civil society and the state over particular issues.

Examples of resistance uncovered in this enquiry include the SIDT's ongoing debate with the state that indigenous NGOs are by definition political and have a role to play in determining development plans and policies for the nation, the land dispute at Vaiusu between the villagers and the government, and the public demonstrations in Samoa against the imposition of a VAGST. Examples of cooperation are the work of the SPCPP with various Pacific states to draft and enact consumer protection legislation and establish consumer protection agencies, and the SIDT survey of village communities in the Solomon Islands.

The idea of resistance to the state by civil society in the Pacific is not new. The passive resistance of the *Mau* (Field 1984) to colonial rule in Samoa and the *Rulu Maasina* Movement (Laracy 1989) in the Solomon Islands are two relevant examples. Scott (1990) suggests that open resistance is comparatively rare in developing nations and usually futile. However, he argues, from a class analysis perspective, that oppressed people resist by employing the weapons of the weak:

“the tenacity of self-preservation – in ridicule, in truculence, in irony, in petty acts of noncompliance, in footdragging, in dissimulation, in resistant mutuality, in the disbelief of elite homilies, in the steady, grinding efforts to hold one's own against overwhelming odds – a

spirit and practice that prevents the worst and promises something better." (1990: 350)

Whilst resistance is common, cooperation between the state and civil society is not an uncommon feature of state-society relations in Pacific island nations. Cooperation, an important cultural value of the Pacific Way, has also characterised these relationships within Pacific Island nations. Though the relationships between civil society, the state and the market have been found to be problematic at times, each segment of civil society examined in this enquiry had developed a process and structure for negotiating their relationship with the state and the market.

## **ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Each segment of civil society studied in this enquiry was found to represent an alternative approach to the dominant development paradigm and demonstrated a potential to scale up. Alternative development and scaling up of activities are discussed further in this section.

This enquiry was undertaken within a particular historical context. Pacific Island nations achieved independence during the promise of the development decades of the 1960s and 1970s. Post-independence development approaches were primarily driven by the state and aimed at industrialising the plantation economies of the colonial era and modernising traditional societies (Bertram and Watters 1985, Campbell 1992, Poirine 1995, Turner 1997). Thirty years on, at the turn of the century, it can be seen that the mainstream development models have failed to deliver on their promise (Macpherson and Macpherson 1998).

Economic independence has eluded most Pacific Island nations as they struggle under the burden of debt raised to fund projects that were designed to

create wealth from natural resources. The Asian economic crisis<sup>19</sup>, structural adjustment programmes and state sector restructuring, imposed by the World Bank and other international financial institutions, have eroded the small gains made by state-led development. The modernisation-industrialisation project has ground to a halt (Porter et al. 1991, May 1998).

In the 1990s state-led development is giving way to market-driven development. This change in the developing world has followed the lead of New Zealand, the United Kingdom and other developed nations that have been guided by neo-liberal economics. Hazledine (1998) provides an apt description of this approach, which has been referred to here as the dominant development paradigm.

“Known as ‘economic rationalism’ or ‘neoclassical economics’, the currently dominant doctrine cares nothing for how things are done. All that matters is the outcomes in terms of economic efficiency, meaning changes in gross domestic product, narrowly defined. Process is unimportant: concepts of culture and even society, meaningless. Like Margaret Thatcher, the rationalists ‘don’t believe in’ society, maintaining that individuals are the building blocks of the efficient economy.” (1998: 9-10)

Guided by this philosophy, development agencies are placing a greater emphasis on small business development (Shadrake 1996, 1998), microcredit (NZODA 1998a) and private sector led programmes (NZODA 1998b). The World Bank, the Asia Development Bank and other international financial institutions are also guided by economic rationalism. Pacific island states are encouraged to reduce regulation of the marketplace (Swain 1998b), to provide freedom for business to develop, and to concentrate their efforts on good governance<sup>20</sup> projects (Larmour 1996, 1998, Macdonald 1998).

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<sup>19</sup> See Swain 1998a, 1998b, and Consumers International 1998.

<sup>20</sup> See discussion above pp.33-34.

The state and the market have dominated development in the Pacific over the thirty years since the colonial period. During that time the role of civil society in development has received less attention. This enquiry has found that segments of civil society have made significant contributions to development and have the capacity to provide alternatives to the dominant development paradigm.

This study has found that the Solomon Islands Development Trust has developed an approach to development that has had a profound impact on strengthening village communities throughout the Solomon Islands. This participatory, practical, and bottom-up approach, which aimed to empower village communities, was found to be in conflict with the centralised, bureaucratic, top-down approach favoured by the state. Not only has the SIDT's approach to particular aspects of development, such as logging, proven to be sustainable, it has also demonstrated superiority to the state's approach and longevity in difficult global economic conditions. The SIDT has brought development education to two-thirds of the population of the Solomons at a cost, and with an infrastructure, significantly smaller than that of the state. The SIDT has shown that its programmes are a serious alternative to the dominant economic development approach advocated and practiced by the state with the support of international financial institutions and transnational corporations.

It was concluded that the *fa'asamoa* gives the Samoan people clarity about who they are and where they stand in the world, enabling them to make pragmatic judgments about which aspects of development they can usefully adapt for their own ends and what should be rejected. The *fa'asamoa* remains the basic framework of meaning on which Samoan society is founded and lives day to day. It has been argued that the *fa'asamoa* represents an indigenous development paradigm.

Village based development projects, such as eco-tourism, supported by a global kin network and coupled with a subsistence economy, have the

potential to preserve the quality of village life through affirming an indigenous development paradigm. Many Samoans choose to live a semi-subsistence village based life style, rich in culture and tradition, close to nature, and full of social relationships. A lifestyle that accepts, and rejects, elements of the modern world without comprising the *fa'asamoa*. These Samoans choose (in Sbert's words) "the importance of wisdom as existential, cultural experience" (1993: 1999) over modernity and progress. As such, the *fa'asamoa* represents a serious alternative approach to the state-led and, more recently market-driven, economic development paradigm (Macpherson 1992) imposed by international financial institutions on Samoa.

The South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme has worked to involve Pacific Island states, traders and sectors of civil society in a discourse on consumer protection with the aim of creating safe, informed and fair marketplaces. States have been encouraged to enact consumer protection laws and establish agencies to enforce compliance. Traders have been encouraged to view consumer protection as good business and to develop business practices that are consumer friendly. NGOs and community organisations have been involved in consumer education and information programmes to educate, inform and organise consumers to act to protect their rights and carry out their responsibilities as consumers.

The SPCPP has viewed the dominant statist and market-driven approaches to development, which are currently deregulating the marketplace, as problematic. The SPCPP has promoted an alternative approach to development in which the state, the market and civil society all have important and complementary roles to play. Civil society, manifest in the consumer movement, is central to the approach to development promoted by the SPCPP, and is seen as having an important role as a countervailing force in a tripartite relationship with the state and the market.

The approach the SPCPP has taken to development has been based on a clear set of measurable objectives, an explicit set of principles drawn from

local knowledge, an indigenous epistemology and a deep relationship with the people of the region. This represents an alternative approach to development to that usually taken by international non-government organisations.

Significantly, the three segments of civil society have each scaled up activities and expanded their influence. This has been achieved through a variety of mechanisms and strategies that have been appropriate to the different contexts in which they operate. The *fa'asamoa* has linked and spread through international kin networks which provide financial and emotional support to those who maintain the home village community. The SIDT has multiplied and spread the reach of its development education programmes throughout the Solomon Islands, adding from small beginnings, to establish a national organisation that has the capacity to mobilise a significant proportion of the population. Advocacy with Northern NGOs and governments has further strengthened the influence of the SIDT. Like the SIDT, the SPCPP has used advocacy and networking with Northern NGOs and governments to scale up activities and attract funding to support Pacific initiatives. Unlike the SIDT, the SPCPP has kept a small organisational structure and low overheads, utilising new technologies and media of communication as multiplicative strategies for scaling up and expanding influence.

Each segment of civil society studied in this enquiry represented an alternative approach to the dominant development paradigm and demonstrated a potential to scale up. Whether they will replace the dominant development paradigm, or have reached their full potential, remain open questions.

## **SUMMARY**

In this enquiry three sectors of civil society, in three locations, were studied in some depth. A cross-case analysis revealed a number of common themes and patterns between the three case studies. Five important themes or patterns identified were:

- Each of the three segments of civil society made a significant contribution to development and was shaped by its particular social, cultural, geographical, political and historical context.
- Each case study reflected a specific approach to addressing development that was pragmatic, comprehensive, and integrated social, political, economic, cultural and other objectives.
- Each approach to development was driven by a clear set of principles that were based on local knowledge and an indigenous epistemology but were open to incorporating relevant ideas and practices from outside.
- Each segment of civil society developed a process and structure for negotiating their relationship with the state and the market.
- Each segment of civil society represented an alternative approach to the dominant development paradigm and demonstrated a potential to scale up.

The five important themes or patterns identified, were discussed in detail in this chapter and were shown to have the potential to explain the contribution civil society makes to development in the Pacific.

## CHAPTER 8

### CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT REVISITED

#### INTRODUCTION

Civil society has been defined here as a social sphere of formal and informal voluntary associations formed to protect and promote the interests of the society. It may take different forms in different contexts, and is separate from and independent of the state and the market. In an earlier chapter, an examination was undertaken of the nature of civil society, the history of the concept and its relationship with development theory. Civil society was located within the current development discourse and seen as central to resolving the development impasse. This early work, on the nature of civil society, formed a theoretical framework for the fieldwork that was to follow in which three segments of civil society were examined *in situ* in the Pacific Islands. From that examination, five important themes or patterns emerged which represent the major findings of this enquiry. In this final chapter, the discourse of civil society and development is revisited with the aim of drawing some conclusions and contributing to that discourse. Throughout this chapter, areas for further research are also identified.

In this enquiry the terms context and historical context have been used to locate the discourse on civil society and development, and the case studies, within particular times and places. The first section of this chapter provides some final reflections on context to summarise the previous discussion and locate it within the wider discourse on development and globalisation.

The post-modern era may spell the end of progress and development, as they are currently understood. The notion of progress (Sbert 1993, Cowen and Shenton 1996: 12-21, 409-411, Shanin 1997) was an important organising

idea for the development discourse. Progress and development are re-examined and re-assessed in the second section.

In the previous chapter, it was argued that civil society represents a serious alternative to the dominant development paradigm in Pacific Island nations. We return to this argument in the third section, discuss alternative approaches to development, and locate the findings of this study within the discourse on alternative development.

A model of state-market-civil society relationships is presented in the fourth section. This is an explanatory model of the tripartite relationship. The model expands on the notion of Zones of Resistance or Cooperation, introduced in the previous chapter and suggests that this model may be used as a tool to assist in development education, policy formulation and programme planning.

Finally, the discourse on civil society and development is revisited and some concluding comments are made about the contribution of this study to development practice.

## **CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEXT**

This study has demonstrated that to understand the notions of civil society and development they should be viewed as the product of a particular time and place. This study has also shown that the nature of civil society varies from context to context and argues that there is not a universal shape to civil society. The shape of civil society in post-military Brazil is different from that of post-communist Russia; and its shape in the post-colonial Solomon Islands is different from that of post-colonial Samoa. It is concluded that a particular social, cultural, geographical and political context is important for understanding the nature of civil society and development in a particular location.

This enquiry examined the nature of civil society and development in the context of the island nations of the Pacific at the end of the twentieth century. How does this study fit into the wider development discourse?

A time-line may be used to help answer that question. A time-line (see Appendix 3.) is a teaching aid used by the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme, during consumer education workshops, to promote a wider historical perspective (Laban and Swain 1996: 13-17). A typical time-line is drawn from the time of the first people, through European exploration, the arrival of traders and missionaries, the establishment of colonial rule and the colonial period, to the struggle for and achievement of independence, and to the post-independence years, concluding with a summary of the current situation of the first people. Plotted on the timeline are population, health and economic statistics, important figures and critical events. Viewed on this timeline, the development project and globalisation are seen in a wider perspective and the long history of the indigenous people is brought into sharp relief. Furthermore, the development project can be located within a larger history.

For most Pacific nations development has had a short life, when viewed as part of human history which has been recorded by oral and literate historians. For example, Papua New Guinea's human history, of tens of thousands of years, is perhaps the oldest in the region but its development was very late. May (1998) notes: "The island of New Guinea was one of the last parts of the globe to be subjected to European colonisation, and when the eastern half of the island became independent as Papua New Guinea, in 1975, the extent of colonial penetration remained limited" (1998: 54). The development project has had a life of only a decade or two in some island nations. As independence was achieved in the late 1970s for a number of Island nations, they were late starters and have moved rapidly from national development plans to globalisation and participation in the world market. The Solomon Islands, which gained independence in 1978, is typical of Island nations that

have a compressed national development and integrated into the global economy over the last twenty years.

Civil society in the Pacific can be viewed in the context of late, compressed national development, and early integration into the global economy. The growth of civil society institutions, including non-government organisations and social movements such as the Solomon Islands Development Trust and the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme, is a phenomenon of the 1980s and 1990s in the Pacific and coincides with the rise of the globalisation project. However, if we take a wider historical perspective, and include traditional forms of mutual assistance, such as the *fa'asamoa* in our definition of civil society, then it can be seen that the Pacific has a long and rich history of civil society.

This enquiry has led to some general conclusions about the importance of context to civil society in development, and the three case studies have provided some detailed observations about civil society in context. Further case studies of other segments of civil society would provide more insights into this area of research. Case studies of the role of the church, of sporting and other community associations in development in specific Pacific nations would be research projects of considerable interest and should add to our understanding of civil society and development in context.

Throughout this study, it has been argued that the nature, growth and impact of development has varied according to time and place. This has also been found to be the case of the segments of civil society examined in this enquiry. This enquiry concludes that social, cultural, geographical, political and historical contexts are important for understanding the nature of civil society and development in a particular location.

The findings of the studies of the *fa'asamoa*, the Solomon Islands Development Trust and the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme support Sachs view that universalism is under siege and that:

“The globe is not any longer imagined as a homogeneous space where contrasts ought to be levelled out, but as a discontinuous space where differences flourish in a multiplicity of places.” (Sachs 1993a: 112)

This enquiry found that Western-orientated development (and now globalisation) has frequently ignored local contexts and history by proposing universal approaches to address local concerns. Furthermore, it was found that the three segments of civil society examined each made a significant contribution to social and economic development in their communities. This study concludes that an appreciation of context is critical for understanding the process of development and the role of civil society in creating good change.

## **THE POST-MODERN CRITIQUE OF PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT**

The findings of this enquiry about the importance of local knowledge and an indigenous epistemology, discussed in the previous chapter, have raised some serious questions about the nature of development. One of the building blocks of the development project was the idea of progress. Progress is frequently reified and rarely examined. Here we take a brief look at the notion of progress and (re) assess its importance as an organising idea.

Guided by the ideal of progress, and a sense of superiority in the belief that their way of life represented the epitome of development, European explorers followed by traders, missionaries, colonists, and latterly development experts, brought European technology, culture, systems of governance and ideology to the Pacific Islands. Local knowledge and ways of thinking were displaced by the ideal of progress, and the dominant development paradigm, which sought to modernise backward societies and bring the natives into the global family (Clarke 1990, Shiva 1997, Gegeo 1998).

This view of history, as unifying and universalising humanity through progress, is now seen as problematic. A post-modern critique, which challenges the universalist basis of modernisation theory, is growing. A leading critic of the dominant development paradigm is Wolfgang Sachs who notes:

“The unity of mankind was a project of the future, made possible by the expectation that human action would keep the course of history always on an upward road. Progress was the guarantee of unity ... the differences on the globe would fall into oblivion because they were outshone by the bright light of progress ... But clearly enough ... the belief in progress has crumbled.” (1993a: 112-113)

The legacy of the development project in the Pacific includes a series of chronic problems<sup>1</sup>. Measured against the problems faced by the people of the Pacific, and the other peoples of the developing world, the ideal of universal progress has proven to be flawed. In Shanin's view:

“[T]he idea of progress eventually became a powerful ideology of disenfranchisement ... Ideas of limitless linear growth blinded us to the complexity of the social world – to diverse and parallel forms which operate side by side without being transitory ... Such ideas also delayed our understanding of ecological issues. Real human history, accounting for the complexity of forms, rather than conforming to a pre-defined process of universalization and simplification, was being lost.” (1997: 69-70)

At the evening of modernity, we are again confronted by the twin riddles of diversity and cyclic time. Progress has proven to be a false solution. The idea of progress served to simplify a complex world and gave colonialists and other expansionists a rationale to attempt to make the undeveloped world into their

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Laban and Swain (1996: 8), cited in Chapter 1, SPREP (1992: 219-224) and Borugu (1995:16).

image of a developed world. It can now be seen that the diversity of social organisations is a reflection of the richness of our world. In addition, the linear notion of time is perhaps just one possibility. In a post-development world, where difference can be affirmed and celebrated, there are less certainties, more relativities and greater diversity and pluralism than imagined by developmentalists.

The post-modern vision is not of one world but rather of many possibilities. However, this vision is contested. The idea of progress may be challenged but it is not defeated. Trans-national corporations and global trade drive the globalisation project, the powerful successor to the development project. These organisations are actively promoting progress as the way forward. Post-modern (or post-development) approaches are based on a rejection of the dominant model of development.

The post-modern critique, and in particular the emerging theories of civil society<sup>2</sup>, require us to re-examine the notion of progress and re-evaluate the contribution of traditional ways of living and understanding our world. The essential sentiments of theories of civil society are in sharp contrast to those of the dominant development paradigm. In a civil society, multinational universalism is rejected in favour of a cosmopolitan localism (or an indigenous epistemology). The unlimited natural bounty has proven to be a fragile, finite resource and our ecosystems require sustainable management if they are to survive. Freedom of opportunity has led to the elite individuals (mainly men) benefiting from development whilst the grassroots communities (particularly women and children) suffer. Civil society helps us to balance the needs of the community against the wants of the individual and to locate people within wider social relationships where they are responsible for their actions (or inaction) and accountable to others. The indicators of development in a civil society favour qualitative measures of human satisfaction with the quality of life over quantitative measures of the growth of GNP. Lutzenberger agrees: "GNP

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<sup>2</sup> To be discussed in the following section.

*as a measure of progress* is the most stupid, the most absurd and the most pernicious index that could ever have been thought of. (1996: 20).”

The post-modern critique has made it difficult to use the terms progress and development with confidence. The (re)emergence of the idea of civil society, at a time when state-led and market-driven development is increasingly viewed as problematic, is a phenomena of considerable interest. This study has shown that segments of civil society, at local, national and regional levels, have something to contribute to a fresh discourse in the post-modern/post development era in the Pacific. If the idea of progress is flawed, and development is now seen as problematic, what are the alternatives? This question will be addressed in the following sections.

## **THEORIES OF ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

There is now a growing literature on rethinking, or critiquing, development. Two different approaches are the post-development approach (Rahnema 1993, 1997) and the post-modernisation perspective, (Cowen and Shenton 1996). We consider here some of those approaches that go beyond a critique and advance alternative approaches to development. These approaches are referred to as theories of alternative development. The last years of this millennium is a time when the old approaches to development are seen by many as tired or failed and new approaches are not yet fully fledged. Development may well be going through a paradigm shift (Kuhn 1962). Part of this shift is the rise of alternative development approaches. Some of these are partial, based on a few examples of practice or successful programmes, others are developing theoretical rigour and may represent a new paradigm in the making.

An early influence on alternative development was the report of the South Commission (1990), chaired by Julius Nyerere, which expressed scepticism of the development project. Other groups of intellectuals and activists in the South also expressed their disillusionment in a series of declarations and

proclamations<sup>3</sup>. The 1992 United Nations Earth Summit, and the parallel NGO Forum, provided an opportunity for worldwide advocates of alternative development to meet and affirm their vision for the future. The People's Earth Declaration was the result. The final paragraph of this declaration reads:

“We, the people of the world, will mobilize the forces of transnational civil society behind a widely shared agenda that bonds our many social movements in pursuit of just, sustainable, and participatory human societies. In so doing, we are forging our own instruments and processes for redefining the nature and meaning of human progress and for transforming those institutions that no longer respond to our needs. We welcome to our cause all people who share our commitment to peaceful and democratic change in the interest of our living planet and the human societies it sustains.”  
(Cited in ANGOC, 1993: 34)

The notions of civil society, participation, sustainability, pluralism and a redefinition of development and progress were central to this and other visions of alternative development. The principal advocates of alternative development have been NGOs, social movements and indigenous people linked in a transnational civil society. Development theorists have also become important contributors to a new post-development-alternative development discourse.<sup>4</sup>

A summary, and expansion, of Martinussen's (1997: 289-341) review of the main theoretical approaches to alternative development is presented below in Table 8.1. The segments of civil society examined in this enquiry have been placed on this table to locate them within the wider discourse on alternative development.

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<sup>3</sup> For example: The Alternative Forum (1994).

<sup>4</sup> See for example Rahnema (1997) and Sachs (1993a, 1993b).

Martinussen (1997) identifies three alternative development perspectives. The first is characterised by “a redefinition of development goals” (1997: 291) and includes the approaches of Amartya Sen (1988), Mahbub ul Haq (1995) and those of a range of international development agencies which have rejected economic growth as an end in itself and turned their attention to social inequality and poverty. However, according to Martinussen “they have not rejected the whole body of mainstream economic development theory” (1997: 291). These approaches, in the main, have worked within the development mainstream and are supported by international development agencies (see for example UNDP 1994, UNDP 1997). It could be said that these approaches have not attempted to change mainstream development thinking but have served to put a human face on the development project by adding some of the missing elements.<sup>5</sup>

“The second type of alternative approach has not only disaggregated the development process and emphasised its dissimilar effects on different social groups, but has additionally shifted the whole perspective and focus towards civil society” (1997: 291). Martinussen refers to these approaches as theories of civil society. It is amongst these particular alternative development theorists, who have rejected the dominant development paradigm, that we can locate the segments of civil society examined in this study.

The third type, Third World<sup>6</sup> approaches, are not discussed in detail by Martinussen as they fall outside of “the framework of Western rationalism” and are described as “normative and utopian” rather than based on “interpretation and explanation” (197: 291) like the other two types. These approaches have also rejected the dominant development project, often as the result of colonialism, and are sometimes openly hostile to any outside ideas or influences. There are some aspects of these perspectives that relate to the segments of civil society examined in this study and will be discussed further.

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<sup>5</sup> A cynic may see these approaches as propping up the failed cause of development.

<sup>6</sup> This unfortunate label, in the author’s view, should be replaced by more appropriate terms such as: Isolationist or Anti-Development approaches.

**Table 8.1**

**Theories of Alternative Development**

<b>Redefinition of Development Goals</b>	<b>Theories of Civil Society</b>	<b>Third World Approaches</b>
<p>Opposed or add to mainstream thinking by focussing on social implications and human dimensions of macro-economic processes of change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty (UNDP, UNICEF, Seers.)</li> <li>• Social Inequality (WID, GAD)</li> <li>• Basic Needs Approach (ILO)</li> <li>• Human Development School (UNDP, Mahbub ul Haq)</li> </ul>	<p>Reject mainstream thinking, focus on politics of civil society or wider social, cultural, economic and human processes of creating a better society based on community.</p> <p><b>Political Economy of Civil Society</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household/Whole Economy Model (Friedmann, Polanyi, SIDT, SPCPP)</li> <li>• Job Creation/Self Employment (Streeton)</li> <li>• Citizen Resistance (Bailey, Scott, SIDT SPCPP)</li> <li>• Politics as Discourse (Foucault, Sachs)</li> </ul> <p><b>Ethnic Identities and Conflict</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnic/National Identities (Clapham, Geertz)</li> <li>• Politicisation of Ethnic Identities (Brass)</li> <li>• Indigenous Epistemology (Gegeo, <i>Fa'asamoa</i>, SIDT, SPCPP)</li> </ul> <p><b>People-Managed Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critique of Bureaucratic Governance (Gran, SIDT, SPCPP)</li> <li>• People Centred Development (Korten, SIDT, SPCPP)</li> <li>• Empowerment (Friedmann, SIDT, SPCPP)</li> <li>• PRA, RRA (Chambers)</li> </ul>	<p>Countervailing and very fundamental alternatives to Western thinking, often based on preserving national and local traditions. (In some cases isolationist and anti-development sentiments rejecting outside ideas influences and technology.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islamic Fundamentalism (Kohmeni, the Taliban)</li> <li>• Islamic Socialism</li> <li>• Satyagraha (Gandhi)</li> <li>• Alienation (Fanon)</li> <li>• African Socialism</li> <li>• Chinese Socialism (Mao)</li> </ul>

From the theories of civil society perspective, the work of Friedmann (1992), Sachs (1993b), Korten (1984) and Gegeo (1998) have had the greatest influence on this study. These writers point towards alternative development based respectively on empowerment, pluralism, a people-centred approach and an indigenous epistemology. Their contribution to the discourse on alternative development will now be discussed further. The placement, within this school of thought, of the segments of civil society examined in this enquiry, will be also be further elaborated.

Empowerment is the title, and theme, of Friedmann's major work (1992) on the politics of alternative development. In his work on empowerment, Friedmann has developed one of the most comprehensive approaches to alternative development. He argues that "alternative development is an expression of militant civil society [that] has the capacity for becoming autonomous centres for action" (1992: vii). Friedmann criticises, as naïve, romantic and utopian, those anti-statists who exaggerate the infallibility of people and believe those small communities alone are the key to alternative development.<sup>7</sup> His view is that alternative development begins locally but cannot end there, as the lot of the poor cannot be improved without the collaboration of the state.

The empowerment approach<sup>8</sup> to alternative development:

"places the emphasis on autonomy in the decision-making of territorially organized communities, local self-reliance (but not autarchy), direct (participatory) democracy, and experiential social learning. Its starting point is the locality, because civil society is most readily mobilized around local issues. But local action is severely constrained by global economic forces, structures of unequal wealth, and hostile class alliances. Unless these are changed as

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<sup>7</sup> This is the group the author would categorise as Isolationists or Anti-Development.

<sup>8</sup> Friedmann's approach to alternative development may be located within two of the three sub-sections of Theories of Civil Society. ie: Political Economy of Civil Society and People Managed-Development. (see Table 8.1)

well, alternative development can never be more than a holding action to keep the poor from even greater misery and to deter the further devastation of nature.” (1992: viii)

This definition of alternative development could be a direct description of the approach of the Solomon Islands Development Trust. The SIDT has established an organisation based on territorially organised communities (villages), participation (VDWs), experiential learning (*SEI!* and *Mere Acton* theatre groups), and mobilised around local issues (logging, voter education), but understanding the linkages with global forces. The SIDT could be seen as an example of Friedmann’s vision of alternative development in practice. There are also elements of the SPCPP approach that parallel the empowerment approach. (ie: localisation, participation, experiential learning and issue based projects.)

Friedmann incorporates analyses of poverty, social inequality, gender relations, and an environmental perspective into his theoretical construction of empowerment. His model of the four domains of social practice (1992: 27) provides a conceptual map of his theory of alternative development.<sup>9</sup> The SIDT chart of their outreach programmes (Appendix 2), which links households and village community projects with the wider dimensions of the Solomon Islands society, has many similarities to Friedmann’s Household-Whole Economy Model (1992: 50). Friedmann suggests that his model reflects his view of “who we are as human beings ... one that is consistent with the way life is actually lived in most parts of the world ... one in which we are defined essentially by our social relations in ways that makes it possible to become the individual persons that we are: moral beings, responsible for our actions and accountable to others” (1992: 47). This view of people, engaged in practical real life activities, is at the core of civil society theories of alternative development. It is also central to the approaches of the SIDT, the SPCPP and

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<sup>9</sup> This map was a starting point for the model of state-market-civil society relationships presented and discussed in the following section.

the *fa'asamoa*. People are seen as members of a family, *aiga*, household, clan and community, capable of determining the future of their family and community, not the abstracted individualised economic man of the dominant development paradigm.

Pluralism is the approach to alternative development favoured by Sachs (1993a, 1993b). His essay, *One World* (1993b: 102-145), is part of his attempt to outline an alternative to the dominant development paradigm. Sachs suggests three ideals for a “diverse but coherent world” (1993b: 113) in which diversity and pluralism are valued and affirmed. The three ideals are regeneration, unilateral self-restraint and the dialogue of civilisations.

Regeneration requires each culture to find and work towards its own image of a good society. Unilateral self-restraint requires each nation to put its own house in order so that it is not an economic or environmental burden on others. Self-examination and dialogue with other nations is required for peaceful and sustainable coexistence. These three ideals shape a perspective Sachs (1993b) refers to as cosmopolitan localism.

“In this perspective, ‘one world’ is not a design for more global planning, but an ever present idea for local action. Cosmopolitan localism seeks to amplify the richness of a place while keeping in mind the rights of a multi-faceted world. It cherishes a particular place, yet at the same time it knows about the relativity of all places.”  
(1993b: 113)

As in Friedmann’s empowerment approach, Sachs<sup>10</sup> acknowledges the importance of local diversity and places the local into a wider global context. This is a pluralistic globalism, typical of post-modern thinkers, as opposed to

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<sup>10</sup> Sachs is located theoretically in the Political Economy of Civil Society category and his theoretical work is perhaps best defined as Politics as Discourse. (See Table 8.1)

the universalistic globalism of the globalisation project and the dominant development paradigm.

Sachs notion of regeneration has many parallels to Gegeo's notion of an indigenous epistemology<sup>11</sup>. Both affirm local ways of constructing a world view, of making sense of nature, society and outside ideas, and creating a lifestyle that is in harmony with a particular local context. The SIDT, the SPCPP and the *fa'asamoa* each operate on a similar basis which affirms local cultural contexts but has the capacity to incorporate useful outside ideas and technology.

Sachs ideal of unilateral self-restraint appears synonymous with the environmental concern of Freidmann. Each of the civil society theories of alternative development is concerned with social justice, gender equality and environmental sustainability at the local level and extending to the global in a dialogue between nations. It can be seen from the evidence of the case studies that the SIDT, the SPCPP and the *fa'asamoa* have put these ideas into practice

Gegeo's rejection of modernisation has led him to affirm an indigenous epistemology, through traditional discourse, as a process of alternative development that has the effect of "anchoring the truth of the discourse in culture" (1998: 290). If Gegeo's notion of indigenous epistemology, and the *fa'asamoa*, were based solely on a rejection of Western thinking, they could be placed amongst the Third World approaches to alternative development along with other fundamentalist and isolationist perspectives (see Table 8.1). However, Gegeo's notion of indigenous epistemology does not attempt to fix culture as unchanging tradition and accepts certain aspects of outside knowledge and materials, but only on local terms. Gegeo's (1998) study of his Kwara'ae community can be viewed as an example of a traditional community

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<sup>11</sup> A separate category Indigenous Epistemology has been added to Table 8.1 to accommodate Gegeo's perspective and that of the *fa'asamoa*. See below for further discussion of this point.

as a civil society. This view is parallel to that found in the *fa'asamoa*, a strong but flexible tradition which can make pragmatic judgements about the aspects of development that can be usefully adapted and those that should be rejected. The openness of the indigenous epistemology (and the *fa'asamoa*) to incorporate outside influences, albeit on local terms, separates it from the closed nature of the so-called third world approaches.

It is indeed ironic that post-modern thinkers have led development in a full circle and are now seeking learning from the traditional world to achieve sustainable development (Clarke 1990). Sadly, there is little of this world to learn from, as the development project was ruthlessly successful in destroying local knowledge.<sup>12</sup> Rahnema introduces the first part of the *Post-Development Reader* with the following quote from the *Analects of Confucius*, which makes the point that we have much to learn from the past:

“The one who by rediscovering the old can contribute to the new is indeed worthy to be called a teacher.” (1997:1)

It was argued in the previous chapter that the Solomon Islands Development Trust, the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme and the *fa'asamoa* have each made a significant contribution to the development of the communities they serve, and that civil society represents a serious alternative to the dominant development paradigm in the Pacific Islands. As there was little prior research into the nature of civil society in the island nations of the Pacific, it had not been established where those segments of civil society might be located in the wider development discourse. In this section, theories of civil society have been identified as a specific school of thought within a wider discourse on alternative development. The segments of civil society, examined in this enquiry, may be placed within that school of thought and located alongside the work of Friedmann, Sachs, Korten, Gegeo and others.

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<sup>12</sup> Belated attempts are now being made to learn from the wisdom of the ancients. See for example Knudtson and Suzuki (1992), Clarke (1990).

Theories of alternative development, and in particular theories of civil society, are rich areas for further research in the island nations of the Pacific. The contribution to development of traditional forms of mutual assistance, such as the *wantok* system in Melanesian communities, *vaka i taukei* in Fiji and *te katei ni Kiribati* in Kiribati, are significant areas for further research<sup>13</sup>. A comparison between the findings of other studies of traditional forms of mutual assistance in the Pacific and the study of the *fa'asamoa*, reported here, would also be of considerable interest. Few studies of this nature have been made of non-government development organisations and social movements in the Pacific, this represents another fertile field for research.

It may be concluded that the case studies of Solomon Islands Development Trust, the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme and the *fa'asamoa*, as segments of civil society, make an original contribution to the discourse on the theory and practice of alternative development.

## **A MODEL OF STATE-MARKET-CIVIL SOCIETY RELATIONSHIPS**

Three traditions have been identified in the literature of civil society<sup>14</sup>. First, the liberal tradition, otherwise known as classical civil society, which is based on a separation of public and private spheres. Second, the Marxian tradition, which subsumed the market and civil society within a dominant state. Third, an emerging post-development discourse in which the state, the market and civil society form a tripartite relationship, is a new tradition. These three traditions can lead to confusion of what is meant by civil society. The following illustrations (Figures 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3) have been created to provide a simplified representation of the three traditions with the aim of clarifying the differences between these traditions.

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<sup>13</sup> Overton (1999) 'Vakavanua, Vakamatanitū: Discourses of Development in Fiji' is a recent contribution to this area of research.

<sup>14</sup> See Chapter 2.

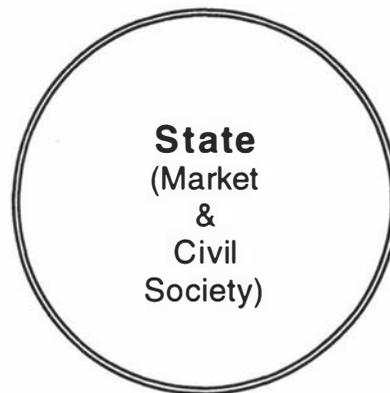


**Figure 8.1. Classical Civil Society**

In the classical conception of civil society, developed by the Scottish Moral Philosophers and the liberal Adam Smith, the market and civil society are grouped together as the private sector, in opposition to the state as the public sector. The public and private domains are separate in this conception emphasising the freedom of business from state control. This early notion of civil society developed in Europe and North America at the time of the collapse of feudalism and the rise of capitalism and Protestantism.

Elements of classical civil society may be identified in North America today particularly amongst neo-liberals (Crane 1994), social reconstructionists (McLean 1997) and neo-conservative anti-statists (see Cohen and Arato 1992). A call for civil society, defined in classical terms is part of the rhetoric of the North American Right which aims for clear separation of public and private domains<sup>15</sup>.

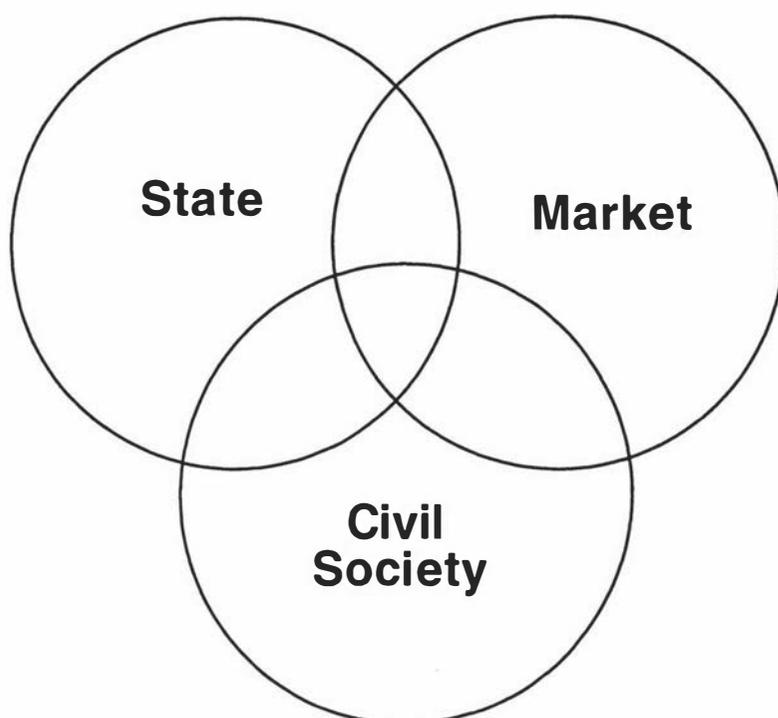
<sup>15</sup> This call is echoed in New Zealand by the ACT political party.



**Figure 8.2. The Marxian Perspective**

Marx saw the Classical view of civil society as the terrain of the individualistic bourgeoisie and a “terrible lie” (Tester 1992: 15), preventing the development of a collective community. He silenced the discourse on civil society for nearly a century. The Marxian view was of a state that subsumed the market and civil society into a state run society in which there was no need for individualism, as the state would become all things to all people (Illustrated by Figure 8.2). The problematic nature of this perspective has been demonstrated in the collapse of Marxist states in Russia and Eastern Europe.

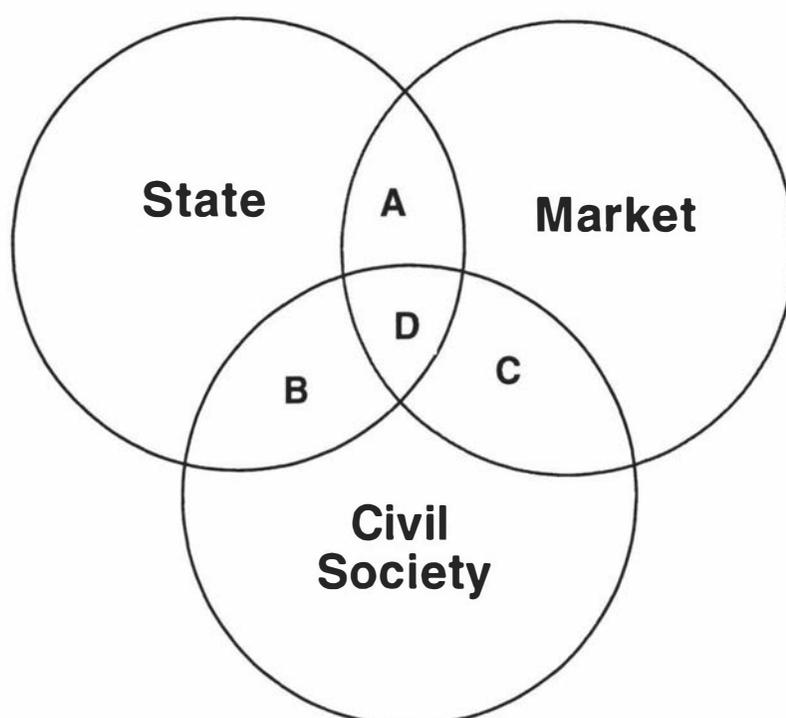
The classical and Marxian conceptions of civil society can be seen as two extreme cases. In the former, individual needs, wants and freedom are put ahead of those of the group; in the latter, collective requirements are put ahead of the individual. Both perspectives, in their extreme forms, have proven to be problematic. The emerging post-modernisation tradition of civil society seeks to achieve some balance between the state, market and civil society. This is illustrated in the following conception (see Figure 8.3) in which the three domains overlap each other in a tripartite relationship.



**Figure 8.3. State, Market and Civil Society**

The finding, presented in the previous chapter, that the SIDT and the *fa'asamoa* have had problematic relationships with the state, whilst the SPCPP's relationship has been essentially cooperative in nature, has led to the conclusion that the relationships between civil society and the state may be viewed as a zone of resistance or cooperation. In this hypothetical zone there may be a contest, or cooperation, between civil society and the state over particular issues.

The simple model (Figure 8.3) has been extended to show the areas of overlap as zones of resistance or cooperation. It is also proposed that the relationships between civil society and the market, and the market and the state may be viewed similarly. In this new model (Figure 8.4. below) the overlapping areas (A, B, C & D) of the circles, representing the ambits of the state, the market and civil society, have been identified as zones of resistance of cooperation.



**Figure 8.4.**

**A Post-Development View of State, Market and Civil Society.**

(A, B, C, D: Zones of Resistance or Cooperation.)

This is an explanatory model designed to illustrate how relationships between the state, the market and civil society appear to work in the real world. This model shows the subtle changes of inter-relationships in varying situations. It has value as a model for educational or community development programmes to explain the nature of the tripartite relationship. It can also be used as a theoretical model to predict how relationships between the state, the market and civil society may be changed if particular development policies are implemented. The following discussion provides specific illustrations of how the model operates.

Let us take consumer protection legislation as an example. A state enacts a consumer law in effort to create a safe and fair marketplace. Product standards are established and agents of the state inspect the marketplace to ensure compliance. Zone A represents the area where the interests of state and the

market intersect. Traders have some options: they may resist the state by selling substandard products and attempt to avoid compliance, or they may cooperate with the state by selling products that comply with the standards. Civil society also has a part in this relationship. Consumer organisations, as representatives of civil society, may lobby the state to enact or strengthen consumer protection legislation or they may publicise unfair trade practices. (Zone B). Civil society may also directly lobby business (Zone C). State agencies, traders and consumers all have a role to play in ensuring consumer protection. (Zone D) This model can be used to explain those roles and it may be used to demonstrate how those roles may be developed and improved<sup>16</sup>.

The model can also illustrate what happens when neo-liberal or statist policies are employed. For example, if a government aimed to create a de-regulated, free market this could be demonstrated in the model by reducing the area of overlap between the state and the market. This has a consequence for civil society as it also reduces the influence of citizens. Demonstrating these effects, by the use of this model as a development education tool, can assist all stakeholders to see the subtle inter-relationships between the state, market and civil society. This model may be used as an explanatory and descriptive tool to illustrate how development does happen but it also could be used in an exhortatory and prescriptive manner showing how development should happen.

This model has been used informally by the author, during training programmes in the Pacific, as a tool to illustrate the inter-relationships between the state, market and civil society. Further research is required to develop this model and test its use, relevance and effectiveness as a tool for development education.

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<sup>16</sup> The author has used this model, in consumer education workshops, to explain state-market-civil society relationships to government workers, traders and consumers. Preliminary feed back was positive but further research is required for a proper evaluation.

This enquiry found that the segments of civil society examined each had developed a process and structure for negotiating their relationship with the state and the market. A model of this tripartite relationship has been developed to illustrate the subtle nature of these relationships, how they may be negotiated and potential areas for conflict or cooperation. This enquiry concludes that an understanding of the inter-relationship between the state, the market and civil society is important for successful development planning, policy formulation and programme implementation.

### **CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT REVISITED**

This enquiry set out to examine the role of civil society in development in the island nations of the Pacific. The role of civil society in development was found to have been neglected in favour of state-led and market-driven approaches. This study demonstrated that the three segments of civil society, examined in this enquiry, each contributed to development in ways that the state and the market could not. However, to promote civil society as the new paradigm for development, ahead of the state and the market, would be to ignore the valid, though problematic, roles of the state and the market in development.

Development in Pacific Island nations has been dominated by the state. Newly independent nation states in the Pacific have almost universally attempted to modernise traditional societies, reform agricultural practices, extract natural resources and industrialise island economies. State-driven development has led to a range of social, economic and environmental problems. There are parallels between this experience in the Pacific and that of other developing nations.

One lesson from the experience of state socialism in Eastern Europe is that the state was not sufficient in itself to establish a good society. State dominance led, in many cases, to totalitarian regimes. The collapse of the socialist states in Eastern Europe resulted in (or was triggered by) the (re)emergence of civil

society and the growth of markets. A similar lesson can be taken from the failure of autocratic states in Latin America and Africa.

Fukuyama (1992) sees the failure of statist approaches to government supporting his End of History argument. He argues that “democratic capitalism, in the context of an economically developed, civil society is the best political system, and while it may not take hold everywhere, people will be happiest where it does” (in Kaplan 1996: 378). Fukuyama’s view that democratic capitalism is the end point of the struggle between socialism and capitalism appears to be an argument for the triumph of modernisation theory and an attempt to provide another universalist solution to the organisation of a complex world.

Market-driven development has a shorter history than state dominance in the Pacific Islands but it is also proving problematic (Winkler 1982: 67). Whilst some of the resource-rich nations have developed profitable businesses, most Pacific Island economies are very small and many families rely on subsistence gardening and fishing to meet their daily needs. The government sector is often the largest employer, many Pacific Island nations are aid dependent and the people rely on remittances from family members overseas for cash. Furthermore, the distance to markets and expense of transport ensures that perishable island products are rarely profitable. The development of a strong market economy throughout the Pacific has yet to be realised (Macpherson and Macpherson 1998).

Pacific nations have been encouraged to learn from the market-led economies of Asia. However in some Asian nations, where democratic capitalism has been given full expression by a strong state, civil society has weakened and democracy has been put at risk. Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore are examples of this phenomenon. During times of strong economic growth Asian civil society has been muted and accepted the excesses of strong states (and leaders). Civil society has awoken and (re)asserted itself during the

recent Asian economic crisis. Strong leaders (and states) may be acceptable when all is well but are challenged when economic miracles fail.

The first, second and third worlds of the development project are giving way to a new trinity of state, market and civil society as the globalisation project advances. Some theorists<sup>17</sup> see civil society as the third way and an alternative to the problematic first way of free-market capitalism and the discredited second way of state socialism.

It was found in this study that segments of civil society can and do make significant contributions to social and economic development in the island nations of the Pacific, and it could be argued that civil society represents a new paradigm for development. However, it is the writer's conclusion that state, market and civil society all have a contribution to make to the social and economic development of a nation and that no one sector is sufficient in itself. The balanced and effective development of Pacific Island nations requires the state, the market and civil society each to play their respective roles, despite their sometimes conflict-ridden relationships.

In the search for development, neither the state nor the market have had the final word and it is doubtful that civil society alone is the solution. In Smillie's words:

“Development is a product of many things: good education, effective health and welfare services, good and open government, environmental sustainability, high rates of saving and investment, a dynamic private sector, a vibrant civil society and a healthy trading regime.” (1995: 20)

To achieve development, the state, the market and civil society all have important, complementary roles to play.

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<sup>17</sup> See for example Giddens (1998), Wolfe (1989).

## IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

This study commenced with the proposition that the development project had failed in most Pacific Island nations and that civil society had been neglected in favour of state-led and market-driven approaches to development. Three case studies were presented of segments of civil society, which have made significant contributions to social and economic development in their respective communities. A number of conclusions were then drawn about the role of civil society in development in the Pacific Islands. The study concludes with three lessons for development practice from this enquiry.

The first lesson to be taken from this study is that civil society needs to assume a higher priority in development planning and practice in the Pacific Islands. The acknowledgment of the importance of civil society and the affirmation of its valuable contribution to the economic and social development of a nation, by governments and development organisations, would be a good starting point.

National development plans, and other development planning documents, often read as though the public services, and latterly the market, are the only available agencies for organising development. Including a requirement in national development plans to examine the potential for civil society institutions (both formal and informal) to undertake development projects would be one mechanism to raise the profile of civil society and acknowledge its role in development.

Development practice must engage the community. Participation in all phases of development programmes creates a vibrant civil society, as illustrated by the case studies of the *fa'asamoa*, the Solomon Islands Development Trust and the South Pacific Consumer Protection Programme. There are development tasks that the state currently undertakes which could easily be carried out by civil society institutions. Non-government organisations, women's, youth, church and other community groups have a particular contribution to make in the Pacific in this regard. In the past, the usual practice has been to set up a

state organisation, or seek to contract an existing business, to undertake new activities. Civil society organisations represent a viable alternative to state agencies or a local business.

Traditional forms of mutual assistance, such as the *fa'asamoa* in Samoa, the *wantok* system throughout Melanesia, *vaka i taukei* in Fiji, *te katei ni Kiribati* in Kiribati and others throughout the Pacific Islands, have a particular contribution to make to development in their respective domains. Directly supporting these social organisations to undertake development projects, extend food security or assist in disaster relief, builds these communities, enhances their skills and ensures that the local community has ownership a particular endeavour. Furthermore, local communities will apply an indigenous epistemology to any activity that outside experts would be unable to employ.

The second lesson for development practice from this enquiry, is that of context. There is not one way to practice development. Different contexts require different approaches to development. A particular social, economic, cultural, political and geographical terrain requires development practice that is appropriate and sensitive to that terrain. The three case studies presented here illustrated the importance of contextual approaches to development and demonstrated the failure of universalism.

Development practice that values local knowledge, and facilitates an indigenous epistemology, is an aspect of a contextual approach to development. The participation of indigenous people, on their own terms, is central to good development practice. Local knowledge and an indigenous epistemology have recently been recognised as important, but are treated by most development practitioners as peripheral matters. Western-orientated development is wedded to the western notion of progress and has Eurocentric, racist overtones. For Pacific nations to have development practice that leads to good change for local people, the notion of progress must be de-constructed and an indigenous epistemology understood, valued and promoted.

A third lesson for development practice is the need for the state, the market and civil society to develop processes and structures for negotiating their relationships. These relationships have proven to be problematic, conflict-ridden and often just misunderstood. The explanatory model of state-market-civil society relationships, presented in this chapter, is a useful starting point. Development practitioners, public servants, NGO workers, and others involved in development programmes, would benefit from an informed dialogue about this tripartite relationship. This would assist the establishment of processes to negotiate improved relationships. Training potential leaders of development projects in facilitative, participatory processes would also assist improving relationships, and recruiting local people, who have the experience, knowledge and skills to operate in the three sectors, would be a further advance.

Control of development projects, including financial responsibility, is perhaps the greatest contributor to poor state-market-civil society relationships. This centralisation of power is a product of the top-down, centralised approach to development planning, which has dominated development practice in the Pacific Islands, and is the antithesis of empowering, pluralistic, participatory and people-centred development practice. Emphasising that development practitioners are the servants of the people, rather than the masters of development, is one way of reversing priorities. According civil society an important role in development, and establishing a good working relationship with government agencies and local business that is based on mutual respect, is not an idealistic dream but an achievable objective.

# APPENDICIES

## APPENDIX 1

## FIELDWORK AUDIOTAPE CODES

## CASE STUDY 1

Tape Code	Date of Recording	Informant(s)	Location
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**Fieldwork Journal Samoa**

CS1 – 1 A-B	6-1-97 to 11-1-97		Vailima
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CS1 –2 A-B	19-5-97 to 25-5-97		Vailima
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CS1 –3 A-B	27-5-97 to 29-5-97		Vailima
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**Talanoaga**

CS1 – 01 A-B	21-5-97	Alitele	Nu'uaiga
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CS1 – 02 A-B	25-5-97	Aualuma	Nu'uaiga
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CS1 – 03 A-B	25-5-97	'Aumaga	Nu'uaiga
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CS1 – 04 A-B	27-5-97	Faletua ma Tausi	Nu'uaiga
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CS1 – 05 A-B	27-5-97	Tula	Nu'uaiga
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CS1 – 06 A-B	9-1-97	Toeina (Pilot study)	Nu'uaiga
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## CASE STUDY 2

**Fieldwork Journal Solomon Islands**

CS2 –1 A-B	22-6-98 to 3-7-98		Solomon Is.
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**Tok Tok**

CS2 – 01 A-B	29-6-98	John Roughan	Honiara
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CS2 – 02 A-B	30-6-98	Roland Batarii	Honiara
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CS2 – 03 A-B	1-7-98	Walter Ben Turasi	Honiara
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CS2 – 04 A-B	2-7-98	John Roughan	Honiara
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CS2 – 05 A-B	1-7-98	Sister Donna	Honiara
CS2 – 06 A-B	13-10-98	John Roughan	Christchurch
CS2 – 07 A-B	13-10-98	John Roughan	Christchurch

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **THE PACIFIC REGION<sup>1</sup>**

Spread over 30 million square kilometres, more than 98 per cent of which consist of ocean, the Pacific region is vast. Of its 7,500 islands, only some 500 are inhabited. This isolation complicates administration, communication and the provision of basic services. The Pacific Islands are separated into the three sub-regions of Melanesia (West), Polynesia (South-East) and Micronesia (North), based on their ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences (Crocombe 1983: 14). The physical sizes, economic prospects, available natural resources (SPREP 1992) and political developments differences (Crocombe 1983: 121-153) in these sub-regions suggest that the groupings are useful<sup>2</sup>.

#### **GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY**

The islands themselves feature great geographical diversity. Papua New Guinea accounts for 83 per cent of the land area, while Nauru, Pitcairn, Tokelau and Tuvalu are each smaller than 30 square kilometres. Some countries and territories, such as Nauru and Niue, are one island; others, such as Kiribati, French Polynesia and Federated States of Micronesia, include more than a hundred islands, which are distributed over enormous distances. In terms of physical geography and natural resources, the Melanesian countries tend to be large, mountainous and volcanic (with rich soils, exploitable mineral deposits and plentiful marine resources), while the Polynesian and Micronesian islands are smaller: Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Tokelau and Tuvalu consist of low-lying atolls, only one or two metres above sea level. The smaller volcanic islands such as the Cook Islands, parts of the Federated States of Micronesia, Tonga and Western Samoa, have some fertile

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<sup>1</sup> Detailed on the Pacific Region may be found on the Secretariat of the Pacific Community website: [spc.org.nc](http://spc.org.nc) which is regularly updated. See below (p. 279) for a summary of Pacific Island demographic information.

<sup>2</sup> Fiji is considered part of Melanesia, but culturally it resembles the Polynesian countries.

land, but both living and non-living natural resources are mainly confined to the ocean.

## **VARIED POPULATIONS**

Just as varied as the geography of the Pacific Islands are the populations and demographic trends in the region (SPC 1999), even excluding the extremes of Papua New Guinea (4.2 million people) and Pitcairn (54 people). The population of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) has been growing annually at 5.6 per cent in recent years, while Niue's population is decreasing at a rate of 2.4 per cent. The total population of the region is estimated at 6.9 million for 1996, and at the current regional growth rate of 2.3 per cent, it will reach the 10 million mark in 16 years time. Melanesia accounts for 84 per cent of that population, Polynesia 9 per cent and Micronesia 7 per cent. The generally small populations are affected by international migration, and more Cook Islanders, Niueans and Tokelauans live overseas than on their home islands. The peoples of the Pacific Islands share a voyaging tradition, with their societies evolving through migration, but culturally they are very different, mainly due to their isolation. Although the region is home to just 0.1 per cent of the world's population, it is home to one third of the world's languages, with over 700 spoken in Papua New Guinea alone. In terms of social organisation and cultural practices, in Melanesia, social and political status are traditionally acquired through individual merit (Campbell 1992: 19-23); in Polynesia, they are the result of descent (op. cit: 14-18); and in the less fertile atolls of Micronesia (ibid: 23-27), either descent or old age customarily confer seniority. All Pacific Islanders attach great cultural importance to land, and three out of four Islanders still live in rural areas, however significant urban populations are developing in most Pacific Island nations.

## **NEW HEALTH CONCERNS**

Regional social, economic and environmental factors, coupled with global changes, have had a significant impact on the health and well-being of many

Island countries and territories. These include a changing global environment, the relative ease and availability of modern travel, and overpopulation. Over the last 30 years, changes in diet and lifestyle in the Pacific region have brought about an increase in conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease and drug and alcohol abuse (Schoeffel 1993). As a result of lack of access to basic, simple and affordable health services, there is now an increase of infectious diseases such as diarrhoea, dengue, malaria, tuberculosis and pneumonia, and this is compounded by unsafe water supplies and non-existent waste-disposal (UNDP 1994, SPREP 1992). Good progress has been made in education, health, social services, literacy, and life expectancy, but there is certainly a need for improvement, particularly in Melanesian countries such as Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

## **FRAGILE ECONOMIES**

Agriculture and fishing, whether commercial or subsistence, are the main activities for most of the region's population, and the only source of exports for some. Limited markets and the overall decline of commodity prices have affected the traditional production and export of copra and other coconut products. Countries and territories with successful agricultural and mineral exports include: Fiji (sugar and gold), Nauru (phosphate), New Caledonia (nickel), Papua New Guinea (coffee, cocoa, palm oil, copper, gold and crude oil) and Tonga (squash) (SPC 1995, 1999, SPREP 1992). Timber is a major export commodity from the Melanesian sub-region, but most of the profits go to companies based elsewhere (Vuetilovoni 1998). Fish exports, mainly tuna, are of growing importance to many Island countries and territories, with the commercial use of living marine resources increasing to rival the combined value of the region's other renewable resources.

## **COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES**

The political systems and structures are many and varied in the region: for example, Tonga is one of the few surviving monarchies in the world; Vanuatu

is an independent republic; Western Samoa is an independent state, but only *matai* (chiefs) can be elected to Parliament; Niue is a self-governing Commonwealth country in free association with New Zealand; Palau is a Republic associated with the United States in a Compact of Free Association; Guam is an unincorporated Territory of the United States; and New Caledonia is a French overseas Territory. Of the 22 political entities, 15 are constitutionally independent (SPC 1999).

Pacific Island Population Data<sup>3</sup>

Country or territory	Date of Last census	Population at last census	% of Pacific Population	Land Area km2
<b>Melanesia</b>		<b>6,317,102</b>	<b>84.9</b>	<b>539,712</b>
Fiji	1996	775,077	10.8	18,333
New Caledonia	1996	196,836	2.9	18,576
PNG	1990	3,761,954	63.1	462,243
Solomon Is.	1986	285,276	5.7	28,370
Vanuatu	1989	142,419	2.5	12,190
<b>Micronesia</b>		<b>521,158</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>3,214</b>
FS Micronesia	1994	105,506	1.6	701
Guam	1990	133,152	2.0	541
Kiribati	1995	77,658	1.2	811
Marshall Is.	1988	43,380	0.8	488
Nauru	1992	9,919	0.2	21
N. Marianas Is.	1995	58,846	1.0	471
Palau	1995	17,225	0.3	488
<b>Polynesia</b>		<b>604,121</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>8,133</b>
American Samoa	1990	46,773	0.9	200
Cook Is.	1996	19,103	0.2	237
Fr. Polynesia	1996	219,521	3.1	3,521
Niue	1997	2,088	0.0	259
Pitcairn Is.	1997	40	0.0	1
Samoa	1991	161,298	2.3	2,935
Tokelau	1996	1,507	0.0	12
Tonga	1996	97,7784	1.3	649
Tuvalu	1991	9,043	0.1	26
Wallis & Futuna	1996	14,166	0.2	255
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,442381</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>551,059</b>

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<sup>3</sup> SPC. 8.6.1999

## APPENDIX 3

### THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

This appendix provides some further information on the Solomon Islands to supplement the material in Chapter 5.

The Solomon Islands is a widespread archipelago of 992 islands covering 80,000 sq/km of sea and stretching roughly 1,800 km west to east and 900 km from south to north across the Pacific Ocean on a northwest southeast axis from 5°S to 12°S and 155°E to 170°E. The 29,785 sq/km. of land ranges from large forested mountainous islands to tiny coral atolls. Home to 400,000 (est.) people (SPC 1999), the Solomon Islands are ethnically and culturally classified as Melanesian (Campbell 1992: 18-23, Crocombe 1983: 14). The people of the Solomons however are very diverse. Some outlying islands have Polynesian communities (Rennell, Bellona and Tikopia), there are Micronesian (Gilbertese) communities on Guadalcanal and also small populations of European and Asian origin. Eighty-seven distinct languages (100 dialects) are spoken in the Solomons and whilst English is the official language, *tok pisin* or Neo-Melanesian is more widely used.

The Solomon Islands may have been inhabited for over 20,000 years and settlements have been dated to 1,300 BC from remains in Fotoruma Cave on Guadalcanal. Expatriate anthropologists, linguists and historians have studied the people, customs, languages and history of the Solomons, however their writing has been largely confined to academic publications. Indigenous scholars are now examining their society from within.

After the initial Spanish discovery, and failed attempts to find the fabled King Solomons mines in the sixteenth and seventeen centuries, the Solomon Islands suffered from British colonial neglect (Crocombe and Tuza 1992) and

had little mention in global history until they were the site of major land, sea and air battles marking a turning point of the Second World War in the Pacific.<sup>1</sup> Since independence in 1978, there has been a growing interest in the recent history of the Solomon Islands which is now written by indigenous Solomon Islanders and widely published.<sup>2</sup>

The communal social organisation of the Solomon Islands is referred to as the *wantok* system. Extended family groupings or clans that share the same language, customs and geographical location are commonly referred to as *wantoks* (one talk, one language). *Wantoks* have reciprocal obligations to each other including the responsibility to feed, shelter and financially support their *wantoks* when they visit. Urban dwellers, who have migrated to Honiara the capital for employment and joined the cash economy, find it particularly burdensome when large numbers of *wantoks* arrive and they are obliged to provide for them and share their hard-earned resources. A tension exists between individual wants and communal obligations as the economy makes the transition from subsistence gardening and fishing to a cash economy.

The economy of the Solomon Islands is comprised of two parts. 75-80% of the population are involved in the village-household economy or subsistence economy. Trade and wage workers make up the cash economy which is dominated by the export of lightly processed primary commodities and the public service. Primary commodities include: tropical hardwoods, palm oil, coconuts, cocoa, fish and gold.

The Solomon Island political structure is based on the Westminster parliamentary system inherited from the former British colonial administration, but politics in the Solomons is based on the *wantok* system. Most people vote for individuals on the basis of their performance in community projects rather than on the basis of affiliation to a political party. A candidate must be well

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<sup>1</sup> Solomon Islanders refer to WWII as *Bikfala Faet*. The Big Death (1988) is an oral history of this conflict compiled and published by the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education.

<sup>2</sup> See, for examples: Laracy (1989) and Crocombe and Tuza (1992).

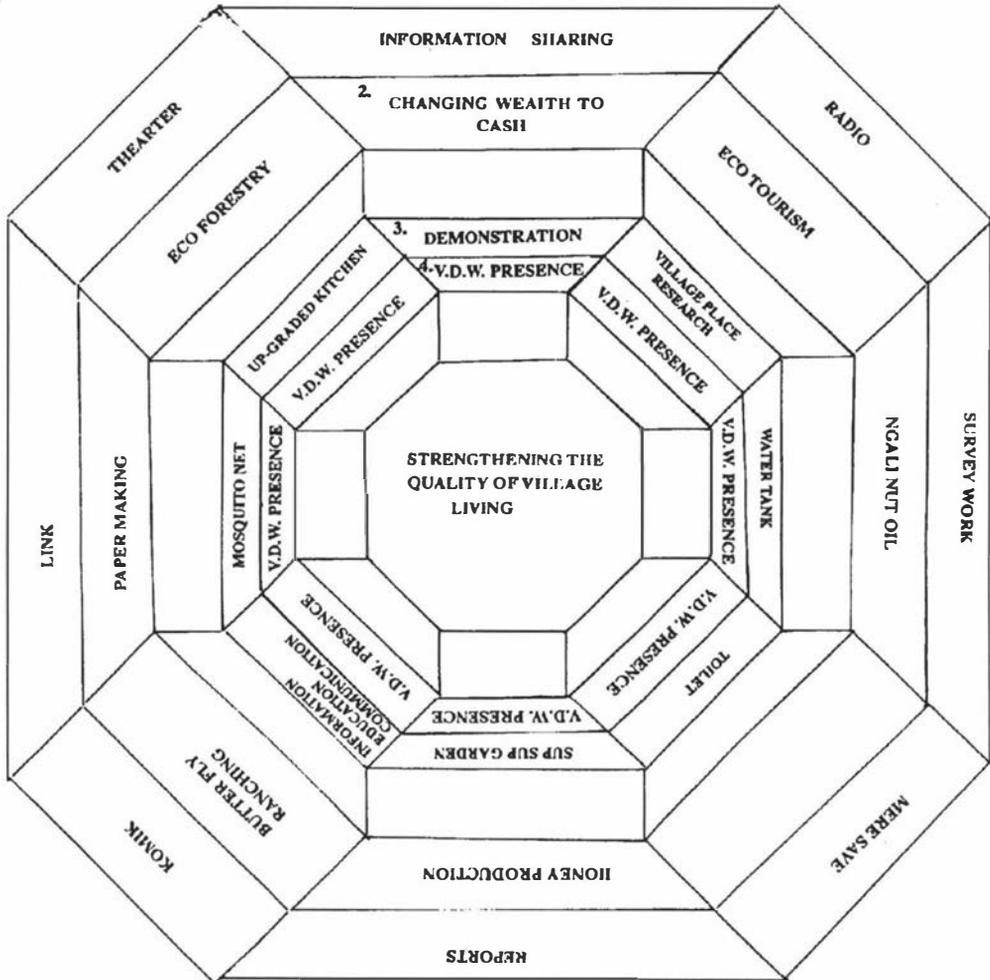
versed in local affairs and knowledgeable about custom and tradition. A local 'big man' is often promoted to national political office. Party politics is new to the Solomons and loyalty to *wantoks* takes precedence to party loyalty. Traditional forms of governance gave way to a parliamentary democracy at independence but twenty years later politics is still dominated by 'big men'.

Everybody over the age of 18 may vote in local and national elections. The National Parliament consists of 38 members, who elect a Prime Minister from their ranks. Administratively the country is divided into seven provinces which each elect a premier and regional assembly. Whilst some powers have been transferred from the national to provincial governments in recent years, financial resources and control remain largely with the centre. The provincial governments have been supported by ahead tax, one effect of which is to force people into the cash economy. Within each province are various local area councils which deal with local and village matters.

The heterogenous nature and diversity of the Solomon Islands population has led to some inter-group conflict. In 1999 a group of land owners on Guadalcanal took up arms and evicted settlers from Malaita and other provinces who had taken up residence near Honiara to work in the capital. This incident illustrated the tensions that are just below the surface of the usually friendly and tranquil Solomon Islands.

# SOLOMON ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT TRUST OUTREACH

(From SIDT Annual Report 1996)



## APPENDIX 4

### SAMOA

This appendix provides some further information on Samoa<sup>1</sup> to supplement the material in Chapter 4.

Samoa<sup>2</sup> consists of two groups of politically divided islands. The western group is comprised of two large islands, Upolu and Savai'i, and the small islands of Apolima, Manono, Fanaotapu, Namua, Nu'utele, Nu'ulua and Nu'usafe'e. The eastern group is made up of five islands: Tutuila, Aunu'u, Ta'u, Olosega and Ofu in the Manu'a group, and two coral atolls Rose and Swains Islands. Apart from the atolls, the Samoan islands are mountainous, volcanic and heavily forested except for a populated coastal strip and where lava fields cover the surface. The 163,500 people of Samoa live on a land area of 2,935 sq. km., American Samoa's 200 sq.km. is home to 54,600 people squeezed into a narrow coastal strip (SPC 1995). The people of Samoa are ethnically and culturally classified as Polynesian (Meleisea 1987: 15) and share one language. People of European, German and British, Chinese (Davidson 1967: 31-75, Gilson 1970: 162-187) and Melanesian (Meleisea 1980) origins have lived in Samoa since the nineteenth century and contributed to the *afakasi* and *papalagi* populations of Samoa.

The *fa'asamoa* is literally the Samoan way of doing things and refers to traditional practices, customary behaviour and mutual assistance in the village context and beyond. The *fa'asamoa* is a both a social structure, organising the shape of the community, and a set of cultural processes and protocols that determine the pattern of village activities.

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<sup>1</sup> A detailed description of the social organisation of a Samoan village and the traditional culture is provided in Chapter 4 along with a brief geography of the Samoan Islands and a detailed historical timeline follows. See Meleisea (1987, 1992, 1995) and Meleisea and Schoeffel (1987) for more detailed information on the social and political history of Samoa.

<sup>2</sup> The western group of islands, formerly known as Western Samoa, are now the independent nation of Samoa. The eastern group are the United States territory of American Samoa.

Samoa is largely a nation of villages. Apia, the capital, is the only large urban community. Most people live on the coast. Over 81% of Samoan land is held under customary tenure, the remainder is held by the Government (11%), the Western Samoan Trustee Estate Corporation (5%) and freehold title (3%).

The Samoan economy is a mixture of a cash economy and subsistence agriculture and fishing. In 1989 the total GDP was estimated at US\$129 million or US\$793 per capita. Imports regularly run at three to four times the value of exports for the last decade. Inflows of private remittances and aid compensate for the trade deficit. Remittances from family overseas are estimated at US\$38 million per annum and annual overseas aid at US\$100 per capita (SPREP 1992).

Samoa is a parliamentary democracy, modelled after the Westminster system with some indigenous modifications. The Head of State is the chiefly title holder of one of the *tama aiga* (Royal Families) of Samoa and parliamentary representation was chosen by *matai* suffrage until recently when universal suffrage was introduced. Only *matai* (chiefs) may be members of parliament.

## **TIMELINE - SAMOA.**

(SPCPP 1997c: 10 -14)

### **Time of the First People.**

Samoa oral tradition has it that the Samoan people arose from *sa moa*, the sacred centre, anthropologists believe that Polynesians established themselves on Savai'i, Upolu, Tau and the eastern shores of Tutuila two to three thousand years ago.

The first people established a subsistence economy and a stable food supply based on fishing and gardening, a healthy, clean and sustainable environment, a sophisticated canoe navigation system, a complex social

organisation (*fa'asamoa*), a deep spiritual understanding at peace with the land and sea and all the elements of a living culture which survived intact for thousands of years.

Meleisea (1995) identifies four distinct periods of Samoan history: Prehistoric, from Creation to Tongan domination, Tongan Domination, the three hundred years to the end of the fifteenth century, *O le Tafa'ifa*, the time of the four royal titles to 1900 and the Christian Period, from 1830 which overlapped the third period.

### **Time of European Exploration.**

Coming of the *Papalagi*.

1722. Jacob Roggeveen, a Dutch explorer, sighted the Samoan Islands but did not land.

1787. La Perouse, a French scientific explorer, visited Pago Pago. A few other explorers visited Samoa in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

### **Time of Missionaries, Traders and Whalers.**

1831. John Williams and his ship, *The Messenger of Peace*, brought the Christian faith to Samoa and the London Missionary Society quickly converted most of the people.

Traders provided cheap store goods and material in exchange for copra, *bêche de mere*, turtle shell and other products.

Whalers, exploiting the local fishery landed for fresh water, food and entertainment; introduced communicable diseases and left castaways and beachcombers.

### **Time of Colonial Expansion.**

The Germans, British, French and Americans competed for influence and land in the Pacific. The United States, seeking a suitable deep water port for coaling in a strategic location, annexed Tutuila in 1900 and the Manua group, the eastern islands of Samoa, in 1904 whilst Germany gained Upolu and Savai'i in the west. The US Navy was given the responsibility for administering American Samoa and the local chiefs ceded control to the USA. German administration was based in Apia and controlled German Samoa.

1914-18 WW1. New Zealand invaded German Samoa, but the war had little impact on American Samoa. New Zealand administration continued until independence.

1918. Influenza Epidemic, due to colonial neglect, killed an estimated 22% of the Samoan population.

1920s. Margaret Mead and other anthropologists studied the Samoan people and their lifestyle, creating theories of development and reinforcing romantic notions of the paradise of the Pacific (the theories were later disputed).

1920s-30s. Agitation for independence by the pacifist *Mau* movement. Death of Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III by New Zealand Police gunfire.

1939-45. WWII. Samoa became an important training and staging area for allied troops during the Pacific war. Roads, airstrips, docks and hospitals were built shattering the quiet traditional lifestyle of the local people. Many young Samoan men were recruited into the US military and began the migration of Samoans to mainland USA that has continued to today. After the war, peace and quiet returned to the islands.

1950s. The colonial administration continued but development was slow with future leaders educated in New Zealand and gradual development of the skills of self government. The last Governor Guy Powles worked to develop constitutional arrangements that reflected the *fa'asamoa* and matai suffrage was established with *Tama Aiga* to have central roles in the post-independence administration.

## **Independence**

1962. Independence. Western Samoa became the first independent Pacific Island nation.

1960s Increasing migration to New Zealand and other Pacific rim nations to provide labour for their growing economies. Remittances to home from workers overseas becomes major contributor to Samoan economy.

1970s. The development of a modern economy, with exports of local agricultural products and tourism established, with the support of overseas aid. However prices for exports are low and migration to New Zealand and other Pacific rim nations increases. Remittances remain high.

1980s. Slowing Pacific rim economies result in slowing of immigration and tougher immigration policies. Exports of taro increase. Remittances and overseas aid are important factors in the economy.

1990s. Two major cyclones, Ofa and Val, severely damage infrastructure and housing. Overseas aid becomes major factor in economy. Small industries are slowly developing, and some transnational corporations (eg: Yazaki), have relocated factories to Samoa to take advantage of cheap labour costs and tax incentives, however export prices for local produce remain low. Taro blight affects main cash crop. The success of *Manu Samoa* in World Cup Rugby gives the nation great pride. The impact of globalisation becomes apparent.

Television and MacDonaldis fast foods are introduced. Western Samoa formally changes its name to Samoa.

### **Today.**

After sixty years of colonisation and thirty-five of independence the first people rely on subsistence agriculture and a small fragile local economy boosted by remittances and aid from overseas. Development programmes have brought few changes for most of the population. Samoa faces the impact of a global consumer society and has become part of the globalised marketplace. The health of the people is at risk as non-communicable diseases (obesity, diabetes, heart disease, gout and cancers) are increasing. The land is increasingly rubbished by the waste of the consumer society and the sea is polluted. Whilst the traditional culture is strong at the village level the demands of the modern world is placing it under stress and the *fa'asamoa* (traditional culture) is giving way to the *fa'atala* (money culture).

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