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# **SELF RELIANCE**

and the

## **YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa**

A thesis submitted in partial  
fulfilment of the requirement  
for a Masters of Philosophy degree  
in Development Studies

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## ABSTRACT

The role of Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) in the process of development in Third World countries has become a focus of attention over the last decade. Their work is seen as an important contribution in the development of the human resource.

Most NGO's have become users of overseas aid. In recent years they have been challenged by the overseas funding agencies to become financially self-reliant.

This study enquires about the nature of the meaning of the concept of self-reliance, whether it is a universally held value or whether it is a logical by-product of the world capitalist system.

The YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa are used as case studies along with some other NGO's in Fiji and Western Samoa. The study concludes that the YMCA of Western Samoa is not likely to become more than fifty percent financially self-reliant because of a severely limited resource base, especially the absence of a sizable middle class. It is also immersed in a national climate of dependency from the family, community and government level.

The YMCA of Fiji is making progress and will in all likelihood achieve operational financial self-reliance but in setting its goals on self-reliance it has been captured by the middle class and has reduced its programme with the poor and the rural people.

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# CONTENTS

## ABSTRACT

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

<u>Chapter</u>		<u>Page</u>
1	Introduction	1
2	Development - A Conflict of Values	9
3	Self-Reliance - The Concept Explored	14
4	Cultures and Values in Transition	27
5	The Emerging Significance of NGO's in Development	36
6	Introduction of the YMCA to Fiji and Western Samoa	45
7	South Pacific YMCA Collaboration	52
8	The Eternal Triangle - Relationships Between the Donor - Receiver and User	62
9	Relationships with Government	70
10	Early Attempts at Self-Reliance	84
11	Other NGO's experience with Self-Reliance	96
12	Prospects and Plans for Self-Reliance	107
13	Conclusion - What Price Self-Reliance?	119
	 <b>Bibliography</b>	 123

## LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
Value scores of self-reliance (men)	30
Value scores of self-reliance (women)	31
Value scores of supportive family (men)	32
Value scores of supportive family (women)	33
All ages and both sexes values of each culture (average)	34
Kortens Schematic representation of fit requirements	40
Structural relationships between donor, organisation and receiver	62

**INTRODUCTION**

The work of voluntary organisations, commonly referred to as Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) in the development process of Third World countries has increasingly been recognised over the last decade or two. The special quality of being "people-centred", of being focused on the growth of the whole person within the community is the significant competence attributed to the work of NGO's. This is, perhaps, a reaction to regain a balance against the thrust for industrialisation, centralisation, big business and big government. Big business and industrialisation regarded people as merely another resource to be harnessed along with capital, plant and machinery for the end product of financial profit.

Thousands of community groups in scattered rural villages, some associated with international NGO movements have been working away on local projects improving community facilities and enhancing life in the village. In the process they have made mistakes, learnt from them, and extended the capacities and skills of scores of village people. Frequently they have organised special training courses before they attempted projects so that a team of workers were up-skilled to tackle the job more effectively.

Beginning in the 1960's, and accelerating in 1970's, government funding agencies recognised the potential of the importance of the NGO development contribution and channelled some of their funds to the NGO's. Frequently this was done in collaboration with international NGO's so that the efforts of the NGO was multiplied sometimes three fold and sometimes more. By the mid-1970's the flow of funds through the NGO network had become a multi-million dollar business. But it was never intended, so it now transpires, that the flow of funds would be a never-ending stream. Previously,

when a factory was built by a capital investment, once in production the factory produced its own surplus which fed its own expansion needs like perpetual motion. But investing in people, it was discovered, was different. The more needs that were met the more new needs emerged. As problems were overcome aspirations rose and what were previously 'wants' now became 'needs'.

Knapman (1986:139) in an article in the Journal of Pacific History titled "Aid and the Dependent Development of Pacific Island States" begins with an overview.

"Advocates of foreign economic aid argue that it will expand third World development opportunities, by augmenting supplies of people, money and goods at concessional rather than market rates. The test of success for such resource transfers is whether or not they decline, as the development they assist makes them redundant. This paper argues that most Pacific Island States will fail this test, that aid will tend to create the need for more aid, leading to a condition of permanent aid dependence; and that this is the only available entry into 'developed' consumer society. The stark alternative for most Pacific societies is the austere independence of a 'Zen economy' - zero economic growth - which few islanders or foreigners would prefer".

Of the eighteen island countries in the South Pacific, all (apart from Nauru) are receivers of aid from a variety of sources. The most lavishly treated are the American and French dependencies, New Caledonia, American Samoa, French Polynesia, Trust Territories of Micronesia and the small island states with a New Zealand connection, Tokelau, Niue and the Cook Islands. The other states with full political independence were able to draw smaller amounts of aid from a wider range of donors. For example, in 1980 *He* Fiji Government received official Development Assistance grants from Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, USA, the Asian Development bank, EEC, and the UNDP for a total \$41

million. French Polynesia however received \$139 million from France and the Trust territories of Micronesia received \$150 million from USA. In fact the aid flow in the Trust Territories was 91 percent of all Government expenditure. Western Samoa in 1980 received 42 percent of all Government expenditure from foreign aid. Fiji Government expenditure however, required only nine percent in foreign aid flows.

Knapman (1986) contends that the argument that aid promotes growth through capital accumulation runs into a logical contradiction when applied to small island states as their earning capacity is severely restricted because of their remoteness, poverty of natural resources and dis-economies of scale.

Knapman is of course not especially focusing on the role of the NGO's and their likelihood to become aid-dependent, but it is open to conjecture whether an NGO within an aid-dependent state can realistically achieve a reasonable level of financial self-reliance. One of the prime sources of support needed for NGO self-reliance is realistic and dependable support from the state.

From the late 1970's First World government funding agencies and their NGO partners started to express concern. They questioned the NGO agency people in the Third World who were the agents in the field and asked "When will you become financially self-reliant? This was a new question that had not been seriously put or considered before. A new dilemma emerged. What did the term "self-reliance" mean to the First World agent and what did it mean to the Third World agent, and was there a difference. If there were a difference in interpretation, how would the difference be resolved, whose needs would triumph. The First World government agency had needs, the NGO partners had needs, the people in the village had needs. Could all of

these needs be met if the flow of funds continued or was stopped? If there were agreement that financial self-reliance was desirable, necessary and possible, how would it be achieved? If the First World was still resource rich and the Third World resource poor, what would replace the previous flow of funds?

The major purpose of this study is to examine the contradictions and dilemma's which NGO's face in spearheading development work with those most in need, the poor and the powerless, and at the same time to become progressively less dependant on flows of foreign aid.

Common logic would suggest that as the development work expands, more resources would be required to fuel the thrust of the work. Funding agencies declare in their policy statements such phrases as "a project or activity should, within an agreed period, be sustainable from local resources". Development NGO's, on the other hand, wish to meet all the emerging needs of the people and require the resources to do so. What is at stake is the ability of the NGO to get on with doing the job and achieving its mission. The values of the funding agency and the NGO are in direct contradiction.

The YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa are used as case studies to describe the dilemma being faced. In the 1970's and 1980's these two organisations were considered by some to be leading proponents of NGO's doing effective people-centred, village based development work. Other NGO's used them as a model on which to base their own development thrust. Church groups broadened their programmes to include community development projects and programmes. From the mid 1980's, however, the YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa began to experience difficulties in sustaining the work partly because of the demands of the funding agencies for continual

reports and paper work, and partly because of the funding agencies expressed need for evidence of a progressive movement towards self-reliance.

It is suggested that the dilemma facing the YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa is typical of the experience being faced by many NGO's and that the future development thrust of NGO's is being placed at risk by the policies and values of funding agencies. In the hierarchy of values, self-reliance is ranked as an imperative by the powerful but is little more than a dream for the powerless. As an extension to the case studies, the opinion is given by two NGO's (The Fijian Council of Social Services and the Western Samoan National Youth Council) that if overseas aid is withdrawn then those agencies will go out of existence almost immediately.

While the central purpose is to examine the conflict of values held by funding agencies and NGO's concerning the concept of self-reliance and the consequence of a decreasing number of people-centred development programmes carried out by NGO's, this study also examines other factors that are relevant to the central theme.

The question of the meaning of self-reliance is explored. It is suggested that the concept of self-reliance is a value position (indicating a preference in favour or against the idea) and is only one value amongst many. Values compete with one another and will move in the hierarchy depending on ones situation.

The suggestion is made that the relative value of self-reliance is conditioned by psychological factors, cultural norms, and political-economic structures

A survey was conducted to examine whether Fijians, Samoans, New Zealand Maori, New Zealand Europeans, and Caucasian North Americans differed

in the relative value they placed on two factors, financial self-reliance and a strong supportive family. The survey indicated that the concept is one which each culture defines with different meanings and that its position in a value hierarchy shifts as a persons circumstances change. For example, self-reliance will be valued higher by young men than by older women, regardless of cultural origin.

The study then moves into discussing the relatively recent recognition of the significance of the work of NGO's in the process of development. The opinions of several authors are cited which suggest that development will be driven by people with strong social commitment rather than with budgetary imperatives of huge global bureaucracies; that the more forward-looking NGO's will be the channel through which a people-centred development will be delivered.

The work of the YMCA in Fiji and Western Samoa is described, particularly the Rural Work programmes which influenced the lives of 10,000 people in Fiji and 6000 people in Western Samoa. Much of the work was innovative and pioneered several aspects not attempted before in those countries. The production of crops for export was, in many cases, doubled and mobile training schools broadened the range of skills of hundreds of rural people to deal with the problems that confronted them more effectively.

The international network of YMCA partnerships between First World and Third World countries is then described. Pacific Partners collaborative efforts between the YMCA's of New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, Western Samoa, and Papua New Guinea with support from Canada and USA began in 1976 with some promise but gradually fell into a state of disenchantment as it was discovered that the ideal of self-reliance was becoming more of an illusion than a reality.

The study then describes the relationship between donor and receiving agencies. A case study demonstrates that the relationship is fraught with difficulties, tensions and misunderstandings. The flow of funds from donor to receiving agency was frequently influenced by changes in the exchange rate, changes in the agents of either party, management shortcomings in the donor or receiver, and that all changes resulted in the delayed delivery of funds and/or a reduction in the funds originally contracted. Furthermore, the bulk of funds were targeted for projects with only a limited amount allowed for administrative overheads or institutional strengthening.

The study then moves on to describing the relationship between an NGO, in this case the YMCA and the Government of Fiji. The nature of this relationship evolved over a twenty year period. In the early years (1971 - 1980), the Government did not seek any working relationship with NGO's and exchanges were marked by a lack of respect and trust. As the Government moved beyond the immediate post-colonial honeymoon period it developed an understanding that some of its work could be best accomplished in partnership with NGO's.

The Fiji and the Western Samoa YMCA's early attempts at self-reliance are described, as are their demise in spite of some support from its overseas partners. The funding pools and the investments were transferred to meet operational deficits which were brought about by a lack of management skills and a combination of unforeseen circumstances.

The efforts of three other NGO's, the YWCA of Fiji, the Fiji Council of Social Services and the Western Samoa National Youth Council are described to indicate that many NGO's experience severe difficulties in moving their organisation towards self-reliance. The YWCA in Fiji has substantial investments in capital projects in their endeavour to become self-

reliant but they have found that such investments require constant injections of more funds to retain their income-earning capacity.

Finally the leaders of the YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa address the question of the possibilities of financial self-reliance. Recent attempts in Fiji are promising but they are at the cost of being captured by the middle-class and moving away from working with the poor. Western Samoa's struggle is seen to be fraught with difficulty and may prove to be an impossible task that is continually moving beyond the grasp of the people who seek it.

The first question to be addressed is the nature of development itself. Is it value free? Does it 'bring good things to all people'? What are the costs that must be paid to win the benefits?

DEVELOPMENT --- A CONFLICT OF VALUES

Scientists and scholars have been urged to make their work objective and free from personal opinion, but often facts are reported with implicit interpretations without explaining why they were included whilst other facts (perhaps disconfirming ones) were omitted. There is of course, no such thing as complete objectivity. Facts never speak for themselves, they always require interpretation. Myrdal (1968:33) insists that the first responsibility of any scholar is to reveal the value assumptions on which interpretation is based. In his introductory chapters, Myrdal states,

"Throughout the history of social studies, the hiding of valuations has served to conceal the inquirers wish to avoid facing the real issues.

The only way in which we can strive for objectivity in theoretical analysis is to lift up the valuations into the full light, make them conscious and explicit, and permit them to determine the view points, the approaches, and the concepts used".

A conflict of values in the Fiji context is described by Crocombe (1973:65) which places the high value held by Indian, Chinese and European businessmen in the accumulation of goods against the high value placed by indigenous Fijians in personal relationships and the distribution of goods. Fijians earn respect and status by giving things and service to one another and are considered less Fijian if they accumulate for their individual profit.

"If all members of a society place a similar value on accumulation and distribution, equilibrium is maintained. But if one group emphasises generosity and distribution (as do Fijians) and another emphasises hard bargaining and accumulation (as does the Indian business community in Fiji), there is an inevitable flow of property

from the "distributors" to the "accumulators". Moreover, the fact that the latter do not reciprocate in the manner of the former inevitably causes strained relationships between them". (Crocombe, 1973:65).

This relative value between accumulation and distribution is true, according to Crocombe, in all Polynesian societies. This would help explain the Samoan practice of receiving substantial amounts of money in the form of remittances from relatives overseas and then spending a high proportion of it on the construction and maintenance of villages churches and the comfort of the pastor.

Goodell in Korten and Klaus (1984:273) describes the dominant approach used by Governments in the introduction of development projects to local communities.

"The most common approach to building local capacity for economic development simply takes out to the poor the amenities we know they need, instructing them in how to use these improvements correctly; pumps, new seeds, clinics, electricity. On their part, the poor wake up one morning to find that their government has brought them one more thing not even of their asking - a vast irrigation system, or a tractor for every five villages - virtually free. We operate like surgeons on these etherized communities without so much as a nod of their consent".

Goulet (1992:470-71) identified the gains and losses of development. The gains reported by the World Bank were:- Large numbers of people have more food, more comfortable lodgings, a greater variety of clothing, access to books and numerous other material goods than ever before; Machines, equipment and processes of all kinds have freed millions of people from burdensome tasks; Institutional specialisation dealing with education, transportation, banking and statistics; Increased freedom of choice especially

for women and children; Greater worldwide interdependence between small and large countries; Higher degrees of tolerance than ever before for the diversity in religion, laws, customs, ideologies, clothing, tastes in food.

These gains, of course, are not universal and not enjoyed by vast masses of the human family.

Amongst the losses identified by Goulet were the following:- The shattering of the dynamism of desire for material goods, and unlimited consumerism; An increase in vertical dependence among nations. Even relatively rich developing countries have seen their dependency increase, thanks to their financial debt; An increase in anomic or social alienation and role ambiguity among members of all societies; The destruction or dilution of cultures; the meaning systems of numerous cultural communities are evacuated. People are caught up in the rat race, in the pursuit of goods; Damage to the ecosystem, the biological systems damaged in the name of development; Value conflicts over the meaning of "the good life". Does it consist of, among other things, equality of opportunity or equality of results? Values conflict in the meaning of "a just society". Does justice reside in inherited authority, in opinion polls, in the rule of the majority or in some social contract?

In calling for a wisdom to match our sciences, Goulet relates the story of an interview with an elderly Guarani Indian chief in eastern Paraguay, whose forest habitat had been destroyed in the construction of the Icaray Dam.

"He bemoaned the disappearance of the forest, the destruction of familiar Indian rituals, and the loss of interest in younger members of his tribe in the values, language and culture of his people. This leader then declared that more important than the destruction of the forest and the destruction of his people was the disappearance of the

sacred dance. I asked him why the sacred dance was so important and he replied

"It is what holds the cosmos together".

Twenty years ago, this was a declaration of cultural faith, today it is a statement of ecological fact" (page 473).

Development is largely a package deal. The desirable is mixed thoroughly with the dross. Development is rather like a beautiful mistress. The delights, fantasies and the champagne dinners are all most attractive, but her admirers and courtiers may find her rather expensive and finish up with unpleasant side effects they did not foresee.

Harman in Korten and Klaus (1984:17), on the subject of values and development states:-

"Modern industrial society is exceptionally confused about values. It knows how to approach almost any "How to"? question. How to put a man on the moon? How to handle the vast quantities of data in a second, or a millisecond? How to split the atom and combine the genes? But it is most unsure when faced with the question, "What for?" When you can accomplish almost any technical task imaginable, if willing to commit the resources, then what is worth doing?"

### Summary

The process of development, it is suggested, has a cost which is very often unforeseen. These costs include a drive towards unlimited consumerism, an increase in vertical dependency, social dislocation, the dilution of cultures, damage to the ecosystem, value conflicts in the meaning of "the good life", and value conflicts in the meaning of "a just society".

Development is seen as a package deal in which the desirable is thoroughly mixed with the dross.

Modern society has developed a wondrous bundle of strategies for addressing the question of "how to", but is remarkably deficient in addressing the question "why"?

This leads us to consider the question whether self-reliance is a universal "good" or whether it too has costs that invite thorough investigation.

## SELF RELIANCE - THE CONCEPT EXPLORED

The purpose of this chapter, within the central theme, is to examine the nature of self-reliance from a variety of perspectives.

Psychologists, Sociologists and Political/Economic analysts each describe human behaviour, its causes and consequences from the paradigms of each particular discipline. This attempt to give a brief overview of each disciplines approach to the concept of self-reliance has extreme limitations and will fall short of satisfying the psychologist, sociologist and political/economic analyst. Little short of a full text book for each discipline would in all probability satisfy the academic. To include these perspectives, therefore, is to invite criticism. To avoid, or ignore the various contributions, however, would be remiss in the extreme.

With this distinct limitation acknowledged, some elements of the concept of self-reliance will be examined within the limitations of each disciplines paradigms.

### The Psychological Paradigm

In the study of human behaviour, the idea is expressed that behaviour is most frequently a conditioned response of the individual to the environment. It is something that has been learnt by experience, something programmed into the individual somewhat similar to putting patterns into a computer for responses in appropriate circumstances. 'Learned helplessness' is a pattern of behaviour that has been the subject of much research.

Myers (1983) reports that when humans are placed in situations in which they have little or no control they become passive because they believe that their efforts will have little or no effect. They suffer paralysis of the will, passive resignation, and physical immobility.

People in institutions can be conditioned into the psychological state of learned helplessness by denying them the opportunity to make any decisions that effect their well-being. Simple exercises such as giving them choices with a menu, looking after a plant or a pet can alleviate the response of helplessness. Similarly, people who have been unemployed over a sustained period can experience learned helplessness. If one gets rejection after rejection from scores of attempts, it cannot fail to make some impact on the feeling of worth of the individual. Self-reliance and feelings of self-worth are assumed to go hand-in-hand.

Myers (1983:97), also reports a dimension of human behaviour that is conditioned by one's perception of their potential impact on one's environment, called 'locus of control'.

"More than a thousand research studies have explored the consequences of people's believing that they control their own destiny (termed 'internal locus of control'). These studies compare such people to those who more often assume that their fate is determined by chance or outside forces ('external locus of control')."

Disadvantaged children with a strong internal locus of control achieve more in school than do those with a weak sense of personal control. Internally controlled people are also more likely to be non-smokers, to wear

seat belts, and practice birth-control. They are more independent and resistant to being manipulated, they are better able to delay instant gratification in order to achieve long-term goals.

Whilst these behaviours of learned helplessness and internal and external locus of control are assumed to be operative in every society, the question being addressed here is whether learned helplessness is more prevalent in societies that have been subject to the experience of colonisation. Iaveta Short in Walsh (1993:D6.1), in commenting on Cook Islanders in New Zealand states,

"Many of the leadership core of the present Cook Island community in New Zealand were brought up in the colonial era in the Cook Islands - nurtured with heavy doses of subjugation and inferiority to the European colonists. When they arrived in New Zealand where European values and culture prevailed, it served only to confirm and perpetuate their feeling of subjugation and inferiority".

There can be little doubt that this message of superior and inferior relations was a common theme of the colonial experience. The European expansion of colonial empires subjected the majority of the peoples of the world to a foreign culture which applied all of its economic, political and cultural systems onto the subjects under its control. Worsley (1984:2) described the invasions as

"The spread of Western capitalism wrought a transformation of social life across the globe at the cost of the immiseration of millions. By the 1880's, the world had been divided up among a few Western industrial powers".

Wallerstein (1983:82) addresses the effects of colonialism in stronger language and makes the linkage between the colonial spread of Empire and the expansion of capitalism.

"The process involved in the expansion of the capitalist world-economy - the peripheralisation of economic structures, the creation of weak state structures participating and constrained by an interstate system - involved a number of pressures at the level of culture: Christian proselytisation, the imposition of European language: instruction in specific technologies and mores: changes in the legal codes. Many of these changes were made manu militari. Others were achieved by the persuasions of 'educators', whose authority was ultimately backed by military force. That is the complex of processes we sometimes label 'Westernisation' or even more arrogantly 'modernisation'.

What needs to be remembered is not only the totality, the comprehensiveness of the colonial experience by the invasion of all aspects of the life of people, but also the fact that in most cases its departure (as countries one after another became politically independent) has been relatively recent. Short's comment that the current leaders were brought up in the colonial era is as true of most corners of previous empire as it is for the Cook Islands. And to assume that this would not in some way influence their behaviour and their perceptions of what they believe is real would be naive in the extreme.

Few theories of development have focused on the influence of the individual on society. Most have been confined to regarding the process of development and underdevelopment as a phenomenon of systems; economic systems, and political systems and their influence on the inhabitants therein. Two notable exceptions were McClelland (1961) and Hagen (1962). Their

work was regarded as seminal in the 1960's, the early period of the formation of development theory, but has progressively lost favour during the 1970's and 1980's. They are now most commonly regarded as being ethnocentric and arrogant defining development as being largely "the American way of life".

The effect of the colonial experience on the local inhabitants is described by Albert Wendt in Oliver (1983:118).

"During almost one hundred years of colonialism, racist myths about us grew up. The colonisers prescribed for us the roles of domestic animals, amoral phallus, lackey, the comic and lazy and happy-go-lucky fuzzy-haired boy and the well-beloved colonised. You can see this especially in countries which are still colonised".

What is suggested is that the colonial experience, along with other environmental factors has conditioned a significant number of the ex-colonised towards behaviour traits that are resistant to the concept of self-reliance. Self-reliance can be viewed as an attitude that is a learned response to a culture of conditioning over several generations. It could be several more generations before new attitudes are formed.

As Allport (1954:139) has put it,

"One's reputation, whether true or false, cannot be hammered, hammered, hammered, into one's head without doing something to one's character".

## The Cultural Paradigm

One of the most pervasive influences over the possibility of whether or not an attitude of self-reliance is promoted is the culture in which one is enmeshed. One attempt to describe the effect of culture on economic performance is that of Talcot Parsons. Parsons pattern variables are outlined by Hoselitz (1970) with three of the variables discussed in some detail. These three variables may provide some insight into why some societies promote an attitude of self-reliance more than other.

Parsons pairs the variables in contrasting sets. The first pair is 'achievement vs ascription'. This set seeks to differentiate a society which gives status to individuals who have earned respect by achieving significant goals compared to other societies in which status is given to individuals as a consequence of who they are related to. Thus in achieving societies, suggests Parsons, the status of community leaders and successful business people is elevated and the status of Princes, Dukes, Earls and Chiefs is on the decline'. And whilst there will be significant exceptions in all societies (for example the Kennedy clan succession) and although the process will most often be gradual, as social norms move toward the elevation of achievement and away from ascription as a source of status the better that societies chances of economic success.

Of course, a factor that elevated traditional chiefs in many developing societies was the practice in the colonial period of indirect rule. It was a particular practice in British colonies to appoint the traditional chiefs to positions through which the colonial power could exercise influence.

Once again we are reminded, that it is only within the last thirty or forty years that Empire ended and nationhood began. Crocombe (1973:59) informs us that the systems of government in the eastern Pacific drew leadership from hereditary chiefs.

"Leadership was determined largely by the accident of birth. Such systems are now much less widespread in the world than they used to be. The decline has resulted partly from a weakening of beliefs about the rank or status of a person being determined by a god or gods. Partly it is due to evidence showing that ability in government and other skills is learnt rather than in-born, and that both high and low intelligence are found amongst both high and low ranking persons".

It should be noted, however, that in Fiji the Great Council of chiefs holds power over several substantive issues, particularly ownership of land.

Parsons second pair of variables of Parsons are universalism vs particularism. A society that uses universalistic norms, according to Parsons, will apply criteria to the whole population rather than having particular sets of people automatically selected for particular jobs. The most recent universalistic norm applied to selection in the Western societies are those of EEO, that is Equal Employment Opportunities. It is no longer legal to select out people of a certain age, sex, or ethnic origin.

It should be recalled that the universalism to which Parsons referred is a norm, that is , a recognised social practice and approved form of behaviour. One can hardly apply universal criteria in a society largely dominated by social roles in which 'everyone knows their place'.

The practise of particularism' is slowly losing its prevalence with each passing generation but it will be some years before universalism becomes a norm.

The third pair of variables defined by Parsons is specificity vs diffuseness. These are most readily observed in the division of labour within any given society. In traditional societies according to Parsons, the division of work is spread in very broad bands, whilst the division in industrialised societies is in hundreds of very narrow specialisations. Urban centres, as contrasted to rural villages, provide some examples of this pair of variables. In the village, the woman folk will perform all the tasks required to feed the family. They will tend the garden, fetch the firewood, prepare the meal, most often eat separate to the men, and clean up the kitchen and eating utensils. If however one of the young women gains employment in the city hotel, she could well make only the desserts for the hotel guests, once she has received the specialised training.

In moving from a diffusion of roles to one of specificity, the range of specific roles is likely to be narrow for some years.

The three sets of variables indicative of a modern society, achievement, universalism, and specificity may be more a commentary of industrialised urban centres in all countries of the world rather than a distinction between the developed and underdeveloped countries of the world. However, the three sets of variables indicative of a traditional society (status by ascription, selection by particularism, role definition by diffuse-

ness) leads inevitably to leaders being appointed by their relationship to the traditional hierarchy who then select others by who they are (rather than what they can do) and that these roles cover a wide variety of situations.

The attitude of self-reliance is hardly fostered in a society where the great bulk of major decisions is made by a relatively small number of people over a wide range of issues and that this small group of people have made all the decisions over a long period of time. The decision to begin a process of self-reliance is one of taking power over ones life, but if the dominant culture invests much power in the hands of others, then one must 'swim against the tide' to behave contrary to cultural norms.

### The Political Paradigm

With the demise of the Eastern European Communist block, it would be easy to assume that any political economic system other than capitalism no longer survives. But socialism, as defined as 'the collective ownership of the means of production' has some elements in Pacific Island states. In Fiji and Western Samoa approximately eighty percent of the land is held under the title of extended family clusters. These represent to a limited degree, some forms of collective ownerships of the means of production within a capitalist society.

It would be prudent, therefore to compare and contrast the power centres of capitalism and socialism. In redefining the concept of "the Third World" Worsley (1984:309) presents his interpretation of the essential characteristics of capitalism, socialism, and the Third World.

"The concept of the third world necessarily implies the existence of two prior worlds. It is important, therefore to spell out what the characteristics of the first two worlds are ... The first world emerged as and remains, an economy based upon private property in the means of production and characterised by its necessary concomitants. The existence of a supply of exploitable wage-labour, and competition between firms seeking to maximise profit in a market economy. All of these institutions and structures are legitimised by assumptions so deep they are scarcely ever inspected, let alone questioned;"

Worsley suggests that the basis of the capitalist First World is possessive individualism; Competition in which it is assumed that private gain for some will be of benefit to all; that charitable societies with some State support will alleviate poverty and meet basic needs.

By contrast, the Second World was based on collective ownership of the means of production. The economy is planned centrally by the State, and politically the State is dominated by a single centralist party.

Worsley (1984:310) continues,

"As for the Third World the central notion is one of dependency. Third World countries do not have a distinctive economic system different in kind from that of the capitalist world; politically weaker, and with a lower level of development of productive forces, they are exploited by the latter as sources of cheap labour of raw materials, and latterly of manufactured goods, while the West specialises in advanced technology.

But dependency is not a purely economic concept. It is a category of political economy, since it describes inequalities of power as between states, economic institutions and actors operating on the world-market. Cultural dependency was usually simply omitted from most models".

As the modernisation theories of the 1960's lost their credibility, a new school emerged that commented on the flow of funds from the underdeveloped Third world to the developed First World. One of the most prolific writers, Andre Gunder Frank reported of the \$9 billion dollar flowing from the USA to the Third World while \$25.6 billion flowed back to the USA in the form of investment profit during the period 1950 to 1965. This gave a net inflow from the poor to the rich of \$16.6 billion. This was a continuation of earlier flows from the poor to rich as Tinker (1987:14) report concerning the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) reports;

"From 1840 to 1874 a balance of 781 million Dutch Florins was remitted to the Netherlands as profit. This paid off the national debt, financed the construction of the Dutch railway network and restored Amsterdam to its financial importance".

The Dependency school of theorists, many of who were from the Latin American continent, proposed that the world was characterised by a structure of metropolis - satellite centres where the metropolis exploited the satellite. While this had facilitated the expropriation of large portions of the underdeveloped countries actual surplus, it had also prevented these countries from realising their potential surplus. The monopoly structure was found at all levels the international, the national and the local level and created a situation of exploitation which, in turn, caused the 'chain-like' flow of the surplus from the remotest Latin American village to Wall Street in New York. This general thrust was taken up by theologians which came to be known as the Latin American Liberation theology and later, Asian Liberation theology. The theologies had the dual tasks; liberation from oppression and the indigenisation of theology. (Egan, in Walsh 1993 page E12.4). Whilst

dependency theory and liberation theology had a particular relevance to Latin America and to a lesser degree in other areas of the world, it absorbed a generation of people concerned with development into believing that unless one was involved in overthrowing the structure of the whole world structure it was fruitless doing anything else. Dependency, and the lack of will to be self-reliant was a state of ones place in the structure of the whole world system. One was either an exploiter or exploited. Apart from revolution by the masses, the only remedy suggested was industrialisation under protective tariffs and import-substitution. This has been accomplished to a degree by the Asian tigers (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, to a lesser degree Malaysia and Thailand) but only under the power of the giant multinationals and at a cost of loss of liberty of many of its people.

Like many situations with two apparent opposite and mutually exclusive propositions, most of us operate by believing there is some truth in both the modernisation and the dependency paradigms. That to operate by believing in only one paradigm is to paint oneself into a corner where further action is not possible.

### Summary

Self-reliance is a concept that is not value-free. It is an attitude that might be held (or not held) by individuals, groups, communities or nations. A predisposition towards an attitude of self-reliance has been explored using three paradigms; a psychological paradigm in which the cognitive tools, beliefs and behaviours of individuals is shaped and conditioned by his/her history of experiences and environments. The colonial experience, had a

powerful influence on many individuals predispositions towards or away from an attitude of self-reliance. The second paradigm, that of culture, proposed that various norms within a given culture will define whether self-reliance is a value that is approved or disapproved. The third paradigm of political systems, maintained that the spread of the world's capitalist system has divided the world into exploiters and exploited, and that one's position in this structural relationship determines whether self-reliance is an obligation or a mirage.

A predisposition towards self-reliance cannot lead to an assumption that all members of a society will give self-reliance equal value. Do men and women value self-reliance at a similar or different level? Do young people or their elders value it more? Is there a difference in the value held between Samoan, Fijian, New Zealand Maori, New Zealand Europeans and American Caucasian societies? These questions are explored in the next chapter.

**CULTURES AND VALUES IN TRANSITION**

The purpose of this chapter, within the central theme, is to examine the concept of self-reliance from the frame of reference of various culture's and age groups. The relevance for this examination is that agents representing funding agencies are most often of European origins and the agents representing receiving organisations are indigenous to the country in which the work will be carried out. Furthermore, certainly for the decades 1970 and 1980, the majority of agents representing funding agencies were men and were middle aged. Questions arise about the congruence of meanings between the funding agent and the receiving organisations representative if they were of different cultures, age and gender.

A series of hypotheses was developed to get some indication of whether the factors of age, gender and culture had an influence on the relative values held about two facets. The facets were:-

- a strong supportive family
- financial self-reliance.

The survey had distinct limitations. Firstly the number of people surveyed was extremely small. It therefore is a mere indicator of possibilities. Secondly, several potentially important elements such as level of income, occupation, years of education were not taken into account. Culture, age and gender were the only elements considered because of the limited resources for the survey.

The hypotheses were:

1. That age and gender are significant determinants of the value placed on financial self-reliance and a strong support family.
2. That the difference between age groups within cultures in the values placed on financial self-reliance and a strong supportive family is greater than the difference between cultures of the same age group.
3. That the values each culture placed on financial self-reliance and strong supportive family does not conform to the stereotype of the 'family centred Polynesian' and the 'individualistic money-centred' European.

### The Survey

A questionnaire was developed which asked respondents to rank-order a list of life goals.

A total of 246 people completed the questionnaire. Of this total 37 were Fijian; 65 were Samoan; 52 were New Zealand Maori; 49 were New Zealand Pakeha and 43 were American Caucasian.

In Samoa, 18 of the questionnaires were completed by people working in Apia, and the remaining 47 were administered through Palanitina Mala-Toelupe, Chief Health Educator of the Health Department, by Sakaria Taituane and Afakasi Laki in the village of Malaela in Poutasi rural Upolu.

The life goals were developed in part from an idea reported by Rokeach in Simon and Kirschtenbaum (1973:73). There was some difficulty in making all the life goals appear in a congruent context, but as the only ones being measured were 'a strong supportive family' and 'financial self-reliance' this was not seen to be a major defect.

The list of life goals used for rank-ordering were:-

- an exciting life
- social recognition
- a strong supportive family
- financial self-reliance
- a comfortable life style
- a sense of accomplishment
- true friendship
- social equality
- intellectual stimulation
- a sense of self-respect
- inner harmony
- challenging career

The respondents were both men and women and their ages fell into the follow categories:-

25 years and under

26 to 45

46 and over

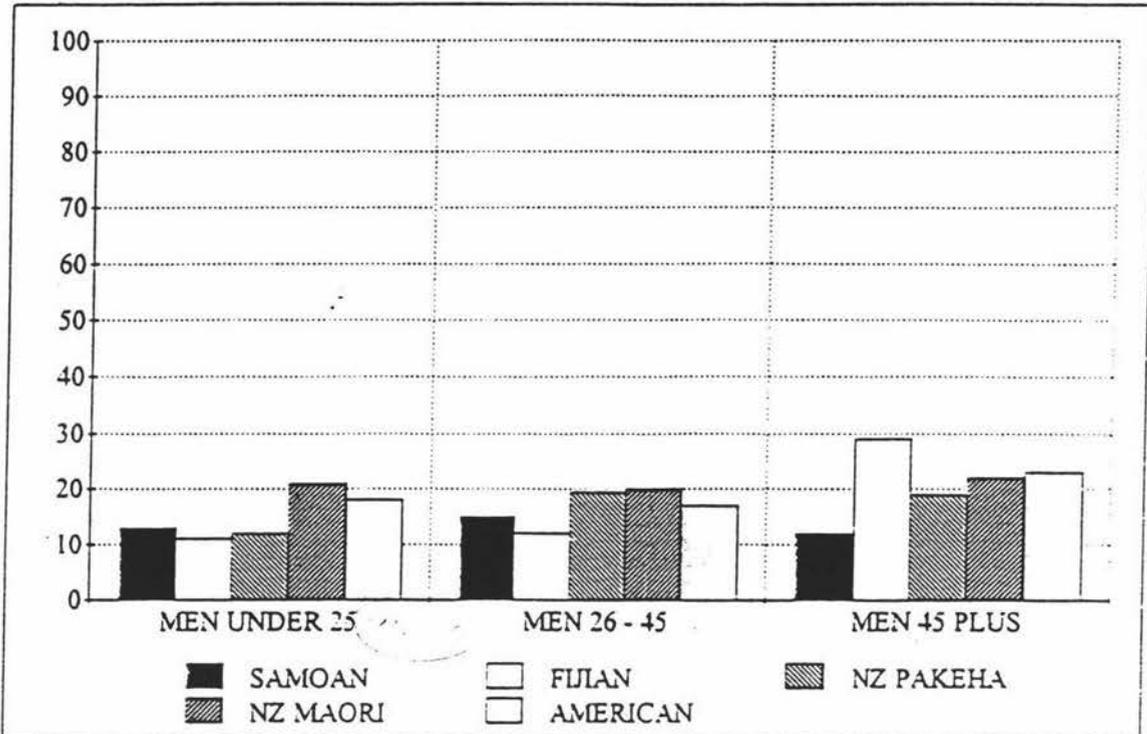
As the rank-orders would produce a lower score for the life goals most highly valued, all scores in each cohort were added then averaged. They were then divided into 100 so that the higher the scores the higher the value placed on them.

As the number of respondents was small the results failed to approximate to the normal curve. In spite of this reservation, the indicators are felt to be reasonably reliable.

Figure 1

**Self-reliance values by cultures**

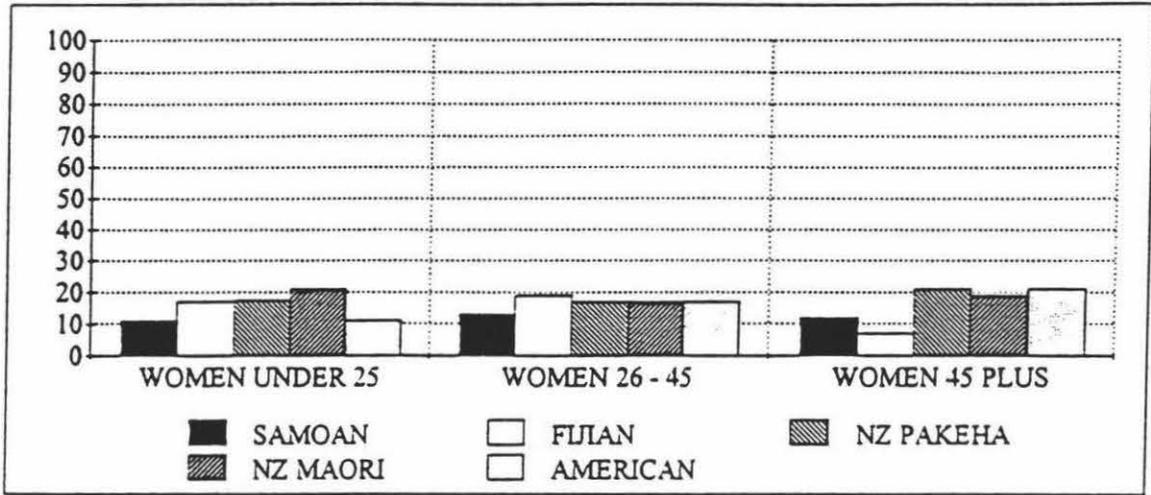
**Value scores of self-reliance (men)**



There is little variation placed on the value of self-reliance by Samoan, American and New Zealand Maori across the age spans. Apparently, for these cultures the value of self-reliance does not increase or decrease very much as they grow older. The New Zealand Pakeha appears to value self-reliance somewhat higher in the middle years than when young. Fijian men, on the other hand, place a much higher value on self-reliance after the age of 45, (an increased score from 11.3 to 28.5). The overall impression is that the difference in the value placed on self-reliance by all men in the survey was not particularly significant.

Figure 2

Value scores of self-reliance (women)

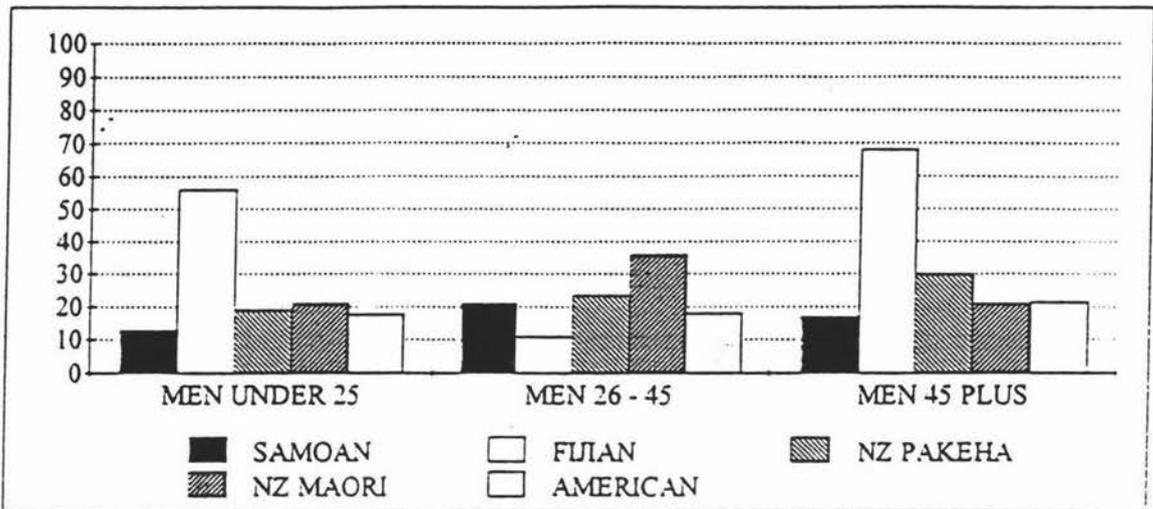


There appears to be little difference in the value placed on self-reliance by women across all ages and cultural groups. The only group that appears to change its value with increasing age is Fijian and the value declines with increasing age. The age of over 45 is sometimes described as an age of dependence. In the Fijian social context, older Fijian women often live with their adult offspring, American women, on the other hand, with an increase in value of self-reliance as their age increases, may be reflecting their wish to avoid being dependant on their offspring.

Figure 3

Comparing value scores of strong supportive families among cultures within age and gender

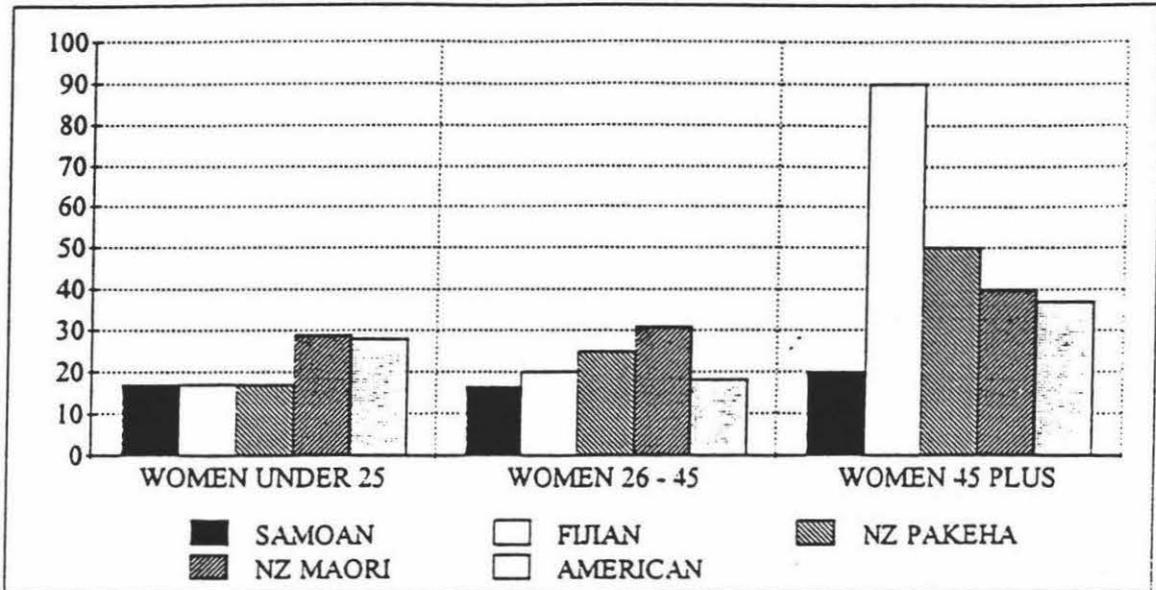
Value scores of supportive family (men)



The graph shows that there is a marked difference between cultures in the value given to a strong supportive family. Fijians under 25 years and over 45 years apparently place a much higher value on a strong supportive family than other cultures (scoring a high of 65) but in the sandwich generation (dependant children and parents) apparently place a low value on a strong supportive family. There appears to be a tendency in most men for a strong supportive family to increase in value as age increases, with a possible surge (up or down) in the middle years.

Figure 4

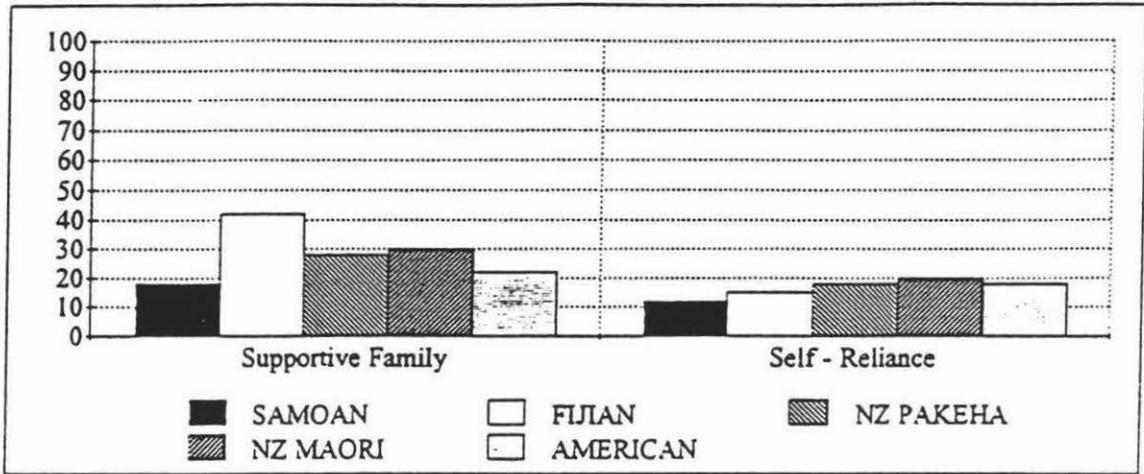
Value scores of supportive family (women)



The graph indicates that the value placed on a strong supportive family increases for all women in the five cultures as age increases. This is very pronounced for Fijian women over 45 years to elevate the value of supportive families.

Figure 5

All ages and both sexes values of each culture (average)



The graph indicates that there is not a lot of difference given by all cultures to the value of self-reliance. There is however, more differences in the value placed on a strong supportive family among cultures with Fijians apparently valuing it twice as high as Samoans.

The purpose of this chapter and of the research has been to demonstrate that the concept of self-reliance is not a 'given' that can be used across time and cultural boundaries as a fixed idea. The research may be seen to be somewhat inelegant and the size of each cohort less than satisfactory. Nevertheless, it may be viewed as an instrument to indicate a number of propositions:-

First, self-reliance is a concept to which each culture attaches different degrees of value. This could lead to a funding agency making self-reliance a condition of a grant and the receiving agency accepting the condition but with a different interpretation leading to incompatible results.

Second, that self-reliance can be regarded as a value and as such it competes with other values which may be in competition or contradiction.

Third, that values, including self-reliance are not fixed but shift as circumstances change. Agencies struggling with survival or security needs are likely to place a different value on self-reliance compared to agencies that are operating at a sustainable level.

Fourth, that within cultures, various age groups regard self-reliance with different degrees of strength and that males and females do not regard self-reliance equally.

Fifth, that stereotypes regarding a culture's value orientation towards self-reliance must be used with caution. They may represent ideals which are rarely achieved or they may be only of historic interest. Patterson (1992:43) in exploring Maori values comments that ideals may be rarely lived up to but that is no reason to dismiss them. They still represent important guide posts against which to measure behaviour.

The recognition that self-reliance is a value held in high regard by some and of lower value by others is important when the human face of development is under consideration.

Non Government Organisations (NGO's) have been credited by some with having brought the human element into the development process. The questions that confront us, are, how significant is the NGO role in development, what is its scope and where is it headed?

**THE EMERGING SIGNIFICANCE OF NGO'S**  
**IN DEVELOPMENT**

The purpose of this chapter, within the central theme, is to examine the relatively recent recognition of the contribution of NGO's to development efforts in the third world. As self-reliance is an issue that has placed many NGO's in a fragile state so that their work is at risk of collapsing, it must be questioned whether the NGO's are worth saving. If their contribution is important should the value of self-reliance placed on it by the funding agency be recognised.

During the 1970's and 1980's, scores of books and articles were published calling into question the effectiveness of aid programmes and challenged the assumptions on which development programmes were made. William and Elizabeth Paddock (1973) conducted an independent audit of aid programmes and called their book "We Don't Know How". The Institute for Food and Development Policy in San Francisco published a book that challenged American policy. Their view was that American influence through its Aid Programme was more harmful than helpful. They titled their book "Aid as Obstacle". It would be true to say that by the late 1970's going into the 1980's, there was large scale disenchantment with official aid policies as they were applied by the rich countries of the First World to the poor countries of the Third World.

Korten (1990:X) gives the opinion that there is yet hope emerging.

"It is becoming evident that the hope for dealing with the global development crisis rests not with the development industry, but with the great social movements of contemporary society including the peace, environment, women and human rights movements. It rests with people who are driven by strong social commitment rather than

with budgetary imperatives of huge global bureaucracies. It rests in particular with the more forward-looking non-government organisations (NGO's) of the South that find themselves immersed in the political environmental and economic struggles of the poor with whom they work and that lack the luxury of closing their eyes to the real nature of the problem. Yet these Southern NGO's remain dependant on Northern donors whose funding policies and procedures are grounded in old myths about development and the processes by which it is achieved".

Korten is not alone in the view that a new force has emerged into the development scenario that in myriads of small ways will influence the chemistry of the development process. The Club of Rome Commissioned Bertrand Schneider and a team of researchers to investigate and report on the results of the Development Decade. They found that twenty years of official development effort had resulted in a host of project failures and little or no impact on the plight of the poor. Whilst development efforts imposed from the top-down apparently had no impact, what was emerging was a world movement of people at the grassroots making their own development efforts with considerably more success.

Schneider (1988:XII) reports:

"Although it has yet to be clearly perceived and accurately measured, a new pattern of development is taking shape at community and village level in rural areas of the Third World. In a spirit of self-reliance, numerous 'grassroots' groups have decided to take charge of their own development in rural villages throughout Latin America, Africa and Asia".

The study by Schneider (1988) and his team of researchers investigated 93 projects supplemented by a documentary study of a further 277 projects in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Although the results most often were modest and at times experienced failure, the movement continued to spread through most areas of the Third World. The projects were supported and financed by non-profit, non-governmental organisations (NGO's), volunteer

and charitable agencies which channelled aid and assistance, provided training through personnel in the field and encouraged innovation and the use of simple technologies wherever possible. The NGO network was extended and backed up by scores of informal groups without precise legal attributes - cooperating churches and religious communities - but also by government and international institutions. The finding by Schneider of the wide variety of grassroots development efforts made it difficult to put a precise label on their motivation. There was one theme, however, that appeared to be universal, that is the ideology of human rights.

### **The Magnitude of the NGO Network**

Schneider and his team found that the NGO phenomenon was fluid and in full evolution and that in most countries in Asia it was fairly recent. The flourishing of all sorts of groups within village communities was a result of either local initiatives or an out growth of Northern NGOs. An attempt to measure the magnitude of the phenomena of NGO's found several thousand NGO's involved in development in the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Thailand and Indonesia.

In Kenya there were 370 NGOs but there were only 100 five years previous to the study. The earliest developmental NGO's emerged in the 1960's with exponential growth in the late 1970's to 1980's. The substantial number of NGO's working on development projects in the Third World gives some indication of the potential of this world movement.

Another measure of the NGO potential is the cost-effectiveness of their use of aid funds. Oliver (1983:27) reported a study made in 1976 for the South Pacific Forum of how aid could be made more effective. Within the list of recommendations made by the Task Force was:

"Concerning Voluntary Organisations; All Pacific countries have a range of voluntary, church and charitable organisations undertaking projects in social and economic development ... A study in Papua New Guinea ten years ago showed that \$13 million a year came in aid through voluntary organisations, and was worth \$50 million in equivalent government services. We were told and observed ourselves that voluntary aid is often more cost-effective than resources handled by central or local government."

The Taskforce observed that voluntary organisations were best equipped to deal with projects such as rural vocational training, urban youth and womens work, small scale agricultural enterprises, very low-cost housing, small scale water supplies. The Taskforce suggested that voluntary organisations pay lower salaries than public servants, tend to attract highly motivated staff, and have lower overhead costs. They also made smaller mistakes as their on-the-spot decision making meant they could be easily and quickly stopped, changed or removed.

The relatively recent focus on 'people-centred development' has brought a raft of writers to the fore. Tweed and King in Walsh (1993:D2.3) quote a 1989 Caracas report which states,

"The human dimension of development is not just another addition to the development dialogue, it is an entirely new perspective, a revolutionary approach to development. If we manage this transition in our thinking, then human civilisation and democracy may reach another milestone when, instead of being the residual of development, human beings finally become its principal object and subject - not a forgotten economic abstraction, but a living operational reality, not helpless victims or slaves of the very process of development that they have unleashed, but its master".

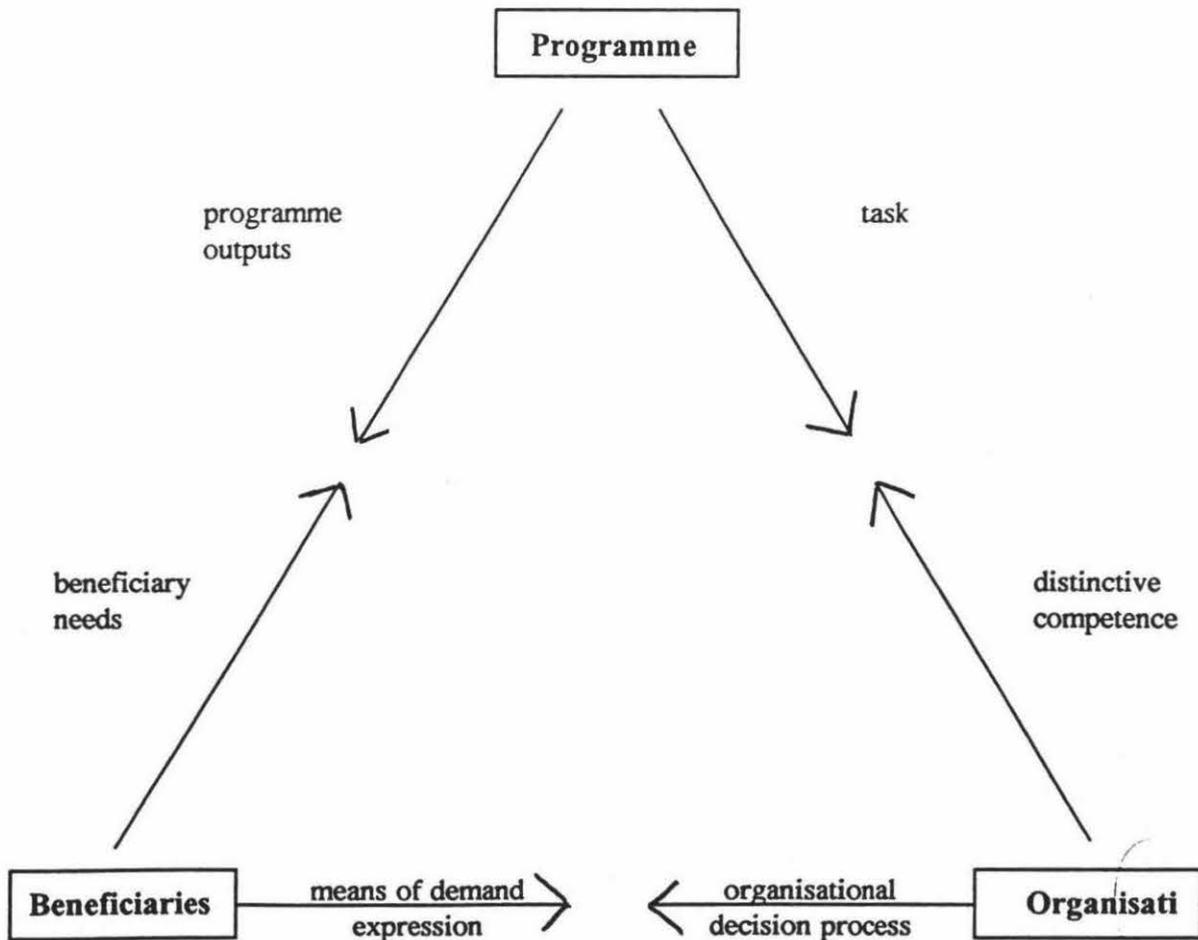
Korten (1984) in a book of readings focusing on 'People Centred Development', considers that the NGO's operate an approach that differs from the institutional system of planning that is the key to its success. He terms the institutional planning system the "blue print" approach which is characterised

as being rigid, static, technically accurate, imposed from above by technocrats, the use of hard-data. It is a system useful for the introduction of infrastructure such as roads, bridges, buildings, wharfs, airports and the like, but particularly unsuitable for development in which human beings are central to the delivery and on whose lives the project will impact.

Korten (1984) proposes a system of planning which he terms the 'social learning' system in which people learn and grow in partnership with the project - that each (the people and the project) respond to the others stimulus, shapes its growth and final form. He presents in diagram form the essential 'fits' between the organisation, the programme, and the beneficiaries.

Figure 6

**Schematic Representation of Fit Requirements**



The diagram describes the need for a fit (congruence) between beneficiary needs and programme output, the distinctive competence of the organisation and the task to be achieved, the organisations decision making process and the beneficiaries means of expressing their need. Korten suggests that the better the fit of these elements, the higher the chance for the effective delivery of aid.

Coombs and Ahmed (1974) suggest that programmes operated by NGO's have certain evident advantages over government sponsored ones. They have greater operational flexibility; they can recruit more able and more dedicated people and often they can get better results at lower costs. But they also have certain built-in handicaps. Because of financial constraints and uncertainties they are usually obliged to operate on a limited scale. Too often they decline sharply or disappear altogether when funds dry up or when their architects leave the scene. In some circumstances they are also vulnerable to changes in government policy towards voluntary organisations, but even when the government takes a friendly attitude, ministries with programmes of their own naturally prefer outside support funds to go into these.

### **The NGO/government relationship**

The relationship between governments and NGO's is very complex, sometimes there is outright antagonism at other times collaboration with swings in the mood at times being opportunistic rather than as a result of any deliberate policy. Most commonly, in fact, many, if not most governments have no written policy on the relationships with NGO's leaving it very much up to the personal philosophy of the minister in charge or his directors of the appropriate departments.

Schneider (1988:109) reports:-

"Most of the governments concerned do not have an official policy line with regard to NGO's. They generally approach the issue on a case-by-case basis, or in terms of each regimes interests... The

absence of relations between NGO's and governments generates mistrust on both sides, and can lead to conflict situations, as does any lack of communication whatever level it may be.

At times NGO's have deliberately ignored governments or kept them at arms length, so that the latter are now taking measures concerning them which may be excessive... It must be remembered that for years NGO's behaved as if governments didn't exist, when they were not in outright opposition to them".

Such is the nature of the NGO/government relationship, it is impossible to give any precise description of where it might lie at any particular time. Voluntary organisations are sometimes used as vehicles of public policy because of their cost/effective methods of work, but governments find it difficult to accept criticism and react as if they are the only legitimate authority on every subject. The nature of this relationship will be more fully described using a case study in chapter nine "Relationships with Government".

### **The Vulnerability and Sustainability of NGO's**

Schneider (1988:79) and his team found that of the thousands of NGO's involved in development, very few had managed to become financially self-reliant. They were vulnerable to the whims of local government and foreign aid agencies. Schneider states:

"It appears from many of our sources of information that there are still few NGO's able to live off their own resources; in other words, few projects can be realised without regular financial or material assistance. The figure may be something like a few dozen out of 650 (for 100 million inhabitants). Those NGO's, or projects which are today independent are those which benefited from an enormous amount of financial assistance at the outset. In most cases the aid came from oil companies".

This constant drag on donors has left many with a complaint known as 'aid weariness'. Sometimes it must seem that no amount of money over

endless time will actually create development and make the receiving partner self-reliant.

Todaro (1989) suggests that the 1970's and 1980's witnessed, on the donor side, a growing disenchantment with foreign aid as domestic issues like inflation, unemployment, government deficits and balance of payment problems gained increasing public exposure. Taxpayers became more concerned with domestic economic and social problems. One often heard the expression 'aid weariness' as the aid dollar appeared to be having little impact.

Berger and Neuhans in Korten (1984) put the case for the preservation of what they call 'mediating structures'. These structures (family, neighbourhood, church and voluntary organisation) mediate between the pressure of massification of big government, big business and the frailty of the private individual.

In an article in the periodical 'World Development', Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith (1992:379) argue for special efforts for the sustainability of development institutions. They report a survey made by the United States Agency for International Development which found that of 212 projects studied, 26 percent earned strongly negative ratings for sustainability; 56 percent got marginal marks, and a mere 11 percent of the projects were considered to have good prospects for being self-sustaining after the termination of US assistance.

"To note that things deteriorate over time may seem banal, but it bears repeating. Institutional sustainability is a process not an end-state, maintaining it requires ongoing allocation and expenditure of resources. Much of the earlier work on institution-building contained an implicit assumption that effective institutional performance was a target that, once reached, became an integral irreversible part of the institution. Secondly, because institutional capacity can be lost as

well as gained, attention to deterioration guards against mistaking simple longevity for sustainability".

Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith state that socio economic progress requires people to coordinate their behaviour, which in turn requires institutions that bring people together in ways that effectively facilitate concerted action. Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith remind us that in this age of rapid social change it has become increasingly difficult to adapt institutions to emerging needs. New ideas are needed every year and institutions need special inputs to retain their response strategies. People wind down, buildings deteriorate, technologies become redundant, knowledge becomes dated, relationships become tired.

Being financially self-reliant will not be sufficient to earn the right to exist to the year 2000. Being relevant may yet be a more important challenge.

The YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa sought above all else to be relevant. Self-reliance was not a concept under consideration. The only questions being considered were "what are the needs of the people of Fiji", and "what is an appropriate YMCA response"?

**INTRODUCTION TO THE YMCA'S OF FIJI AND**  
**WESTERN SAMOA**

The purpose of this chapter, within the central theme, is to describe the development programmes of the YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa. The relevance of this chapter is to demonstrate that the work of NGO's is innovative, people-centred and community based and that this is a distinctive feature typical of the development efforts of many NGO's. The value of the work needs to be considered alongside the imperative of many funding agencies for local self-reliance.

**The Fiji YMCA**

The Fiji YMCA began in May 1971 in response to an invitation from the Trustees of the Suva Youth Centre. The National Council of YMCA's of New Zealand dispatched an experienced YMCA director to Fiji to assess the needs and to give leadership to the newly created YMCA. Through discussion with local committee members and by reading Government reports it was established that the major needs that young people were experiencing were, high levels of unemployment and under employment, accelerating rates of rural to urban migration, and significant numbers of young people leaving school with no formal qualifications. One particular piece of information that the YMCA decided to address was that there was at the time a building boom and the Department of Labour had stated that there was a shortage of 300 carpentry hammer hands.

In consultation with local builders the YMCA planned a course in basic carpentry. The YMCA secured from the Fiji Governments Ministry of Youth a grant to pay a New Zealand Volunteer Services Abroad carpentry instructor and housing accommodation. CORSO of New Zealand made a grant

of \$NZ5000 for the purchase of tools and equipment. This was the first overseas aid requested and received. The skills defined by local builders indicated that twelve weeks would be sufficient to train young men in basic carpentry suitable for the jobs available. The Carpentry School was the first programme innovation created by the Fiji YMCA and flew in the face of conventional wisdom that said that it took three years to train a carpenter. The resourcing of the programme was satisfactory to the YMCA as the only overseas aid required (the \$5000 from CORSO) was for capital purchases with all ongoing costs being met from within Fiji. The Carpentry School operated for three years until the building boom evaporated. Over that period it trained and put into productive employment 150 young men who previously had been unemployed.

In October 1971, with the successful establishment of the YMCA Carpentry School, the YMCA turned its attention to considering the needs of young rural people. A research article by G N Bamford for FAO was found to be relevant. Its purpose was to "identify, study and evaluate various systems and approaches to educating and training rural youth for a vacation in farming". Encouraged by this research the YMCA proposed the establishment of YMCA Clubs in rural villages. A request was made to the Ministry of Youth for a grant to employ a Rural Worker. The Ministry agreed to the request and in November 1971 the YMCA's Rural Work programme was launched.

The objectives of the programme were:-

- "\*The development of commercial agricultural projects, both groups and individual, which encourage more productive use of the land and the energies of young people
- \*The development of community facilities to enhance the quality of life in rural areas
- \*The development of social, cultural and recreational programmes to help make the village a more socially attractive place to live

\*To provide opportunities and training programmes for the development of leadership potential in young rural people."

During 1972 the first Club was established in the village of Serea harnessing the energies of 100 young people. All expenses were met by the grant from the Ministry of Youth. Gardens were planted, vegetables were sold in the Suva market, a corrugated iron and bamboo community centre was built, leadership training programmes conducted, social events held and although the work was not extensive it satisfied the YMCA that it was a good beginning.

In 1973 and 1974, the YMCA began to secure significant grants from agencies, some overseas and some local, to expand the rural work programme. Grants were secured from Canadian University Services Overseas, the Emperor Gold Mines of Fiji, CORSO of New Zealand and the Vancouver YMCA with support from the Canadian International Development Agency. This was the beginning of a shift from local self-reliance to that of dependency on overseas aid. Local sources now paid for four Rural Workers and overseas agencies paid for nine. Club fees for members were introduced but these amounted to less than one percent of income and were difficult to extract from the rural members. By the end of 1974, YMCA clubs were established in 36 villages with 3000 members. In 1975 this expanded still further to 84 villages with 7,500 members.

A myriad of projects were undertaken by the club members. These included group and individual piggeries, beef cattle schemes, vegetable gardens, community centres, movie picture shows, farmer training and project planning, Carpentry workshops, house building, church renovation, fishing cooperatives, kindergartens and pre-school play centres. These were seen to be innovative and a response by local people to local needs. By 1976 the YMCA had clubs in 100 villages with 10,000 people involved in a variety of club

activities. Many young people served on committees that traditionally would not have included them. The twenty Rural Workers employed by the YMCA attended training workshops in Suva every month to keep their skills up to the tasks in hand. Although the YMCA was largely dependent on overseas aid to pay its staff, the excitement of the progress in rural Fiji overrode any forboadings of the fragility of the financial base.

As needs were identified by rural people the YMCA created new programmes in response. When it was discovered that in central Viti Levu more than half of the outboard motors used for river transport were broken down, the YMCA invented the Mobile Outboard Motor School. An outboard motor instructor conducted workshops in each village training the owners how to make elementary repairs and how to maintain and use the motors properly. Within the first year, the Mobile Outboard Motor School had trained 100 rural people in repair and maintenance skills and brought into service 60 motors that were broken down. Following this success, mobile schools were created for chainsaw operation, sewing machines repairs, carpentry and wood carving. Three hundred women learnt the skills of repairing their own sewing machines, sixty men learnt how to use and repair chainsaws. These mobile schools became so effective that several other agencies including the Fiji Governments Ministry of Rural Development copied the YMCA example and established similar programmes.

Each time the YMCA identified a need and designed a new programme, grant requests were made to overseas agencies usually for relatively small amounts (the mobile outboard motor school only required \$US2000 a year for operational costs) but each time it did so, it dug itself a little deeper into becoming dependent on overseas aid and consequently less self-reliant.

The administration of the Fiji YMCA was beginning to get bogged down with the continual need to write project reports and proposals for grants, to host overseas visitors and representatives from funding agencies. The post of Executive Director was filled by a Fijian in 1976. The New Zealand YMCA began to withdraw its support as it viewed the network built with agencies in Canada, Britain, Australia, and the USA was now sufficient to carry the burden of resourcing the YMCA of Fiji. Most aid flows continued at around \$F100,000 a year but problems over the use of aid funds were shortly to be experienced. These will be taken up in the chapter "Relationships between the donor, receiver and user".

### **The YMCA of Western Samoa**

In 1977 the YMCA of New Zealand was invited by some citizens of Western Samoa to establish work there. The YMCA of New Zealand responded by sending the person who had previously established the YMCA in Fiji. A local committee was appointed to identify the issues that it would be appropriate for the YMCA to address. The observations were that there numerous groups of young people in Apia who were unemployed drifting aimlessly around Apia; in villages young people had become reluctant to carry out the orders of traditional leaders, there was heavy importation of basic foods to sustain the population, remittances from overseas relatives were greater than the value of all exports, and there was a shortage of trade skills in rural villages with all training centred in Apia.

At this stage the aid-dependency problem in Fiji had not been recognised so the YMCA of Western Samoa was about to fall into the same trap. Requests were made to the YMCA's of the USA, Canada, Australia, Japan and the Asia Alliance of YMCA's. The Government of Western Samoa was asked for assistance but as they were also dependant on overseas aid very little help was given. Programmes were launched in Social Survival Skills for young

people in Apia, a Carpentry School was established on the outskirts of Apia and the first rural club begun. Volunteer Service abroad of New Zealand provided a carpentry instructor and CORSO again provided a grant for tools and equipment. Plans for the construction of a YMCA centre in Apia were advanced with grants of \$WS25,000 from the Rotary Club of Apia, and \$WS75,000 from the YMCA's of USA.

Rural clubs began to expand and by 1979, thirty six clubs were established with 6000 people involved. A survey was conducted to determine the need for motor mechanic training. It was found that of the 68 mechanics employed by the twelve largest firms only 12 had ever received any training. Most graduates from the Government Technical Training Colleges went straight to American Samoa where they received wages ten times higher than in Western Samoa. The YMCA established a basic motor mechanic school, a mobile sewing machine school and a carpentry school on the island of Savaii. Young farmers training courses were held in ten villages. Leadership training, project planning and other courses were conducted in each of the 36 village clubs. The YMCA coordinated the export of taro to New Zealand and kava to Fiji and at one stage was the second to largest exporter of taro and the largest exporter of kava in Western Samoa. YMCA members received \$WS24 a case for their taro while the Government Produce Marketing Division paid farmers \$WS7 a case. YMCA members increased their production of taro in 1980 by over 300 percent. The YMCA's annual report of 1981 acknowledged that of the \$WS241,208 income for the year, 74 percent had come from the YMCA of USA, and a further 11 percent from other overseas agencies. The trap had been set for the YMCA of Western Samoa to become aid-dependent. Whether any other option was possible is open to conjecture in view of the fact that many, if not all other agencies, including the Government of Western Samoa were aid-dependent.

The YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa were not alone in wrestling with the problem of achieving some balance between securing local resources to vigorously respond to local needs and the availability of overseas aid to boost local efforts and resources. The YMCA's of New Zealand, Australia, Canada, USA and Japan were partners with Fiji and Western Samoa. The provision of their abundant resources may have helped the YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa to respond to community needs and achieve their short term goals, but may have also contributed to their aid-dependent state and brought about a diminished capacity to meet the long term goal of local self-reliance. Whether or not this long term goal was achievable however was yet to be established.

SOUTH PACIFIC YMCA COLLABORATION

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the process in which the YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa became receivers of aid through an international YMCA network. The introduction of YMCA work to Fiji and Western Samoa followed a pattern of extension that had been developed for over eighty years by the international movement. The extension process was predominantly one of transplanting the total package of the organisation from the First World to the Third World with little or no recognition of the cultural, economic or political differences. The Fiji and Western Samoa YMCA's created a ground-breaking model in which the ideas and the programmes created were responses to needs identified by local people. What was perhaps not foreseen, was that issues of self-reliance would ultimately need to be addressed.

A paper presented at an Asian YMCA forum in Bangalore, India in 1992 stated,

"It was very common for the recipient YMCA to model its buildings, facilities, programmes, organisation structures, policies, etc on basis of the donor YMCAs profile. The recipient YMCAs were essentially transplants of overseas models and had an image of a 'foreign' organisation. The activities of the 'transplanted' YMCAs did not have any relevance to the life style and the realities of the local people."

One early exception to this transfer of a foreign institution was found in India where a Rural Reconstruction Centre was established around 1932 at Mahtandem. Villagers were recruited to the Centre for short courses in goat raising, banana production, sisal making, poultry production and the like. At the conclusion of each course, each participant took back to their

home village the materials to start a project. This might be banana planting suckers, a young doe goat in kid, a brooding hen with a clutch of eggs and other similar resources. At the one year anniversary of leaving the centre, the participant was expected to return to the Centre to deliver a comparable resource with which they had left.

In 1960 the National Council of YMCAs of Australia sent an experienced staff person to Papua New Guinea to establish YMCA work in Port Moresby. Initially the work followed the Australian model of recreation and urban youth clubs. However, in the early 1970's a Rural Training Team was created with government support. The team, usually comprising of one or two Australians and a Papua New Guinean conducted workshops in villages encouraging better agricultural methods, and the establishment of village youth clubs. YMCAs were established at Mount Hagen and Lae. The Lae model comprised a 40 bed hostel used extensively by local people on short term stays. The Australian movement supported the work in Papua New Guinea until the late 1980's. On the withdrawal of the Australian support the work in Papua New Guinea virtually collapsed with only the hostel in Lae remaining in 1993.

The National Council of YMCAs of New Zealand established work in Fiji in 1971 by seconding an experienced YMCA staff person to Suva and in 1978 repeated the move by transferring the same staff person to Western Samoa where he served until 1982.

A series of South Pacific YMCA Development Workshops have been held in Fiji (1976), Western Samoa (1979), Papua New Guinea (1981), Australia (1986), Fiji (1988), Western Samoa (1989), Australia (1990).

In addition to participants from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Western Samoa, partners were also invited from Canada, USA and the Asia Alliance of YMCAs based in Hong Kong.

From 1985, the presence of YMCA work in Tahiti was acknowledged, but as it was primarily a department of the Congregational Church of French Polynesia it has not taken part in the Development Workshops.

The early workshops (1976 - 1981) dealt with receiving country papers, looking at common issues, discussing patterns of relationships and the presentation of documents by visiting speakers. The working - through of partnership relationships which resulted in Aid contracts was dealt with on separate occasions as bilateral arrangements between two countries, a donor and receiver.

The 1986 South Pacific Development Workshop conducted in Brisbane spent a major portion of the five days discussing the relationship of the South Pacific YMCAs with the Asia Alliance through which it was affiliated to the World Alliance of YMCAs. The South Pacific delegates asserted that at Asia Alliance gatherings they were swamped by the Asian delegates and their uniqueness was not acknowledged. The original emblem of the World Alliance had identified Oceania as a entity separate to that of Asia, Africa, America and Europe. The workshop agreed not to break away from the Asia Alliance but to strengthen ties within the South Pacific with regular newsletters and one-to-one partnerships through the services of a volunteer circulating secretariat.

There is no evidence that this proposal was actually carried through. On the second to last day of the workshop delegates turned to issues seriously effecting the work in each member country.

Several issues were seen to be of common concern in the area. These were Finance (including Government support), Leadership Training, Marketing/Income Production, Communication, Public Awareness, Youth Participation, Expansion and Know-How.

The National Councils of YMCAs of Australia and New Zealand agreed to assist the YMCAs of Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Western Samoa by providing assistance with approaches to Government, staff exchange, providing scholarships for development staff to attend training in Australia or New Zealand and other matter of mutual support.

With one notable exception, the good intentions of the agreements were not delivered. The notable exception was the inclusion of the General Secretaries of Fiji, PNG and Western Samoa in a training course in Strategic Planning conducted in Melbourne in 1990 by international consultant, Dr Bo Hardy.

The South Pacific YMCA Development Consultation held in Suva in January 1988, focused on the problems of the YMCAs of Fiji and Western Samoa. There was no representative attending from the YMCA of Papua New Guinea. The objectives were to discuss the financial situations of both Fiji and Western Samoa YMCAs, study the three year submissions prepared by the two YMCAs, and look at the operation rather than philosophical aspects of problems faced by the two YMCAs. The Western Samoa YMCA General Secretary reported that the shortfall with their core operations budget for 1988 would be \$US14,900 but they were also seeking capital assistance with building a third house at the Ululoloa Self Support project.

They gained indications of support from:-

Vancouver YMCA	\$US8,000	(core budget)
	\$23,000	(house capital)
New Zealand YMCA	\$3,000	(core budget)
Australian YMCA	\$7,000	(house capital)
Honolulu YMCA	\$3,000	(core budget)

This appeared to meet Samoa's needs for 1988 if all the commitments were delivered.

The General Secretary of the YMCA of Fiji presented that YMCAs needs for 1988.

### Income

The core budget required \$28,000 to be raised locally, a grant of \$17,000 from the Fiji Government, \$15,000 from Australia YMCA, \$19,000 from Vancouver YMCA, \$8,000 YMCA of New Zealand and \$4,000 from the YMCA of Honolulu. A deficit of \$30,000 was anticipated.

Fiji also identified projects in need of support. These were:-

Gymnasium	\$74,500
Kindergarten	\$7,000
Workshop	\$17,000

The Consultation agreed that Australia would advance \$7000 and train the Fiji staff for the kindergarten programme. Vancouver offered to send an expert to help Fiji raise funds for an endowment fund to help its long term self-reliance needs. In the event, the Australia YMCA delivered its commitment but the Vancouver YMCA had a change of fortunes back home and was not able to send the endowment fund expert.

The consultation recommended that the Fiji YMCA develop a proposal to cover its core budget deficit with supporting letters from its Pacific Partners to be dispatched to the YMCA National movements in the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, World Alliance and the Asia Alliance. The Honolulu representative would sound out Foundations in the USA and all members would present the proposal to local Rotary Clubs.

The 1989 South Pacific YMCA Consultation held in Apia, Western Samoa from 26 to 28 January resolved to review the achievements made as a result of the commitments made in 1988 and to plan for a further stage of self-reliance for Fiji and Western Samoa. The results for Fiji showed that apart from the \$17,000 received from the Government of Fiji, every contributor had fallen short of their pledge leaving a total deficit of \$41,250. The Fiji YMCA was now moving heavily into debt.

The Australian YMCA, however contributed \$20,000 to the kindergarten project, well in excess to the \$7000 it had pledged.

Pledges were then made for the 1989 financial year. These were:

Australia YMCA	\$32,000
New Zealand YMCA	\$3,500
Vancouver YMCA	\$17,000
Honolulu YMCA	<u>\$5,000</u>
	<u>F\$57,500</u>

This still left a shortfall of \$33,130. The consultation recommended that Fiji reduce its expenditure by cutting out the salaries of Rural Workers and urging them to continue as volunteer community workers.

The Western Samoa YMCA General Secretary reported that funds had been received during 1988 from:-

Honolulu YMCA	US\$3000	
New Zealand YMCA	\$2,000	
Vancouver YMCA	\$30,000	for house project
Australia YMCA	\$9,000	for house project
	\$11,000	for rural work and trade training
	\$6,000	for a truck

Although the New Zealand YMCAs contribution appears to be nominal and often not up to its pledge, its expenses in the establishment of the YMCAs of Fiji and Western Samoa exceeded NZ\$500,000 (in 1982 dollars) in salary, housing, travel, superannuation and general support. In fact, at the withdrawal of the New Zealand YMCA General Secretary in 1982, the New Zealand YMCA was left with a debt of \$30,000 from its ten and a half years commitment to the Fiji and Western Samoa YMCAs.

The consultation expressed concerns that:-

1. The long term financial problems of Fiji and Western Samoa YMCAs were not being solved
2. The Fiji and Western Samoa YMCAs were not as well prepared with the presentation of their cases as they should have been
3. Donor YMCAs need more accountability from their partners - audited reports were missing
4. All information was not being revealed; for example the Western Samoa YMCA did not mention there was a mortgage on the houses until the 1989 meeting.

The YMCA of Western Samoa presented a full and detailed case to a Pacific Partners Consultation in Melbourne in March 1990 and for the first time disclosed all of its debts and liabilities. It asked for US\$145,000 to break even in the 1990 financial year.

Debts were disclosed for:-

Current Outstanding Accounts	\$9,694
Term loan Pacific Commercial Bank	\$30,000
National Provident Fund Loan	\$47,912
Turners and Growers Debt	\$16,000
Asian YMCA Development Fund	<u>\$10,850</u>
Totalling	<u>US\$114,456</u>

The \$145,000 requested from the Pacific Partners was to cover a shortfall in operational costs including servicing the long term loans (but not eliminating the loans). The size of the total of debts and the grants requested was such that the Pacific Partners insisted that the Western Samoa YMCA urgently restructure cutting programmes back to bare essentials, eliminating programmes that made no comparable financial return on investment, and to consider capitalising on some of its assets to reduce the escalating debt burden.

### Summary

The YMCA South Pacific partnerships which began in 1976 and which included funding partners has evolved through several stages and is currently feeling its way into new understandings of its operational role.

The first few consultations (1976 - 1986) received country papers and discussed common issues but left aside as a separate agenda negotiations on finding funds to help Fiji and Western Samoa meet operational costs.

Contracts for the transfer of aid funds were handled on a one-to-one basis and not considered as a collective responsibility.

However from 1988 the Pacific Partners pooled their resources to consider how they could collectively meet the needs of the YMCAs of Fiji and Western Samoa. For a time the strategy seemed to be working. The two YMCAs were 'kept afloat' and there appeared to be an end in sight as self-support projects were put in place alongside programmes that solely aimed to meet particular community needs.

The illusion of 'winning the battle' through collective endeavours began to be fractured in 1989 when it was discovered that Western Samoa was not revealing all of its debts and that a full disclosure was not being made of the current situation. For the first time the seeds of doubt were sown that the strategy of collective responsibilities may not be a viable proposition to secure the long term survival of the YMCAs of Fiji and Western Samoa.

The full disclosure in 1990 by the YMCA of Western Samoa of its accumulated debt burden destroyed the faith of the Pacific Partners in the strategy it had been using of collective responsibility. It now appeared that Western Samoa, at least, was a bottomless pit and that the more funds that were 'thrown at it', the more would be needed in the following years to satisfy its hunger for more and more funds.

Furthermore, it now appeared that Western Samoa, at least, was being less than honest in the information it chose to share in order to retain the flow of funds it had become accustomed to receiving. It would not be surprising if the partners felt they had been cheated by Western Samoa and that there was a lack of commitment by Western Samoa to honour the spirit of the contracts made to plan and move towards ultimate self reliance.

The 1990 Pacific Partners Consultation is the last meeting on record and it would appear that the 'bubble had burst' on the idea of collective responsibility. Bilateral negotiations have continued between Fiji and Australia, and Western Samoa and Australia and Vancouver but these have been somewhat constrained and with a significant reduction in the flow of funds, particularly to Western Samoa. The opinion has been expressed in informal circles by an officer of the Asia Alliance that Western Samoa should be left without aid and that if anything 'emerged from the ashes', that embryo may be worth supporting. This opinion, however, has not been considered seriously by the Pacific Partners. What shape the Pacific Partnership will now take is still in the process of emerging.

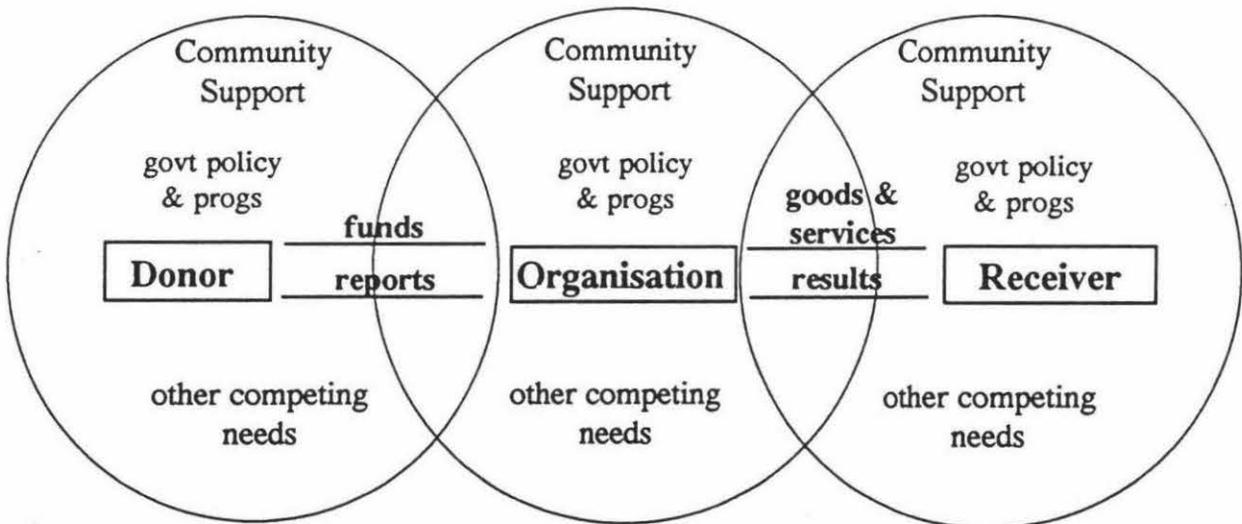
The relationships between 'givers and receivers' is fraught with difficulties as it is one based on an uneven powerbase. One agency is perceived to have power and influence over the other and the smallest transgression by the receiving party might well be responded to by an exercise of power by the giver. The difficulty of this relationship will be described in the next chapter.

**THE ETERNAL TRIANGLE****Relations between the donor, the local organisation and the people they seek to serve**

Three groups of people are commonly involved in the process of a development programme which is funded by foreign sources. The donor, the local organisation, the people at the end of the line, the receivers of the final goods and services. All of these people have needs and expectations which can only be effectively met if the needs of the other parties are also as least to some extent satisfied. Each of these groups also had relations with other parties that had an influence of the relationship with the donor - organisation - receiver bond. This might be presented diagrammatically thus:-

Figure 8

Donor Environment    Organisation Environment    Receivers Environment



Some of the expectations and needs of the three groups are:-

**The donor** needs community and agency support, periodic reports with measurable objectives and outcomes, diplomatic relations between the Government of the two countries, an effective management agency in the receiving country with acceptable credibility, and the need for sufficient funds to carry its own administration of the aid programme.

**The receiving organisation** needs an open relationship with the donor agency and its representatives based on trust in which problems can be discussed without the threat of the withholding of funds; sufficient funds to cover overheads and administration costs; a minimum requirement for written reports which are not unnecessarily lengthy; the delivery of funds on the due date and for the amount promised even when exchange rates fluctuate; the need to be seen as 'in charge' of the project with some management discretion without being unduly beholden to the donor agency for all management decisions.

The receivers' **communities'** needs are to be consulted and included in all aspects of the programme and project identification, implementation and evaluation; the observance of local customs and protocol; the need for ongoing support and guidance without the organisation behaving as if they owned the local community; the need for a maximum use of local resources both human and material; the need to avoid a multiplicity of agencies dealing with different aspects of the communities life and people.

**Self-reliance needs.** The matter of the self-reliance of the receiving organisation or the receiving community does not appear in any written form in aid contract but the implicit assumptions would appear to be **that the donor** agency wants to see the receiving organisation become self-reliant within the period of the aid contract (usually three years). The donor agency does not wish to contribute to the receiving agencies capital accumulation required to generate self-reliance and as a rule has no idea of what will replace the resources given in the aid package. The donor agency has no wish to make the receiving organisation aid-dependant nor for it to curtail its programmes which are helping needy people. It regards the future of the receiving organisation as beyond the responsibility of the donor.

**The receiving organisation** needs the aid packager as a resource to be used to help those most in need. While the organisation does not wish to be aid-dependant, the matter of self-reliance is a long-term item for consideration. The short-term problem of people in need is paramount at the time. The receiving organisation needs continual aid until such time that it has achieved institutional strength and a resource base sufficient for it be operationally self-reliant. The length of time this takes may be ten years or twenty years but more probably fifty years or more.

The relationship between donor and receiving agencies is fraught with tensions as the following case study demonstrates.

#### **Case study of the Fiji/Vancouver YMCA relationship**

In November 1974 the Vancouver YMCA wrote to Fiji advising that \$C32,000 had been granted by the Provisional Government of British Columbia and that that should be the basis of presenting a case to the Canadian International Development Agency. Six months later, the Vancouver YMCA wrote again expressing frustration at the long delay in CIDA's deliberations. Finally, in September 1975 the YMCA of Vancouver wrote advising that CIDA had agreed to provide \$C90,000 to be allocated over three years, 1975 to 1977.

Towards the end of the three year term of the 1975-1977 aid package, the Vancouver YMCA undertook to negotiate another three year programme of aid with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). CIDA had appointed a new agent to negotiate with the Vancouver YMCA and it became obvious that the agent had a different set of values and assumptions about development than the previous agent. Negotiations became protracted and the flow of aid funds from Canadian to Fiji stopped while CIDA and the Vancouver YMCA talked through their differences. In

June 1978, eight months after the end of the previous contract the Vancouver YMCA wrote to Fiji.

"I have still been waiting to hear from CIDA. When we investigated our Fiji application two months ago, we found that our friend Barbara Jacobs who had to process same had done nothing about it. Then we heard that that agent had been suspended and the proposal passed over to another person. As it takes three or four months to process an application it may be some time for this proposal to be firmed up."

The Fiji YMCA had by this time run out of reserve funds and was in debt. The letters from Vancouver had let it to expect that aid delivery was eminent and that some debt was normal business practice. Finally, one year after the previous aid package had dried up, a new contract was signed in Vancouver and the fresh flow of funds began.

This long delay of twelve months in the delivery of aid brought about by difficulty in relationships in the donor country demonstrated one of the problems with being aid-dependant, a situation outside the control of the receiving organisation.

When the delivery of the first instalment was received in Fiji, it was substantially less than originally indicated. Letters from Fiji expressed concern. The reply from Vancouver said

"We enclose the budget approved by CIDA. The Fijian dollar amount is no longer accurate as the Canadian dollar is down in value by 15 percent. The budget is in Canadian dollars and we will be sending you the Fijian equivalent. As of today we will have to pay \$1.48 Canadian for a Fijian dollar."

This was the second lesson of being aid-dependant as changes in value of the Canadian dollar impacted on the Fiji YMCA programme.

In September 1979, the Vancouver YMCA wrote to Fiji.

"We are facing a very serious financial situation here in Vancouver YMCA. It's chiefly due to the opening of a new YMCA building which will take a year or two to reach its maximum potential. As you can readily understand our Board of Governors will be taking a hard look at our overseas commitments. Can your YMCA get along with 75 percent of our 1980 commitment?"

This was the third lesson of being aid-dependant as problems in the donor agency impacted on their organisational capacity to deliver what they had originally indicated.

In spite of these difficulties, a third period aid package was prepared from Vancouver YMCA to the Fiji YMCA for the period 1981 - 1983. The Vancouver package was not only fifty percent in value to the original 1975 - 1977 package. As Vancouver aid reduced, the Fiji YMCA programme declined. A letter from the Vancouver YMCA President to the Fiji President stated

"The Vancouver YMCA and the Fiji YMCA have been involved in a partnership arrangement for close on ten years now. The Vancouver YMCA has directed \$400,000 to Fiji with two thirds (2/3) of this amount granted from CIDA. We must point out to the Fiji YMCA that the Vancouver YMCA's credibility with CIDA must be preserved and that Fiji is accountable to us for the use of Canadian funds as designated."

This was the fourth learning experience of the Fiji YMCA in being aid-dependant. While the donor agency might be expected to be flexible around conditions experienced in the donor country, little or no flexibility

should be demonstrated in the receiving agency whatever the circumstances.

The Vancouver YMCA, at the request of the YMCA of Fiji, seconded Grahame Watt to Fiji for one month from 9 August to 9 September 1983, to make a review of the Fiji YMCA's management instruments and processes and to make recommendations to correct deficiencies. He interviewed 27 persons in Fiji including Board and committee members, staff and activity members on a one-to-one basis. His report was posted on 2 December 1983. The President of the Vancouver YMCA wrote to the President of the Fiji YMCA.

"After reviewing the evaluation document of Grahame Watt on his September visit, and other information, the Vancouver YMCA has lost confidence in the administration and capabilities of the General Secretary and the total accounting system of the Fiji YMCA. Therefore, the Vancouver International Committee resolves:-

1. That no further Vancouver funds will be forthcoming to the Fiji YMCA until the Vancouver Association is in receipt of official evidence that sound administration has been restored to good practices
2. That the 1983 December payment be sent directly to the Treasurer, the Board to be held accountable for the disbursements of these funds
3. The evaluation prepared by Grahame Watt as shared and amended by the Task Force, be forwarded to the Fiji Association for consideration and action...

I bring this matter to you in the spirit of true YMCA partnership and with the assurance that the Vancouver YMCA interest in Fiji is not diminished in anyway."

This report brought about the resignation of the General Secretary of the Fiji YMCA. The Fiji Board of Directors appointed another person to the position in the expectation that he would be able to provide management services to a level acceptable to the YMCA of Vancouver.

This was the fifth lesson of the Fiji YMCA in aid relationships, that the administration of funds and programmes must be to a standard determined by the donor agency.

Another aid package from Vancouver YMCA was negotiated with a condition built in that Vancouver would only supply aid to match funds raised in Fiji on a dollar for dollar basis. The intent of this clause was to advance the self-reliance of the YMCA of Fiji but ignored the fact that the people with whom the Fiji YMCA worked were resource poor. The average income of the people in the rural villages probably did not exceed \$600 per year.

Finally, in 1992 the Vancouver YMCA wrote to the Fiji YMCA and stated

"Our YMCA in Vancouver is having a serious financial crisis as a result of three years of deficit. We have had to make some decisions on reducing our overseas aid in 1993. For the first time in 16 years we will not be able to provide financial aid to Fiji in 1993."

### Summary

From 1975 to 1993, the Vancouver YMCA successfully obtained and sent to Fiji almost half a million dollars. This resulted in a large and very effective Rural Work programme that many other agencies both in Fiji and other countries in the third world have copied. The mobile training approach in outboard motor repairs, chainsaw operation and maintenance, sewing

machine repairs have all been used as models for development by many other agencies.

The flow of funds from Vancouver has not been without its difficulties. The flow has been interrupted by bureaucratic bottlenecks in Canada, management ineptness in Fiji and organisational problems in the Vancouver YMCA and by changes in the exchange rate in currency between Fiji and Canada. In each of these difficult situations, it has been the Fiji YMCA that has suffered.

The gradual withdrawal of funds in the mid-1980's led to the withdrawal of salaries of Rural Workers and the replacement by volunteer community workers serving seventy villages in rural Fiji. The lack of finance reduced the accountability of village clubs to the Fiji YMCA head office and a gradual withering away of any substantial programme of activities of the YMCA rural clubs.

Several other agencies in Fiji (several Churches, Government, Fiji Council of Social Services, Save the Children amongst others) are taking training courses into the villages. The YMCA is exploring new roles and new needs and plans to meet these by self-financing Rural Development Centres.

If foreign aid is not dependable in the long term, and if the people receiving the programme have insufficient resources to apply on a user-pays basis, who then can or should support the work? Is there a possibility that the local Government might provide funds to support the work? Certainly in the first few years the Fiji Government Ministry of Youth granted funds to help the YMCA launch its innovative programmes. Could this support be institutionalised and a regular dependable feature of the income of the YMCA? Would this create new problems of ownership of the programme? Was this a reasonable way to the ultimate of self-reliance?

RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT

Attempts to become less dependant on overseas aid have led NGO's to turn to the local Government for support. To the NGO, it seems logical that if the NGO is addressing problems that the countries Development Plan has identified, a partnership between Government and the NGO would be a cost-effective way of delivering the services. The Government officials, however, may be faced with budget constraints, may regard the NGO as a competitor rather than a partner and may wish the NGO to continue to draw on overseas aid from channels not available through Government sources thereby adding to the total flow of funds for the development efforts. The aid dependency of the NGO is a problem to be faced by the NGO and is most often not regarded by the Government as a Government responsibility. Most often Governments have no written policy on their relationship with NGO's, a situation which handicaps both parties and leaves Government with the ability to respond to each situation as they see fit from time to time.

In the Fiji situation, somewhat coincidentally, the first Ministry of Youth was created in the same week (May 1971) as the introduction of YMCA work to Fiji.

A circular letter to all Youth Organisations and Sporting bodies from the Government Secretary for Youth Sports and Rural Development stated,

"The new Ministry request all existing youth and sporting organisations to present proposals for future development, and specific areas where Government could possibly give assistance."

The YMCA's response to the circular letter sought support for the appointment of a VSA carpentry teacher to establish a Carpentry School at the YMCA. The response from the Ministry was prompt and courteous and agreed that the Ministry would cover all expenses related to the appointment of the Carpentry Instructor.

In October 1971, the YMCA placed a request with the Ministry for financial support for the salaries of a local Assistant General Secretary, the support of the VSA Carpentry Instructor, and the appointment of a YMCA Rural Youth Worker. By 4 November, the Ministry had responded and agreed to the request. At years end, the Ministry had also provided accommodation for the Carpentry Instructor. The two fledging organisations had begun their journey with a relationship based on mutual support and respect.

The YMCA reported to the Minister of Youth in March 1972 that the first YMCA Rural Youth Worker had been appointed and was working with the villages of Sawani and Serea with the intentions of forming clubs in the villages. The General Secretary of the YMCA advised the Minister that the YMCA's early beginnings at the rural work programme, encompassing agricultural training, project planning, community development, and leadership training promised to be a most important contribution to the development of Fiji.

In July 1972, a staff change in the Ministry led to the appointment of a new Secretary for Education, Youth and Sport (note the change of components) and the relationship with the YMCA turned a negative corner. A letter to the YMCA from the Ministry advised that a Group Captain Doran was looking at the possibility of establishing a National Youth Service Scheme.

The YMCA responded by commenting that it would be of interest to hear the opinions from Vocational Training, Rural Work and Youth Work experts on the Group Captain Doran plan for a National Youth Service Scheme and expressed reservations on the wisdom of a National Youth Service Scheme. The YMCA asked to receive a copy of Group Captain Doran's plan. The reply from the Ministry stated,

"In relation to the possibilities of establishing a National Youth Service Scheme in Fiji, it is the feeling of officers in this Ministry who have seen similar projects in operation in other developing countries that such a scheme would go well in Fiji. The decision as to who is going to be consulted in relation to the recommendations made by Group Captain Doran, and whether to proceed with the scheme will, however, be the sole responsibility of Cabinet."

In November 1972 the YMCA wrote to the Minister again expressing interest in obtaining a copy of Group Captain Doran's plan. The YMCA Rural Work Committee expressed the view that there may be some areas of overlap or duplication between the proposed National Youth Service

Scheme and the YMCA's Rural Work Programme and suggested that collaboration might result in programmes that complemented one another.

The Ministry failed to reply to the YMCA's letter and it now became apparent that they had no wish to enter into dialogue with the YMCA. Following this, in December 1972, the Ministry advertised a position for a rural youth field officer and the advertisement was written in such a way that only the YMCA rural worker fitted the job description. The YMCA wrote expressing its concern at this apparent competition between the Ministry and the YMCA. The Ministry's reply stated,

"Your statement that the intention of this Ministry to recruit a Rural Worker would put our two agencies into direct conflict is absurd. It is as irresponsible as saying that the different youth organisations in existence in Suva and which all seek to satisfy the needs of out-of-school youth, are all in direct conflict with one another because they work in the same area. This Ministry must go into the field of Rural Youth Work because it has the development of the nation as well as that of the rural youth as its foremost objective. Since this Ministry has at its disposal resources that would enable it to do a more effective job than the YMCA, why then should it not seek through a public advertisement the best man for the job.

In relation to Ministerial planning in the area of out-of-school youth, plans will be made known to the Fiji National Youth Council for discussion at my Ministers discretion when these have been prepared. The Ministry does not hold with the idea that it should interfere with the policy decisions of functioning youth organisations and it therefore expects these organisations to reciprocate in kind."

The Ministry then advised that the grant to the YMCA for 1973 would be \$F3788, a significant decrease in the Ministry's previous grant.

In May 1973, the YMCA lodged a request with the Ministry for grants for 1974 of \$5108 for the previous two salary grants with normal increments and a grant of \$1000 for the expenses of establishing a Block Laying school. In February the Ministry informed the YMCA that the 1974 grant would be \$4160 and that the wage subsidy for a YMCA Rural Worker had been deleted.

In May 1973, the Ministry of Youth, with the support and advice of the South Pacific Commission Out-of-School Youth Work Consultant, began setting up its own rural youth organisation. The SPC Consultant conducted workshops for volunteer youth workers in the Nadi area and approached the YMCA Rural Worker suggesting he should resign from the YMCA as the Ministry would pay more. The YMCA General Secretary wrote to the Ministry objecting to this interference and asking if the Ministry was responsible for the SPC Consultants actions whilst he was in Fiji.

The Ministry replied,

"Your letter contains a serious accusation of interference by the SPC Consultant in the internal affairs of Youth organisations.

The only professional contact the SPC Consultant has had with the voluntary organisations is with your Youth Workers at the Nadi course and with the FNYC when he has attended meetings when invited

by that organisation. If he has gone into the YMCA and "interfered" with the internal workings of your organisation then he has done so without my knowledge and without the authority of this Ministry. My own opinion is that there must be something already amiss in the relationship between staff and organisations if an outsider can have the kind of effect on your organisation as you say it has."

For the next twelve years, from 1973 to 1985 the Ministry, despite several changes of personnel as Permanent Secretary of Youth, and despite changes in the Ministry's title gave little or no support to the YMCA and its programmes. Over the period, the position of the General Secretaryship of the YMCA was localised with the appointment of a Fijian to the post.

By November 1973, the YMCA was caught in a rising spiral of expectations by the number of villages asking for YMCA work and the early discussions with overseas YMCA's which indicated that they would in all probability grant aid for the Fiji YMCA's Rural Work programme. While the work continued to expand almost by its own inertia, the overseas money had not eventuated and the YMCA became desperate for financial support.

In December 1973, the YMCA wrote to the Ministry urgently seeking a \$600 grant for supplementary support as the cashflow forecast indicated by the end of December there would be no funds available to pay staff. The Ministry's reply stated that there were no additional funds to help the YMCA.

By June 1974, the Ministry was creating its own rural youth organisation and channelled its funds towards that body. A survey was conducted by G N Bamford which recommended a fair-share formulae for the distribution of Government funds for rural youthwork.

In June the Minister of Education Youth and Sport travelled with YMCA staff to visit YMCA clubs up the Wainimala river, in particular the clubs of Nakorosule. The YMCA wrote and thanked the Minister for his personal interest and recommended he read the G N Bamford report which stated that the YMCA was being treated unfairly. The Ministry did not reply to the YMCA's request.

A deputation of the YMCA's executive committee and staff met with the Minister of Education Youth and Sport and the Principle Officer for Further Education on 19 February 1976 to discuss, amongst other things, the distribution of Government funds for Rural Youth Work. The YMCA advised the Minister that in 1976 the funding received from CORSO of New Zealand, CUSO of Canada, and the Emperor Gold Mines would terminate and asked if the Minister would agree to take over the burden carried by these overseas agencies, namely 80 percent of the salaries of Rural Workers amounting to \$16000 per year.

The reply recorded was,

"Government certainly has no argument against the principle of providing 80 percent of wage costs. This principle is now operating throughout the Education system and is slowly becoming operative in youth organisations. The Ministry provides a significant number of salary grants to Youth Organisation now and the number is rapidly expanding every year.

The only problem may be the actual amount of money approved by Cabinet and by the Ministry of Finance. The YMCA case in this respect is a good

one and any written information you can give the Minister will help in the bid for funds".

The YMCA noted that of the \$30,000 allocated for salary subsidies for Rural Youth Workers for 1976, the YMCA share was only \$4000. It asked the Minister to review this allocation. Despite the YMCAs deputations apparent successful meeting with the Minister, no further funds were made available to the YMCA.

The correspondence file for 1976 then records YMCA attempts to gain support from the Ministry of Fijian Affairs and Rural Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Social Development. All Ministries endorsed the work of the YMCA and referred the YMCA to the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport.

The next ten years saw little change in the Ministry's attitude to the YMCA. The District Rural Youth Councils which the Ministry supported grew to 98 by 1986, but around 1988 the Ministry withdrew its support and the Councils in the main collapsed.

In 1987, the YMCA's relationship with the Ministry turned a very positive corner and a substantial increase made in the annual grant. The Ministry now publicly acknowledged that all the needs of young people could not be met by the Ministry and its dollar may well be best spent supporting those organisations that were demonstrating their ability to address the needs in cost-effective ways.

The Ministry's grants to the YMCA increased over the period 1984 to 1992 from \$F6050 to \$F20,000. This change or relationship between the Ministry and the YMCA is further demonstrated by the following interview with the Director of Youth in the Ministry in June 1993.

"Let me first of all define development and then discuss why the Ministry is supporting the YMCA.

Development has to do with people, their spiritual, social, physical and economic development and their interaction with their environment. The YMCAs focus on the development of the whole person fits in very well with this view of development.

Fiji is a rural society. The Fijian community has a tendency to drag the individual down to the community norm. The Indian doesn't have this handicap. In the Fijian context the development of the individual cannot get out of hand, it must be in keeping with everybody else. So the Fijian is faced with a paradox, how to develop the community and the individual so that one is not out of step with the other. I am not saying whether this is a good thing or bad thing, that is just the way it is.

Education, both formal and non-formal will be the key to release the potential of the people and their environment. Education liberates, enlightens people, they become more tolerant and can rationalise what is happening and what needs to be done. The leaders must be the best informed to give quality decisions.

In a developing country like Fiji there is a need for grassroot education, being better informed to make enlightened decisions about their lives.

People overseas will need to make some changes in their approach to development. The interconnectedness of the people of this planet leads to a need to moderate the profit motive. We are learning the hard way the danger of such things as cutting down trees indiscriminately. The mass media needs to continue with this message.

I see the possibility of the Fiji YMCA becoming financially self-reliant in the future. Not right now but in the future. There are some things the YMCA can do to make more activities income generating. For example the rural work can get a piece of land and grow crops for sale while teaching members good agriculture methods. The rural work can bring in finance for the YMCA to become self-reliant. The services conducted here in Suva are very good but if they are not careful they will get captured by the Suva activities and not get back out to do the work where the need is the greatest.

This years grant to the YMCA (\$30,000) is to help the YMCA concentrate on its rural work to teach the people business enterprise. There is so much fundraising in Suva the pressure has become unreal.

The YMCA is one of the best managed organisations in Fiji. Other organisations may have more members and more activities but they are poorly managed, not as good as the YMCA. The YMCA has a solid structure and good administration.

The YMCA has the support of the Government because it focuses on the development of the whole person, it takes grassroot education out to the people in the rural areas, the fact that it is actively trying to become self-reliant, and the good management demonstrated by the YMCA. If it keeps the Minister and his staff well informed they should be able to continue to receive the Ministry's support.

Although Government has no formal policy, we have said often in the last few years Government cannot do all the work, we must depend on NGOs. The YMCA is doing an excellent job and we will continue to support it in the work it is doing. As the Government develops plans and policies for Youth, we will consult with and draw on the resources of NGOs so that we help them help us. Government will never have the resources to do all the work that needs to be done. Also, we recognise that NGOs have better knowledge of the people we provide services for. They are more responsive and flexible to handle the changing needs in hundreds of small ways. Both Government and NGOs have strengths that can compliment each other. We can do more collectively than separately. That is why we support the work of NGOs and particularly the work of the YMCA".

### **The Western Samoan Situation**

The Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture in Western Samoa has a record of non-collaboration with NGO Youth Organisations in Samoa. This is to a degree understandable in the Samoan context as collaboration between NGO's is a relatively recent feature and mostly exists around the distribution of aid funds from overseas agencies. There has been a history of each group protecting its territory and keeping its members from being contaminated by other agencies. The Ministry did in its early years attempt to work through church youth groups coordinating its approach through the churches head office but found, more often than not, that its programmes were strictly harnessed and manipulated by the church leaders.

The Ministry received a grant of \$WS100,000 a year on a four year contract from the United Nations Population Fund to conduct courses in Family Welfare and Home Management. This programme is conducted in villages with youth groups without reference to the youth groups head office. The Ministry employs a staff of five youth workers to conduct the programme. A major function of the Ministry is organising international and regional sports functions to be held in Western Samoa. The Governments allocation to sports organisations was \$330,000 in 1993.

Governments budget allocations to the Ministry for distribution to NGO's from 1978 to 1991 was \$5,000 per year, but in 1992 this was increased to \$50,000. This was distributed to youth groups to assist with the clearing and replanting of village gardens following Hurricane Ofa. The grant of \$50,000 was repeated in 1993 but the method of distribution was still being considered. This grant may well be the stimulus to move the NGO's and the Ministry to move towards new forms of collaboration.

### Summary

The significant change in attitude of the Ministry of Youth towards the YMCA is particularly interesting over the 21 years of the YMCAs existence in Fiji.

In the first place, the YMCA was introduced just one year after Fiji became an independent nation. In 1970 it threw off the shackles of colonialism to demonstrate to the world that it was now capable of making its own decisions without reference to colonial masters. It believed that now

that colonialism was a thing of the past, the decisions made locally would be so superior that Eldorado was just around the corner. Now that Fiji was controlled by local citizens it merely required strong government leadership and all good things would follow. The fact that the Ministry of Youth had a strong personality that listened to few except significant traditional leaders was no coincidence. The period immediately following political independence attracted strong personalities as a lamp attracts moths. Furthermore the colonial experience overlaid on the traditional hierarchy provided a model that set a norm that leadership to be effective must be strong with its powerbase firmly at the top. Any person, agency or organisation below the top must observe the protocol of obeying orders from the top.

Added to this scenario is the circumstance that the prime agent of the YMCA, itself obviously a foreign organisation, was a European who, at least in skin colour, was a reminder of the colonial past. There was no way in these circumstances that a strong local leader was going to support an organisation such as the YMCA. Even when the YMCA localised the position of General Secretary and appointed a Fijian, the post-colonial honeymoon was still in orbit and the YMCA discriminated against by withholding Government support.

By the mid-1980's, the post-colonial honeymoon was wearing thin and Government was beginning to recognise that leadership, in addition to being exercised at the top, also required the energies and talents of the people at the grassroots if development was to move forward. This style of government required civil servants that could harness all the potential energies

available at all levels of society. This style of Government attracted different personalities. People that could listen, negotiate, compromise and consult.

In spite of military coups, the style of leadership in Fiji government has adapted to the circumstances in which development can only be forged through a series of partnerships; people and agencies collaborating together sharing resources, pooling ideas and getting on with the job with a minimum of external assistance.

The increased funding from the Ministry of Youth in Fiji lessened considerably the YMCA's dependence on overseas aid. However, in the absence of a written policy of the Ministry on its relationship with NGO's it leaves the YMCA with some feelings of insecurity of being reliant on yet another source of funds outside of its control.

Self-reliance has been an item of concern with the YMCA in Fiji and Western Samoa since their inception. The next chapter will describe that experience.

**EARLY ATTEMPTS AT SELF-RELIANCE**

Self-reliance has been a concern of the YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa since their inception and many efforts have been made in pursuit of that goal. This chapter will describe their attempts to achieve a local funding base.

There were several reasons that contributed towards the self-reliance attempts. Firstly, the expatriate General Secretary from New Zealand was on a three year term contract (later extended to six years). Written into this contract were the requirements that during his tenure every effort should be made to secure local support for the future operations of the organisation. Secondly, in the Fiji case, because the country had only recently become politically independent, it was desirable to recruit local leadership as soon as possible to avoid the YMCA being seen as an extension of colonial influence. Thirdly, all foreign aid offered was given under contract with a limited timeframe, leaving a sense of insecurity for the period after the termination of each contract. Fourthly, the particular expatriate General Secretary had a strong personal value of saving to create a secure base for his future. He had in his working life put twenty to fifty percent of his personal income into long term savings account. During the term of the expatriate in Fiji and Western Samoa, the self-support funds were established and over \$30,000 invested in each organisations and, after the expatriate completed his terms of appointment, the self-support funds were whittled away.

Almost from the introduction of YMCA work to Fiji in 1971, efforts were made to raise funds locally to contribute a share towards the cost of programmes. Within the first year a modest grant was won from the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Rural Development. Modest fees were set for every member taking part in activities and Rural Clubs, as they were established, paid a fee towards head office costs. The November 1971 Fiji YMCA News Bulletin made a call for contributors to sustain the work. Sustaining memberships were invited at \$100 for business firms and \$5 for individuals. The October 1972 News Bulletin reported that sixty people had become Sustaining Members and that next year another 200 would be required.

At the same time as local money was being sought, the Management Committee was also localising. The previous committee of the Suva Youth Centre had been largely comprised of Colonial officers completing their tour with the sugar company, police, banks and insurance companies.

The first Fijian Chairman of the Management Committee of the YMCA of Fiji was Jonetani Kankimoce. The News Bulletin of March 1974 announced;

"On 7 February 1974, after serving the Management Committee of the Suva Youth Centre and lately the YMCA/SYC, Mr Trevor Wright stepped down from the chairmans position and handed over the seat to Mr Jonetani Kankimoce."

The May 1974 News Bulletin reported the first three years of development of the Fiji YMCA. Under the heading of 'Financial Development' the Bulletin reported that a strong base of financial support was slowly being built up for the security of the work. Sustaining Membership, the Bulletin said, was providing a source of continual strength. However, compared to the input of contributions from overseas, the level of financial input from local Sustaining Members amounted to less than ten percent.

Each year from 1974, fund-raising events were held with bazars, Queen Carnivals, agricultural sale days and the like. At the same time, the YMCA developed a policy of putting aside ten percent of all income, of local and overseas sources combined, into a Self-Support Fund. The intention of the fund was to invest the money into a commercial venture, the income from which would gradually replace that being received from overseas sources.

In 1977, on the eve of the withdrawal of the New Zealand key staff person, a campaign was launched for the Self Support Fund. A Leaflet was printed and sent to all overseas funding agencies and to local business firms.

The response to the leaflet was virtually zero in financial terms, but it did send a signal of the moral intent of the Fiji YMCA that in the long term they wished to be financially self reliant.

The audited accounts of 31 December 1977 showed that the Self Support Fund was held on fixed deposit at the Bank of New Zealand and stood at \$36,837.38. The Annual audited accounts of 1979 showed that the Self Support Fund had changed during the year to \$34,362.

This small movement downwards in the fund demonstrated that the Fiji YMCA was now prepared to dip into the fund when times were tough as there were no other 'reserve' funds on which to fall back. The YMCA was living up to the limits of its income and if expenditure ran slightly ahead the Self Support Fund was used as a survival mechanism. This was a small indication of how the fund would be used now that the expatriate General Secretary had concluded his contract and a local had been appointed.

During 1981, things fell apart with the funding of the Fiji YMCA. The 1981 Annual Report commented that attendance at Board meetings had improved over 1980 as five of the seven meetings had obtained a quorum in 1981, compared to 1980 when only two out of seven meetings had a quorum. This was very demotivating to the General Secretary as the policy leadership failed to give sufficient loyalty needed over this critical period. The Ministry of Youth decreased its support to reach an all-time low of \$2500 for the year.

Vancouver YMCA had experienced a hard year in 1980 and had now been forced to reduce their annual contributions. Grants from CORSO of New Zealand, the YMCA of USA, the Asia YMCA Alliance completed their contract term in 1980 and were therefore absent in 1981.

The YMCA General Secretary had budgeted income optimistically and expenditure as conservative. The results, as is not uncommon were of course, the reverse.

In despair, the YMCA dipped into the Self Support Fund allocating

\$8,192 to General budget, \$8,835 to support the Vocational Training programme, and \$11,335 to balance the budget for the Rural Work programme. The withdrawal of \$28,362 from the Self Support Fund left only \$6,000 in the Fund. This virtual collapse of the Self Support Fund killed the spirit of self reliance and left the maintenance of the work of the YMCA in a precarious state from which it did not recover for the next decade.

Over the following ten years, the percentage of finance received from foreign sources was:-

1982	70.5%
1983	84.7%
1984	72.3%
1985	61.9%
1986	74.8%
1987	48.5%
1988	47.2%
1989	57.4%
1990	56.7%
1991	41.9%

A dramatic reduction in dependence in overseas funds was experienced in 1992 to 16 percent. How this was accomplished will be described in the chapter "Prospects and Plans for Self Reliance".

The YMCA of Western Samoa was aware from the experience of the Fiji YMCA, that it was dangerous to leave large sums of money available

on investment in a bank account as it was too easy to dip into it if the operational budget ran into trouble. Plans were made to purchase land as soon as possible on which to build houses for rent, preferably to expatriates who typically paid substantial rents. This seemed to be a very good plan as the YMCAs Carpentry School could be employed to undertake a major part of the construction.

The movement towards self-reliance began with the establishment of a Self Support Fund opened in 1978, one short year after the introduction of YMCA work to Western Samoa. Through efforts made in the next three years the fund built up to \$32,000, sufficient to start applying the strategy of investing in a revenue earning venture. In late 1981, the YMCA purchased one and a half acres at Ululoloa, a desirable locality for residential housing. The purchase of the land cost the fund \$24,000. Plans were prepared for nine houses to be built using in part the budgeted income from the Trade Training secured from the YMCA of USA grant. The Trade Training budget was \$40,450 for 1982 and \$46,220 for 1983.

In 1982, the expatriate General Secretary completed his term and the post was localised.

The Asia Alliance of YMCAs was asked for a grant of \$10,000 to consolidate the funds for the construction of the first two houses. The YMCA Carpentry School began in 1984 by clearing the undergrowth from the land and then laying out the profiles for the pouring of the concrete floor for the first house.

At this stage the YMCA of Western Samoa had its first stroke of bad luck. The Chairman of the Trade Training Committee experienced a family crisis and left the country for several months. He had been the driving force behind the housing project and had the technical and trade skills to lead it successfully. The Board now faced a dilemma. With only \$8,000 left in the Self Support Fund and the key leader overseas, the Board took a loan from the Pacific Commercial Bank and called for tenders from builders to construct the first house. The Board estimated that the anticipated rentals would meet loan repayments but with not much to spare. The tender was let for \$84,000 and the first house constructed. In 1985, the chairman of the Trade Training Committee returned to Samoa and convinced the Board that the Carpentry School was capable of building the second house. Accordingly, the Carpentry School built the second house at a cost to the YMCA of \$41,000.

In the meantime, several Government Aid projects which had required accommodation for expatriates were completed and the market demand for rental houses diminished substantially. The YMCA found that the rental income it had budgeted on was no longer realisable. Furthermore, grants received from overseas YMCAs intended for investment in the housing project were sidelined into the operational budget to meet a growing deficit. As is not uncommon, the YMCA of Western Samoa lived and spent well beyond its income. In addition to the house loans, the YMCA now began operated a bank overdraft and had several outstanding debts.

To top off the bad luck and the bad management, interest rates at the Bank increased so that debts increased as rental income decreased.

The situation with the Ululoloa Housing project started to come to head. A letter from the Vancouver YMCA dated 11 August 1989, stated:

"The Western Samoa YMCA committed itself to completing the third house on the Ululoloa Housing project. The Vancouver YMCA received donated funds and Canadian Government funds with the understanding that a third house would be completed as part of the Advanced Carpentry Training Programme. Will the Western Samoa YMCA be completing this house?"

The Vancouver YMCA and YMCA Canada could be held responsible for the return of the Government of Canada portion of the funds if the house is not completed."

At the same time the Vancouver YMCA pledged \$20,000 Canadian for operational funds for 1989.

The Western Samoa YMCA reported to the Pacific Partners meeting on 14 March 1990 that rental income from the Ululoloa houses (2) was anticipated to be \$16,000 while loan repayments on the house loans, overdraft and other debts was expected to be \$25,400.

A letter from the Australian YMCA dated 16 March 1990 stated:

"It is my strong recommendation that your major capital asset, the two houses at Ululoloa should not be sold to pay off your debts. If they are to be sold, the proceeds from the sale should be used to purchase another revenue earning asset."

The circular reasoning of this letter should not pass unnoticed as if the debts were such that the houses needed to be sold, there would be little or no money left to purchase another revenue earning asset.

At this stage the United States Agency for International Development changed its policy of delivering aid to NGO's in the South Pacific and channelled it through the Government of Western Samoa Aid Coordinating Committee. Whilst the aid delivered through the YMCA of USA had completed its term, US AID funds to all NGO's virtually dried up as the Aid Coordinating Committee decided which NGO it favoured and which it disfavoured.

Finally in 1991, the bank with which the YMCA had its overdrafts and loans realised that the YMCA could no longer service its debts and insisted that the houses at Ululoloa be placed on the market. There was embarrassment in this action as the chairman of the Board of Directors was the Manager of the Bank which carried the YMCA's debts. This led to the chairman resigning from the YMCA Board and shortly afterwards he migrated with his family to Australia.

The YMCA sold the two houses and the half acre of land Ululoloa in 1991 for \$130,000 which cleared the debts owed to the bank. In 1992 the remaining one acre of land was sold for \$70,000 and the funds used to build an additional building as a Training Centre in Apia. This building was not revenue producing.

This was the end of the YMCA's attempt at self support in Western Samoa.

### Summary

The experience of the YMCAs of Fiji and Western Samoa with the development and demise of their Self Support Funds demonstrated that self reliance may be desirable, but it is not such a fundamental drive as is survival.

There is little doubt that bad management contributed to the demise of the Self Support Funds, and that both Fiji and Western Samoa YMCA were extremely unwise to spend money without first seeing it in the bank. On the other hand, it was unforeseen bad luck that:-

- \* The Canadian dollar devalued 15 percent.
- \* The Minister of Youth in Fiji indicated increased financial support for the YMCA which his officers did not deliver.
- \* The Vancouver YMCA had a bad year and decreased its contribution significantly.
- \* The key leader for the housing project left Samoa for 15 months.
- \* Rents for houses went down and bank interest rates went up over the same period.

The other factor that should not be overlooked is that both Self Support Funds were established by an expatriate General Secretary who placed a high value on saving for future security, and both YMCAs, Fiji and Western Samoa faced the threat and demise of the funds whilst under the

control of Pacific Islanders known for their paramount values of sharing and the distribution of earnings gained.

It should also be noted that except for rare cases, most foreign agencies have a distinctive preference for funding projects which promote action in the field. Most, if not all international funding agencies give little or no preference to the sustainability of the organisation that is responsible for managing the project. Some agencies have a policy of asking if the project will be self sustainable but the message could be interpreted that their particular agency will regard the project as a full stop once it is completed. There is no message of concern for the organisation responsible for the management of the project and the impression is left that one must seek out another agency if the original project uncovers another need to be met.

There is clearly an urgent need for new financing models that are based on the institutional development of NGO's and community associations. This implies that the focus of development must move from the project to the organisation itself. It also implies the creation of genuine and viable partnerships between donors and development organisations.

New funding relationships will not, however, solve the entire problem. It is equally important that the NGO significantly increases its own self-financing activities.

The experience of NGO's is similar to that of Fiji and Western Samoa in the struggle to achieve self-reliance. Different strategies have been attempted but the results have most often been disappointing in spite of galian efforts. The next chapter will explore some of these attempts by NGO's in the South Pacific.

OTHER NGO'S EXPERIENCE WITH SELF-RELIANCE

The case studies of the YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa have demonstrated the struggles they have experienced in attempting to be self-reliant. It has been stated that their experiences has been typical to that of many NGO's working in the development field. Three other NGO's, the YWCA of Fiji, the Fiji Council of Social Services and the Western Samoa National Youth Council have also experienced difficulties. Some other NGO's are involved in development work but sources of information were not available. While funding agencies often try to separate development work from welfare programmes, the NGO's did not differentiate the two types of programmes as they viewed their efforts as helping people in need for both short-term and long-term goals.

The YWCA of Fiji

The YWCA of Fiji was formed in 1962 following a public meeting called by the mayor of Suva and the stimulus of a group of Fiji Women led by Lolohea Wayarawai. The World YWCA responded by appointing two Australian women to establish and organise the work. Offices and programmes were established in the Old Town Hall and shortly thereafter a kindergarten established in a Suva inner suburb.

International efforts at fund raising with the brokerage services of the World YWCA resulted in a four storey building being constructed in 1974 in Sukuna Park on a mid-city site granted by the Suva City Council. One floor

comprised a fifty two bed hostel mainly used (forty six beds) by local young women attending various national training institutions. The ground floor was utilised by a cafeteria, originally operated by the YWCA but now leased to a private business person, and administration offices of the Fiji YWCA. Of the two remaining floors, one was rented to a United Nations agency and the other used by the Suva YWCA for programmes. In recent years with a growing debt problem half of the Suva floor has been taken back and rented out to produce income. During the same period funds were won internationally for the kindergarten to have its own building constructed in Des Vouex Road, Suva. Branches were established in Lautoka with a fourteen bed hostel, in Levuka, Bua and Nadarivatu.

The kindergarten in Suva caters for 120 children with two classes meeting in mornings and two in the afternoons (thirty children at each session). A range of courses are conducted at the Suva Centre each year including sewing, floral art, fabric art, cooking, craft, health, literacy and technology. Four hundred people attended courses in 1991. One curious thing is that the literacy classes are attended mostly by Russian and Japanese Seamen and the courses are in the English language. Whether any of these courses and activities could be called 'development' is a moot point but they represent an important element of non-formal education for people that have left the formal education system. The branches in Bua, Nadarivatu, Levuka and Lautoka have similar patterns of activities on a smaller scale.

The YWCA of Fiji is a good example of an NGO that has achieved the degree of self reliance that it can meet its recurrent cost of basic

programmes through its early investment in a revenue producing project (the Suva Centre) leaving most overseas aid funds to address special development projects. There is a certain amount of overlap between the two expenditure directions of basic recurrent costs and special development projects.

The Suva Centre which originally cost approximately one million dollars was funded mostly by grants from overseas through the World YWCA network.

The Suva hostel made a surplus of \$37,602 in 1991 while all other programmes operated at a loss. Grants totalling \$43,128 were received from the World YWCA, UNICEF and other sources to meet recurrent costs.

The YWCA employs Project Officers who are funded by aid grants. The writing up of projects, the securing of aid grants and the expenditure of the grants is big business for the YWCA. The analysis of projects for 1991 demonstrated that of the total of \$F253,478 received from overseas aid:

- 54.4 percent was allocated to buildings
- 21.4 percent was allocated to vehicles and equipment
- 10.4 percent was allocated to development projects
- 10.2 percent was allocated to training programmes
- 3.6 percent was allocated to salaries

The end result was that the YWCA allocated 75 percent of its aid income to its own capital accumulation and 25 percent on development projects and courses aimed at improving the quality of life of the people it served.

It should not pass unnoticed that the YWCA has the largest capital asset of any NGO (with the exception of the churches) in the form of its Suva building valued probably at \$2 million dollars, allocates 75 percent of its aid income to asset accumulation and still requires half of its operational income from overseas sources.

The predominance of the aid grants targeted at improving the capital assets of the YWCA (as distinct from directly servicing peoples needs) points to the fact that capital assets that produce revenue also generate their own maintenance and development needs. Any resource left to itself tends to run down and needs constant upgrading, redesigning, refurbishment and replenishment. The greater the value of the asset, the greater the need to feed it with more and more dollars. Furthermore, as community needs change, the usefulness of the asset will change unless it is completely re-packaged.

Nevertheless, the YWCA has achieved a degree of financial self reliance that enables it to get on with the job of serving the people in need. An example is the Nadarivatu Village Sanitation Programme. In 1990 the Nadarivatu branch reported that it had completed 67 water-sealed pit toilets and shelters in Nadai and Nadala villages. They had poured 28 concrete pans in Waibukubuku and Naseyani villages but had not yet completed the shelters.

This is a remarkable example of how relatively small amounts of aid (\$5142) can produce significant benefits if applied directly to the end-need through the services of a NGO active in the field.

### The Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS)

What began as an umbrella organisation in 1957 to foster inter-agency cooperation between Voluntary Organisations with welfare and development programmes, became in the 1980's a broker for international aid agencies to distribute funds through the NGO network. Originally, the Fiji Government Department of Social Welfare provided administrative support and an annual grant to enable the FCOSS to do its work. Then the Agency for International Development of the Government of USA channelled all of its NGO funds through the FCOSS and so changed the nature and apparent purpose of the FCOSS. This grant, together with other agencies packages of funds, boosted FCOSS total income to near half million dollars. In 1987, with the advent of a military coup, AID of USA stopped the flow of funds to Fiji and produced a 'pause' in the activities of FCOSS.

By 1990 FCOSS had recovered its brokering role but not to the same extent as the 1987 total.

In 1990, FCOSS received funds from the following:-

Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB)	\$171,821
New Zealand Official Development Assistance (NZODA)	44,000
Involvement Volunteers (ACF) grant	22,662
Help Age International UK	<u>70,540</u>
	<u>\$309,023</u>

This represented 91 percent of its total income of \$338,129. Total administration costs were \$90,944 being 26.8 percent of total income.

The projects funded in 1990 included Boys Town, Womens Crisis Centre, YWCA resource centre, six schools, a welfare clinic and a childrens' home.

Although FCOSS does not differentiate between welfare and development projects, the vast majority of projects assisted are certainly welfare in nature rather than 'development' oriented.

FCOSS also organises various workshops and in 1999 used \$7,064 of NZODA funds to conduct Disaster Preparedness courses for one hundred participants in Suva, Nadi, Lautoka and Labasa.

The Fiji Council of Social Services has changed its apparent purpose from an intergrating umbrella organisation to become an aid broker for welfare projects. Many of the projects they funded were operations of

large international organisations (church, YWCA) that were able to call on their own network internationally.

Although the projects were predominantly welfare in nature and although they were funded by grants from development agencies, FCOSS nevertheless does an important job in linking micro-projects to the funds available.

In the course of an interview with the Executive Director of FCOSS in 1993, he stated that if overseas aid stopped flowing, FCOSS would close down overnight. Although self-reliance is a value that FCOSS would like to achieve, its realisation is mostly unlikely unless it changes the nature of its operations.

#### Western Samoa National Youth Council

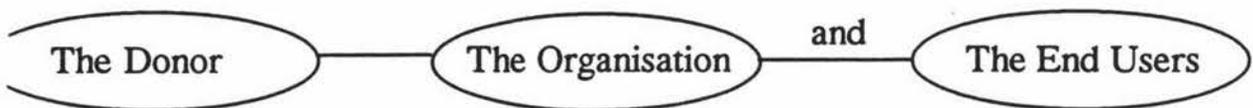
The WSNYC started in 1977 and operated for a few years, then lapsed because of lack of funding, then re-established in 1987. Its constituent members are the youth groups of the Congregational, Catholic, Methodist, Seventh Day Adventist, Anglican and Bahai Churches, Boys and Girls Brigade, Boy and Girl Scouts, YMCA, YWCA and Youth for Christ. Its functions are:

- \* To coordinate youth activities to give support to its member organisations
- \* To negotiate with aid donors for financial support for youth projects
- \* To conduct training seminars and workshops to encourage youth to participate in development

The WSNYC is sponsored by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation of West Germany which provides \$WS100,000 each year on a three year contract. Approximately half of the grant is allocated to the administration of the WSNYC and the remainder to development projects and seminars for the constituent members. The budget allocation for 1993 was:-

WSNYC Salaries	\$20,000
WSNYC Administration	18,333
WSNYC News Bulletin	3,334
Projects, Small Equipment	28,333
Development Seminars	30,000

The South Pacific agent of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation based in Fiji, audits the accounts of the WSNYC every three months. Original dockets, vouchers and receipts are insisted on for the audit. The tight controls on the spending of funds results in strict management methods for the operation of the seminars and the purchase of small equipment. However, the level of management skills of the clubs at the village level in most cases cannot meet the high expectations of the WSNYC as imposed by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation with the result that the budget allocation is not fully used. This is an interesting case of a discrepancy between the needs of:



In 1993, with half the year gone only a quarter of the small projects grants had been utilised. In addition to the funds received from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, grants are occasionally won from UNDP, AIDAB, and other agencies. In 1992, \$WS17,000 was received from the Cyclone Val Committee of New Zealand to help with the replanting of crops in cyclone ravaged plantations of members. Grants are approved by the WSNYC for distribution to members from the New Zealand and Australian High Commission, the South Pacific Commission and the Commonwealth Youth Programme.

The WSNYC nominates three Youth representatives each year to the Commonwealth Youth Diploma Course conducted in Fiji. Very few find paid employment as Youth Workers in Samoa on completion of the nine month Diploma Course.

The General Secretary of the WSNYC is concerned that the constituent members only see the organisation as a useful channel to get overseas aid. The general purpose of inter-agency collaboration is virtually not recognised or utilised. He is also of the opinion that if overseas aid 'dried up', the WSNYC would disappear overnight along with the projects, seminars and support to youth groups. No donors have provided funds for capital investment or organisational reserves. The small affiliation fees of constituents and other local funds amount to less than five percent of the total budget.

The relationship with the Ministry of Youth is a matter of concern to the WSNYC. There is no support from the Ministry either in financial terms or in terms of organisational collaboration. Although the Secretary of the Ministry is exofficio on the Executive Committee of the WSNYC, he has not attended any meetings. Furthermore, an invitation was extended to the Secretary of the Ministry to address the groups attending the first five seminars organised by the WSNYC but neither he nor his deputy attended.

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The General Secretary considers that the WSNYC is ninety five percent dependent on overseas aid and would not survive in its present form if aid was withdrawn.

### Summary

The three NGO's described in this chapter have demonstrated great diversity in their long term goal of being financially self-reliant. The Fiji YWCA has built and is expanding its capital assets on which to establish its base for local

sources of funds. It does seem, however, the larger the accumulation of capital assets, the greater the call on overseas aid to maintain, enhance and modify those assets.

The Fiji Council of Social Services and the Western Samoa National Youth Council have deviated substantially from their original purpose and have become brokers for overseas funding agencies. It is notable that none of the funding agencies have considered investing in the institutional consolidation of the FCCS and the WSNYC and appear to regard their services as dispensable should they decide to channel their funds through other agencies. The future of the FCCS and WSNYC is very fragile as they are virtually totally dependant on overseas aid for their survival.

Against these examples of organisational insecurity, the work of the Christian churches stands as a marked contrast. For 130 years (1830 - 1960) the Methodist Church of Fiji received funds from the Overseas Missions to pay the stipend of its ministers in the field and its head office expenses. Funds are still received from overseas but the proportion of the total budget is small and their expenditure is focused on particular projects. Furthermore, the role previously paid by the Christian denominational overseas mission agencies has to a large extent been supplemented by inter-denominational Christian agencies such as World Vision, and non-denominational agencies such as Save the Children, Oxfam, and Bread for the World.

The example of the Christian church should be seriously examined when alternative models of institutional security is being considered.

**PROSPECTS AND PLANS FOR SELF-RELIANCE**

The YMCA's of Western Samoa and Fiji are passing through a critical period in the life of their organisations. They have been through the exciting period of discovering needs not being met by others; of creating innovative programme responses; of building an organisational structure with policy makers keeping in touch with action at the grassroots; with building a system of membership at the village club level; of training and coaching leaders at the national and village club level; developing administrative services both financial and secretarial; designing and operating a communication system so that funding agencies and village people respond to each other's needs; and locating and effectively using sufficient funds to drive the programmes and operate the organisation.

All these things have taken time. Effective organisations are not born overnight, neither can they be transplanted from one country to another. Organisations, like development, are a seed to be sown, not a tree to be transplanted. Transplantations do not work if the soils from origin to destination are different in any significant way. In this respect, the YMCA in Fiji and the YMCA in Western Samoa are like no other YMCA's in the world as the cultures in which they are embedded differ from other cultures.

Organisations are a complex web of relationships, that develop their own culture and respond to their external environment in a variety of ways. Organisations are organic. They grow or wither as they are fed or starved of resources both human and material.

Organisations such as the YMCA experience a critical interface between the volunteer policy makers (board of directors) and the professional

executive and his/her staff. The most effective relationship between the board and the executive staff has sufficient tension so that each knows that the other does not take them for granted. Too much or too little tension could lead to explosion or implosion.

The Fiji YMCA and the Western Samoa YMCA have only infrequently enjoyed the optimum degree of tension between board and staff. In Western Samoa there have been four general secretaries in the eleven years since Samoans have held the post. Three have been dismissed for what the board judged to be incompetence (but some board members now think they over-reacted). In Fiji, for several years the board rarely had sufficient numbers attend meetings to achieve a quorum. At another time the Board suspended the general secretary as they judged his attendance at an international peace conference to be politically imprudent. But the board acted unconstitutionally and the annual general meeting sacked the board.

All these actions are signs of organisations struggling with the process of growing up. There is no dispute that both organisations have extremely good people at the shared helm. But they are experimenting with an organisational culture which is bigger than each individual involved in it.

If they are to survive and flourish an important instrument they need to create is strategic plans that draw together the collective visions and that designs realistic steps towards that vision. It is behind the banner of that collective vision that the leadership will organise and gather all the resources required to fuel movement towards the vision. If they are to achieve self-reliance, that will be a value that is declared and the plan so shaped to create movement towards that value and goal. Whilst it would be useful to have a written plan, it would be more important to have a shared unwritten collective vision held by all the organisations members, than to have a written plan

constructed by few people and kept in one person's bottom draw. The best of both worlds is a written plan that motivates all the members of the organisation towards its realisation.

What are the chances then, of the Fiji and Western Samoa YMCA's creating a future in which self-reliance is a feature.

### The Fiji YMCA Case

Interviews were conducted with nine leaders of the YMCA of Fiji in June 1993. They included three Board members, four head office staff including the General Secretary and two Rural Community Workers. Two of the Board members represented rural communities from inland Viti Levu. There was a broad range of skills with three university graduates. The Fiji YMCA is mature to the extent that it has had a generation of leaders move out into the community who acknowledge the YMCA's influence on their personal development. The first Fijian YMCA President is now a member of the Cabinet of the Government of Fiji and two others are in parliament.

The YMCA of Fiji has in place a strategic plan for the period 1992-96. In its introduction under the heading of 'Prophecy of Competence' it states:-

"The Strategic Plan provides the umbrella for integrating the annual operational planning of all of our groups in the city and villages. It gives them room to be creative and to innovate in the formulation of their specific and measurable unit objectives.

The need is not for perpetuating the YMCA as an institution. Rather, it is for creating - and converting into reality - a new and enlarged vision of what the YMCA can be in the lives of people and the nation we serve."

The Strategic Plan then lists a series of membership and programme goals and a list of resource goals. There is some recognition of the desire for financial self-reliance but in these areas the plan is short of specific and measurable goals. For example amongst the resource goals are the following:-

"Establishing a financial development programme to ensure financial stability and growth.

This goal will be achieved when:

- Financially independent local associations are set up at city, town and provincial level
- Core budget expenses are supported by membership and programme income in all centres and groups
- A fund is set up for developing new programmes and subsidies for the needy."

The plan is rich in visions and remarkably short on specifics. Some of the visions and values are bold statements by an organisation that has been predominantly Fijian and Christian within a multi-racial, multi-religious nation that had recently experienced political and racial tension and conflict. The mission statement itself sets the tone:

"The mission of the YMCA in Fiji is to enable young people through YMCA programmes to develop as individuals and to build our multi-racial nation on values of the Kingdom of God."

The term "Kingdom of God" had been deliberately chosen after consultation with the leaders of the Christian, Muslim and Hindu Communities as appropriate for an agency that wished to promote inter-faith dialogue,

tolerance and understanding. This is a brave position to take and follows in the tradition of the World YMCA and its promotion of inter-faith dialogue on the global agenda.

Operational goals published for action in 1993 are clear and measurable in programme areas but lack specificity when it comes to financial goals. For example:-

"We will try to make the Suva Youth Centre financially independent in terms of its core budget.

We will continue to operate the Suva Child Care Centre on a self-financing basis.

We will launch an annual sustaining membership campaign using YMCA international fund-raising expertise."

Putting aside these reservations on the lack of specificity with the resource and financial goals, there is little doubt that the Fiji YMCA is moving strongly towards financial self-reliance. The Sustaining Membership Campaign in Fiji in 1993 raised \$15,000 from local donors, a strategy that is intended to be repeated every year with an increase in the goal each year. An interview with the General Secretary of the YMCA of Fiji, Savenaca Nacanitaba puts the full case of the YMCA and its future:-

"With the YMCA, development is about releasing people's talents and capabilities to do those other things - expand their life style choices and help the poor. What has inhibited our YMCA from having a stronger base is a lack of skill of the staff related to financial development. We are clear that we have the skills to develop human resource goals but we recognise our shortcomings in the area of financial development. What has not helped is that there is a lot of foreign aid floating around and handed out by other NGO's. This is a barrier when we talk to our own people about the need to be self-

reliant. At the national level there are a lot of people that feel that the government owes them a living. There is a lot of dependency mentality at the individual, community and national level.

I would like to clarify our interpretation of what we mean by self-reliance.

To us self-reliance means having a sufficient resource base that the organisation can stand on its own feet for its operational costs even if aid funds are withdrawn. Overseas funds might be used for projects and development over and above the normal and standard operations of the YMCA and its work in the community. This will require two separate budgets within the organisation - an operational budget and a projects budget. Overseas aid is often unreliable and the organisation cannot take the risk of falling down. Getting overseas aid is very time consuming which results in a sacrifice to programmes. It is often impossible to do a realistic cashflow if the overseas agency has long delays, if that agency gets caught in its own internal difficulties and if the foreign exchange rate alters between their country and ours. Sometimes you could get an agency that offer \$10,000 then there is a six month delay, then it's less than originally agreed and then they want quarterly reports each of which takes three or four days work in the midst of your busy organisational tasks. If you focus on resources from the local community they will get a stronger sense of commitment and ownership. The action might be smaller and slower but the results will be deeper and longer lasting.

The General Secretary then explained that the Fiji YMCA plans to achieve operational self-reliance included charging child-care services on a user-pays basis, marketing aerobics and fitness classes to achieve a surplus, contracting with the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Employment Opportunities to conduct business skills courses, raising \$20,000 or more each year from sustaining memberships, purchasing or leasing 40 acre farms for rural clubs to work and raise funds, and the consideration of a hostel in the Suva area.

## Summary of the Fiji YMCA

There is little doubt that the Fiji YMCA leaders want financial self-reliance and are well on the way to achieving it. They have largely overcome the dependency mentality they say is shared by a sizable proportion of the community. They will have a need for several years yet of overseas funds partly to meet operational costs but more importantly to invest in income-producing projects. Each farm for rural clubs would benefit by a grant of about \$40,000. The hostel/residence would cost an estimated \$F500,000 with perhaps half required in grants to ensure profitability.

All of the projects will stretch the leadership resources of the Fiji YMCA to the limits of its capabilities. If one or two key leaders leave the YMCA before all projects are operational the whole programme would be put at risk.

All of these efforts have a cost. In the words of Savenaca Nacanitaba,

"The drive for self-reliance has meant that we have been captured by the middle class. We have had to reduce our work with the poor in the rural clubs because they don't pay their share of costs. We don't ask anymore 'who are the people most in need', we now ask 'who has money that we can provide a service to'. This is a major deviation from the YMCA's original mission. We have to continually ask ourselves is it better to be captured by the middle class and become self-reliant, or is it better to use overseas aid to work with the poor and the under-privileged? There is no easy answer to that question."

## The Western Samoa YMCA Case

Interviews were conducted in person with six significant leaders of the YMCA of Western Samoa during July 1993: four key board members were interviewed and two key staff people, all had extensive training overseas in their professions, four were university graduates including a PhD; their degrees are in economics, tropical agriculture, commerce and theology. Two had been on the YMCA Board since its inception in 1978; two were the managers of government corporations and another controlled a large commercial enterprise. They are held in high regard in the community and have important connections in government and the commercial sector.

In July 1993 they were immersed in survival problems including the winding down of programmes and the slowing down of external funding sources; the expiry of the lease of the property on which their headquarters were built with the landlord increasing the payment of the lease four fold; and some indecision on what to do and where to go next.

They felt that what has held their YMCA back include the following; a vision that was once held but has been lost, partly because of too many changes in the post of general secretary, partly because of bad management in the past which led to the collapse of the Ululoloa Housing project; there has been insufficient commitment from Board members; the YMCA is unclear of its role in the community, and there are false expectations in the community of what the YMCA is and can do. Too many people, including some Board members see it as an overseas organisation and then expect gifts as a logical consequence in much the same way that all of their relatives overseas send gifts. Some felt they would appreciate closer monitoring by the donor and its agent. Some projects might lend themselves to provision of funds and an overseas person to monitor and help its operation.

Most felt that what is required is good planning, a realistic vision and strong leadership to carve out a future worth having. There was some call for new members on the Board to broaden and refresh the energy required to lift it to new plateaus. Some felt that with the threat on the lease of the Apia headquarters building, it was time to consider decentralisation in order to serve rural villages more effectively.

When asked whether self-reliance was desirable, necessary and possible for the YMCA in Western Samoa, five of the six said "Yes", but added some reservations about its complete achievement in the foreseeable future. The sixth person pointed out that there were severe practical problems with the lack of resources, particularly the limited number of people who could afford to pay for programme services. Perhaps more importantly, there was a psychological problem to overcome with the whole nation from the family to the Government and everything in between being dependent on overseas gifts and grants for a high proportion of their living needs and development needs. There was no local resource on which to draw to sustain the current level of living and their rising aspirations.

There was some agreement that the leaders of the YMCA wanted the YMCA to be self-reliant within the next ten years at least to the extent of covering their core operational budget with local funding and surpluses from programmes. This will probably require a reduction in central administration costs, partly by using volunteers where appropriate.

This expression of wanting to be self-reliant is well represented in the type of projects they have in mind to re-create their future. All of the projects have a high component of income generation once a sufficient capital investment has been made. Whether the critical mass of capital investment can be secured is a matter of conjecture.

There is no collective vision held by the board and staff members interviewed about where the future of the YMCA is heading. From the six people interviewed there were six visions with few common threads. There was mention of recreation and sports programmes and helping rural clubs to be more effective in managing income producing projects. The three projects which seemed to have some degree of acceptance were; a revolving loan scheme to help rural clubs lift their efforts with income generating projects. This project is written up in some detail and a sponsor sought for \$WS300,000. The written objectives were "to introduce training and technology to increase production targets for rural village club industries which will include taro production, fishing, livestock, village craft, vegetable production and others as required and where suitable." The National YMCA would find and arrange overseas and local markets to ensure a good return to growers. It was intended that after the \$300,000 was secured, the operation of the scheme would be self-financing with about \$12,000 a year being directed to the central administration costs.

The second project that was mentioned was a forty bed hostel which was being researched prior to writing it up and the designing of draft plans. This would require a capital investment of approximately \$WS1 million and could realise a return of about \$40,000 a year. The YMCA of Hong Kong has been approached and has indicated it may consider an approach for a loan for part of the capital required. The location of a central site is likely to prove difficult. Perhaps more importantly, it is difficult to see how the hostel will meet the needs of the people of Samoa as it is envisaged that 80 to 90 percent of the occupants will be overseas tourists.

The third project that was mentioned was a rural training centre. This was first mentioned in the YMCA's Development Plan for the period 1982 - 84. It envisaged an area of land of 100 acres or more and the building of a

classroom, dormitory, kitchen and dining room, ablution block, two staff houses, trade training workshop and equipment shed. It was estimated that the buildings would require capital of \$250,000. Equipment would be basic and resemble only one grade up of what was available in the most advanced village situation. It was hoped the land could be leased from Government at a nominal rental. Courses would be conducted for twenty young people at a time for a two to three month period. They would be designed to raise the standard of agriculture production and introduce correct management practices in production and marketing. Classes would also be conducted in carpentry, plumbing, nutrition, planning and goal setting, family management, and other features of health living.

To make the centre self-financing students would go home each weekend and would return Monday with food for their week's needs. Classes would be held every morning and the students would work on the centres plantation and gardens every afternoon.

Three times a year, YMCA rural workers would have a week in training at the Centre and three times a year rural club officers would have training at the Centre. There is little doubt that the Rural Training Centre would be of benefit to the people and the economy of Western Samoa. It would also build on the YMCA's experience and network of rural clubs that exists and that could be expanded.

### Summary of the Western Samoa YMCA

The YMCA of Western Samoa is going through a difficult period. As well as grappling with problems of the present (caused partly by poor management in the past) they have mixed visions of the future. There is a light at the end of the tunnel but they are still in the tunnel. Most of their leaders want self-reliance but recognise that, with the limited resources, it will be difficult if

not impossible. Their chances would be better if they had a collective vision of where they were heading, if they had strong leadership and if they had regular, dependable and worthy support from the Government of Western Samoa. Each of their projects requires a major capital investment which realistically could only come from overseas sources. The alternative strategy may be best expressed in the words of the Chairman of the Board of Directors Faamausili Vaitoa Toelupe "We have to do things in our own small way with our own resources. We don't have to have fancy gymnasiums and all that type of thing. We have to be happy and satisfied and contented without aid. This is us and this is the way we are." This expresses a philosophy that is idealistic but genuine. It is, however, more easily expressed by the comfortable middle class than by the poor whose aspirations for a reasonable future are far from being met.

**CONCLUSION - WHAT PRICE SELF-RELIANCE?**

Self-reliance of NGO's working on development programmes in the third world is a complex issue. The institutional security of many NGO's is a matter that funding agencies appear to have given little consideration and some NGO's are in danger of collapse.

Knapman (1986) presented the proposition that aid will create the need for more aid leading to a condition of permanent aid dependence and that the stark alternative for most Pacific Island societies is a Zen economy - zero economic growth - which few islanders or foreigners would prefer. He contended that their earning capacity is severely restricted because of their remoteness, their poverty of national resources and their dis-economies of scale.

This study has suggested that self-reliance is a value prized highly by some but less prized by others and that its place in the hierarchy of values is, at least in part, determined by other competing values, age and economic circumstance. When self-reliance and survival compete for effort and the use of resources, survival is the winner for every member of the human race.

An attitude of dependency (frequently called a 'dependency mentality') is a response conditioned by prior exposure to a colonial experience, cultural and political norms exercised by the society in which one is immersed. Self-reliance may be part of a package in the company of the free-market philosophy, user-pays ideology and individualism.

NGO's have demonstrated, particularly during the past twenty years that they have a significant role to play in the development process. Their role

has been described as people-centred, grassroots, learning through doing and with an ability to undertake community projects in a very cost-effective way. NGO's, however, are very fragile, and seldom have sufficient institutional capacity to sustain large efforts for long periods without some form of external assistance.

The delivery of aid is fraught with obstacles. Frequently it is subject to long bureaucratic delays, fluctuates with movement in currency exchanges, is dependant on economic and management difficulties in the donor organisation, requires lengthy frequent reports and requires high standards of management competency in the receiving agency, a resource that almost by definition is in short supply in Third World countries. There is only recently beginning to be an awareness by donor agencies of the legitimacy of fair administration costs incurred by the receiving agency in delivering aid to the people at the grassroots. What has yet to be recognised by donor agencies is the need of the receiving agency for institutional security. A vision of the future limited to three year intervals (the span of most aid contracts) runs into the type of psychological state that a person must have when they think they have a terminal disease. Institutional sustainability is a serious issue that donor and receiving agencies should place high on the agenda when aid proposals are being discussed. It would be naive to assume that an organisation can sustain itself solely by its own resources and its local environment.

Many NGO's, it would seem, have begun to define self-reliance as an organisational state in which core activities can be financed through local sources and is a process on the path to economic self-sufficiency. Foreign aid is for projects and programmes beyond the core activities even though the aid funded programme may be central to the organisations pursuit of its mission. Survival through core activities; mission accomplishment through aid programmes.

Relationships between NGO's and Governments in many third world countries is seldom confirmed by a written government policy and support ebbs and flows at the whim of politicians and civil servants. Government agencies may view NGO's as a source of aid funds not available to government and may in fact, regard the NGO as a competitor in the field. Politicians in all countries seek to be seen as 'deliverers of good things' and may resent NGO's being seen in more favourable lights. Yet regular dependable government support may be one of the ways that an NGO can avoid becoming too dependant on foreign aid.

The case studies of the YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa along with some other Pacific Island NGOs' have demonstrated some of the features of the self-reliance/dependency dilemma. Both YMCA's received relatively large amounts of foreign aid for about twenty years. Over the period innovative programmes were created in hundreds of village clubs and many people learnt new skills to enhance their quality of life. In the main, the acquisition of these skills will be a permanent strength in their personal armoury whether the organisation survives or not. Both YMCA's are facing with some urgency the issue of self-reliance. The model of the YWCA in Fiji has demonstrated that the accumulation of capital assets may produce some revenue for recurrent costs, but they also generate a need for more investment in the maintenance, and remodelling of their capital assets. Every asset left to itself tends to wind down and become less useful with the passage of time.

Against these models of institutional insecurity stands the example of the Christian churches which have received funds from overseas missions for well over one hundred years. Indeed the overseas mission work of most Christian churches is seen as an ongoing concern without the imposition of short-term time frames and an imperative of self-reliance in the near future. The overseas missions has guaranteed institutional security and is seen as part of a global mission.

The options identified by the YMCA's of Fiji and Western Samoa in attempts to move towards self-reliance spell out the price to be paid. In the case of Fiji, they have identified the option of moving to serve the middle-class through the introduction of user-pays programmes. Programmes for the poor and isolated rural villagers will be cut to the bone. It is the poor and the isolated rural villagers who will pay the price of self-reliance. In the case of Western Samoa, the only option identified in any attempt to move towards self-reliance is to deliver programmes that can be paid for by local resources. Once again, those that will pay the price for self-reliance are the poor and the rural villagers.

Aid agencies and third world NGO's are faced with a moral dilemma. Should they seek to serve the poor and those most in need or do they push for self-reliance at whatever the cost?

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