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**Fa'a Samoa: An Aid to Livelihood Recovery
Following the Samoan Tsunami?**

A Case Study Examining Two Samoan Villages.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirement
for the degree of
Master of Philosophy in Development Studies
At
Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand

Sandra Joy Murphy

2013

ABSTRACT

Natural disasters are destructive, traumatic and expensive. Costs associated with natural disasters are increasing, while simultaneously, there is a call to minimise or optimise development spending. With this in mind, this study examined the ways in which the cultural framework of Samoa, *fa'a Samoa*, influenced Samoan livelihood recovery following the 2009 tsunami. *Fa'a Samoa* is widely considered to consist of three major components, *matai* (chief), church, and *aiga* (family), supported by a variety of other factors including land, ceremonies, respect, service, love, hospitality and compassion.

This research was undertaken through qualitative research, using critical case study analysis. Semi-structured interviews within an unaffected donor village, an affected village and with key informants provided primary data. The data was evaluated against the Samoan cultural framework, *fa'a Samoa*, using key themes such as Christianity, love, family, customary land, reciprocity and village governance to ascertain trends or attribute meaning.

Research findings show that central to the recovery of Samoan communities following the tsunami, and their development in general, is *fa'a Samoa*. By drawing on *fa'a Samoa*, Samoan communities were able to recover their livelihood with the provision of less official assistance than would have otherwise been required. As a result, the principal conclusion of this thesis is that development should employ an approach in which the acknowledgement of cultural frameworks moves from desirable, to an essential requirement of policy and practice. Additionally, to aid livelihood recovery, non-affected communities should be called upon to provide assistance during the response and recovery phases and procedures should be put in place to enable families to connect with and help their affected kin.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It takes a village to raise a child
(African proverb, commonly attributed to Hillary Clinton)

I have modified the above quote to reflect my experiences while undertaking this thesis.

It takes a village to write a thesis

As such I would like to acknowledge and thank the people of my global village, who without their support, advice, guidance and knowledge I would never have been able to complete this thesis. You are too many to acknowledge all individually, but please know that I am indebted to all of you.

To the people of Samoa: my unending gratitude for your openness, your love and your fortitude. My five weeks in Samoa was arguably the best time of my life. Samoa will forever have a special place in my heart. Unfortunately, due to my desire to preserve the anonymity of all respondents I am unable to thank anyone by name. To all of you, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

To Sara and Masi owners of Taunmasina Hideway, Apia, my home base in Samoa: I appreciated your fantastic hospitality, the amazing breakfasts and Sunday lunches, the accommodation and the friendship. I look forward to many return visits.

Without the support of my dear friends Clare Terwiel and Warren Pearson, this thesis would not have been possible. By agreeing to be surrogate parents you allowed me to undertake my field work, a thousand thank-yous.

To my thesis supervisors Professor Regina Scheyvens and Dr Gerard Prinsen, thank you for your patience, your advice and understanding.

My biggest thanks to the two of you is for the ways you inspired me. At a contact course six years ago, when enrolled in a Post-Graduate Diploma of Education I heard Regina speak for the first time. She spoke about beach *fales* (traditional accommodation for tourists) and their role in sustainable livelihoods. That led to me changing to Development Studies and much to my surprise, I have found myself researching, in part, beach *fales* and their role in livelihood recovery following the tsunami. Two years ago Gerard shared stories about his work in the field, opening my eyes to endless possibilities. Your openness, and the insight both of you have shared, has helped shape me to the person I now am.

Of significant importance were the financial contributions I received from the Secondary Teacher's Study Award, New Zealand Aid Programme Awards for Postgraduate Field Research and the Massey University People, Environment and Planning Graduate Research Fund. Without this assistance, this thesis would not have occurred.

Finally thank you to my immediate and extended family. Your hospitality and offers of transport when I was in Palmerston North were greatly appreciated. Likewise ongoing support and assistance with proofreading, a thankless task, has not gone unnoticed. To my wonderful children Caitlin, Alissa and Cameron, you inspired me to achieve my goals and I am very proud of you all.

To Bernard, my darling husband and best friend. Words are insufficient to express my gratitude for your unconditional support, love and understanding. God bless.

To my global village, *Fa'afetai, fa'afetai lava*

This thesis is dedicated to the survivors of the tsunami, especially

Agnes, her husband and her two angels.

Your compassion, resilience and Christianity inspired me throughout
this research.

May God grant you many blessings.

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ACRONYMS and GLOSSARY

List of Acronyms

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DAC	Disaster Advisory Committee
DEMA	Disaster Emergency Management Act
DMO	Disaster Management Office (part of MNREM)
IASC	The Inter-Agency Standing Committee
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MNREM	Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Meteorology
MWCSD	Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development
MWTI	Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure
NDC	National Disaster Council
NDMP	National Disaster Management Plan
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NZAID	New Zealand's International Aid and Development Agency
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
SIDS	Small Island Developing State
SUNGO	Samoa Umbrella of Non -Government Organisations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WIBDI	Women in Business Development Incorporated Society

Glossary of Samoan Terms Used Within this Thesis

Aiga	Nuclear, immediate or extended family/kin group
Apia	Capital of Samoa, located in Upolu
Fa'a matai	Chiefly system of matai, customary system of governance
Fa'avae I le Atua Samoa	Samoa is founded on God
Fa'a Samoa	'the Samoan way', also referred to as Samoan culture
Fale	Open style Samoan house
Fono	Village governing council, comprised of Matai
Komiti	Committee
Lavalava	Cloth wrapped around the waist, worn as a skirt by men and women
Matai	Chief or orator, head of the family
Meaalofa	Gift or the practice of giving, receiving and sharing of gifts, thing of love
Nu'u	Village
Palagi	White or European person, non-Samoan
Pulenu'u	Village mayor, liaison between village and Samoan government
Savaii	Largest but second most populated island in Samoa
Tala	Samoa currency
Upolu	Second largest but most populated island

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CHAPTER ONE: Introducing the Thesis

Once the tsunami came there was nothing left"

Puli, Matai, Village U

Introduction

Between 2000-2009 over 2.2 billion people were affected by 4,400 natural disasters (Kellett & Sparks, 2012). The associated financial, economic, and social cost of natural disasters is increasing and at the same time, developing countries are disproportionately affected (Coppola, 2007). This has led to a growing demand for humanitarian assistance at a time when the financial liquidity of donors is contracting. As a result there is a need to optimise aid, including complementing local assistance, while at the same time examining ways to improve 'global' and local humanitarian policy and practice.

This thesis sets out to see how *fa'a Samoa* influenced livelihood recovery in Samoa following the 2009 tsunami. However, while undertaking field research a bigger issue arose, that is: how important are cultural frameworks for development? In view of this, both questions are addressed in this thesis.

Significance and Rationale

During two trips to Samoa in 2011 I was privileged to be able to speak to a variety of people involved in the Samoan tsunami, including survivors and government officials. These conversations highlighted the resilience and compassion of the Samoan people, leaving me wondering what influenced Samoa's recovery. Upon my return to New Zealand I discovered that although there is considerable research into all aspects of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami, which

struck large parts of Asia, there is limited social science research on the 2009 Samoan tsunami.

Currently, research has been undertaken into tourism recovery including (Tagomoa-Isara, 2010) and a piece by Wong et al. (2012) who examined the effects of the tsunami on tourism in Samoa as part of their research on climate change and tourism. During their investigation into the human response to three post-tsunami case studies; Boxing Day 2004, Java 2006 and Samoa 2009 Bird, Chague-Goff, & Gero (2011) touched on livelihood recovery in Samoa. Dudley et al. (2011) conducted research into the experiences of survivors during the tsunami. Parkes (2010) researched vulnerability and rural livelihoods post-tsunami while Holmegaard (2011) discussed the changes in Christian religions and traditions in post-tsunami Samoa. The shortage of social science post-tsunami research encouraged me to undertake this thesis.

Secondly as noted above, the 'cost' of natural disasters is increasing, resulting in a need to ensure the optimisation of aid. Current disaster management policy and practice utilises *palagi* (Western) methodology, relying to a large extent on overseas aid and international development experts. Following a disaster, as well as the provision of cash and goods, there is also a sudden influx of non-resident humanitarian and disaster-related personnel and organisations into the affected areas. An illustration of this is that following the Boxing Day tsunami 400 organisations provided relief in Banda Aceh alone (Pettit, Beresford, Whiting, & Banomyong, 2011). The influx of experts as part of disaster relief is commented on in a UK cartoon (Figure 1), which depicts what is often seen as the cultural and financial inappropriateness of deploying outside specialists to disaster areas.

Figure 1: Disaster Relief



(POLYP, Unknown) Reprinted with permission.

There is no disputing the vital work undertaken by many of these responders. In spite of this, foreign involvement can negatively affect local communities by weakening their ability to undertake their own recovery and undermining their traditional cultural frameworks (Cosgrave, 2007; Kennedy, Ashmore, Babister, & Kelman, 2008; Shah, 2007). With this in mind, this research aimed to uncover if the cultural framework of a community could be, or is being, fully utilised to support livelihood recovery. There is considerable research on sustainable livelihoods, livelihood restoration, and disaster planning and recovery (Cannon, Twigg, & Rowell, 2003; Coppola, 2007; Gaillard, Maceda, Stasiak, Le Berre, & Espaldon, 2009; Ireland, 2004; Minamoto, 2010). However, there is limited research on utilising cultural frameworks to plan for and aid livelihood restoration following a disaster.

Research Aim, Objectives and Questions

The aim of this research project is to investigate:

How did *fa'a Samoa* influence livelihood recovery in Samoa following the 2009 tsunami?

The objectives of this thesis are as follows:

1. To examine how unaffected villages and church communities within Samoa contributed to the recovery of sustainable livelihoods in affected Samoan villages.
2. To examine how important cultural frameworks, (especially *fa'a Samoa*) are for development.

The central research questions are:

1. Following the tsunami, in what ways did direct village/church aid from non-affected to affected villages compare to that from formal channels?
2. To what extent has assistance from unaffected communities in Samoa had a positive, long lasting effect on sustainable livelihoods?
3. To what extent has *fa'a Samoa* influenced the aid to and recovery of, affected villages following the tsunami?

(Note: unaffected communities refer to those communities which did not sustain physical damage. All Samoan communities experienced loss and emotional trauma to various extents).

An Introduction to Samoa

This thesis topic is situated in Samoa. Accordingly it is valuable to highlight aspects of Samoa which are of importance to the study. Firstly the geography of Samoa is examined, followed by the social, political and economic situation. This background enables the reader

to develop a greater understanding of the factors which influenced the response to and recovery from the tsunami. The cultural framework of Samoa is examined in depth, later within Chapter Five.

Geographical Features

The Independent State of Samoa is located between 13° and 14° south latitude in the South West Pacific, approximately halfway between New Zealand and Hawaii. Samoa lies approximately 150km northwest of the Tonga shear fault zone, where the Pacific Plate subducts beneath the Australian Plate (The Government of Samoa, 2006a). Samoa consists of ten volcanic islands, four of which are inhabited namely: Upolu, Savaii, and the small islands of Manono and Apolima (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Map of Samoa



(CIA World Factbook, 2012)

The total land area of Samoa is 2,830 square kilometres with Savaii the largest island being 1,700 square kilometres and Upolu, the main island having a total land area of 1,110 square kilometres (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2012). Field research was undertaken in Savaii and Upolu. Apia, Samoa's capital is located in Upolu along with the main trading port and the international airport.

Social, Political and Economic Features

The total population of Samoa is 187,820 persons, consisting of 96,990 males and 90,830 females. Savaii, the largest island has approximately 24% of the country's population compared to Upolu which has approximately 75%, while Manono and Apolima have a combined population of approximately 0.1% of the total Samoan population (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2012).

Samoa has been influenced by its two colonising powers, Germany, 1899-1914, and New Zealand 1914-1962 (Misatauveve, 2012). In 1962 Samoa gained political independence from New Zealand (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, 2012), becoming a constitutional monarchy which continues to be highly influenced by traditional Samoan custom and governance (*fa'a Samoa*). The other significant western influence on Samoa was religion. The strength of this influence is illustrated with the inclusion of religion in the Samoan constitution, which states: "Samoa is founded on God" (*Faavae i le Atua*) (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2012).

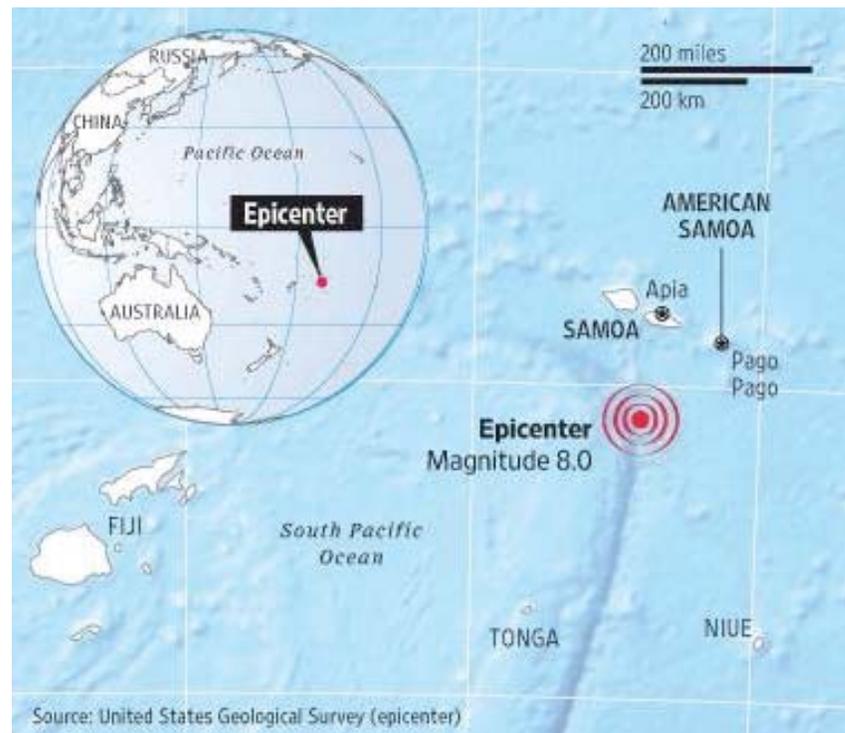
As one of the world's forty three Least Developed Countries (LDC) (United Nations, 2010), Samoa can be considered a poor country, having a GDP per capita (2010 est.) of \$US3,791 (U.S. Department of State, 2012). The Samoan economy is primarily an informal economy, which is dependent on tourism, remittances, external borrowing, and aid, with New Zealand purchasing 45%-50% of all Samoan exports (U.S. Department of State, 2012). In the 2010/11 financial year, 37% of the Samoan Government's budget was from development assistance and concessionary lending, with New Zealand providing approximately NZ\$23m of official development support (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, 2012).

Samoaan Tsunami Context

Samoa, like other Small Island Developing States (SIDS), is susceptible to natural disasters, especially cyclones, tsunamis, and storm surges. Increasing coastal development amplifies this susceptibility (Nelson, Roberts, & Daly, 2008) with seventy percent of Samoa's population living in coastal areas (The Government of Samoa, 2010). At approximately 7am local time, 29 September 2009, a devastating region wide tsunami inundated coastal communities, in Samoa, American Samoa and Tonga (van Zijll de Jong et al., 2011).

Unlike most tsunami, the 2009 Samoan tsunami was generated by an earthquake doublet, where an initial 8.1 magnitude earthquake was followed almost simultaneously by a 8.0 magnitude earthquake (Beavan et al., 2010; Lay et al., 2010). The epicentre, south of Samoa, on the Tongan trench is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Location of the epicentre of the tsunami



(United States Geological Survey, 2009)

The death toll attributed to the tsunami was 190 people, comprising of 34 in American Samoa, 9 in Tonga (Gibbons, 2009), and 147 people in Samoa (The Government of Samoa, 2010). The severe effects of the tsunami were localised to Manono, Apolima and the popular tourist areas of eastern and southern Upolu. It is the eastern area of Upolu which is of particular interest to this study.

The Samoan tsunami affected approximately 5,000 people in over fifty Samoan villages and had a major impact on the environment. Land was inundated with seawater, killing plants and contaminating fresh water, debris was scattered widely and infrastructure destroyed, while the topography of beaches and coastal flats was also changed (Figure 4). Along the southern coast of Upolu there was significant damage to the coral reefs and fisheries. This environmental damage had a devastating effect on livelihoods for the affected communities (The Government of Samoa, 2010; Wendt Young, 2010).

Figure 4: The power of the tsunami: Inundated land on the south east coast of Upolu



(Phibbs, 2009)

Livelihoods in the affected areas consisted of subsistence living or income producing practices, with an emphasis on tourism and ocean-related livelihoods (Bird, et al., 2011). Along with environmental damage, livelihoods were also severely affected as a result of the destruction of, or damage to boats, vehicles, shops and tourist ventures, with 56 beach *fales* and 23 fishing boats destroyed (The Government of Samoa, 2010).

Only 2.6% of Samoa's population (approximately 5,000 people) were affected (The Government of Samoa, 2010), yet the financial cost of the tsunami was considerable, with the Government of Samoa estimating the cost of the recovery plan to be just over US\$100 million (2010). This equates to approximately \$20,000 for every man women and child affected, and is in part a result of the significant costs associated with relocating several villages to high ground and damage to infrastructure in localised areas. To aid Samoa's recovery, the United Nations General Assembly extended Samoa's Least Developed Countries (LDC) status until January 2014. Samoa had been due to graduate in December 2010 (United Nations, 2010). This deferment enabled Samoa to access concessional loans, thereby reducing the burden on the Samoan economy.

Outline of this Thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters, beginning with Chapter One which examines the significance and rationale for this thesis before outlining the thesis aim, objectives and questions. Chapter One also provides an overview of the geographical, social, political and economic features of Samoa. Livelihoods in Samoa and details on the Samoan tsunami are also discussed.

Chapter Two focuses on sustainable livelihoods and social capital. This chapter begins by briefly examining the evolution of sustainable development, defining the concept in terms of this thesis before moving on to provide examples of sustainable livelihoods, especially within Samoa. The chapter acknowledges that while the attainment of sustainable development requires all forms of capital, it is the role of social capital that is central to this thesis. As a result, an investigation into the key aspects of social capital is undertaken, revealing that with regards to Samoa, social capital is evident in networks, bonds, trust and reciprocity. Examination of the three subsections of social capital (bonding, bridging and linking social capital) concludes the chapter.

Chapter Three begins by discussing trends associated with disasters along with an examination of key terms associated with disaster management. Building on the findings in Chapter Two this chapter moves on to highlight research into the role of social capital and religion in disaster response and recovery. Emphasis is placed on relating the amount of social capital an individual or community possess to their recovery.

Chapter Four, the methodology chapter argues that an author's subjectivity influences all aspects of a thesis, yet frequently, positionality statements are tokenistic. As a result of this assertion the author's positionality is woven throughout this chapter, which includes an examination of the qualitative methodology employed, specifically, critical case study research. The chapter also addresses ethical considerations and factors which influenced the fieldwork, such as research assistants, sensitivity to the needs of the survivors of the tsunami and my own vulnerability.

Chapter Five presents the cultural framework for this study: *fa'a Samoa*. Unique to Samoa, *fa'a Samoa* is shown to be broad,

encompassing all aspects of Samoan society, but it is the aspects of *fa'a Samoa* which provide resilience in the face of a disaster, which are examined in depth. The resultant knowledge and understanding of the cultural framework of Samoa provides insights into how and why Samoans responded to the tsunami in the ways they did, including livelihood recovery. This chapter also includes discussion on the modern history of disasters in Samoa, the organisational structure of disaster management and the co-ordination of the response to the 2009 tsunami.

Chapters Six and Seven present findings from the field research drawing on case study and key informant interviews as well as personal observations. Chapter Six outlines assistance from the Samoan Government and Samoan NGOs, as well as aid which originated overseas including that from international agencies and non-resident Samoans. This provides a context against which to compare the focus of this thesis, local Samoan to Samoan assistance which is revealed in Chapter Seven.

Chapter Seven investigates the outpouring of emotion and support from unaffected Samoans during the response phase, and then reflects on the role *fa'a Samoa* played in the provision and distribution of aid. Finally the chapter explores the ways assistance from unaffected communities aided sustainable recovery, and the factors which limit assistance.

Chapter Eight discusses the research findings in relation to the literature presented in Chapters Two, Three and Five. This chapter addresses the three research questions and the two objectives of this study. This thesis concludes with recommendations on crucial points arising from the discussion and areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: Understanding Sustainable Livelihoods and Social Capital

*In Samoa, social capital already exists as fa'a Samoa
(O'Brien & Stewart-Withers, 2006, p. 212)*

Introduction

To enable a detailed examination into the effectiveness of *fa'a Samoa* on livelihood recovery, it is important to first examine sustainable livelihoods and social capital. This chapter begins by examining literature pertaining to definitions of sustainable livelihoods. We then move to discuss the four common aspects of sustainable livelihoods: as an approach, a tool, a set of principles or an objective, while noting that this thesis focuses on sustainable livelihoods as an objective.

Sustainable development requires capital, and specifically, in relation to this thesis, social capital. It is therefore appropriate to outline the types of capital before examining social capital in depth. Key aspects of social capital are networks, bonds, trust and reciprocity. These aspects are also strong characteristics of *fa'a Samoa*, which is examined in Chapter Five. Social capital can be broken down into three subsections: bonding, bridging and linking social capital and these subsections are also explored.

Sustainable Livelihood: Definition and Approach to Development

Sustainable livelihoods, an integral aspect of this thesis, are at the forefront of development literature and practice. Building on Amartya Sen's work on capabilities (Sen, 1984, 1987), Chambers and Conway (1992) published *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century*. This paper was instrumental in promoting the

sustainable livelihood focus within development where sustainable livelihoods is defined as:

The capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term

(Chambers & Conway, 1992, p. 6).

Since then sustainable livelihoods have evolved to be viewed in four main ways: as a tool, an approach, a set of principles or an objective (Ashley & Carney, 1999). In comparison, Knutsson (2006) perceives sustainable livelihoods to have developed from a concept to an approach. The four facets of sustainable livelihoods mentioned by Ashley & Carney are important for successful long term development. However, this thesis focuses on sustainable livelihoods as an objective and it is this facet which is now examined.

A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base

(DFID, 2000, p. 1).

This definition has not been chosen for this thesis as it is considered too rigid for a developing country such as Samoa, which is vulnerable to the destructive power of natural hazards. As discussed in Chapter One many businesses and livelihoods were slow to recover from the Samoan tsunami and as a result, if this definition were chosen, they

would not be considered sustainable. With this in mind I have drawn upon the work of DIFD (2000) and other authors to develop a definition of sustainable livelihoods appropriate to this thesis. Livelihoods refer to people's means and ability to earn a living, often through a variety of activities (Companion, 2011; Gaillard, et al., 2009).

As this thesis is a Development Studies thesis, 'sustainable' is defined from a development perspective. In 1987 the UN published the Brundtland report. This report defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. not stated). Therefore sustainable livelihood is defined as: A person's ability to earn a living, which is robust in the face of adversity, without compromising the livelihoods of future generations.

Sustainable livelihoods occur worldwide, but pertinent to this thesis are sustainable livelihoods from coastal communities. The range of activities within coastal communities is vast with Ireland (2004) identifying over 100 traditional and modern coastal livelihood income generating endeavours. These ranged from fishing, ice selling, prostitution, salt panning, tourism, traditional medicine, to hand crafts. Not all of these livelihood endeavours are observed in the Pacific Islands and Samoa specifically, so it is important to examine the key livelihoods in Samoan communities.

Pacific Island livelihoods are dependent on their ecosystems (Anderson, 2009). This is especially true in Samoa where livelihoods are frequently related to the sea; fishing and tourism, and the land; agriculture and horticultural practices. Within Samoa one of the most frequently cited examples of sustainable livelihoods is that of beach

fales (Haughey, 2007; Scheyvens, 2005, 2009; Tagomoa-Isara, 2010; Woods, 2006). Beach *fales*, traditional accommodation for tourists, are located on the coastal strip and utilise what can otherwise be unproductive land. Catering for domestic and international tourists requires beach *fales* to purchase food, labour, building materials and services. The operation of beach *fale* businesses provides an opportunity for many other small businesses, like taxi drivers and shop keepers to piggy back, providing sustainable livelihoods for the wider community.

Definition of a Community

Literature frequently discusses community/communities. Therefore it is important to define a community and more specifically look at what constitutes a Samoan community. While there are many characterisations of community, the following two focus on community from a development and natural disaster perspective. A community is a group of people who share an environment, interests, resources and goals, and often has an elected or nominated leader (Dhameja, 2011). A community can also be defined as a “an entity that has geographic boundaries and shared fate” (Norris, Stevens, Pfefferbaum, Wyche, & Pfefferbaum, 2008, p. 128). Drawing on these descriptions and with regard to this thesis, a Samoan community is defined as: a group of people within the geographical confines of a village (*nu’u*) which includes the members of the church, *aiga* (extended kin groups) and associated leaders; minister, *matai* (chief) and *pulenu’u* (mayor). For a detailed discussion on *aiga*, *nu’u*, *matai* and *pulenu’u* refer to Chapter Five.

Several authors including Nakagawa & Shaw, (2004) contend that communities are not homogenous entities. Rather they comprise of individuals of different race, culture and religion, who possess diverse political perspectives, incomes and affiliations. Samoan communities

share the same culture, *fa'a Samoa*, and are almost exclusively Samoa and Christian making them less diverse than multi-racial, multi-cultural communities. That said, Samoan communities are not homogeneous entities as they are stratified by gender, age, social standing and wealth. Like all communities, Samoan communities possess capital. Capital is varied by type and amount and as such plays an important role in sustainable livelihoods and disaster response and recovery.

Types of Capital

Research shows that there are many types of capital, with some being more prevalent than others in academic and applied literature. Five of the most commonly mentioned forms of capital are human, natural, financial, social and physical (Birkmann, 2006; De Silva & Yamao, 2007; Lautze & Raven-Roberts, 2006). This compares to Bourdieu who described capital as occurring in three fundamental forms: economic, social and cultural, and to a lesser extent symbolic (1986).

Depending on the author, human capital can also be referred to as cultural capital and consists of the education, skills and knowledge that an individual possesses. Similarly, economic capital/financial capital is the ability to utilise economic resources. Natural capital is the natural resources and ecosystems, which are available for man to utilise (Goodwin, 2003). This compares to physical or production capital which consists of tangible assets, such as machines and buildings (The World Bank, unknown). Finally, social capital is the networks and trust that an individual or group possesses.

All these aspects of capital play a significant role in recovering from a disaster, but it is the role which social capital played in facilitating the recovery following the Samoan tsunami, which is central to this thesis. The next section examines social capital, looking in particular

at social networks, including bonding, bridging and linking social capital and concludes by considering trust and reciprocity.

Social Capital

Social capital is a resource which is varied, multidimensional and multi-disciplinary. In the course of this review over fifty definitions were examined and as Dynes (2005) noted, these definitions often had a different emphasis. One of the reasons for this is that social capital definitions are influenced by the discipline from which the author defines it.

Two of the most frequently cited authors are Bourdieu and Putnam. Bourdieu defined social capital from an economic perspective when he described it as being “made up of social obligations ('connections'), which are convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of a title of nobility” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. x). This is in contrast to Putnam who examined social capital from a social perspective and concluded that social capital refers to “connections among individuals-social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arises from them” (Putnam, 2000, p. 19).

Common to the varied definitions of social capital are social networks, reciprocity and trust. Concepts such as goodwill, social cohesion, kinship, acceptance, co-operation, relationships and tolerance are also frequently mentioned. It is important to recognise that none of these concepts function in isolation as all aspects of social capital are inter-related. An example of this is that reciprocity does not function without goodwill and trust.

This thesis examines the way Samoan culture, *fa'a Samoa*, influenced disaster recovery at the *aiga* (village) level. Social capital exists as

fa'a Samoa within Samoa (O'Brien & Stewart-Withers, 2006; Stewart-Withers, 2008). With this in mind, the following two statements which define social capital and its role in disaster recovery are appropriate. Firstly, social capital consists of structural aspects, including social networks and connections, and cultural norms, including, values, reciprocity and trust (Adler, 2011). This definition is chosen as cultural norms are placed alongside social networks, which are particularly relevant to Samoa (refer to Chapter Five for detailed discussion on *fa'a Samoa*). Secondly, from a disaster perspective social capital “facilitates flow of information providing a basis for action and assisting in individual and community goal attainment” (Ritchie & Gill, 2007, p. 109). It is important to note that information is not restricted to that supplied through formal channels. Information passed between kin, acquaintances and business associates plays a vital role in achieving goals.

A community does not possess social capital; rather it is the individuals or institutions within the community which do (DeFilippis, 2001). Literature shows that DeFilippis' assertion is debatable, with many contending that social capital can be possessed both individually and collectively (Chtouris & Tzelepoglou, 2011; Kilpatrick, Field, & Falk, 2003; Nakagawa & Shaw, 2004). Woolcock and Narayan typify this position when they say:

The basic idea of social capital is that a person's family, friends and associates constitute an important asset, one that can be called on in a crisis, enjoyed for its own sake, and leveraged for material gain. What is true for individuals, moreover, also holds for groups

(2000, p. 226).

In a similar vein, Paton and Jang contend that a consequence of co-operative action is that the collective knowledge and skills of a

community is greater than the sum of that possessed by individual members (2011). Samoan villages are inherently collectivist in nature. In view of this and mindful of the literature, this thesis acknowledges and examines individual and collective social capital.

Social capital is complex. It is not a static (Mathbor, 2007; Spence, Eith, & Lachlan, 2010), nor is it uniform between and amongst individuals and communities. Rather, it is constantly evolving as a result of changing dynamics and social interactions. Neither does it function in isolation, as social capital operates alongside the previously mentioned types of capital, as well as being affected by geographical and technological constraints. There are many other factors which contribute to the complexity of individual and collective social capital. These include: local identity, social norms such as a willingness and duty to participate in mutually beneficial action, mutual trust and social networks (Chtouris & Tzelepoglou, 2011; Nakagawa & Shaw, 2004).

Social Networks

Social networks, a key component of social capital, are a multi-layered resource. Individuals and communities possess a complex variety of networks and connections based on a variety of factors including: kin, religion, politics, employment, sporting and social ties. Networks enable the flow of information, goods and capital, while providing support and guidance. These networks are important for the day to day functioning and growth of a community and are vital for livelihood recovery following a disaster. Unfortunately a lack of family ties has a significant impact on the livelihood of individuals and communities (Woolcock, 2002). This applies above all to rural communities and far less and decreasingly so, to urban communities where ties, including those emanating from work, leisure and politics, are complementing or substituting family ties. It is through co-operation that individuals, groups and communities are able to work

together to achieve goals, which otherwise might have been unattainable (Kilpatrick, et al., 2003).

There are three levels of social capital: bonding, bridging and linking. Each of these levels arises as a result of networks within and between communities and organisations, and each is vital to ensure rapid and full recovery following a disaster. Hawkins and Maurer contend that in the wake of a disaster, bonding social capital can be utilised to provide immediate support, whereas bridging and linking social capital aid long term recovery (2010). These three levels of social capital are now examined in further detail, while their role in disaster recovery is examined in Chapter Three.

Bonding Social Capital

Bonding social capital occurs as a result of strong ties/networks between similar people who share an expectation of reciprocity (Putnam, 2000; Sakamoto & Yamori, 2009). These people can include immediate family members, neighbours, close friends, and business associates (Mathbor, 2007; Nakagawa & Shaw, 2004; Woolcock, 2002). Bonding social capital can be cultivated through a variety of mechanisms including business, religious and recreational activities (Mathbor, 2007), but in Samoan *aiga* (villages) it is often families which display the greatest bonding social capital. (Refer to Chapter Five for a detailed discussion on family networks and the *aiga*). When assistance is required to build a home or in times of tragedy, it is people who are part of the bonding network who are the first to provide assistance. Remittances, an important contributor to the Samoan economy, are a result of bonding social capital between resident Samoans and their overseas kin.

Bridging Social Capital

Bridging social capital “occurs between and amongst communities” (Mathbor, 2007, p. 364). These communities share similar economic status and political power but may differ as a result of occupation, ethnicity or location (Woolcock, 2002). There are many examples of bridging social capital within Samoa but two are important to this thesis.

Firstly, beach *fale* operators may have regular contact with other operators throughout the country as a result of follow-on bookings for guests and membership to Samoan Tourism authority (STA). Secondly, faith based organisations utilise bridging social capital between organisations within a community or between communities, both locally and overseas. In both instances, in times of need, bridging social capital allows individuals and communities to tap into resources outside their immediate circle.

Linking Social Capital

Bonding and bridging social capital are considered to be a result of horizontal relationships, while linking social capital is a result of relationships in a vertical direction (Pelling & High, 2005). The reason linking social capital is considered to be vertical is that it usually connects individuals and communities to people or organisations that hold power. Nakagawa and Shaw (2004) describe linking social capital as networks between a community and those in positions of influence in formal organizations such as banks, agricultural offices, schools, housing authorities, or the police. In the same way linking social capital connects communities through relationships with financial and political institutions (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010; Mathbor, 2007). In the time of a disaster, individuals and communities with high linking social capital are able to access appropriate and timely assistance from government bodies as well as

national and international organisations, thereby improving their ability to recover.

Social capital is possessed by individuals and communities in varying degrees. The poor tend to have strong bonding social capital, weaker bridging social capital and very little linking social capital (Woolcock, 2002). As discussed in Chapter One, Samoa is considered a developing country, and many of those affected by the tsunami lived a subsistence lifestyle. This is one of three reasons why the role that bonding and bridging social capital play in rehabilitation, is a focus of this thesis. The second reason is that this thesis examines two case study villages and as such concentrates on horizontal Samoan to Samoan assistance. The third and final reason is that it is culture (and religion) that bonds people within communities in Samoa, and culture (and religion) that bridges people between communities.

Trust and Reciprocity

Trust, a crucial component of bridging, bonding and linking social capital, is intrinsically linked to reciprocity. Members of a social network trust that the flow of information, money, labour, knowledge and care is provided and or reciprocated when required. While acknowledging their assertion is controversial, Moore et al. contend that regardless of an individual's position or influence in a community, all members benefit from the trust that the community holds (2004). I agree with this statement, but argue while all members of a community benefit from trust within a community, those in positions of power or influence tend to benefit to a greater degree than those without power or influence. This is in keeping with Nakagawa & Shaw's belief that trust can be facilitated or enforced by community leaders and as such can have both positive and negative characteristics (2004).

Cultural Frameworks

There are few definitions of 'cultural framework', and the few that are available are from a business and marketing perspective. An example of one of these definitions is by Terpstra and Sarathy (2000) where the cultural framework is said to include eight categories within a community or organisation: values and attitudes, education, social organisation, religion, language, aesthetics, law and politics, and technology and material culture within a community or organisation. As this thesis is from a development studies perspective, the author defines the cultural framework of any given community as the values, traditions, structures and beliefs which cement the community together.

Conclusion

One of the aims of disaster response and recovery is to achieve sustainable livelihoods. Therefore, within this thesis, sustainable livelihoods are considered to be an objective, rather than a concept, a tool, an approach or a set of principles. The achievement of sustainable development is dependent on several factors, one of which is social capital. Social capital is multifaceted, but the aspects which are of major significance to this thesis include: bonding and bridging social capital, trust and reciprocity. Within Samoa it is bonds within and between communities, and the associated concepts of trust and reciprocity, which are key aspects of *fa'a Samoa* and as such are delved into in Chapter Five. But before we move to Chapter Five, it is important to define disasters and the stages of disaster management and then examine the role of social capital within disaster response and recovery. This is examined in depth within the next chapter, Chapter Three.

CHAPTER THREE: Disasters- The Role of Social Capital in Disaster Response and Recovery

Post-disaster recovery processes should be considered as opportunities for development, by revitalizing the local economy and upgrading livelihoods and living conditions
(Nakagawa & Shaw, 2004)

Introduction

Disasters are horrible, destructive and deadly. They can occur indiscriminately throughout the world affecting all aspects of society. This thesis examines in part, the response and recovery of a contemporary disaster, the 2009 Samoan tsunami. To understand the context within which this disaster lies, the first part of this chapter sets out to define disasters and associated terminology, before examining contemporary trends in disaster response and recovery.

The second half of this chapter focuses on the significance of social capital in disaster response and recovery situations. This is illustrated through case studies from both religious organisations and communities throughout the world - showing particularly how social capital helped people recover their livelihoods.

Disasters

Just as there are many types of disasters, there are many definitions as to what constitutes a disaster. “CRED, [The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters] defines a disaster as an event requiring international assistance or causing ten deaths or affecting more than 100 people”(Bankoff, 2007, p. xiii). In comparison, McEntire (2007, p. 26) considers a disaster to be “deadly, destructive and disruptive events that occur when a hazard (or multiple hazards)

interact(s) with human vulnerability”. The Samoan Government defines a disaster from a Samoan perspective where

‘Disaster’ means a situation -

(a) which could result or has resulted in causing widespread human, property or environmental losses throughout Samoa or in any part of Samoa; and

(b) which will require a substantial mobilisation and utilisation of Samoa’s resources or exceed the ability of Samoa to cope using its own resources

(The Government of Samoa, 2006, p. 2).

While this thesis examines the Samoan tsunami, reference is also made to other disasters throughout the world. Consequently, for the purpose of this thesis, the following definition of disaster, which is written within the context of development, is used. A disaster is “any severe disruption to human survival and security that overwhelms people’s capacity to cope” (Collins, 2009, p. 4).

The three types of hazard which can cause a disaster are: natural, technological and intentional (Coppola, 2007). Disasters are a result of the interaction between people and the environment (Barrios, 2011). Accordingly, disasters are measured in terms of loss of life, injuries, damage sustained to people and property and environmental degradation (Bowden, 2011).

There are several trends associated with natural disasters. Disasters are: becoming less deadly, more costly, affecting more people and affecting developing countries disproportionately (Coppola, 2007). This is in-line with EM-DAT (Emergency Disasters Database; database for CRED) who evaluated disaster data between 1900 and 2010 and found that while the number of people killed by natural disasters has

decreased dramatically, the frequency of natural disasters, the number of people affected and the associated financial cost of these disasters has increased considerably (2012).

This increase can be attributed to a variety of reasons including increasing populations, deforestation and global warming (Furedi, 2007; Ronan & Johnston, 2005). There are differing opinions as to whether the world is experiencing an increase in natural disasters, or if there is just increased awareness of those that occur (McEntire, 2007). Yet, there is agreement that climatological related disasters, including hurricane, tropical cyclones, typhoons, drought, floods and storm surges are increasing (Keller & DeVecchio, 2012; Loayza, Olaberría, Rigolini, & Christiaensen, 2009; 2007; Raddatz, 2009).

Stages of Disaster Relief

Academics, disaster management organisations and NGOs use a variety of definitions for the stages of disaster management. This is confusing, especially as the preparation/prevention phase, which is on-going, occurs in different stages. For ease of comparison, I have placed Table 1 at the beginning of the definitions. This table attempts to provide a simplified and clear comparison between various definitions of the stages of disaster management.

Table 1: Definitions for the stages of disaster management

Phases of Disaster Management					
	Mitigation	Prevention	Preparation	Prevention	Preparedness
	Preparedness	Rescue	Emergency	Acute	Early-warning
	Response	Relief	Recovery	Recovery	Mitigation
	Recovery	Rehabilitation	Reconstruction	Rebuilding	Relief
					Recovery
					Rehabilitation
A u t h o r	(Coppola, 2007; Dynes, 2005; Haddow & Haddow, 2009; Warfield, 2012).	(Sugimoto, Sagayaraj, & Sugimoto, 2011)	(Crosbie, 2009)	(Marsella, et al., 2008)	(Collins, 2009)

As this thesis focuses on the Samoan tsunami, the four phases of disaster management are considered to be those outlined by the Samoan Government (2006). These phases are: risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery. Risk reduction is akin to mitigation.

Risk Reduction (Mitigation)

Risk reduction is the mitigation activities which are undertaken to reduce the risk of hazards to community and property (The Government of Samoa, 2006). Reduction occurs prior to and during the disaster event (Collins, 2009).

Preparedness

Preparedness is defined as the actions of people, individually or collectively to reduce losses from a hazard before its occurrence (Keller & DeVecchio, 2012). These actions include behaviour modification to reduce the effects from the disaster (Drabek, 1986) as well as comprehensive planning for the eventuality of a disaster.

Response

Response is the emergency phase. Response addresses immediate needs including search and rescue, tending to the affected along with limiting damage to the natural and cultural environment. Many, such as McEntire (2007), describe response as occurring in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. This compares to others such as Coppola (2007) who contends that response begins with the notification of an imminent hazard event and ends when the emergency declaration ceases. Similarly, response “means actions taken in anticipation of, and immediately after a disaster or emergency to ensure that its effects are minimised and that people affected are given immediate relief and support” (The Government of Samoa, 2006c, p. 8).

Recovery

The recovery phase ranges from weeks to several years in duration and involves a large variety of organisations including local, national and international governments, and NGOs. Recovery is defined as “the medium and long term activities undertaken for physical, social, economic and environmental regeneration after a period of emergency” (The Government of Samoa, 2006c, p. 8). It is during this phase that organisations including Australia-Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction, also known as AIFDR, (2011), UNDP India (2012) and UNISDR (2007) aim to ‘build back better’.

Contemporary Trends in Disaster Response and Recovery

Disasters experienced today are similar to those in the past. However, our approach to preparing for and responding to disasters has evolved, sometimes radically, in part as a result of the professionalisation of disaster management (Maunch, 2009). Western-type disaster prevention policies were formulated in Germany, Russia and Denmark as early as the second half of the eighteenth century (Pfister, 2009). Since then disaster planning has spread throughout the world, constantly being updated to take account of new knowledge, emerging capabilities and trends. Some of the trends which have emerged: include the explosion in the number of aid organisations, the acknowledgement of culture, the advent of the psycho-social response. Additionally, as a result of the increasing use of telecommunications there has been an increase in aid. These trends are examined now.

Proliferation of aid organisations and aid

In recent years there has been a proliferation of aid organisations. Following the Boxing Day tsunami, there were reportedly 400 organisations providing relief in Banda Aceh (Pettit, et al., 2011) and Kumaran and Torris noted a similar number of organisations and agencies were involved in South India (2011). These organisations provided considerable assistance with just one organisation, Oxfam aiding 2.5 million people throughout the disaster area. This was achieved by way of a variety of projects and activities including the building of bridges, schools, nearly 3,000 homes and over 10,000 wells (OXFAM New Zealand, 2009).

Literature also shows that the sudden influx of organisations, associated expatriate workers and money, had a negative effect on some local communities. The effects of this so called 'second tsunami' included: hampering local NGOs' ability to provide appropriate aid, making aid co-ordination difficult and more expensive as well not fulfilling promises (Cosgrave, 2007; Kennedy, et al., 2008). Similarly, Shah (2007) conducted research into psychosocial trauma following a disaster. He found that neo-colonial processes, of which international relief aid, and their local partner practices are a part, contribute to the abandonment of culturally embedded practices.

It is contended that the recovery of Sri Lankan areas affected by the 2004 tsunami could have been achieved with "a third of the expatriates, half of the NGOs and half of the money" (Gaasbeek, 2010, p. 140). This was supported by others including Telford and Cosgrove (2007) who noted that too many agencies were involved in Sri Lanka and Indonesia following the tsunami. As a result, some forms of assistance were ineffective, inappropriate or an inefficient use of funds. In a similar vein, Senanayake (2005) contends that the many unemployed or underemployed Sri Lankan graduates could have been employed in recovery, rather than relying on foreign workers

and volunteers who didn't know and/or understand the local language and culture.

Acknowledgement of culture

Many practitioners and academics (Chester, 2005; Marsella, Johnston, Watson, & Gryczynski, 2008; Mercer, Taranis, & Suchet-Pearson, 2010; Senanayake, 2005) advocate that local culture needs to be respected and recognised to optimise recovery. Acknowledging culture and working in conjunction with affected people helps to ensure that aid is delivered efficiently and appropriately while the needs of the recipient, rather than the needs of the donor, are met. However, the provision of humanitarian aid is often hampered by cultural misunderstandings between the overseas donor and the local recipient (Dowty, 2011; Minamoto, 2010), especially when assessment is derived from the Western 'hierarchy of needs' (Dowty, 2011). Likewise the World Health Organisation recognised that Aceh's citizens' religious construction surrounding the Boxing Day disaster differs to that of Western constructions of disaster response and rehabilitation. As a result, Western responses may be ineffectual or even problematic (2005).

Most disaster planning and recovery focuses on utilising formal, *palagi* (Western) aid/management organisations and practices. Gegeo contends that Western-based development theory and practice does not always work for Pacific Islanders. Therefore, to be successful, development should be based on indigenous knowledge and epistemology (1998). While Gegeo was referring to development in general, his observations apply equally to disaster response and livelihood restoration following a disaster.

It could be concluded that by utilising local knowledge, those undertaking disaster recovery are able to provide appropriate help

and guidance to those in need while utilising the generosity and skills of outside contributors. This is similar to Mercer, et al. (2010) who advocate the use of a disaster management framework which is not top-down or bottom up, rather an integration of the knowledge bases of the local community and their associated stakeholders. Put simply: “to help the victims of disasters, we must understand who they are and what they need from their own perspective” (Marsella, et al., 2008, p. 3). One way in which help can be offered is through psycho-social support.

Psycho-social response

Just as there has been a proliferation of aid organisations, recent decades has also seen considerable growth in psycho-social response programmes and activities. Psycho-social support promotes the use of non-medical approaches and tools to minimise the psychological effects of trauma (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2012; van Ommeren, Saxena, & Saraceno, 2005). These approaches are varied and include talking, listening, drama activities, support groups, children play groups and just ‘being there’.

In the wake of a disaster a variety of psycho-social programmes are undertaken by international and local organisations. Following the Boxing Day tsunami over three hundred psycho-social projects were instigated (Carballo, Heal, & Hernandez, 2005). While in New Orleans faith based organisations played a significant role in psycho-social assistance subsequent to Hurricane Katrina (Putman et al., 2012).

The growth in psycho-social responses has resulted in research into their effectiveness and appropriateness. McNally (1999) contends that the need for psycho-social responses to trauma is limited. The reasons for this belief include: people are resilient in the face of a disaster, indigenous support networks are successful and should be fostered, and finally, propriety trauma treatment may harm post-

disaster recovery. Another criticism is that neo-colonial based psycho-social responses can be culturally inappropriate and ineffective therefore it is important to acknowledge traditional mental health/healing practices (Shah, 2007).

Up until now the three trends discussed focused solely on people, both those affected and those individuals and organisations offering assistance. In contrast the final trend in disaster management and practice examines the relationship between people and technology.

The communication era and its link to aid

Arguably the greatest change within disaster recovery has occurred within the last 20 years, and more specifically, within the last five years. During this timeframe we have seen an explosion in the use of the internet and other telecommunications, the advent of social media and 24/7 coverage (Haddow & Haddow, 2009). This enhanced global connectedness has resulted in greater assistance from family and an increase in unsolicited aid.

While research in this area is still in its infancy, there is evidence to show that the use of social media following a disaster facilitates the flow of information and aids social connections (Taylor, Wells, Howell, & Raphael, 2012). Social media can be utilised to link loved ones, friends and acquaintances with those affected, enabling reassurance, support and assistance.

In a similar vein, disaster related images and stories are available almost instantaneously. This immediacy, coupled with the intensity of the images and stories, touches more people than ever before, resulting in increased aid. Research shows that this aid is often unsolicited or inappropriate (Dowty, 2011; 2011; McEntire, 2007; Pettit, et al., 2011; Telford & Cosgrave, 2007). Donations for recent disasters have included such goods as winter clothing for hot climates, expired medicines, culturally unacceptable food, damaged

goods along with equipment that was not needed by the affected community. Inappropriate donations result in a financial and logistical challenge for aid responders and recipients, as goods have to be sorted and/or disposed of. This compares to aid sourced within the local community, which is appropriate to the local culture and the needs of the recipients.

It is clear that the explosion in telecommunication devices and related media has had a significant effect on modern day disaster recovery. Communities and individuals can utilise this technology to tap into their social networks, thereby aiding their recovery. At the same time, technology has been responsible for an increase in inappropriate aid. Social networks and other aspects of social capital are now examined in relation to their role in disaster response and recovery.

Role of Social Capital in Facilitating Disaster Response and Recovery within Communities

As discussed in Chapter Two, a community with high social capital is able to access a wide variety of social, political and financial networks, organisations and information. This far reaching access can be extremely beneficial to the community by providing pertinent information, increasing the flow of goods, personnel and money to the community and helping to prioritise the community's need for assistance following a disaster.

High social capital within a community is linked to living in an environment associated with high every-day risks (Bankoff, 2007). Bankoff presents examples of communities throughout the Philippine archipelago which live with a high probability of seismic and or meteorological hazards and display high social capital. Traditionally within these communities there is an expectation that assistance will

be provided from other members of the community during times of need and this assistance will be repaid in kind at a later date. In much the same way Krishna (2001) showed that in times of disaster, communities with high bonding social capital would turn to their community, rather than an external organisation like the Government for assistance. This reciprocity and trust is also observed in Samoan society and is explored in detail in Chapter Five.

Social capital enables communities to advance (Putnam, 2000). This advancement is particularly important for communities as they try to restore their livelihoods in the wake of a disaster. Literature provides numerous examples of communities utilising social capital to aid response and recovery following a disaster. Several of these examples are discussed below.

Communities which do not rely on coastal tourism or fishing for their livelihoods

Bonding and bridging social capital can be utilised to strengthen communities following a disaster. Adler (2011), in his study into the 2008 floods in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, observed that citizens toiled together to save the remaining city well. As a result of these actions and the devastation they had lived through, Adler also noted that people expressed a greater connectedness with their fellow Cedar Rapids citizens. Likewise, following the catastrophic 2010 Haiti earthquake, Haitian citizens commented on a strengthened faith, renewed solidarity and a strong attachment to their community following the quake, irrespective of the circumstances in which they now lived (Montas-Dominique, 2011).

Social capital can strengthen communities, but literature including the work of Alder and Montas-Dominique shows that social bonds and assistance can wane as time passes. Similarly, immediately after Hurricane Floyd, there was significant assistance and solidarity

amongst and between victims and their social networks (Moore, et al., 2004). Furthermore their research showed that this bonding did not continue into the recovery phase. Rather people spoke of isolation, abandonment and disillusionment.

Communities with high social capital are in a better position to respond to, and recover from, a disaster than those with weak social capital. When examining communities' responses to the 2007 Greece forest fires, Chtouris & Tzelepoglou (2011) noted that those with low social capital were unable to respond as effectively as those communities with high social capital. Similarly, Aldrich (2011) examined the recovery of Kobe's nine wards following the 1995 Kobe, Japan earthquake. His findings clearly show that wards with low social capital were unable to successfully work together for mutual gain. This compared to wards with high social capital that were able to work together for the common good. Aldrich provided many examples including citizens spontaneously forming water chains to extinguish quake related fires, the formation of companies, centres and lobby groups to address and advance the needs of quake victims within the community.

One of the greatest predictors of community recovery following a disaster is social capital (Aldrich, 2011; Nakagawa & Shaw, 2004). This finding is consistent with the case studies already discussed and coastal community case studies which are examined now.

Coastal communities reliant on fishing and tourism for livelihoods

Examples of the relationship between social capital and disaster response and recovery in coastal communities are most pertinent to this thesis. Ritchie (2004) and Ritchie & Gill (2010) describe the effects of the 1989 Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) on the community of Cordova, Alaska including how social capital aided recovery and effects on cultural institutions. While the EVOS was a coastal

technological disaster, the response from and effects on the community were similar to that of a coastal natural disaster.

Generalised reciprocity is based on a high level of trust in environments where frequent social interaction (association) has laid a foundation for mutual obligation and responsibility for action. In social environments where social capital is considered high, there is trust that expectations and obligations will be met. Such settings reproduce social capital through on going reaffirmation of relationships

(Ritchie & Gill, 2010, p. 58).

Social capital helped the citizens of Cordova, all of whom were affected in one way or another, recover from this technological disaster.

Social capital is an extremely powerful resource to call on following a disaster. Arugam Bay, in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka, suffered devastating damage following the Boxing Day tsunami. Significantly hit was the tourism industry which focused on independent travellers, especially surfers. Robinson & Jarvie (2008) described how in the months after the tsunami the Sri Lankan Government sanctioned the Arugam Bay Resource Development Plan without consulting the local community. This plan focused on upmarket tourism, severely restricting the re-establishment of businesses and the recovery of livelihoods. Robinson & Jarvie went on to note that as a result of social capital within the community, the Arugam Bay residents called on central institutions such as the Sri Lankan Tourist Board to take action, mobilised peaceful protests and lobbied national and international media. The result of the community working together was that the implementation of the Development Plan was halted.

Social capital can aid the recovery of a whole community or groups within a community. An example of this can be seen in post tsunami Sri Lanka, (bonding) social capital aided female victims (McGilvray & Lawrence, 2010). Traditionally, families live next to each other and these matrilineal clusters of married women provide shared childcare arrangements, a deterrent to domestic violence, and emotional support. Following the tsunami, homes, livelihoods and families were destroyed or significantly changed. Victims were offered resettlement in new homes in purpose built settlements away from their families and traditional land. Instead of accepting these homes, many families found ways to live next to each other as the matrilineal clusters provided emotional and tangible support for married sisters, which in turn assisted livelihood recovery.

Livelihoods of Southern Sri Lankan coastal communities were severely affected as a result of the Boxing Day tsunami. Like much of Sri Lanka, this area is politically and ethnically divided and feels the effects of decades of civil war. Research undertaken by De Silva and Yamao (2007) showed that following the tsunami, individuals and communities banded together to help each other. A characteristic of these individual communities is that they possess strong social capital including the practice of mutual assistance. However, while Sinhalese communities provided immediate assistance to affected neighbouring Tamil communities, (bridging social capital), in the weeks following, these same communities and individuals returned to pre tsunami ethnic, geographical and political divisions (Keenan, 2011).

The above literature revealed that social capital plays an important role in all aspects of disaster response and recovery, especially livelihood recovery. The utilisation of social capital is most pronounced in the response phase, and in some cases, like that of the

Sinhalese and Tamil communities just discussed, networks dissolve once the immediate crisis is past. Reciprocity, like all aspects of social capital, plays a significant role in the resilience of an individual and a community following a disaster.

Resilience

A disaster has physical and social effects. The way in which a community is able to respond to a disaster helps determine the rate and degree of its recovery. Community resilience can be defined as a community's capacity to endure and mitigate the effects of a disaster (Chandra et al., 2011). This thesis focuses on response and recovery, therefore a more appropriate definition of resilience is the "power or capacity of adapting to any calamity, adversity, crisis or stress and bouncing back to the pre-existing normal situation" (Medury, 2011, p. 426).

A community with a high degree of resilience typically exhibit strong capabilities and a robust cultural framework. These capabilities are said to be: economic development, social capital, community competence along with information and communication (Norris, et al., 2008). To obtain optimum community resilience these capabilities must be fully realised. Elena Peteru a counsellor in the Psycho-Social Response Team, commented on resilience when reflecting on Samoans' response to the tsunami:

Our people are very resilient. I think they are able to move forward because of their spiritual grounding, because the extended family plays such an important role so that if you're suffering, you're not suffering alone, you've got the support of family, then community and then country. On that level I feel that Samoa will move forward

Peteru quoted in Wendt Young (2010).

This comment is in line with the findings of Bird et al. (2011) into the human response to the Samoan tsunami. They concluded that communities with strong family connections, including many family members living overseas, were more resilient to the effects of the tsunami (Bird, et al., 2011). Bonding and bridging social capital between family members and their associates resulted in financial support and encouraged family members to return home to support all aspects of the recovery including livelihoods.

Put simply, social capital strengthens a community's resilience to natural disasters. Calgaro, Pongponrat and Naruchaikusol (2009) examined the resilience of Khao Lak residents following the Boxing Day tsunami. They found that bonding and bridging social capital in the form of kinship and tourism networks provided stability and access to financial and influential resources. In addition, "access to these types of personalised relationships where guests become more like friends (social capital) has further strengthened the community's resilience against external shocks" (Calgaro, et al., 2009, p. 32).

One factor which strongly influences the degree of resilience within an affected population is religion. When examining the psycho-social response to the Haitian earthquake Schininà, Hosn, Ataya, Dieuveut, & Salem (2010) concluded that the strong resilience amongst the Haitian people was in part a result of the important role in which religion plays in their individual and collective lives. Religious philosophy, religious leaders and religious grounding was found to provide resilience to survivors of the boxing day tsunami (Carballo, et al., 2005). In addition, religious institutions are actively involved in many aspects of disaster management.

Role of Religious Institutions in Aiding Disaster

Response and Recovery

Throughout the World, faith-based organisations are actively involved in disaster response and recovery (Australian Council for International Development, 2011). Some organisations are unique to a community or country while others, like World Vision, are involved in nearly 100 countries (World Vision, 2012). Religious organisations provide a huge wealth of organisational capacity, labour, wisdom and means (Gunasekera, 2006; Pardasani, 2006). This enables them to provide varied assistance including technical expertise, personnel, money, goods, food, shelter, counselling and psycho-social support. While religion enables people to make sense of what had happened to them, their loved ones and their environment following a disaster (Sakamoto & Yamori, 2009).

Religious organisations have been recognised as among the first responders to a disaster (Australian Council for International Development, 2011; Sugimoto, Sagayaraj, & Sugimoto, 2011). In Southern India, during the immediate aftermath of the Boxing Day tsunami, religious organisations attended the dead, injured and affected, responding within hours and then proceeded to provide long term aid (Sugimoto, et al., 2011). Similarly, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, religious institutions were actively involved in relief efforts, many for extended periods of time (Weil, 2007).

Churches and other sacred spaces are important in the lives of many victims of natural disasters. These spaces can provide spiritual, emotional and physical refuge in the aftermath of a trauma. McGregor (2010) contends that recognising the faith of the resident population and assisting with the repair of their sacred places was not always achieved in Aceh following the Boxing day tsunami, thus hampering

recovery. Churches are the focal point of Samoan villages and like the sacred spaces in Aceh they are important to the local population.

Links between Religious Communities, Social Capital and Disaster Response and Recovery

Faith based organisations are highly networked; nationally and internationally (Clarke, 2006). Bridging and linking social capital, along with charity, an integral part of religion, enable faith-based organisations and communities to mobilise considerable resources. There are numerous examples of religious organisations utilising social capital to assist disaster response and recovery, a few of which are detailed below.

Following the 2004 tsunami, bridging social capital was observed between different religions within communities, as well as between 'churches' and external providers. In a village near Galle, Sri Lanka, the Christian Church was able to utilise its extensive networks to tap into western aid, thereby enabling the Church to support not only its parishioners but also the Buddhist temple and its members within the community (Fernando & Hilhorst, 2006).

Religious groups work individually or collectively to aid disaster response and recovery. In 1999 a devastating earthquake struck Chi-Chi in central Taiwan. Religious groups from the main religions in Taiwan, Buddhist, Taoist, Christian and Catholic, assisted relief efforts (Chu, 2011). The Buddhist Tzu Chi organisation utilised skills, knowledge and networks developed following its involvement in international disaster relief work, to provide response aid, and they initiated disaster recovery programmes. Chu also noted that Christian World Vision and the Catholic Church called upon their networks to advocate for victims or liaise with political bodies.

Another example of research into the links between religious networks and post tsunami disaster management is that carried out by Sugimoto, et al. (2011) in Southern India. They found that Siva, Christian, Catholic, Muslim and Hindu organisations responded collaboratively and/or individually. These organisations utilised bonding capital, formed through their day to day interactions with local people, and bridging capital, in the form of national and international networks, to source supplies and manpower to assist in the relief effort. This assistance included burial of the dead, tending the injured, providing food, temporary and permanent homes, counselling, repairing infrastructure, and assisting the education of children through teacher training and the provision of resources.

This section concludes with a case study which illustrates the power of religion and social capital to aid victims of a disaster. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Airriess, Li, Leong, Chen, & Keith (2008) examined the response of the Catholic Vietnamese community of Versailles, New Orleans. The deeply ingrained sense of community, shared experiences and collective worship, within Mary Queen of Vietnamese Church (MQVC) provided Catholic Vietnamese survivors with the resilience and determination to restore their community.

Link between Disasters and Sustainable Livelihoods

Restoration

In the wake of a disaster, a key goal of recovery programmes is to restore/upgrade livelihoods (Cannon, et al., 2003; Nakagawa & Shaw, 2004; Parr, 2009). Livelihood recovery assists with the provision of food, shelter and income. Equally as important, returning to pre-disaster livelihoods enables people to experience a sense of normalcy (Ruawanpura, 2008) which is important for mental wellbeing.

Much of the literature specific to sustainable livelihood restoration following a disaster highlights problems associated with the restoration of livelihoods. Many of these problems arise as a result of a lack of knowledge or recognition of the cultural and economic frameworks of the affected communities. These problems include stringent assistance criteria, a lack of co-ordination and planning along with inappropriate housing.

Following the Boxing Day tsunami, many fishermen had difficulty obtaining monetary compensation or replacement boats, cages and fishing gear as they didn't meet prior licensing or registration criteria (Lebel, Khрутmuang, & Manuta, 2006). This severely affected their ability to return to fishing, their previous livelihood. Another example from the Boxing Day tsunami was that evaluation of livelihood recovery programmes showed the need for a co-ordinated approach. The replacement of equipment like sewing machines or boats either occurred in insufficient numbers, worked well, or the community received multiple units, affecting greatly the profitability of what were once successful livelihoods. Kapadia (2006) used the example of sweet sellers in Muhudupitiya Sri Lanka. Following aid aimed at livelihood restoration there are now ten times as many village women making and selling sweets to the same client base as before the tsunami.

The final example is the way in which inappropriate shelter affected livelihood recovery following the Boxing Day tsunami. Many displaced Indian villagers were provided with single storey concrete and tin 'sweat box' homes (Parr, 2009; Sugimoto, et al., 2011). These non-traditional shelters were over-crowded, lacked ventilation and were so hot that a variety of medical conditions arose hampering the villagers' ability to recover their livelihoods. Parr (2009) noted that after a period of time villagers adapted the design of these 'homes' using traditional dried palm leaves to provide a cooling effect.

Role of Social Capital in Livelihood Restoration

Following a Disaster

There is considerable literature on social capital and livelihood recovery yet there is a limited amount of research into the relationship between social capital and livelihood recovery. Three examples were found where a direct link was made and these are discussed now. In all three examples, high levels of social capital aided livelihood recovery.

The path from disaster to sustainable civil society following the 1995 Kobe earthquake was investigated by Shaw and Goda (2004). They found in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, assistance to those affected was provided by families, neighbours and friends, an example of bonding social capital. However, it was the wards with high linking social capital, between residents' associations and local government, which were successfully able to promote sustainable livelihoods.

The Southern Indian district of Vembar was severely affected by the Boxing Day tsunami. Following their research into the response in this area Régnier, Neri, Scuteri, & Miniati (2008) found that assistance was scarce, in part due to a complete lack of guest house accommodation for aid workers. The little assistance that was provided was by the Christian churches established in the area. By calling on their networks the churches were able to utilise their bridging capital to aid livelihood recovery following the disaster.

In the last example, the effect of buffer zones, on fishing communities following the Boxing Day tsunami is examined (Bristol, 2010; De Silva & Yamao, 2007). They found that the buffer zones negatively affected the livelihood recovery of fishermen in many affected communities. De Silva & Yamao went on to note that fishing communities in

Tangalle, Southern Sri Lanka, who traditionally work together, collaborated with fishing organisations, fishing co-operatives and development organisations to assist with livelihoods recovery.

Conclusion

Each year, disasters, which arise from three types of hazards; natural, technological and intentional, wreak havoc on our natural and cultural environment. Research shows that while natural disasters are becoming less deadly, they are affecting more people, especially those in developing countries. With this in mind, this chapter examined contemporary trends in disaster management, before moving on to examine the ways in which social capital and religious institutions aid disaster response and recovery, including livelihood recovery.

Literature reveals that individuals, communities and religious organisations with high social capital are in a stronger position to recover quicker from a disaster than those who have weak social capital. Social capital consists of three forms; bonding, bridging and linking social capital. Isolated or poor communities such as those described by Bankoff in the Philippines tend to have strong bonding social capital, weaker bridging and weak linking social capital. At the other end of the spectrum are individuals or communities with vast networks who are able to link with those in positions of power and influence to provide assistance in times of need.

Social capital and disasters are further explored in Chapter Five, but next we examine the methodology of this thesis. Through examining the subjectivity of the author, light is shed on reasons for choosing this topic and the associated theoretical frameworks, as well as the ethical considerations and ways in which the fieldwork was undertaken.

CHAPTER FOUR: Methodology

Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.
Zora Neale Hurston (1903-1960)

Introduction

The methodology of most social science theses are a result of the subjectivity and position of the author. Yet all too frequently positionality statements within theses are tokenistic, examining little more than generic categories like gender. When a researcher reflects on their positionality and subjectivity throughout the research process the research is strengthened (Jung-ah Choi, 2006). As a result, this chapter begins by examining my subjective position, and then reflects on how that position has influenced other aspects of methodology, including planning for and undertaking fieldwork, limitations and data analysis. This information provides the reader with a clearer picture of all aspects of the research processes and the subsequent validity of the research.

Subjectivity, Positionality and Reflexivity of the Author

When reflecting on my subjective position for this chapter I took time to stop and think: who am I? What is important to me? How would I sum myself up? I chose to take two minutes to list key words that popped into my mind. The words I wrote are as follows: wife, mother, teacher, family, Catholic, nervous, compassionate, and finally *palagi*. Looking at the list I see that all of these words influenced my thesis, some greatly, others to a lesser extent. Consequently, they will be discussed throughout this chapter as I reflect on the research process which was undertaken.

One of the first questions anyone asked me in relation to this thesis was, 'why the Samoa tsunami?' The first answer I invariably gave was that it is appropriate to my teaching. As a Geography teacher I have taught about the 2009 Samoan tsunami as part of Level 1 Geography since 2010. Not only did I find this topic fascinating, so did my students, and this fostered in me a desire to discover more about Samoa and the ways in which Samoa responded to and recovered from the tsunami. This led me to undertake two trips to Samoa in 2011. Another factor influencing my choice was my family. They are the most important thing in my life so it was vital to me that I was able to return to them quickly, if needed. Likewise, as a wife and mother, my safety was important. Consequently, Samoa as a politically and socially stable developing country, which is close to New Zealand, was an attractive research destination.

Qualitative Methodology and Research Methods

This thesis is undertaken using qualitative methodology, specifically, critical case study research, based on an interpretive approach. This is in accordance with Walsham (1995; 2006) who points out that research can be both critical and interpretive. This section will explore the ways in which qualitative methodology, critical and interpretive approaches and case studies are pertinent to this thesis, before highlighting the importance of culture within research methodology. Finally, a critique of the data collection methods is conducted.

Qualitative methodology

Like the majority of social science research, this thesis is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research displays a variety of strengths and weaknesses. Strengths include using small areas to undertake in-depth analysis (Davidson & Tolich, 1999), and drawing on a variety of sources, both of which result in rich data.

Weaknesses of qualitative research include making generalisations from small studies (Kelle, 2006), research being influenced by the subjectivity of the researcher and the interviewee, and the ability to alter research aims and objectives during the course of the research (Diefenbach, 2009). However, this adaptability is also strength of qualitative research. At the commencement of this thesis, the focus was on examining *fa'a Samoa* and livelihood recovery. Having completed field research and the evaluation of data, a bigger issue arose: the role of cultural frameworks in development. As a result, the objectives were modified to address this issue. These strengths and weaknesses are discussed or acknowledged within the remainder of this chapter.

Interpretivism, which is most often seen as a form of qualitative research, acknowledges that reality, which is socially constructed, is not a single reality, rather it is in fact multiple realities, or interpretations, which vary over time and location (Livesey, 2006; Merriam, 2009). These realities result from the participants' and the researcher's prior knowledge, prejudices, ideology and experiences. "Research is about the power to define reality" (Laws, 2003, p. 26). Acknowledging a weakness of qualitative research, I was mindful of 'whose reality' I was representing as I conducted my study. The reality of a person whose loved one died in the tsunami, or a survivor whose livelihood has been decimated, is considerably different to that of a fellow Samoan living in Savaii, a Samoan Government official, or me as a *palagi* New Zealand researcher.

This thesis is undertaken through the critical examination of two case studies. A critical approach can uncover information about processes and relationships which may then be used to improve society (Murray & Overton, 2003). Meanwhile, case studies provide rich data resulting from observing phenomena within their context (Cassell & Symon, 2004; Flyvbjerg, 2006). Another advantage of case study

methodology is that using a variety of sources allows “multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 1).

Equally, case studies have disadvantages. They can be costly to undertake and as Thomas (2011) notes while case studies allow inference, they do not lend themselves to generalisations and conclusions. As case studies are most commonly qualitative, it is not surprising that many of the strengths and weaknesses of the case study approach are similar to those attributed to qualitative methodology. A case in point is that qualitative research and case study approaches are noted as appropriate when research aims to answer ‘how, what and ‘why’ in relation to phenomena (Silverman, 2011; Yin, 2003). Qualitative research is therefore appropriate as the aim of this thesis is a ‘how’ question: How has *fa’a Samoa* influenced livelihood recovery in Samoa following the 2009 tsunami?

Culture

When undertaking research it is important to consider the participants’ culture, incorporating this into the methodological framework and writing (Tupuola, 1994). This is something I have been cognisant of throughout this research process. Hereniko (2000) contends it is important that outsiders commenting on Pacific societies acknowledge indigenous Pacific Islanders, rather than just extracting information from them. Accordingly I used two research assistants who were indigenous Samoans. This was in order to gain a deeper appreciation of cultural protocols and allow respondents the choice of speaking in their mother tongue, as well as to assist with my interpretation of the information I collected. I also made a decision to stay in *fales* rather than *palagi* style tourist accommodation to ensure a more authentic cultural experience and closer access to villagers.

Data collection methods

This thesis focused on the collection of primary data through semi-structured interviews within case study villages and with key informants, such as government officials, during five weeks of fieldwork. Data was supplemented by first-hand observations and personal conversations, which occurred prior to and during field work, along with the collection of documents.

Qualitative research is an explorative process, where frequently the precise nature of the research, and the appropriate questions to ask are not revealed until the investigation has begun (Diefenbach, 2009). While this lack of rigidity can be considered a weakness of qualitative research it can also be considered a strength as rich data is often a result. With this in mind I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews as my primary source of qualitative data.

Semi-structured interviews are flexible (Noor, 2008), enabling the interviewee to modify, add or delete questions with the intention of drawing out further information from the respondent (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009). When conducting my semi-structured interviews, I had five opening questions for my key respondents and four for my affected and donor village respondents (Appendix 5). Following their response, other questions were asked to tease out further information or clarify points. Interviews varied in length from 20 minutes to 1 hour 40 minutes.

Semi-structured interviews are culturally appropriate for Samoa. Samoan culture is an oral culture (Hereniko, 2000; Vaioleti, 2006), and as such undertaking semi-structured interviews acknowledges the culture of the Samoan respondents who assisted me with this thesis. Vaioleti (2006) suggests that when conducting research, it is important to follow the traditional practice of talking in an informal way, without a rigid framework, to gain meaning and understanding.

By employing semi-structured interviews, participants are able to bring to light information that they think is important, revealing things that might not have otherwise been made known.

Document analysis on a variety of secondary sources and official statistics related to Samoa and tsunamis was also undertaken. These sources included Samoan and international Government and NGO reports, books, newspapers, academic articles and websites. Books such as Wendt Young's comprehensive account of the effects of and response to the tsunami titled Pacific Tsunami "Galufi" were purchased within Samoa. Reports including The Early Recovery Framework (The Government of Samoa & United Nations, 2009) and the Samoan Tsunami Report (The Government of Samoa, 2010) were obtained on-line. Articles from the Samoan Observer, the national paper of Samoa, were obtained in hardcopy in Samoa in 2011 and 2012 and also on-line.

First-hand observations and personal conversations were recorded in an ad-hoc way. I did not employ an observation scheme/record to guide my note-making, neither did I set out to look for anything in particular. Rather I used these opportunities to provide background information, aiding the formation of my thesis topic, the direction of my literature review, research questions and finally, 'filling in gaps' in my knowledge. The combination of primary and secondary data enabled a comprehensive picture of the tsunami response and recovery to be developed.

Planning for Fieldwork

In April 2011 I visited Samoa as part of a teacher familiarisation trip, returning in July 2011 as the leader of a Geography school trip which examined the Samoan culture, tourism and specifically the tsunami. During these trips I visited tourism organisations, villages, schools,

churches and people affected directly and indirectly by the tsunami. I also met with the Prime Minister, and attended talks by members of the Samoan Disaster Management Centre regarding preparation for a natural disaster, the effects of the tsunami and the recovery process. Both of these trips enabled me to begin building relationships with people directly and indirectly affected by the tsunami while also collecting background information.

Ethical Considerations

Anecdotal evidence obtained in 2011 regarding the emotional impact of the tsunami and the contention surrounding the distribution of tsunami funds encouraged me to ensure this research was undertaken ethically and sensitively. Following my reading of the Massey University 'Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants', I completed a Development Studies in-house ethics form. In April I attended an Institute of Development Studies in-house ethics assessment meeting where specific ethical considerations and methodology pertaining to this thesis was discussed and then enacted upon. Examples of which included employing a research assistant rather than an interpreter, ensuring my laptop was password protected, and providing participants with ample opportunity to opt in or out of this research. I later completed a Massey University Low Risk Ethics Notification.

Before leaving New Zealand, I obtained a research visa from the Samoan Government and permission from a senior *matai* within a donor village in Savaii, to undertake my research. Throughout this thesis, the donor village is referred to as Village S where S has been used to designate Savaii. The affected village is referred to as Village U, where U refers to Upolu. It is important to note that each Samoan village is unique. Therefore, while the experiences and findings arising from these two case studies could be representative of other Samoan villages we cannot assume that they are representative.

Consent forms and letters to participants were translated into Samoan by a New Zealand-based Samoan (Appendices 1-4). He ensured that the translation was accurate while taking into account the nuances of formal Samoan. Lastly, key informants were emailed from New Zealand, in the hope of obtaining appointments, but none replied. Upon arrival in Samoa, these emails were followed up with phone calls or by calling into the organisation and interviews were obtained.

Undertaking Fieldwork

In 2012 I returned to Samoa for five weeks to conduct field research. During this time I used a combination of purposeful sampling and snowballing to obtain participants and was supported in this and most aspects of fieldwork by two research assistants. These matters are discussed further in the remainder of this chapter.

Case Study Villages

Village S, a non-affected village in Savaii, was chosen as the donor case study village. Anecdotal conversations I had been party to in 2011, when I twice stayed there, led me to believe that Village S had contributed significantly to the tsunami response and recovery. Village U was chosen because it was one of two villages that the young men of Village S assisted in, and beach *fale* accommodation was considerably cheaper than the other village. What I didn't know, was that the vast majority of inhabitants of Village U had relocated to the new village, seven and a half miles away, hampering my ability to spend significant time in the new village. Detailed descriptions of the case study villages can be found in Chapter Six.

Selection of and access to participants

To obtain appropriate and sufficient respondents, interviews were conducted using a combination of purposeful sampling and

snowballing. Purposeful sampling intentionally selects participants according to the needs of the research (Coyne, 1997), whereas snowballing requests respondents utilise their social networks to recommend potential interviewees (Browne, 2005). When undertaking purposeful sampling, I advised my research assistants of the types of people I wished to interview and they either arranged an interview for me or ‘pointed me in the right direction.’

When snowballing, I utilised my contacts in Samoa and New Zealand to recommend key informants whom I could approach. After conducting an interview, I frequently asked the respondent if they could recommend someone who they felt might be willing to be interviewed. Not all recommendations were approached as across each group, Village S, Village U and key respondents, I aimed to interview a spread of men and women. In addition to this, within the case study villages the following groups of people were targeted:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| *Pastor of the main village church | *Professionals |
| *High Chief | *Young men or young women |
| * <i>Matai</i> | * <i>Pulenu’u</i> |
| * <i>Fale</i> owner/manager | *Manual workers |

Key informant interviews were undertaken in Apia with a variety of NGOs, multilateral organisations and government departments. Table 2 shows the breakdown of respondents according to social ranking and gender within the two case study villages and key responders. It is important to note that these groupings are not necessarily exclusive. For example a *fale* owner could be male or female, titled or untitled, young or old. In keeping with Samoan tradition, the majority of matai were male (4/5) and all pastors were male.

Table 2: Gender and social ranking of respondents within each grouping.

	Donor Village Village S	Recipient Village Village U	Key informant	Total
Male	7	5	1	13
Female	2	4	5	11
Matai	5	2	1	8
Non-titled individual	4	7	5	16
Total respondents per area	9	9	6	24

As can be seen from Table 2, there was a disproportionate amount of male respondents and *matai* within Village S. There were two reasons for this. Firstly many people were unavailable to be interviewed. I arrived in Village S the week prior to the 50th Independence Anniversary Celebrations. During this time, the annual Congregational Christian Church symposium occurred in Apia. As a consequence of these two events, many villagers, including a significant number of non-titled men and women, were in Apia. I was fortunate to be able to return overnight to Village S, several weeks later and complete interviews with the village pastor and High Chief.

The second reason for the gender and status imbalance is due to the reluctance of some youth and women to be interviewed. Mary¹ is a good example. She is a respected woman whom I had met on my two previous trips to Samoa. In her professional life she is articulate and confident, yet when it came to being interviewed she was full of doubts. She agreed to be interviewed, but following rescheduling three times, ultimately she was unavailable. My interaction with Mary illustrates the importance Samoans place on not losing face or showing disrespect. Mary was able to say ‘yes’ while at the same time do ‘no.’

¹ All respondents have been given pseudonyms

Research assistants

In the wake of the literature review and discussions with my supervisor, Professor Scheyvens, I became aware of the need to employ a Research Assistant (RA) within the case study villages. A RA was not used for key informant interviews due to the fact that all key informants interviewed spoke fluent English and interviews were relatively straight forward to obtain. The RAs were used to organise introductions and translate a total of seven interviews, four within Village S and three within Village U.

I had aimed to employ a university student who has no direct ties to either village as my RA. Unfortunately this did not prove possible, so instead, with the assistance of *matai* associated with my *fale* accommodations I organised for a university graduate from each village to act as a RA. Both RAs were briefed on the background and aims of this research and the importance of accurately interpreting my and the participant's responses. However, they were regularly distracted from their job and had other commitments to fulfil. I had difficulty obtaining interviews through them and on several occasions interviews had to be postponed as the RAs were unavailable due to tourist guiding or village commitments.

Sensitivity towards Participants

Undertaking this research proved an emotional experience, with feelings of loss, vulnerability and frustration often felt or expressed by the respondents or myself. This fieldwork was undertaken two and a half years after the tsunami, and the healing process was still occurring. Mindful of the trauma experienced by members of Village U, I advised my research assistant in Village U that I did not wish to speak to anyone who had lost a loved one in the tsunami. However, this did not occur.

With my RA away, and as a result of snowballing, I interviewed a fluent English speaking high school teacher. She welcomed me into her home, served me lunch and then we talked. During the interview she talked of her gratitude for the support she and others had been given. She was humble, kind and generous. She mentioned, almost within passing, the death of her only children, two young daughters. I was completely unprepared for this and found it difficult to focus during the remainder of the interview, and now many months later, I find myself still thinking about her almost daily.

For some people, speaking to me was cathartic. An example of this is Mara, a shopkeeper from the affected village. Following her interview she explained (with tears in her eyes) that she felt a lot better for having had the opportunity to share her story, frustrations and concerns.

My own Vulnerability

Within my ethics application, I said I would ensure that I would not be placed in any risky or compromising situations and if I felt concerned or unsafe at any stage, I would remove myself or the participant from the environment. However, I quickly found that the practicalities of research are different to the theoretical considerations I had undertaken. When staying in beach *fale* accommodation within Village U, I often felt vulnerable and uncomfortable. Unfortunately, my accommodation was pre-paid, my RA was from this beach *fale* business, and I did not have contacts within the village which would have enabled me to move while continuing my research.

Most nights I was one of only three or four paying guests sleeping in the *fales*. The majority of the other guests were also female and travelling alone. After dark, many male youths and men with ties to the *fale* business, congregated in the empty *fales* adjacent to mine,

talking, drinking and then sleeping. As the days passed, comments of a sexual nature, that other guests had either overheard or had said to them, and subsequently relayed to me, increased my feelings of vulnerability and discomfort. This culminated in the final night when I 'barricaded' myself into my *fale* with my suitcase behind the entrance.

Another contributing factor to my unease was requests for money from the *fale* manager to me and four other guests. Each separate request was for a different reason including: school fees, broken pump, car tyres and groceries. As much as I aimed to be impartial and analytical, these two occurrences clouded my judgement about some of the inhabitants of Village U.

Ethical considerations in the field

Before conducting an interview, the nature of this research was discussed with the participants, information sheets were provided, in their choice of English or Samoan, and in line with the Massey University ethics procedures, informed consent was obtained. Respondents were given the option to have either their name or a descriptor used in this thesis. The vast majority of respondents requested their name be recorded and many asked to have their business or their employer noted as well. Following consultation with my thesis supervisors, I made the choice to use pseudonyms/descriptors for the villages and all respondents. There were several reasons for this including ensuring the confidentiality of the village and all respondents. Also the identification of selected respondents could give the false impression that some respondents were more important than others.

Limitations

There were two significant limitations to this research project. One limitation is that I was a *palagi* 'tourist' researcher. The other was that Samoa is sensitive to any accusation of corruption or impropriety relating to aid money given in response to the tsunami.

I was aware that I would be perceived differently to a Samoan researcher. I aimed to mitigate any prejudices and difficulties by familiarising myself with *fa'a Samoa* before arriving in Samoa, observing village protocol, and involving myself with village and community activities. Unfortunately, this was not as successful as I had anticipated. In both case study villages I stayed in beach *fales*, and while the staff of both businesses and both RAs, knew I was there for the purpose of undertaking research, I felt I was perceived as a paying guest/tourist in each village.

This limited my opportunities to get involved in community events, despite several requests from myself to do so. In both villages I attended the local church service, but was unable to attend any formal or informal village events. In Village U, *komiti* (committee) meetings were cancelled due to many village members being in Apia, while access to the new Village S was limited as a result of distance, a lack of buses and taxis, and a busy research assistant.

As a consequence of the sensitivity surrounding the utilisation of aid, access to information both externally and internally is controlled to some degree. This control, when observed at its extreme, is a form of 'gate keeping' whereby access to people, documents or other information is restricted by people in positions of power (Scheyvens, Nowak, & Scheyvens, 2003). I was not aware of encountering this. However, I was mindful of the fact that Government employees, representatives, aid organisations, churches and village elders had a vested interest in portraying a positive image in regard to the work

they did. This made it impossible to say that the respondents' comments are a true, unbiased reflection of the recovery and rehabilitation process. However, triangulation enabled a more accurate picture to be obtained.

Data Analysis and Communicating Research Findings

“Ultimately, everything will depend on the quality of your data analysis rather than upon the quality of your data” (Silverman, 2011, p. 46). Consequently, data analysis within this thesis was a detailed process, involving several stages. The processes began with the transcription of semi-structured interviews, triangulation of data and concluded with recording the results.

Initially all twenty three digital recordings of the case study and key informant interviews, and one set of notes were transcribed. There are limitations to the accuracy of transcribed digital recordings. Silverman (2011) noted that they do not take account of all of the nuances of speech, such as pauses or gestures, thereby affecting the reliability of the interpretation of the transcripts. Three additional factors influenced the reliability of the data: English is a second language for both RAs and all respondents, RAs paraphrased some answers, and I lacked understanding of all aspects of Samoan English. I was mindful of these four limiting factors throughout the data analysis process, taking steps to ensure accuracy as discussed below.

The next step undertaken was to re-listen to the digital recordings to find and correct any errors in the transcription. At this stage, whenever possible, I checked with the RA or respondent regarding any comment or word that was ambiguous, to ensure accuracy. The transcripts were coded against the cultural framework of Samoan society, *fa'a Samoa*, (refer Chapter Five) and analysed to uncover recurring ideas and concepts.

Before reporting the findings it is important to undertake the penultimate step, ensuring that the data used is dependable. All evidence obtained via a case study is of value, but it is important to evaluate the trustworthiness of this evidence (George & Bennett, 2005). This trustworthiness or validity is determined by examining if the findings are true and certain. “ ‘True’ in the sense that research findings accurately reflect the situation, and ‘certain’ in the sense that research findings are supported by the evidence” (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011, p. 1).

Data from case study respondents and key informants conflicted on some topics including the donation and distribution of goods and the provision of labour. To ascertain the validity of this and all data, triangulation was employed. The triangulation of data is when multiple sources such as transcripts, texts and observations are examined to find consistencies and discrepancies (Duffy, 1987; Guion, et al., 2011). One off or unsubstantiated comments, facts and points of view were discounted.

Having completed the triangulation of data, the final aspect of this process, communicating the findings through text was undertaken. The process of writing is not neutral, rather is influenced by the positionality of the author (Berg & Mansvelt, 2000). With this in mind, excerpts of transcripts were included to shed light on or enhance the discussion, and ensure that the voice of the respondents is heard. Quanchi (2004) contends that even then the respondents’ voices are marginalised and mediated, but he does go on to concede that there is a valid place for outsiders, like myself, to contribute to public discussion on *Pacifika* topics.

To make sure that quotes were clear and easy to understand small adjustments were made to some quotes, without altering their meaning. This can be observed in the quote where words which have

been added are shown within brackets []. During the course of the interviews tangible aid such as food, water tanks and shelter was variously referred to as aid, gifts, goods, and donations. These terms have been retained throughout this thesis in the interest of accuracy.

In-line with my Samoan Research Visa and Massey University Low Risk Ethics Notification, I have undertaken to share my findings with the Samoan people in the following ways:

- A copy of the completed thesis will be forwarded to the Samoan Government.
- All respondents will receive a summary of the findings, either electronically, or in hard copy, as per their indicated preference.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that all aspects of the research process are influenced by the subjectivity and positionality of the researcher, from the choice of research topic through to the write up. As a *palagi* New Zealander, I was aware of the need to ensure that Samoan voices were clearly heard throughout this thesis. This was achieved in part by exclusively interviewing Samoans, employing Samoan research assistants, and including quotes from the respondents.

This research was undertaken through qualitative research, using critical case study analysis, one case study being an unaffected donor village, the other, an affected village. Key informants were also interviewed and secondary data collected, in order to be able to triangulate and thereby verify my findings. The data was evaluated against the Samoan cultural framework, *fa'a Samoa* which is now examined in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE: Samoan Context- Society, Culture and Disaster Response and Recovery

Fa'avae I Le Atua Samoa – Samoa is founded on God
Samoan motto

Introduction

Building on Chapters Two and Three this chapter examines the cultural context of Samoa as well as disaster management within Samoa. Initially the cultural framework is examined providing an overview of Samoan culture which is essential in order to understand the role *fa'a Samoa* plays in Samoan society. An understanding of Samoan culture is important to this thesis as “culture constructs our realities and shapes the way we perceive and experience reality” (Marsella, et al., 2008, p. 5). Therefore, knowledge of Samoan culture will provide insights into how and why Samoans responded to the tsunami in certain ways, including livelihood recovery.

From culture this chapter moves to examine aspects of disasters in Samoa. To begin with, there is an overview of the modern history of disasters in Samoa, and the organisational structure of disaster management. This background aids the understanding of the coordination of the response to the 2009 tsunami which is then examined.

Cultural Frameworks and Links to Disasters

Samoan culture is thousands of years old and can trace its origins back to Mongolian China (Va'a, 2006). Samoan culture is not static (Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2004) as it continues to undergo significant changes since interaction with western cultures and their religions (Tonkin, 2008; Va'a, 2006). As a result of the on-going changes within Samoan culture, Samoans describe their culture as: “*E tele faiga ae*

tasi le faavae”, meaning “there is only one foundation but many ways of expressing it” (Va’a, 2006, p. 114). Examples of this expression can be seen in the differences between resident villagers and migrant Samoans. Migrants do not have access to traditional lands and village structure, yet as has been observed in Apia and South Auckland, they often hold tight to the Samoan culture.

In a multicultural society there are many cultural frameworks. It could be argued that Samoa could be considered to be a monocultural society. This is because 92.6% of the population is Samoan, and 7% is Euronesians (European and Polynesian blood) (CIA, 2012). Coupled with this *fa’a Samoa* influences all aspects of Samoan life. But this does not mean that the cultural framework of all Samoan communities is the same. The differences between members within an ethno-cultural group may be as strong as those differences between ethno-cultural groups (Carswell & Carswell, 2008).

In development there is a tendency to envision a community as a homogenous entity, underestimating inequality due to gender, education, position and economic status (Sliwinski, 2010). Sliwinski goes on to say that “all communities are dynamic and changing entities composed of various sub-groups and traversed by tensions and conflict” (2010, p. 182). This is the case in Samoa, where there is no stereotypical village (Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2004) as each community exhibits unique characteristics resulting in variations within their cultural framework.

While mindful of the above points, I consider the predominant cultural framework in Samoa to be *fa’a Samoa*. *Fa’a Samoa*, the cornerstone of Samoan life, is often described as consisting of three interconnected aspects or pillars: *matai* (chiefs), *aiga* (extended family, kin group), and the Church (Penn, 2010; Samoa Tourism Authority, 2011; Thornton, Kerslake, & Binns, 2010).

Role of Cultural Framework in Disaster Response and Recovery

While disaster managers frequently state that ‘all disasters are local’ there is a need to also acknowledge that ‘all culture is local’ (Dowty, 2011). By understanding the cultural framework of the affected community/communities aid then can be targeted and provided to meet the needs of those affected. As noted in Chapter Three, in the aftermath of a disaster, a strong cultural framework provides resilience in a variety of ways. This includes the availability of customary land, close family ties and the expectation that you will share or give to those in need.

One aspect of the Samoan cultural framework, which provides resilience, is customary land tenure (Bird, et al., 2011). Following the 2009 Samoan tsunami, this system of collective land ownership allowed affected villagers to immediately relocate from the coast to their inland plantations or bare land, away from any subsequent tsunami risk. While accommodation was rudimentary at times, as a result of this and family members taking in affected kin, Samoa did not have any refugee camps (Cave, 2009). This is unusual in a natural disaster. Following Hurricane Katrina thousands of displaced victims took refuge at the Superdome and the New Orleans Convention Center (Associated Press, 2005). Likewise hundreds of thousands ended up in Haitian refugee camps following the 2010 earthquake (Farmer, 2011).

As discussed in Chapter Two the appropriate way to understand Samoan to Samoan assistance could be through the cultural framework of Samoan society, *fa’a Samoa*, where *fa’a Samoa* links strongly to the notion of social capital. It is *fa’a Samoa* we now discuss.

Fa'a Samoa

Fa'a Samoa is widely accepted to translate as 'the Samoan way' (McGrath, 2002; Samoa Tourism Authority, 2011; Thornton, Sakai, & Hassall, 2012; Tu'u'u, 2002; Twining-Ward & Butler, 2002), where 'the Samoan way' is the customs and way of life of Samoans (Tu'u'u, 2002). There is no definitive definition for *fa'a Samoa* (Cahn, 2008) rather, as Lilomaiava-Doktor (2004) observed, a widely held consensus.

As stated previously *fa'a Samoa* consists of three interconnected aspects or pillars: *matai* (chiefs), *aiga* (extended family or kin group), and the church. As well as these three pillars, *fa'a Samoa* also includes land, ceremonies, respect, service, love, hospitality and compassion (Lilomaiava-Doktor, 2004). Curiously, Twining-Ward and Butler, exclude the church; rather they consider *fa'a Samoa* to be "dominated by the extended family (*aiga potopoto*), chiefly structure (*fa'amatai*) ceremonial gift giving (*fa'alavelave*) and customary land ownership" (2002, p. 367). Within this thesis, *fa'a Samoa* is defined according to the Samoan authors above, that is, consisting of three pillars; *matai*, *aiga* and the church, where these three pillars enforce/reinforce the day to day cultural practices and traditions of the Samoan community.

From a definition we then progress on to the broader description of *fa'a Samoa*. Tonkin describes *fa'a Samoa* in terms of the key concepts of social capital when stating that *fa'a Samoa* "facilitates trust and reciprocity in Samoan society, acts as an important social network through which individuals gain assistance from others and therefore access to social resources" (2008, p. 9). In comparison, "*fa'a Samoa* is a traditional governance system, serving social, economic and political functions" (Iati, 2000, p. 70). Interestingly, when Holmegaard asked Samoans to conceptualise *fa'a Samoa* as part of her research into religion in post-tsunami Samoa, they described it as: love,

respect and sharing (2011). Sharing in the Samoan context includes: food, goods and the gifting of money within extended families (Mageo, 1991). These varied, but equally valid descriptions are a result of the fact that *fa'a Samoa* encompasses most aspects of Samoan life.

Village Governance

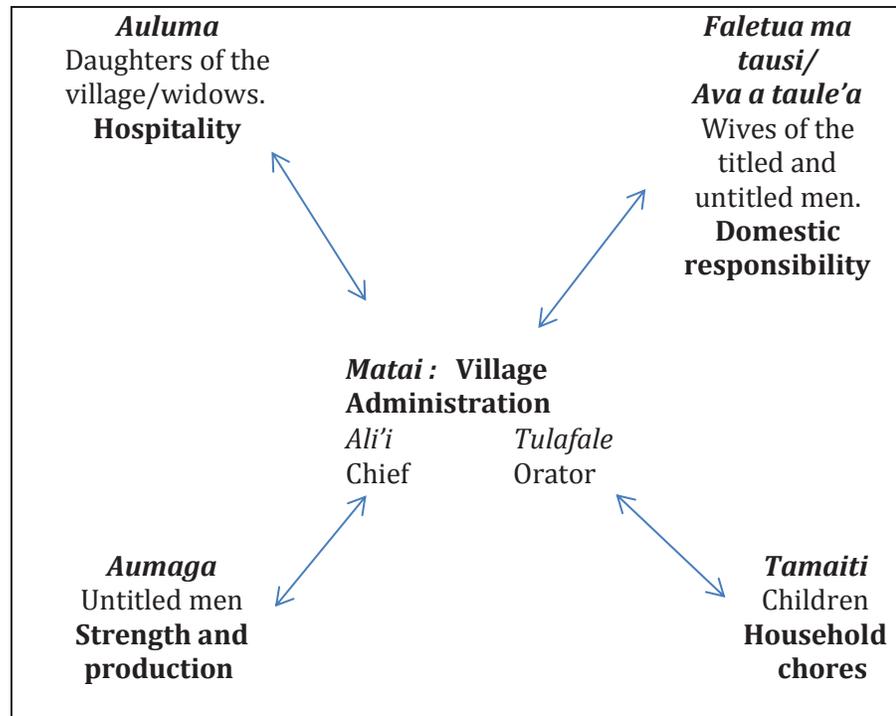
Within Samoa there are 362 villages or *nu'u*, each consisting of several *aiga*, each of which is headed by a *matai* (Samoa Tourism Authority, 2011). Each village contains at least one church, headed by the pastor, priest or minister depending on the denomination of the church. Within each village, ultimate power rests with the council of chiefs (*fono*) (Amosa, 2010; Cahn, 2008; Iati, 2000). Alongside the *fono* are several influential committees including the *komiti tumama* (women's committee) and the *aumaga* (council of untitled men). Both of these committees have church and village responsibilities (Tonkin, 2008). The village structure reflects *fa'a Samoa: aiga, matai* and church, and these three pillars are now considered.

Aiga

The *nu'u* (village) consists of a collection of *aiga* (nuclear and extended family), their associated lands, and buildings (Iati, 2000; So'o, 2008). "When family members marry partners in other villages, the in-laws too become part of the extended family unit" (Samoa Tourism Authority, 2011). This increases the bonding capital between families and as a result these networks can be called on to provide support in times of need.

Life in the village and within each individual *aiga* is highly organised (Figure 5). It consists of the following groups: *matai*, wives of *matai*, untitled men, young women and widows, and children, where each member has a specific role (Iati, 2000).

Figure 5: Groups and their assigned roles within the *aiga*.



(Fana'afi, 1986; Stewart-Withers, 2008)

Within the *aiga*, these groups and individual families provide support to each other, while working to advance the economic and political position of *aiga* members (Va'a, 2006). The stronger the family is in terms of economic, political and social capital, the greater resilience the family has in the face of disaster. The *matai* as head of the *aiga* is the decision maker for the family (Iati, 2000) and highly respected.

Matai

In total there are 18,000 *matai*, whose role is a complex blend of civic and political responsibilities (Samoa Tourism Authority, 2011). A *matai* is not a hereditary title. Rather, any kin member, who has shown wisdom, leadership and especially service to the family and village, is eligible to be a *matai* (Iati, 2000; Tonkin, 2008). The importance of service is demonstrated in the Samoan proverb “*o le ala I le pule o le tautua*”, which translates as the path or route to power/authority is through service (Iati, 2000; McCready, 2005).

This power is shown in the way *matai* govern all aspects of Samoan society, from *aiga* to village life through to government, and as such *matai* are very powerful. However, *matai* are accountable to the *aiga* and the village, through the *fono* (village council) for their actions and like all village members can be punished if warranted (Iati, 2000; Tonkin, 2008). Women are eligible to be *matai*, but in practice it is mainly a male domain (Fana'afi, 1986; Holmegaard, 2011; Tonkin, 2008); with less than 20 per cent of all *matai* being female (Holmegaard, 2011). Some villages ban women *matai* from the *fono* while other villages do not allow women to be *matai* (Amosa, 2010). What is more, the role of a member of parliament is exclusive to male *matai*, as are many church leader positions (Thornton, Sakai, & Hassall, 2012).

Samoa society is extremely hierarchical (Lilomaiva-Doktor, 2004; Va'a, 2006). At the top of Samoan society is the Head of State, followed by the chiefs, untitled people and finally children (Va'a, 2006). One aspect of *fa'a Samoa* is respect (*fa'aaloalo*). "Everyone has an obligation to provide utmost respect to their peers, but especially their elders and superiors" (Tonkin, 2008, p. 45). Village leaders, elders and church leaders are highly respected. The reason for this is that *matai* are considered to have been chosen by god, ministers are god's representatives, while elders have wisdom and knowledge (Amosa, 2010). Amosa also notes that *matai* are respected because they have the ultimate power in the village to make and enforce rules and decisions.

Decisions regarding the collection and distribution of gifts and financial contributions are undertaken by the *matai* (Thornton, et al., 2010). This is usually done at the *fono* (council level) rather than by the individual *matai*. Unfortunately, as a result of the abuse of power by some *matai*, including misappropriation of funds, many rural

Samoans consider *fa'a Samoa* to be another word for oppression (Meleisea, 2005).

The distribution of aid following the tsunami was undertaken by *matai* who frequently retained the greater share for themselves and their closest kin (Wendt Young, 2010). Kumaran and Torris noted similar problems in Cuddalore, India following the 2004 tsunami. Here NGOs used traditional distribution methods; giving goods to the village leaders to distribute, resulting in complaints from villagers regarding uneven and inequitable distribution (2011). The role village leaders played in collecting and distributing aid is further examined in Chapter Seven: Support from Resident Samoans.

Pulenu'u

The *pulenu'u* or mayor of the village is a resident *matai* of the village. Therefore, while *pulenu'u* is not a traditional part of *fa'a Samoa*, as a *matai* it is appropriate to examine their role now. He/she is elected by fellow members of the village council to be their paid government official. Samoa does not have regional or local government (Storey, 2000). As a result it is the *pulenu'u's* job to be the conduit between the Government in the form of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD) and the *nu'u*. The term *pulenu'u* or mayor is used equally in official documents, as a result both terms are used within this thesis.

The *pulenu'u* is a relatively new position (Stewart-Withers, 2008). As a result, the role of *pulenu'u* “does not command significant influence over village decisions” (Lati Lati, 2010, p. 193). However, the mayor has important roles to play. As well as their day to day position as a government employee, the mayors have specific disaster related responsibilities. In relation to disaster preparation, the mayors must identify and inform residents of safe evacuation routes as well as strong, secure buildings in which villagers can shelter (The

Government of Samoa, 2006a). Following a disaster the role of the *pulenu'u* is to liaise with the MWCSO to provide impact assessment information (The Government of Samoa, 2006c).

The importance and authority of God and *matai*, including *pulenu'u*, within Samoan culture is shown in the saying “*Ua tofia e le Atua Samoa ina ia pulea e matai* (God has designated Samoa to be governed by *matai*)” (So'o, 2008, p. 166). It is therefore not surprising that *matai* are so influential within Samoan society. We have examined two of the three pillars of *fa'a Samoa*, *aiga* and *matai*, and now move on to examine the role of the final pillar of *fa'a Samoa*: the church.

Church

The Samoan motto *Fa'avae I Le Atua Samoa* – Samoa is founded on God (Melani, 1998) which was observed on several monuments and Government buildings throughout Samoa, sums up the importance of the church to Samoan society. Religion has been a powerful influencing factor since its introduction in 1830. It was then that the missionary John Williams arrived in Savaii to share the gospel (Va'a, 2006). Williams and successive Christians succeeded in their task as Samoa is now a deeply religious country (Holmegaard, 2011), with ninety eight per cent of all Samoans considering themselves to be Christian (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2008). The church is an integral part of the culture of Samoa, to the extent that religion is inseparable from other social components (Farran, 2010). The effect of this within Samoan culture means that “the majority of Samoans believe that all things come from God” (McCready, 2005, p. 21).

When travelling from the international airport to Apia dozens of churches are seen, leaving no doubt as to the importance of the church within Samoan communities. According to the Australian Council for International Development (2011) the church provides

resilience in times of uncertainty and need. This is contrary to Thornton et al. (2012) who contend that Samoan church leaders believe that the care and protection of the people is the responsibility of the *aiga*. Therefore, there remains a lack of church initiated community welfare programmes within Samoa. Just as it is the responsibility of the *aiga* to meet the needs of its members, the *aiga* is also tasked with meeting the financial responsibilities and needs of the pastor; including his residence (Centre for Sāmoan Studies, 2006). This can be a burden to the community, especially in times of hardship.

Resilience and Welfare

Fa'a Samoa provides resilience, ensuring the welfare of Samoans. This is achieved through a network of support which includes remittances, the provision of gifts along with communal living and the distribution of goods (Iati, 2000). Similarly, it has been noted that an aspect of *fa'a Samoa* is the expectation of reciprocal gifting, sharing, exchanging and redistribution of financial and material goods within the extended family (*aiga*) (Centre for Sāmoan Studies, 2006; Thornton, et al., 2010). This sharing and gifting increases resilience and thereby enhances the wellbeing of family members during times of hardship and strife.

Va'a (2006) compares the Samoan family to a small, weak business, but when overseas kin are incorporated, it becomes a powerful international corporation. While Va'a's views appear derogatory, the point he makes regarding kin is valid. Overseas kin provide assistance in a variety of ways, with financial assistance mainly by way of remittances. These occur in cash or kind and form a major on-going part of the household income for many Samoan families.

Remittances can allow citizens to meet some of their needs with income from expatriate relatives and can, in actual fact, relieve pressure on the government to provide some of these amenities and services for the public

(Kerlake, 2007, p. 135).

During times of stress as seen during the Samoan tsunami, remittances increase dramatically. As well as financial aid, survivors of the tsunami received many other types of *meaalofa* (gift; things of, or from love), the majority of which were from non-affected local and overseas kin. These *meaalofa* are discussed in Chapters Six and Seven.

Fa'a Samoa had a long tradition of social obligations including reciprocity. The importance of reciprocity in Samoan culture derives from the influences of Christian values and Samoan tradition (Macpherson & Macpherson, 2000). These social obligations occur at important *aiga* events such as birth, death, marriage, commissioning of a *matai* and the opening of a new church (Va'a, 2006). They are also expected as a way of thanks for assistance or kindness shown, such as the provision of labour, or following the donation of gifts. This reciprocity occurs during good times as well as times of hardship, such as those following a disaster.

History of Disaster Relief in Samoa

Due to Samoa's location and disaster history, cyclones, volcanic eruption and tsunami have been assigned a risk hazard level of Extreme (The Government of Samoa, 2006c). With the exception of the 2009 tsunami, Samoa has not experienced a disaster since Cyclone Heta in 2004. The greatest disaster threat to Samoa historically has been from tropical cyclones.

Since 1985, approximately twenty tropical cyclones occurred in the Samoan region, with the most serious ones being tropical cyclones Ofa (1990), Val (1991) and Heta (2004) (The Government of Samoa, 2006b). The damage caused by cyclones Ofa and Val was over US\$500 million dollars; whole villages were lost along with 80 percent of crops and 60 percent of coral reefs (World Bank, 2009). While both Savaii and Upolu are potentially volcanically active, the last recorded eruptions occurred in Samoa on Savaii in 1902 and from 1905-1911 (Cronin, 2006).

The Samoa National Tsunami Report noted that anecdotal information suggests that between 1837 and 1980, 60 tsunami events have been recorded, with the most significant occurring in 1917 as a result of an earthquake in the Tongan trench. No lives were lost, but considerable damage occurred to crops and housing in Satupaitea on the southeast coast of Savaii (The Government of Samoa, 2006a).

Past experience

Prior to the development of the 1986 National Disaster Plan, Samoa was ill prepared for a disaster. This is according to Alisi, Disaster Management Official, who also noted that all disaster planning and management was ad-hoc in these early times. Since then there have been successive developments, notably the appointment of the National Disaster Management Officer and the National Disaster Council in 1997 (Nelson, 2005).

Following devastation caused by Cyclones Ofa and Val the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) was set up to better prepare for, as well as co-ordinate and manage, the relief operations of such disasters (The Government of Samoa, 2010). In 2004, Samoa was again struck by a destructive Cyclone. This time, Cyclone Heta hit causing damage equivalent to 15 per cent of GDP (The World Bank, 2011). The knowledge gained from these disasters as well as global

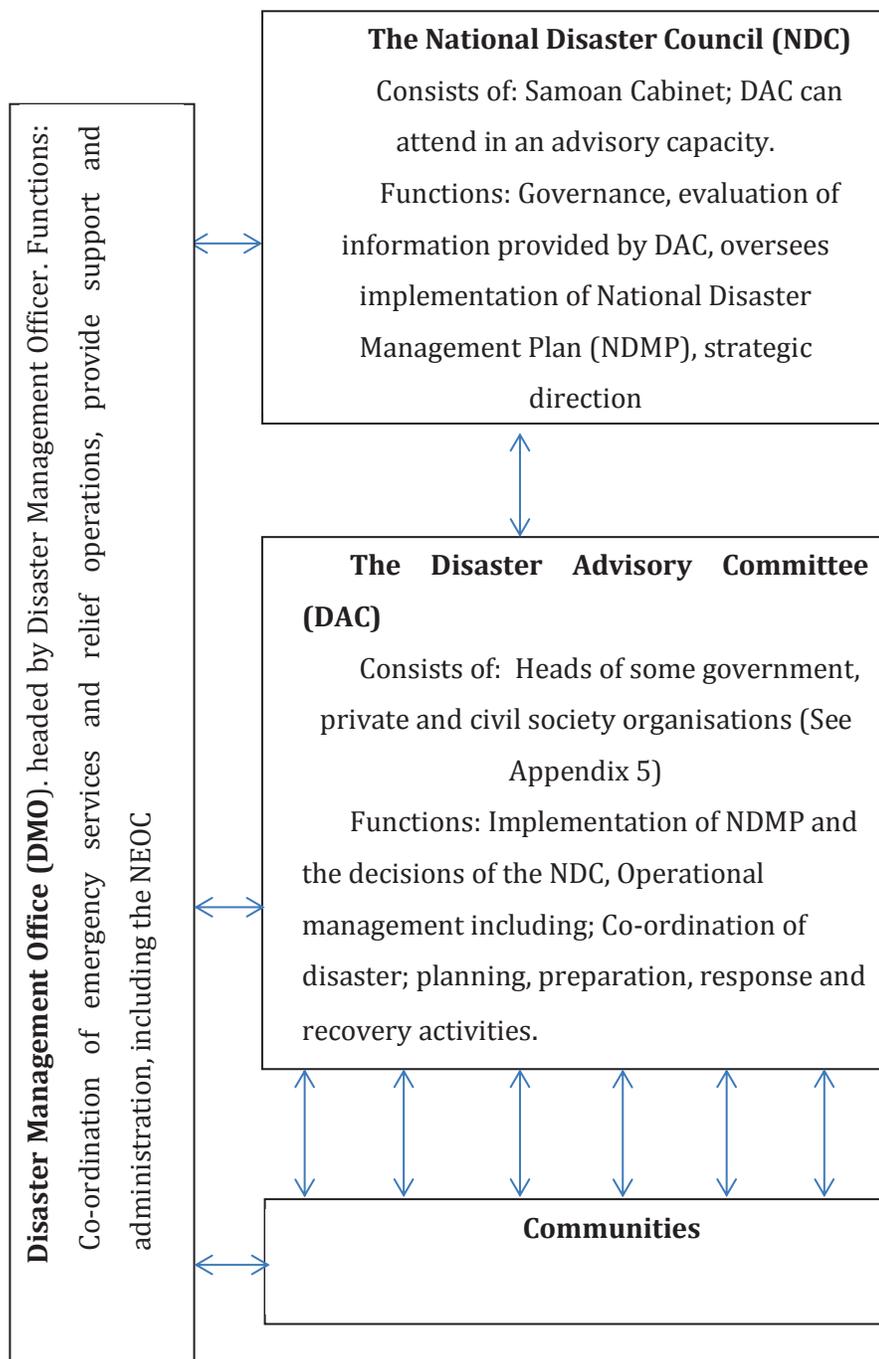
disasters such as the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami ensured these plans and structures are continually modified to ensure they offer the best disaster outcomes for Samoa.

December 2011 saw the introduction of the Samoa National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2011-2016. This plan supersedes the 2006 Disaster Management Plan, incorporating much of the knowledge gained from the Samoan tsunami. However, this thesis analyses the 2009 tsunami, so it is the policies, practices and structures in place at the time which are now examined.

Samoa Disaster Management Processes and Structures

The 2006 National Disaster Management Plan outlines the organisational structure, roles and responsibilities of government agencies, NGOs and district or village committees during the four disaster phases (risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery). The focal point for the co-ordination and implementation of all disaster related activities is the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and Disaster Advisory Committee (DAC). During the disaster response phase the DAC co-ordinates and manages activities from the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) (The Government of Samoa, 2006c). This disaster management organisational structure is complex. With this in mind, Figure 6, (next page) aims to provide an easy to read overview, outlining the roles and relationships between the key Samoan disaster management groups.

Figure 6: Disaster Management Organisational Structure for Samoa



(Logistics Cluster, 2009; Overseas Security Advisory Council, 2012; The Government of Samoa, 2006c, 2010).

As part of the Disaster Management Act (2006) each core member/response agency of the DAC (Appendix 5) was required to prepare a Disaster Response Plan. These plans set out procedures and

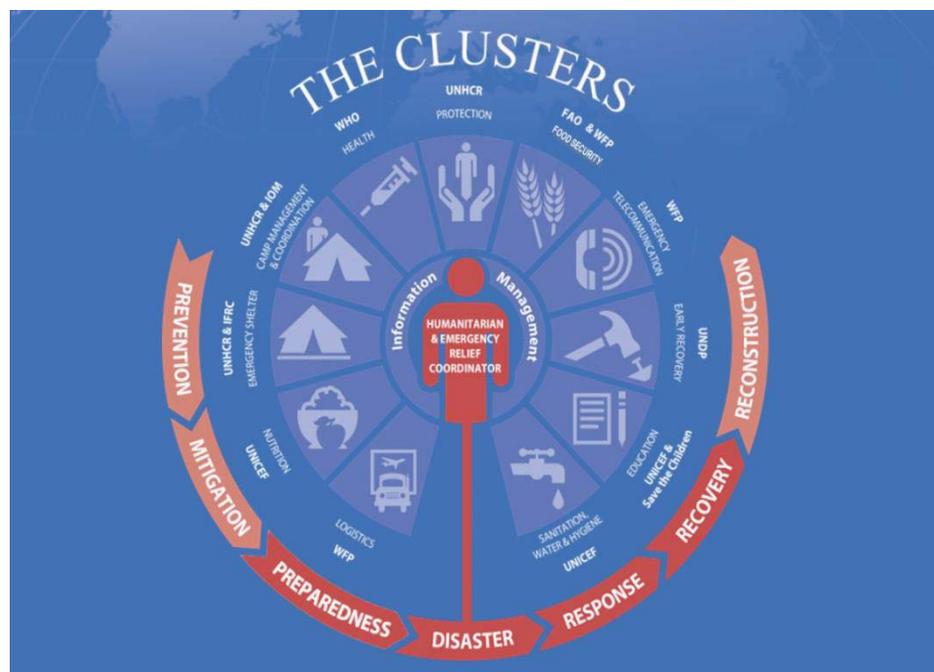
guidelines; including the provision of essential services and interagency co-operation, to be followed during a disaster. In January 2008, the Samoa National Tsunami Plan was reviewed (Logistics Cluster, 2009). As a result of the reviews and the plans in place, Samoa seemed well prepared to respond to a disaster.

United Nations (UN) Clusters

As a member of the UN, Samoa is able to call on the services of the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) when a disaster occurs at a scale exceeding Samoa's national capacity. OCHA will assist governments, such as Samoa, to mobilise international assistance (business.un.org, 2012). OCHA instigated the cluster approach to disasters in 2005, with the aim of improving co-ordination between agencies, while providing a needs based response to a disaster (OCHA, 2012). The cluster system provides a formal, but fluid framework under which disaster management is coordinated. Figure 7 outlines the eleven commonly used clusters, with each individual cluster consisting of key stake holders, including government, international agencies and NGOs appropriate to that cluster.

Each cluster has a cluster lead organisation which is based within the affected country. For example the health cluster is usually led by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The fluidity of the cluster system allows agencies to opt into or withdraw from a cluster as needs demand. Likewise, the number and type of clusters varies according to the individual disaster. A case in point is the Haiti earthquake of 2009. Initially, in February 2009 the cluster system consisted of twelve clusters. By April of that year, following evaluation, the clusters were reorganised, and reduced to ten (Binder & Grunewald, 2010).

Figure 7: How the UN Cluster System Works



(OCHA, 2012)

Co-ordination of the 2009 Tsunami Response

On the day of the tsunami The National Disaster Management Plan was activated and the Disaster Advisor Committee, (DAC) convened. This committee met regularly, often daily, and included representatives from all key organisation NGOs and government departments.

Three days later on the 2nd of October, following an initial assessment, A State of Emergency was declared (The Government of Samoa, 2010) and the cluster system approach was activated. The co-chairs of the cluster system, the UN Designated Official and the Disaster Management Officer, convened the sixty members of the Interagency Standing Committee (IAS) who participated in the cluster approach (Appendix 6). Seven out of the eleven clusters were activated (UN Pacific Humanitarian Team, 2009).

The early recovery cluster, which was led by the Ministry of Finance and the UNDP, met daily with up to ninety people, and reported to the

DAC following each meeting. During the first weeks after the tsunami there was a multitude of meetings, occurring each day. As well as cluster meetings “there were DAC meetings, meetings with the Ministry of Health for psychological and health assistance as well as ad hoc meetings” (Rose, NGO worker). There were comments made that a lot of meetings were undertaken during this time, and that it was possibly overkill. On the other hand, the cluster system in conjunction with the DMO and DAC enabled a fuller picture of the response to be collated.

The DMO was the centre of the response phase, responsible for the facilitation and co-ordination of the assistance during the relief effort. As such, the information provided via meetings, including cluster meetings, ensured all parties involved were aware of what aid was going to the communities, where and when, and what organisations were disseminating the aid. The early response cluster was tasked with co-ordinating a comprehensive social and development assessment of the affected areas. Teams went out for two or three weeks:

... conducting assessments of different sectors of the communities that were affected from the perspective of: livelihood, environment, health and education. All sectors were covered and then an overall recovery plan was drawn up to show what would be needed and the money required to meet those early recovery needs

Grace, Multilateral Development Official.

This recovery plan was presented to the Samoan Government in mid-October. The plan, showed an estimated early recovery cost of between 75 and 111 million NZ dollars (The Government of Samoa & United Nations, 2009) and, was used to inform donors of the Government’s needs.

The plan covered shelter and housing, various aspects of infrastructure including: roading, communications, power, water, health, continuity of education services and rebuilding of education services, community development and livelihoods

Paul, Development worker.

There was controversy regarding the Samoan Government's response to the tsunami, including the re-establishment of infrastructure, and this is examined in Chapter Six. However, this plan and the Government's disaster recovery plans and procedures provided the framework in which to conduct a well-co-ordinated response.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the cultural framework and embodiment of social capital in Samoa is *fa'a Samoa*. *Fa'a Samoa* is defined as consisting of three pillars; *matai*, *aiga* and the church, where these three pillars enforce/reinforce the day to day cultural practices and traditions of the Samoan community. *Fa'a Samoa* provides structure, comfort and resilience in times of extreme stress and hardship such as that which followed the Samoan tsunami.

By understanding the cultural framework of a community, in this case *fa'a Samoa*, development and disaster specialists are able to target areas of need, working alongside the community. This chapter revealed that the Samoan Government, in conjunction with village governance, the Church, and family, had the structures and associated cultural expectations in place to enable a broad response to a disaster. This is highlighted by the fact that Samoa, unlike many countries who experience disasters, was able to care for its people adequately, without the need for refugee camps.

CHAPTER SIX: The Samoan Tsunami Response and Recovery- Government, NGO and Overseas Assistance

Emergency water, shelter and port-a-loos had to be provided and at the same time we had Government organising the whole distribution system. They were very involved.

Winnie, NGO administrator.

Introduction

As outlined in Chapter Five, the Samoan Government, members of and advisors to the DAC, as well as the international community, responded promptly to the tsunami. The response to and recovery from a disaster are costly in terms of loss of life, injury, financial contributions, loss of productivity and emotional stress. Governments as well as the humanitarian community are constantly reviewing their disaster planning and practice to ensure that in the wake of a subsequent disaster, the best outcomes for all are achieved.

This chapter examines official Samoan assistance as well as that supplied by NGOs, international agencies and overseas individuals. Particular focus is on the ways these organisations and individuals provided assistance in the *response* phase and *recovery* phase. This will provide the reader with a context against which to compare the focus of this thesis, Chapter Seven: Support from Resident Samoans. Chapter Six begins with a description of the two case study villages, which provide a setting for Chapters Six and Seven.

Description of Case Study Villages

This thesis examined two coastal villages: a donor village in Savaii, Village S and a recipient village in Upolu, Village U. Both of these villages source/sourced a considerable portion of their income from the beach *fales* which operate/operated within the villages. Within both villages, villagers undertake a variety of jobs. Some are teachers, plantation workers, shop keepers, fishermen while others work directly in tourism. The population of Village S is approximately 150 people whereas Village U has a population of approximately 400 people (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2012).

Village S is located on the northern side of Savaii, on a strip of flat land between the sea and hills; some sheer, some rolling. The village is scrupulously clean, well maintained and contains several beach *fale* businesses and a resort. Within the village, there is only one church, the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (CCCS), often referred to as the Congregational Church. The church is situated in the middle of the village and the pastor, like all Samoan pastors, is respected and plays a prominent role in village life. Many members of Village S, including the High Chief's family, are Mormon and they worship at a church in a nearby village.

Village U is located in the Aleipata district which was severely hit by the tsunami. All beach *fale* businesses in the village were destroyed. While many of these operations have re-established, the majority are yet to return to their pre-tsunami stages of development. Village U was located on a thin strip of land between the sea and a sheer bluff. All villagers interviewed referred to the high ground above the old village, where the majority of their plantations were located, as 'the mountain'. Consequently, while this area is not a mountain in geographical terms, it will be referred to as the mountain throughout this thesis. It is here amongst the plantations, seven and a half

kilometres from the destroyed village, that the new village has been established.

Village U has three churches located within the village, and some villagers are members of churches located in nearby villages. Although members of the village worship at five different churches, the Congregational Church is the main church, having the largest congregation, and is the only church located in the middle of the village. Prior to the tsunami, the pastor of the Congregational Church was considered the main pastor within the village, a position he still holds (Aleki, untitled man, Village U). As a result of the pastor's status and recognition within Village U, he was highly involved in the response and recovery within the village.

Immediate Response to the Tsunami

As word of the tsunami spread, people responded. Immediate assistance was provided from a variety of local sources, including the Samoan Government, Samoan based NGOs, multilateral agencies and Samoan people. On the first day of the tsunami, the Government procured and distributed emergency relief. Alisi, Disaster Management Official, revealed that as a result of limited cooking utensils and water within affected communities, this relief included ready to eat food items such as biscuits, bread and canned food, that could be eaten without the need to add water or heat. At the same time the Samoa Red Cross, stepped into their role as a supporting agency to the Samoan Government, conducting rapid needs assessments and distributing relief items, including mosquito nets, blankets, food, water containers and shelter (The Government of Samoa, 2010).

While relief supplies were being organised in Apia, at the tsunami affected areas, Government, multilateral and NGO workers were

mobilised to provide assistance. All respondents from Village U and all key respondents acknowledged this, along with reports from the Samoan Government (The Government of Samoa, 2010) and United Nations (UN Pacific Humanitarian Team, 2009). Immediate activities undertaken included the clearing of rocks, trees and debris from the roads to allow emergency services to reach damaged villages. At the same time, search and rescue operations were undertaken, resulting in many of the dead and injured being transported to mortuaries and hospitals. Puli highlights the immediate response when he commented:

Early in the morning after the tsunami, a lot of people came to help. The police, the fire brigade and the health department came to rescue people. The Government came to clean up the roads

Puli, *Matai*, Village U.

In the days following the tsunami, assistance from overseas began to pour in. Local Samoan to Samoan relief was varied and included the provision of food, labour and goods; this is discussed in detail in Chapter Seven.

The Samoan Government, through its ministries and authorities, played a prominent part in the response to and recovery from the 2009 tsunami. Therefore it is appropriate that we delve further into the Government's role.

Role of Government

The Samoan Government had ultimate responsibility for all aspects of the response and recovery. As the response phase was underway, Government ministries and corporations began aspects of the recovery phase. The Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure, the Electric Power Corporation, Samoan Water Authority and Samoa

Ports Authority, all undertook the long task of restoring and providing services.

The enormity of the response and recovery was compounded by several factors including:

1. Samoa had never encountered a disaster of this magnitude
2. Many affected communities had to move inland to their plantations, often without easy access
3. Samoa is a Least Developed Country (United Nations, 2010).

These factors are possibly why the official response to the tsunami was controversial. Some people including TV3 (New Zealand) journalist John Campbell, one key informant, and two respondents from Village U were critical of the Samoan Government's response. Criticism focused on the utilisation of donated funds and the restoration of infrastructure. In comparison, four key informants, several development specialist including; Zwart (Radio New Zealand International, 2010) and Haque (2011), and the Samoan Government (2010) praised the response. While all acknowledged the response was not without fault, overall they considered it to be well coordinated and appropriate, given the circumstances.

The relocation of villages to high ground, like Village U, where there was no formed access or infrastructure, was a contributing factor to the slow restoration of running water. This was commented on by four respondents and Peter Zwart, the NZAID manager in Apia, who noted that while the re-establishment of the water supply was slower than ideal, the overall response was solid (Radio New Zealand International, 2010).

Haque (2011), a World Bank economist, considered that Samoa, in conjunction with the international community had successfully managed the social and economic impacts of the tsunami. He went on to note that within eighteen months, 90% of the tourism

infrastructure, nearly all roads and 95% of affected homes had been repaired or replaced.

This section concludes with comments from a development worker, experienced in international disaster response and recovery:

There was co-ordination at the higher level, at the national disaster council level. I think it is one of the better relief responses that I have seen

Grace, Multilateral Development Official.

The Government and Money

There was an expectation amongst some respondents that they should have received cash from the Government. The High Chief of Village U noted that the Government didn't distribute cash to the village; rather they "sent some carpenters, doctors and nurses from Apia to our district." This expectation within villages was in part due to widespread media reports, which placed a monetary value on the aid which was received in cash and in kind. As a result, many Samoan wrongly believed that the Samoan Government had received significantly more money than it actually had.

To aid transparency the Government provided considerable details regarding its income and expenditure following the tsunami to the media, including the publication of *Tsunami: Samoa*, September 29, 2009. This document provided a description of the tsunami, the response, initial recovery and an itemised list of all known aid (The Government of Samoa, 2010). Still, many respondents from Village U seemed unaware of the significant cost involved in relocating their village, building a new school, providing emergency supplies and on-going assistance, with several commenting that the Government should have done more. This is discussed further in the section: Long

Term Assistance including Livelihood Recovery at the end of this chapter.

The Samoan Government report Tsunami: Samoa, September 29, 2009 notes that the majority of money raised within Samoa and much of the funding received from overseas went directly to the Government recovery account. This money was then allocated to government departments and agencies to support the response and recovery as needed. As a result of this centralisation of funds many respondents commented that they were unable to tell if/what local Samoans had donated to the relief effort.

Pulenu'u / Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO)

The MWCSO and the village *pulenu'u* (mayor) had pivotal roles during the response and recovery phases of the tsunami. One of their roles was as intermediaries between the Government, NGOs, multilateral agencies, non-affected and affected villages. As government employees, mayors of non-affected villages conveyed the requests for assistance from the government to their villagers, and then they:

liaised with *matai* regarding the donation of gifts and coordinated the collection of the goods by truck with government officials. Even the churches used the *pulenu'u*

High Chief, (and *pulenu'u*) Village S.

This village to village assistance is explored in detail in Chapter Seven.

Within the affected villages, one of the first tasks the *pulenu'u* was expected to complete was recording the names of all villagers who were affected. But the mayors were also victims of the tsunami. Some

pulenu'u lost family members while others were busy trying to get their families up to the higher ground and establish homes on land that was really virgin forest. Consequently many initial reports were undertaken by the impact teams from the Disaster Advisory Committee (DAC) and the Red Cross.

In the following days and weeks the *pulenu'u* submitted reports detailing the villagers' needs as well as what goods were distributed to each family. As discussed in Chapter Five, these reports and assessments along with those from the Samoan Government, the UN and independent NGOs were channelled through the cluster system to the DAC. Four of the six key respondents noted that these multiple reports provided a comprehensive view of the response within the villages, thereby increasing equitable distribution:

I don't think there was very much willy-nilly or ad hoc distribution of things. By and large it was well coordinated. And even if people went off to deliver things, the distribution centre kind of knew where everything was going

Grace, Multilateral Development Official.

Three key responders noted that another task undertaken by the village mayors was to identify the homes that had been destroyed or damaged. Once identified, the village mayors in conjunction with the MWCSO ensured that houses were only built for people whose homes were actually affected by the tsunami (Masi, government Worker).

Even though all key informants considered that the *pulenu'u* played a key role in the response and recovery, *pulenu'u* were only mentioned by one respondent in each village, and then in passing. While I never questioned why this occurred, there appeared to be two main possibilities. Within Village S the High Chief is also the *pulenu'u*. This

results in an overlap of roles, but within the eyes of Samoans the role of the High Chief is paramount, leading to respondents ignoring the role of the *pulenu'u* within their responses. Similarly within Village U, influencing roles were attributed to *matai* (of which the *pulenu'u* is one) and the pastor. Village U's *pulenu'u* was away during the time that field work was conducted, consequently, I was unable to obtain detailed information about his role in the response and recovery.

Housing

Another area in which the Government played a significant role was that of housing. The Government offered affected families two housing options; one a basic house, built for them by organisations such as Habitat for Humanity or option two, 18,000 tala worth of materials to assist with the building of a home to their own design.

As a member of the tsunami housing committee, Grace, a Multilateral Development Official, provided valuable insight into the thinking behind the decisions made by the committee. All new structures followed the 'build back better' philosophy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, 2012). As a result, all homes had to be situated on higher ground and the Government-supplied *fale* was engineered to be cyclone proof and designed to allow partitioning or addition at a later stage.

The Government and the housing committee were also mindful of people becoming aid dependent. Consequently, both housing options required the people to make a contribution. With the Government built house, "the family contributed through preparing food for the volunteer workers that came to build it" (Pastor, Village U). Those who chose to build their own home were required to pay for all associated labour costs. Due to a lack of cash reserves and no kin to provide money or labour to build his home, Pete, a fisherman in Village U, chose the Government-supplied *fale*. The private option

was chosen by some families within Village U including Sara, a primary teacher. When discussing her home and the assistance she received from her family, on top of the Government's 18,000 *tala*, Sara noted that her brother who lives in New Zealand and her sister in Australia sent money to help with the cost of rebuilding.

The Government received significant assistance with the rebuilding programme from businesses and NGOs including faith based organisation. Within Village U many churches assisted with the building of homes including Elam Church New Zealand as well as the Mormon and Catholic Churches. Of the 800 homes that were totally destroyed and/or needed repair and renovations, Habitat for Humanity NZ, oversaw the construction of more than 400 *fales*. Another major contributor was the mobile phone company, Digicel, who built 50 homes as a result of their fund-raising efforts (The Government of Samoa, 2010).

Distribution of Aid through Official Channels

A further role which the Samoan Government undertook during the response phase was the distribution of aid. This was carried out by the DAC which managed and co-ordinated the distribution of goods. These goods included those from overseas governments, many overseas organisations, and individuals, as well as local donations organised through the mayors.

The equivalent of about three hundred twenty-foot containers of relief supplies were received, recorded and distributed to some 824 households from 51 villages by the end of December 2009. This however did not include relief supplies donated through and distributed by some non-government organisations

The Government of Samoa (2010).

Some organisations shipped and distributed their own containers of relief supplies while others used SUNGO, (Samoa Umbrella of Non - Government Organisations) or the Red Cross as their distributor. Both of these organisations worked closely with the DMO to ensure speedy and equitable distribution of goods. One of the DMO's many responsibilities was to co-ordinate the transportation of aid from collection sites at the NEOC, SUNGO and Red Cross, to affected areas as required.

SUNGO was the distributor of the American aid, but no respondent specified if this American aid was governmental, NGO, private aid, or a combination of all three.

They got in seven or eight 40 foot containers from America. The contents of it were huge. It ranged from clothing, food, equipment, everything, except for some electrical stuff that we couldn't use as the power is different

Rewa, NGO Official.

As well as electrical equipment, there were a variety of overseas goods including warm clothing, single shoes and expired goods, which ended up in the landfill. Items donated from overseas incurred costs to the Government. These costs included: customs processing, shipping agents fees as well as the cost of sorting, distributing and as in the examples described above, dumping of goods. While there was overwhelming gratitude for the assistance of overseas donors, it was noted that "it can be easier to obtain locally sourced relief supplies" (Alisi, Disaster Management Official).

NGO and Overseas Assistance

In addition to the support from the Samoan Government, the people of Samoa received considerable assistance from a variety of sources including: NGOs, overseas governments, non-resident family and individuals. This aid consisted of: material items, monetary donations, concessional loans, the provision of equipment, specialist and non-specialist labour, and specific assistance as requested by the Samoan Government. This support was appreciated by the Samoan people:

It was so encouraging to see that while we stand alone as a sovereign nation, we have a lot of support, a lot of friends and a lot of love from many countries

Fruean, CEO of Digicel Samoa
(Wendt Young, 2010, p. 353).

All respondents from Village U and all key informants commented on the international assistance provided to affected villages from a variety of sources such as: churches, the New Zealand and Australian Government and their Armed Forces, Red Cross and overseas donors. Many of the donations, were a result of social capital, and this is illustrated by the quote from Pastor, Village U:

A couple in Sydney who have been helping with our preschool, supplying resources, they came out with food, clothes, tents and all that. We have another sister school in Melbourne. They have been helping us for the last eight years and they came over with containers. We also received money to help rebuild our church from Congregational Churches in New Zealand, Australia and America and other churches like the Anglicans

Pastor, Village U.

Overseas Governments

The New Zealand and Australian Governments responded directly to the request for assistance from the Samoan Government. Both governments provided immediate funds, supplies and personnel including members of their defence forces and medical specialists. New Zealand's financial contribution totalled NZ\$12m consisting of:

NZ\$2m for emergency relief, AU\$5m jointly with Australia towards the Post-Tsunami Recovery Plan, and NZ\$4m in targeted assistance for the rebuilding of Samoa's tourism industry

Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, (2012).

The New Zealand Defence Force was active in the response phase; providing over 150 personnel from the New Zealand Navy, Army and Air Force (NZPA, 2010), equipment, transportation and knowledge (Figure 8).

Figure 8: New Zealand defence personnel unloading medical supplies which were used to treat villagers who were injured in the tsunami



(Phibbs, 2009)

Connie provided a personal view of Defence Force assistance when she recalled:

New Zealand Army and Aussies came here. They built toilets up on the mountain because we have no toilets, no water. They delivered food, especially water by helicopter
Connie, beach *fale* owner, Village U.

Role of NGOs

Just like overseas governments, the response from NGOs was substantial. It can safely be assumed that over 100 NGOs were involved in the response and recovery. This figure is based on 16 NGOs who are part of the Samoan Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) (UN Pacific Humanitarian Team, 2009) and 121 NGO members of SUNGO (SUNGO ILO, 2012), not all of whom were individually involved. Additionally, numerous churches, national and international NGOs provided assisted. Through their involvement with the cluster system, NGOs were able to target their assistance to complement the work of civil society and fellow NGOs.

As already stated, the DMO was the major facilitator and co-ordinator of all assistance, ably supported by the Samoan Red Cross. Due to demand, SUNGO joined these two organisations as another facilitation and distribution centre. Staff from these organisations:

got the list from [the] Government of the families that were affected, and we just went to double check with the minister and the mayor, is this ok? Is this the number of households, the number of people? Do you have any special needs like old people needing walkers [or] wheelchairs? We listed it down, saw what is in the containers and distributed accordingly

Rewa, NGO Official.

Several NGOs sourced relief supplies locally but the majority of non-perishable relief was overseas donated goods. While some people initially missed out on assistance, many organisations had contingency plans in place to address this. As one NGO administrator commented,

We were sent money by people all over the world. What we did, and a lot of other people did, was we put that money aside and because we were part of the Government distribution we were able to pick up the people who missed out. We helped them immediately, then took their names to the Government distribution centre. This ensured everyone was covered

Winnie, NGO administrator.

In addition to SUNGO and the Red Cross, Women in Business Development Inc., Lions and church groups are a few of the many local NGOs that supported the relief efforts by providing water, food, household goods, labour and vehicles to affected areas. Winnie, described the practical way in which an Apia based NGO responded:

We went out there right after it started to help our people. We just loaded our truck up with water and all sorts of things that staff did. When water was slow, we went out again, and took our food grade buckets out with clean fresh water, so that people could drink right away. We just reacted

Winnie, NGO administrator.

Overseas Samoans

Samoa society is large and expansive, with sizeable communities within American Samoa, New Zealand, Australia and the United States. One of the most significant contributors to the recovery was

assistance provided by overseas Samoans, their church and business networks. Following the tsunami these communities found ways to help, irrespective if they had family members directly affected or not. These extended networks provided support in the form of financial, practical and emotional assistance, as well as assistance with rebuilding (Bird, et al., 2011). Stories abound regarding the generosity of overseas people, Samoan and non-Samoan.

I have a brother that lives in the States and he travelled to Samoa with four containers of goods from San Francisco. He came here with his pastor and a number of other men and went directly to the community

Masi, a non-affected Government Worker.

Masi's account is just one of many examples of overseas Samoans, without family ties or contacts in affected villages, providing assistance. In addition to Masi, three other key informants commented that overseas Samoans and non-Samoans approached hospitals, government departments and NGOs to facilitate ways for them to assist.

Within Village U the High Chief believed that all village members received overseas family assistance. However, only eight of the nine interviewees within Village U received assistance in this way. The exception was one fisherman who had no overseas kin (Table 6, Chapter Seven). Overseas family members provided support and assistance as they could. Sometimes this assistance was substantial. Some kin collected goods which they sent to Samoa, many returned to Samoa to provide emotional and physical support, and even more deposited money directly into their family's bank accounts. The High Chief, Village U commented that his family in Australia and New Zealand came over at the time of the tsunami and "they brought money and bought me a brand new pick up [truck]."

Mara, a shopkeeper, and *fale* owner prior to the tsunami, received considerable help from her eight children, all of whom made the trip to Samoa from New Zealand and Australia. They assisted with cleaning up and provided emotional and financial support. Mara also noted that “only my children, the companies they work for, sent me some money, but not the church, not my church”.

Following her comment Mara and I talked about her disappointment with her church and her expectation that they should have helped her. Mara explained that she had discussed her feelings with her pastor and he offended her by calling her a *palagi* and saying that she didn't understand Samoan ways. Mara was Samoan born and raised, but lived in Auckland for 40 years before returning to Samoa to live with her husband and mother, in the years immediately preceding the tsunami.

Remittances from overseas kin are a significant contributor to the livelihood of resident Samoans. Following the tsunami, remittances increased significantly, with the 2009 December quarter showing a 25 million *tala* increase in remittances compared to a normal quarter (Gibson, 2010). This money supported families by addressing their immediate needs as well as their livelihood recovery. As well as the donation of money, goods and labour had a direct impact on livelihood recovery. An example of this is the shop that Emma's Australian based uncle-in-law built for the family, which Emma's husband now runs.

When my husband's Uncle came back [to Village U] he thought of putting up something for the family, so he put up the shop. We kicked off with a very small room, but at the beginning of this year Uncle returned for a family reunion and he extended the shop

Emma, *fale* owner, Village U.

These 'stories' are just a fraction of those told to me and countless other people. They and the associated discussion, show that the assistance of overseas Samoan aid was vital to recovery.

Overseas Guests

Throughout the Aleipata region, many of the beach *fales* that have reopened, have done so as a result of good linkages between themselves and their ex-guests. Many former tourists provided support to the beach *fales* by depositing funds directly into the owners' bank accounts, sending goods or returning to Samoa to assist in the clean-up.

Within Village U the larger and more established beach *fales* were the most likely to receive significant assistance from previous guests. Mara's beach *fales*, while a sizeable establishment, had only been open for a month, and as a result didn't receive any ex-guest assistance. This compares to long established *fales* such as Aleki's which received phone calls of support and thousands of dollars of aid.

We are lucky. We received money from overseas people who had stayed here. They are not related to us, they are not really our good friends. But they really liked the place. They stayed here before and they like the hospitality we provided

Aleki, untitled man U.

As well as the donation of money, several ex-guests from Australia, New Zealand, America and Denmark returned to Village U to provide support and assist with the clean-up. Two of these ex-guests returned to the village during the time of this thesis research. These women described how they independently came to the village from Australia with goods and money. They stayed for over a month, clearing the

rubble of what were once beach *fale* businesses and homes. During this time several other overseas people came and went:

There was a guy from New Zealand here who would go out snorkelling and drag bits of cars out of the sea. Whatever he could do on his own. He did that for a couple of weeks

Maureen, ex-guest.

This assistance provided huge financial and emotional support to the *fale* owners, enabling some, like Aleki's family to return quickly to their pre-tsunami livelihoods. Five of the nine respondents from Village U, commented that they were touched that people from overseas, who they did not know well, extended such care and assistance. Unfortunately, as mentioned previously, not all *fale* owners were able to access this support.

Psycho-social Response

The Psycho-social Response (PSR) was another example of many organisations and groups working together towards a common goal. Under the co-ordination of SUNGO, participants including Government departments such as Ministry of Health and MWCSO, the New Zealand Government, Samoa NGOs such as Samoa Red Cross as well as churches, provided support to those suffering from trauma.

A group of specialists including psychologists, psychiatrists and councillors from Israel, New Zealand and Australia arrived to provide assistance as part of the PSR. Helen Leslie, NZAID Programme Manager in Samoa at the time of the tsunami, commented that some of the New Zealand and Australian specialists were Samoan. This proved very valuable as they were able to understand the culture and speak Samoan (Regina Scheyvens, Personal Communication, 2012).

The specialists assisted with the training of volunteers and were then rolled out with local Samoans into the tsunami zone.

I placed them with Samoans as the Samoans could talk to the Samoans and I also wanted men and women to go out together, as men and women handle loss differently

Rewa, NGO Official.

Three of the six key informants commented that churches were instrumental in the psycho-social response and four of the twenty four respondents noted that assistance was also provided by students of the three theological colleges during this time. The Samoan Government acknowledged the contribution of all participants in the psycho-social response including clergy in “providing pastoral care that provided warmth to the troubled and anguished” (The Government of Samoa, 2010). While key informants and members of the clergy seemed aware of the psycho-social response, it was not mentioned by any respondents from Village U. This finding is similar to that of Scheyvens who, when conducting an assessment of Caritas’ support of a psycho-social response programme in 2011, found that few villagers knew of the programme (Regina Scheyvens, Personal Communication, 2012).

Role of the Church and Faith-based NGOs

Each church and faith-based organisation is a separate entity and as such provided different assistance. In addition to their help with housing and the PSR, as already discussed, churches and faith-based organisations played a key role in the response to the tsunami. The Mormon Church, Caritas, and ADRA were visible in their aid, providing assistance for the villages including helping with the provision of supplies and water tanks, and attending “all the DAC meetings” (Grace, a Multilateral Development Official). Domestic and external churches provided financial assistance for the

building/rebuilding of churches in affected villages. A powerful example of this support was the large Congregational Church built in the middle of Village U, upon the mountain.

Long Term Assistance Including Livelihood Recovery

During the recovery phase, the majority of long term support was provided by the Government of Samoa. This support was varied and included widespread tourism marketing advice and promotion, financial support, the development of long term recovery plans and the provision of livelihood linked goods.

All of the beach *fale* owners in Village U were aware of the Tourism Tsunami Beach *Fale* Re-building Programme (TTRP), which was funded by the Samoan and New Zealand Governments. Grants were available up to \$100,000 Samoan *tala*, (Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labour, 2010). Of the respondents who owned beach *fales* prior to the tsunami, three out of the four had received a TTRP grant. Mara was yet to receive a grant, thirty two months after the tsunami, despite many enquiries. Like Mara, all respondents associated with beach *fales* commented that the grants were either insufficient, and/or difficult to obtain, often involving considerable time, trips to Apia and paperwork. Emma exemplified their feelings when she commented:

If you don't get up and go to the offices in town they don't bother. It is difficult for people who have lost everything to get into town. NZAid and Australian Aid and the EU had aid to rebuild the *fales*. But we don't know how to get entitled to those funds

Emma, *fale* owner, Village U.

There was acknowledgement from three respondents that the Government aided livelihood recovery in some villages with the provision of boats, bar-b-ques and lawn mowing equipment.

The MWCS D with assistance from the UNDP early recovery project purchased and procured a number of fishing kits, fishing poles and a number of aquaculture tools and resources so people could start rebuilding their livelihoods

Masi, Government Worker.

Unfortunately, the fisherman from Village U noted that while the Government supplied some fishing equipment, he and many people missed out, as there was insufficient for the village.

Some organisations such as Women in Business Development Inc. (WIBDI) focus on sustainable livelihoods. Following the tsunami they became involved in livelihood recovery:

We took up over 188 new families that were affected by the tsunami. So we are doing quite a bit of work out there. We have set up some new coconut oil sites, vegetable growing; we have a few families supplying hotels, growing bananas for banana exports

Winnie, NGO administrator.

Sustainable development plans for the villages that were most affected in the tsunami have been written by the MWCS D in conjunction with villagers. The Ministry is currently reviewing those plans, with the intention of notifying donors of priorities that have yet to be achieved, in the hope they can assist (Masi, Government Worker).

Livelihood recovery is an on-going process. With the third anniversary of the tsunami approaching (at the time of fieldwork), it is still very much in the minds of those affected, as well as some government ministries and donors.

Conclusion

Like all responses to disasters, there is no doubt that the Samoan Government's response to the Samoan tsunami could have been improved. Concerns were raised regarding the time taken to provide reticulated water to all affected villages as well as the utilisation of funds donated to the Samoan Government. Samoa is a least developed country, and has only had three significant disasters, all cyclones, within the twenty four years prior to the tsunami. With this in mind, on the whole, literature and respondents considered the Samoan Government's response was comprehensive, supported cultural norms and catered to the needs of villagers.

The Samoan Government enacted all aspects of disaster management: risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery. Throughout the disaster management cycle there was a focus on future improvement. The building of homes and *fales* was carried out in accordance with the 'build back better' philosophy. Low lying villages were relocated to high ground and as noted in Chapter Five, policies, plans and procedures have been modified as a result of lessons learnt from this tsunami.

The Samoan Government was supported in their efforts by international partners including New Zealand, Australia, multilateral organisations such as the UN and a host of local and overseas NGOs. This assistance was vital to the recovery, from help with the coordination of the response, the deployment of armed servicemen

and specialists, equipment, funds and knowledge, through to food, clothing and general supplies.

For individuals affected by the tsunami, the greatest contributor to their livelihood recovery was arguably support from overseas kin and their social networks. This aid was prompt and involved emotional support, the provision of goods, money and labour. These findings are in-line with literature discussed in Chapter Three which highlighted the importance of social capital in recovery following a disaster. The overseas assistance is similar to that provided by local Samoans and this, together with the role *fa'a Samoa* played in aid donation and distribution, is now examined within Chapter Seven.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Support from Resident Samoans - *Fa'a Samoa*, Assistance and Livelihood Recovery

*And the country has responded with open arms,
open wallets and open hearts
(Lesa, 2009).*

Introduction

Chapter Six investigated aid from official, NGO and overseas sources. Building on these findings, Chapter Seven examines the assistance provided by Samoan residents. Findings from Chapters Six and Seven are then used to answer the main research questions, the results of which can be found in Chapter Eight. Initially direct assistance from unaffected communities is examined to provide a comparison to that supplied by formal channels.

Next results related to the role *fa'a Samoa* played in the provision and distribution of aid is examined. Key influencing aspects including Christianity, village governance, family, customary land, love and reciprocity are analysed. Chapter Seven concludes with an exploration of the ways in which assistance from unaffected communities aided sustainable recovery.

Direct Assistance from Non-affected Villages and Churches to Affected Villages

During the response phase, the assistance provided was timely and arguably involved all resident Samoans. As Lesa's quote at the beginning of this chapter shows, the Samoan people responded

generously. We begin with Village S where villagers and church members responded in a variety of ways. This response consisted of the donation of goods, the provision of labour, and the offering of prayers. Aid received by Village U is then examined with patterns and trends discussed throughout.

Donated goods

The tsunami destroyed homes, businesses, household and personal items, leaving many families with no material possessions. As news of the destruction filtered through to non-affected communities, villagers rallied to provide assistance in any way they could. As can be seen from Table 3, all twenty four respondents acknowledged the donation of food.

Within Village S, respondents either personally donated or had knowledge of the donation of a variety of goods. Eight out of nine mentioned that they themselves or members of their villages donated clothing and labour. Whereas, six of nine respondents discussed the donation of money. There was a variety of other forms of assistance mentioned, including the donation of kitchen items and materials related to the provision of water and shelter.

Table 3: Table showing the type of assistance that Samoans were aware of that was donated or received during the tsunami response.

Types of Assistance										
Interviewee	Food	Clothes	Kitchen items	Money	Labour	Pray	Mats	Water & Bucket & Water tanks	Tent	Provide care
Village S (Donor Village- Assistance given)										
Talking Chief	1	1				1				
Viliamu	1	1		1	1			1		
Telila	1	1		1	1	1	1			

Fred	1	1	1		1			1	1	1
Lee	1		1	1	1		1			
Talking Chief 2	1	1	1		1	1		1	1	
Ana	1	1	1	1	1					
High Chief	1	1		1	1					
Pastor	1	1		1	1	1	1			
sub total	9	8	4	6	8	4	3	3	2	1
Key Informant										
Interviewee	Food	Clothes	Kitchen items	Money	Labour	Pray	Mats	Water & Bucket & Water tanks	Tent	Provide care
Alisi	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1
Winnie	1			1	1			1		1
Rewa	1	1	1	1	1			1		1
Grace	1	1			1			1	1	1
Rose	1	1		1	1					
Masi	1	1	1	1	1				1	1
sub total	6	5	3	5	6	0	1	4	3	5
Village U (Affected Village-assistance received)										
Puli	1	1	1	1	1			1	1	
Mara	1	1		1	1				1	
Connie	1	1		1	1			1	1	
Emma	1	1		1	1					1
Sara	1	1	1	1	1			1		
High Chief	1	1	1	1	1					
Fisherman	1	1			1			1		
Aleki	1	1	1	1	1			1		
Pastor	1	1		1	1			1	1	1
sub total	9	9	4	8	9	0	0	6	4	2
TOTAL	24	22	11	19	23	4	4	13	9	8

Within Village S donated items from villagers and church groups were collected and taken to the roadside to await pickup from government trucks at the pre-arranged time. These trucks went around Savaii collecting gifts from each village which were then transported to the DMO centre for processing and distribution. The donation and collection of goods from villages is best described by Fred, Village S when he said:

Our village and other villages gathered everything we could at the time of the call and took it to the road and waited for the people who were going to collect and take it to Apia. Every village in the country that was not affected by the tsunami gathered everything they could: clothing, buckets to collect water, tents, deodorant, spoons, forks, bowls, because we knew they would have nothing at all. Mats, that was a very big help because there was nowhere to sit on. There were no tents at the time and they had nowhere to go, they sat under the trees on the mats

Fred, *Matai*, Village S.

Church donations were similar to those of Village S and included: money, fine mats, food, utensils and clothing. Churches within Samoa provided gifts for the relief efforts. Each church had a centre in Apia where villages could bring their donations to and the church then distributed either through official or church channels.

Many families in Apia donated packaged food such as a sack of rice, a sack of sugar or a packet of biscuits. This compares to Village S where donated food consisted mainly of what was available in the plantations, with taro and bananas the most frequently specified.

There were two main reasons for this. Firstly, this food was free and readily accessible. Secondly, according to Pastor, Village S, the villagers assumed that “all the plantations were destroyed in the tsunami.” Fortunately this was not the case as the majority of plantations were on high ground, well out of reach of the waves. The donation of goods is summed up by Alisi:

Local people provided what they had available within their plantations or stores, in their houses, their pantries, whatever they had. They tried to put something together to just help out financially whether it was 10 *tala* or 20 *tala*, or through the radio-a-thon

Alisi, Disaster Management Official.

Table 3 also shows that all nine respondents from Village U mentioned donations of food, eight mentioned clothing, six mentioned money, four mentioned kitchen equipment and three discussed the provision of water, buckets or water tanks. There was no mention of fine mats² from Village U respondents. This was surprising considering the importance placed on mats within Samoan culture and the donation of them was discussed by three Village S respondents, one key informant and Wendt Young (2010) in her book Pacific Tsunami “*Galū Afi*”. Anecdotal conversations within Village U, led me to believe that many villagers from Village U received fine mats, but I have no knowledge as to why respondents did not mention them.

Volunteer Labour

Twenty three of the twenty four respondents mentioned the provision of labour following the tsunami. Within Village S, the High

² Fine mats are among the most precious possessions a Samoan can own. Each fine mat is made by a master weaver. Fine mats have the highest honorific and monetary value and are presented at important events such as the death of an important person, weddings, opening of churches or christenings (Akuhata-Brown, 1966).

Chief, in his role as *pulenu'u*, received a call requesting young men join Government and NGO workers to help rebuild affected communities. The young men chosen travelled to Apia along with “one member of each [Mormon] family to help out” (Viliamu, beach *fale* manager, Village S). Together with youth from nearby Savaii villages, they were assigned to affected villages. The young men worked in the village during the day, returning to Apia at night, where accommodation and food was provided for them or sourced through family ties.

Volunteers undertook a variety of tasks including carrying things to high ground, clearing rubble around the sites of former homes or helping prepare ground within the plantations for shelter. When discussing the work undertaken, one of the volunteers, Lee, (untitled young man, Village S) explained that they helped villagers clear rubbish, build *fales* and tents, as well as prepare food for the local village and the people who helped. Further comments and reflections from key informants and respondents from Village U regarding labour can be found in the section ‘Local Aid and its Effects on Sustainable Livelihoods’ at the end of this chapter.

Limitations to Assistance

As already noted, all respondents donated food, clothing and/or household goods. But for some, the call for financial donations was problematic. Many Samoan families lead a subsistence lifestyle while others, such as professionals and beach *fale* owners, are more financially secure.

Not only were members of Village S contributing to the recovery through village and church committee efforts, they were also contributing to school, work and public fundraising events. The national radio-thon was one such example, where people were able to pledge their assistance, monetarily or with goods. Another example

was the financial contributions from staff and students at the local high school:

The principal and staff met and we decided we had to provide for the victims. The students provided 5 *tala* upwards. We collected this in our classes, and we collected 1,500 *tala*. The teachers donated 20 *tala* each. This added up to 2,000 *tala* in total, including the student's donation. We gave the money to the board and then they decided where it would go to

Ana, teacher, Village S.

There was acknowledgement from four respondents including Ana that many members of Village S did not have spare money to donate to the recovery. This knowledge influenced the village *fono's* (council of chiefs) resulting in a request that villagers contribute only what they could spare.

Local people they don't have money. But whatever they could gather, they gathered, [such as] fruits, whatever they could afford or gather. That is what they took

Talking Chief, Village S.

So far in this Chapter and Chapter Six we have examined the types of assistance offered and its distribution. The concerns outlined with relation to the distribution of gifts point to the complexities around *fa'a Samoa*. Significant aspects of *fa'a Samoa* include love, sharing, family and Christianity as well as the more contentious aspects associated with social organisation. To fully understand the tsunami response and recovery, these cultural influences are now studied.

***Fa'a Samoa* and Its Contribution to the Response and Recovery**

Chapter Five defined *fa'a Samoa*, the cultural framework of Samoa as consisting of three pillars; *matai*, *aiga* and the church, where these pillars enforce/reinforce the day to day cultural practices and traditions of the Samoan community. *Fa'a Samoa* influences all aspects of Samoan life, consequently, it is not surprising that all twenty four respondents commented that *fa'a Samoa* had a significant influence on the way resident Samoans responded to the tsunami. An example of these comments is:

Fa'a Samoa played a large role in ensuring people got back to normal right away. I think a lot of donors were impressed with people's quick responses to the tsunami and being able to deal with it psychologically and socially as well

Masi, Government Worker.

The respondents recalled many factors that were considered to have influenced recovery of affected villages. Once analysed, six recurring aspects of *fa'a Samoa* appeared and these are outlined within Table 4. This table provides an easy to read comparison of the aspects of *fa'a Samoa* which influenced the response to and recovery from the tsunami. While this table, like Table 3 previously, include key informants, this thesis is predominantly concerned with results pertaining to Villages S and U. Within the donor village, Village S, it was Christianity, love, family and reciprocity that were most frequently mentioned as influencing aspects of *fa'a Samoa*. This compares to Village U, the affected village, where according to respondents family, village governance, staying together on customary land and Christianity played the greatest roles. These factors are considered now.

Table 4: How *fa'a Samoa* influenced the response and recovery

Interviewee	Love	Christianity	Stay together on customary land	Reciprocity	Family/ All of Samoa related	Village governance
Village S (Donor Village)						
Talking Chief	1	1		1	1	1
Viliamu	1	1				1
Telila	1	1			1	
Fred	1	1		1	1	1
Lee	1	1		1		1
Talking Chief 2,	1	1				1
Ana		1		1	1	1
High Chief		1				1
Pastor	1	1			1	1
Subtotal/9	7	9	0	4	5	8
Key Informants						
Masi		1	1			1
Rewa					1	1
Rose	1	1				1
Grace		1		1	1	1
Winnie		1			1	
Alisi		1	1			1
Subtotal/6	1	5	2	1	3	5
Village U (Affected Village)						
Puli		1	1		1	1
Mara		1	1		1	1
Connie		1	1		1	1
Emma		1	1	1	1	1
Sara			1		1	1
High Chief		1	1		1	1
Fisherman			1		1	
Aleki		1			1	1
Pastor		1	1		1	1
Subtotal/9	0	7	8	1	9	8
TOTAL/24	8	21	10	6	17	21

Christianity

Chapter Five discussed the importance of the church in the lives of Samoans, while Chapter Six discussed the role of the church and faith based organisations during the response and recovery phases. We now examine the way in which Christianity influenced the response to or recovery from the tsunami. It is important to note that while twenty one of the twenty four respondents commented that Christianity was influential, no one mentioned the word Christianity. Rather, they mentioned God, Jesus, Samoa is a Christian country or cited scripture.

As one of the three pillars of *fa'a Samoa*, the church provides structure, rigour and comfort. In times of stress or tragedy these roles take on greater importance and God is often the first thing Samoans turn to. This was the case on the 29th September 2009. On hearing of the tsunami three out of the nine respondents from Village S said that one of their first responses was to stop and pray for the victims of the tsunami (Refer Table 3). This was illustrated by the Pastor of Village S, when he commented that in the days after the tsunami:

We prayed for them day and night. Not only the church in Samoa, but also the church in New Zealand. Our people are praying people. In times of suffering or disaster like the tsunami we pray six times a day. We pray in the morning, in the afternoon and at other times

Pastor, Village S.

All nine respondents from Village S mentioned Christianity as a major influencing factor in their decision to assist with tsunami recovery (Table 4). Christian practices like charity, as seen in Luke 6:38 'give and it shall be given unto you,' underpin traditional Samoan cultural practices such as the provision of assistance in times of need. This resulted in a deep desire within the Samoan people to help those

affected. Another reason was that Samoa is considered to be founded by God and as a Christian country we come together and work together (High Chief, Village S). In a similar vein the Talking Chief explained that:

Samoa is a Christian country. We believe the more you give, the more you will receive from God. We give with all our hearts and we wait for the blessing from father in heaven. We believe that what we give will always be given back by our heavenly father, so there will be ways that he will bless us

Talking Chief, Village S.

Members of Village U did not mention any knowledge that prayers were said for them and other victims of the tsunami (Table 3). Despite this, all acknowledged the concern, outpouring of love, or gifts from non-affected Samoans. An example of which was Emma, teacher and *fale* owner, who noted that:

Straight after the tsunami, even though they don't know who is dying in this part of the country, who is missing, everyone cried out for what had happened on that day

Emma, *fale* owner, Village U.

Seven of the nine respondents from Village U acknowledged the influence of Christianity on their recovery. There was acknowledgement from the respondents that they received goods and assistance from church congregations, especially in the first weeks.

People from [the] tourism community, church community and Apia. Different types of churches around Samoa they all came and help[ed], cleaning 1-2 weeks

Puli *Matai*, Village U.

Within Village U, only three of the respondents acknowledged that they drew strength from God and their church following the tsunami, praying for guidance and assistance. I would have expected this number to have been greater following anecdotal conversations I had with the respondents and their families. An example is that Aleki's only reference to the Church, God or Christianity was the distribution of goods and the increased number of churches within the community. Yet from anecdotal conversations and our trips to church, he appeared to be a religious man who was very involved within his church. A possible answer to this discrepancy is that Christianity is so fundamental to the lives of Samoans that it was assumed to be a given, therefore not mentioned. Also, by asking how the church helped, respondents could have interpreted the church to be only the 'organisation' rather than including a deeper spiritual entity.

Three respondents expressed thanks to/acknowledged God for the help provided, including Connie who when discussing the assistance provided by the New Zealand and Australian Armed services commented:

I [was] never surprised about their help. I think God helped us. That why they came. I think God told the Christian story to them: go and help Samoans

Connie, beach *fale* owner, Village U.

While twenty one of the twenty four respondents considered that Christianity was an influencing factor in the response and recovery, it is clear from the findings that the intensity of that influence varied among respondents. As noted in Chapter Four: Methodology, every individual's reality is different. Within Village S, Christianity was the basis for many respondents' decision to assist. Key respondents' comments were based more on their observations of, interactions with, churches and faith based organisations in the days and months

following the tsunami. In comparison, some respondents from Village U expected greater assistance from their Church. While others were unhappy with the role the pastor played in the distribution of goods. The distribution of goods is examined further within the next section.

Village Governance

Within this thesis, village governance includes all individuals and committees, residing in the village, who have considerable influence over the day to day running of the village. This includes: *matai*, *fono* (council of chiefs), *pulenu'u*, village *komitis*, pastors and church councils. Twenty one of the twenty four respondents considered village governance to be an aspect of *fa'a Samoa* which influenced the response to and or recovery from the tsunami (Table 4). This figure includes eight of the nine respondents from Village S and eight of the nine from Village U.

Village governance has direct ties to two of the three pillars of *fa'a Samoa*, the church and *matai*. *Fa'a Samoa* asks that villagers and church parishioners follow the directives of their *matai*, *komitis*, pastor and church council. Consequently, village governance was highly influential, especially with regard to decisions made about the provision, distribution and utilisation of aid. An example, which has already been mentioned, is that of the young men who travelled to affected villages to provide assistance. It was village and church leaders who decided to send the men to Upolu, and within Village U it was the village governance structures which determined how best to utilise their assistance.

In the days following the tsunami the call went out from the Government to all village mayors, asking them to provide assistance. In response to this call the High Chief of Village S, in his role as the *pulenu'u*, called a meeting of the village council where it was decided

that the village would bring together anything they could spare. Following this meeting, other village committees including church committees met, discussing how best they could assist, and then placed requests for specific items to their members:

In our villages in Samoa we have different types of communities. Different types of associations, the women's *komiti*, the *matai komiti*, the untitled [men's] *komiti*. The women's *komiti* supplied utensils, the men's *komiti* supplied clothes, taro, baskets of banana. Like that

Ana, teacher, Village S.

The Government received daily updates from those working within the disaster zone. This multiple reporting, as discussed in Chapter Five, provided a continual flow of information on the extent of the devastation and the needs of individuals and villages alike. As a result of these reports, the Government requested that the mayors provide assistance on more than one occasion. Each request resulted in further meetings and donations. When I asked why there was conflicting information regarding what was donated and when these donations occurred, the High Chief of Village S noted that

There were several requests from the Government to each mayor. For the village, as well as collecting around 500 *tala*, we also collected food, clothes, whatever we could give. But it was at different times, [from] different committees

High Chief, Village S.

Just as the role of village governance was central to the procurement and collection of goods, village governance was also highly influential on the distribution of goods. Within Village U, the allocation of donations by *matai*, *komitis*, and church leaders proved controversial.

Despite the fact that Pastor U and many *matai* were complimentary of the way distribution was undertaken, several untitled villagers did not share their views. This controversy is explored now.

Almost as soon as aid began arriving, discussions occurred within Village U as to who was eligible for aid. The Pastor of Village U described how traditionally in Samoa to qualify as a *matai*, you must contribute to the wellbeing of the village and the local school. A result of this benefaction is that *matai* are entitled to any benefits the village receives. He went on to explain that there was a call by some in the village to have aid distributed on the *matai* basis, including to those unaffected *matai* living in Apia and overseas.

Each affected village had their own eligibility criteria and distribution system. Mindful of the hardship all residents of Village U had encountered, it was decided that the goods would be “only for the people who lived in Village U at the time of the tsunami” (Pastor, Village U). A distribution committee was formed, to ensure that donations were allotted fairly, consisting of members from all the village committees: *matai*, women’s and untitled men’s committees, as well as the High Chief and pastor. Donations which came through the Government disbursement channels were sent to the *pulenu’u*, while most church donations were sent to the Congregational Church pastor for distribution.

The Government delivered to the chief’s house in the centre of the village. The chief divided the goods by how many people in your family. So if you have more population, you get more food and gifts for your family. It was good

Connie, beach *fale* owner, Village U.

An aspect of *fa'a Samoa* is that information flows freely between all committees. If there is a problem, the *matai* are approached face to face or through one of the committees as highlighted by Connie:

Ladies in Samoa if they hear something wrong from the chiefs they will talk to them and tell them 'stop that, that is not right', and the chiefs listen

Connie, beach *fale* owner, Village U.

However, it appears that the chiefs didn't always listen to these concerns. Several interviewees expressed concern that goods were not distributed fairly. Aleki, a worker in his family beach *fale* business noted that while:

The *lavalava* were distributed evenly, other things were distributed depending on the quality of the goods in the container. The higher the rank of the person, the higher the quality of goods they got. Especially those people who were in the distribution committee, they kept good things for themselves

Aleki, untitled man, Village U.

Aleki explained that he felt that in times of tragedy like the tsunami, the traditional practice of the chief getting the best things should not occur. Rather everyone should be equal. Similarly, Mara commented that when the gifts were distributed by the committee members:

they said, Ok that is for the minister, that for the high chief. What about the rest of the village, what about us? I was very sad because lots of countries helped us because of the tsunami, and they give to the Samoan people not just the Minister

Mara, Shopkeeper, Village U.

Like the Pastor, the High Chief of Village U acknowledged there was anger and frustration within some villagers. He went on to comment that while it was his desire to make sure every family got the same amount of goods, there were still conflicts.

Matai, including the mayor, and church leaders were busy with tsunami related activities in the months following September 2009. Along with the on-going distribution of goods, they assisted villagers with the huge task of re-building. At the same time they were tending to the needs of their own families, as well as trying to meet the material/spiritual needs of all villagers. These findings are in-line with comments from Grace, a *matai* and multilateral development official. She believed that *fa'a Samoa* provides a safety net, a form of social welfare for the people, with each *matai* bearing responsibility for the welfare of his immediate and extended family. As part of that responsibility, *matai* encouraged their family members to support one another and resettle in the new village upon 'the mountain'.

As already stated church leaders carry considerable influence within their 'congregational' village. The reasons for this power and influence were discussed with five respondents. Representative of their comments is the following comment by Masi:

Following the arrival of the church in Samoa, there was a general understanding that God was more important than the High Chief and in the village the Pastor was perceived as being higher than anything else. But within the village community the village council is the umbrella which supports the church and provides protection to make sure no one will raise a hand against the work of the church

Masi, Government Worker.

Finally, another way in which village governance influenced the recovery was the way government politicians were perceived to have used/abused their power and influence to aid recovery within their villages. Following the tsunami the first villages to receive significant aid were those of senior politicians (Smith, 2011; Wendt Young, 2010). This is similar to anecdotal information obtained during my trip to Samoa in 2011 which showed that many Samoans perceived that the restoration of infrastructure was not carried out according to need. Rather it was undertaken according to the status and power of the village *matai*.

Family/‘All of Samoa is related’

As discussed previously, one of the three pillars of *fa’a Samoa* is family. Therefore it is of little surprise that seventeen of the twenty four respondents commented that family/‘all of Samoa is related’ had an influencing effect on their response to or recovery from the tsunami. The significant and vital assistance provided from overseas family was examined in Chapter Six. As this chapter focuses on Samoan to Samoan aid, the mention of family in this chapter refers to resident Samoans.

From my conversations with respondents, it appeared that no members of Village S had family members affected by the tsunami. Yet five respondents from Village S noted that their decision to assist was influenced by the belief that all of Samoa is related. One of the reasons for this belief is that through the centuries there has been very little migration into Samoa’s relatively small population. This has resulted in Samoans marrying Samoans; often one member of the married couple is from an outside village. This inter-village marriage has resulted in a vast network of kin ties throughout the country. As Telila a young mother and *fale* owner from Village S commented: “For

our people, even if you don't have any relatives affected, they are part of us. That is why we helped".

Within village U, all nine respondents believed that family was one of the most significant factors in their recovery (refer Table 4). Like Village S, members of Village U inferred or stated that everyone in Samoa is related including Emma: "Samoa is a one family, Samoa is one" (Emma, beach *fale* owner from Village U). For respondents from Village U, family influenced the recovery in a myriad of ways. Family provided tangible and intangible assistance and support, enabling those affected to draw strength and begin the process of recovery.

Fa'a Samoa is always strong in bonding families, people in disasters, like we had. It really plays a major role. Family comes from everywhere in Samoa. That is the real *fa'a Samoa*, it keeps us strong. It is good to know that there are always people around when something happens

Pastor, Village U.

One of the less obvious, but hugely important forms of assistance family provided was with psychological support. The pastor and three other respondents from Village U noted that while psychologists came to council and help members of the village, it was families and the church that was able to provide the greatest comfort and psychological support to those affected. His comments were similar to three other respondents. By staying and working together many families were able to draw strength from each other while utilising their collective labour. Connie, a mother and owner, in conjunction with her siblings, of a substantial beach *fale* business, highlighted this when she remarked:

Samoan life is all together like one family. *Fa'a Samoa*.
You see my family we all stay together, work together,
eat together and help each other

Connie, beach *fale* owner, Village U.

Family helped considerably with all aspects of rebuilding. Help consisted of physical, financial and material support, from local and as previously mentioned, overseas family members. All respondents in Village U provided examples of family, both within the village and from throughout Samoa, coming together to help clean up the rubble, rebuild homes and businesses:

My sisters and brothers and village came and helped me build my *fale*. They lived in villages near Apia, [but] they came and helped with the cleaning up and rebuilding and [gave] money to help the family

Sara, teacher, Village U.

Family responsibilities and family ties influenced the response of five respondents from Village U. Following the tsunami, Mara desired to return to New Zealand, where many of her children and grandchildren live:

When the tsunami finished I said 'Mum this is the time to go back', and she said 'Mara, if you want to go back with your husband go'. But who is going to look after her? I can't go back and leave her here. So this makes me stay

Mara, Shopkeeper, Village U.

Mara's decision to stay was influenced by her responsibility to, and love for, her mother. Likewise, it was family ties that influenced Emma and her husband's decision to return to the old village, rather than live permanently in their new home on the mountain. Emma's

only children, two daughters, died in the tsunami and are buried near their home at the coast and that was one reason to stay and rebuild their *fale* business. Another reason was:

Everyone was told to move inland but we were looking at recovering fully from what had happened. We wanted to put everything back even though it takes time for us, ages to do it. We are still trying our best to get everything back the way it was, to erase the memory of the tsunami

Emma, *fale* owner, Village U.

Staying together on customary land

Staying together on customary land was remarked on by ten of the twenty four respondents, as aspects of *fa'a Samoa* which had significant effects on the recovery. While no respondent from Village S discussed these aspects, they were mentioned by eight out of the nine Village U respondents.

Within Village U, in addition to land in the old coastal village, each family had land upon the mountain, much of which was used for plantations. The availability of 'safe' land, which people already owned and had an emotional link to, encouraged the villagers to settle on the mountain. "After the tsunami, we came up here. We have our plantation and we build our *fales* too" (High Chief, Village U). The High Chief elaborated on this comment, pointing out that many families chose to stay together as a family and a village. By doing so they were able to pool their resources and provide support to each other.

Following the tsunami, a few homes in the old village remained standing; suffering only water damage. Sara, teacher, Village U was the owner of one such house. However, she and her farmer husband

chose to relocate with her family and village to a new house on the mountain for two reasons. Firstly, her family wanted to stay together with their village. Secondly, by moving to their customary land, Sara's new home was adjacent to her husband's place of work, their plantation. Having her brother, mother and children near has enhanced the family's emotional security and meant they can work together to aid their recovery. This recovery includes livelihood recovery which is the final section of this chapter. But first, it is important to examine the final two aspects of *fa'a Samoa*, love and reciprocity, which were considered to have aided recovery.

Love

When asked in what ways *fa'a Samoa* influenced assistance to affected villages, eight out of twenty four respondents mentioned love (Table 4). This comprised of seven out of nine of the respondents in Village S, one key informant and no respondents from Village U. Within Village S, not only was love talked about in direct relation to this question, but love was frequently referred to throughout the interviews. Donations of goods, money and labour were seen by the donors as expressions of their love for fellow Samoans and their love of God. Talking Chief 2, encapsulated these sentiments when he said:

fa'a Samoa is love first. We share food with people, we show love for your neighbour even if you don't know him or her. We took things over to them due to our feelings of love. We don't care about our things. We feel love, they have none. The tsunami took it. We feel sorrow and love for them even if we are not related to them. That is a gift of God

Talking Chief 2, Village S.

It was this love of the affected and love of God which influenced the decision of Village S to provide assistance for the tsunami response.

This compares to the Village U where no respondents mentioned that love influenced or contributed to their recovery. The reason for this and other discrepancies was not discussed with respondents of either village. However, the most likely reason could be simply that respondents from both villages were asked different lead questions. In Village S, respondents were asked: in what ways has *fa'a Samoa* influenced assistance to affected villages? This compares to respondents from Village U who were asked: tell me about the ways that *fa'a Samoa* has influenced the recovery of effected villages?

Reciprocity

Of the six key aspects of *fa'a Samoa* which influenced the response and recovery, reciprocity was acknowledged the least. Only six of the twenty four respondents mentioned reciprocity, including only one of the nine respondents from Village U. Reciprocity which is an integral part of Samoan culture was discussed by four of the nine respondents within Village S (Table 4). The villagers noted that while they did not ask for, receive, or expect anything in return for their gifts to the affected, they knew the Samoan culture ensured they would receive assistance if ever they were in need. These sentiments are well represented by the views of Fred one of the senior matai within the village:

The Samoan way of life is we love one another, we are related when anyone is in need, we turn a lending hand and we know, someday when we are in need they will help us too

Fred, *matai*, Village S.

Fa'a Samoa was highly influential in the provision of aid to, and the recovery within, affected villages. With regard to the provision of aid, Christianity and love were the most significant aspects, followed by the belief that all Samoa is related/family, and knowledge that by

giving, donors will receive in times of need. This compares to the recovery within villages where village governance and family were considered the most highly influential aspects of *fa'a Samoa*. The community/family staying together and access to customary land were also seen to have influenced the recovery. This section has provided information to answer the third research question: To what extent has *fa'a Samoa* influenced the aid to and recovery of, affected villages following the tsunami? Answers to this and the other two questions are found within Chapter Eight.

Local Aid and its Effects on Sustainable Livelihoods

As discussed in Chapter Six, the role of assisting with livelihood recovery fell to a variety of organisations and individuals. These included the Samoan Government, overseas governmental aid organisations, NGOs, overseas Samoan family, friends, business acquaintances and *ex-fale* guests. Informal discussions with several donors, recipients and government workers occurred during my trips to Samoa in 2011. They reported awareness of the outpouring of assistance provided by resident Samoans to the affected communities. It was understood that this assistance was directed to the affected communities and was over a sustained period of time. As a result of these discussions, this thesis set out to explore to what extent assistance from unaffected communities in Samoa has had a positive, long lasting effect on sustainable livelihoods?

This research has found that most Samoan to Samoan assistance was provided during the *response* phase, rather than being directed towards sustainable livelihood recovery. As a result of this finding, this section focuses on ways in which Samoan assistance contributed indirectly to livelihood recovery, mainly the provision of labour during the response phase. It then moves on to identify impediments to this assistance aiding long term livelihood recovery.

The vast majority of donated goods and money provided by Samoans was directed through the central distribution system, resulting in limited direct Samoan village/church assistance to the affected communities. In instances where aid was directly provided to the villages in the form of goods, money or labour, most recipients were unaware of the source of this aid.

We didn't know where the people came from. The whole of Savaii showed love by coming here and sharing. It was very difficult to know where people and things came from

Sara, Teacher, Village U.

As a result of this, there was no clear trail between donor and recipient. Consequently, recipients had no way of knowing if the goods they received, like fishing nets, which could be used to support their livelihood, were a result of Samoan to Samoan aid, official sources or had been donated from overseas.

Assistance with Rebuilding Villages

The tsunami decimated Village U, along with many other villages in the Aleipata district. The ground was badly damaged: large holes had been gouged out, pools of stagnant salt water and debris covered the ground. Once the dead and injured were attended to, most villagers began the long task of establishing themselves and their family on the mountain. Many people during this time had two pressing concerns: the building of a permanent house/*fale* for their family and livelihood recovery. For some, livelihood recovery meant re-establishing their businesses (like shops) in the old village, for others, it was finding new sources of income, and for others it was returning to work fishing or on their plantations.

One of the first tasks was the clearing and sorting of rubble to retrieve personal items and any building and household materials

that could be reused. These materials were either transported up the mountain to their family land, or stockpiled for the rebuilding of beach *fales* and shops in the old village. In both the new and old village the preparation of land for building/rebuilding was a difficult task. In the old village, rubble needed to be completely removed and the land levelled before building could begin: as heavy machinery was in high demand, this could take many months. Some people chose not to wait:

I couldn't wait for the Government, it took too long. I wanted my business to rebuild fast. I loaned the money to pay for the machine to clean up the rubbish and landscape the land. I also pay for trucks to remove the rubbish and bring the sand back because ... the wave took a lot

Connie, beach *fale* owner, Village U.

Likewise, the establishment of a new home on the mountain was not an easy task. Access to the new village was via a dirt track and the building sites were either in virgin forest or plantations. During the response phase, assistance provided from overseas family and volunteers (discussed in Chapter Six) as well as local Samoans, had a positive flow-on effect to sustainable livelihood recovery.

As well as the assistance received from the two groups from Village S, (young men and the group from the Mormon Church), which was discussed in the section 'Volunteer labour' in this chapter, people from all areas and denominations assisted during the response phase. This was mentioned by many interviewees including Puli, who noted:

People from Savaii came and helped for cleaning and some people from the tourism community and church community in Apia. Different types of churches and

denominations from all around Samoa. They all came and helped with the cleaning-up for one to two weeks

Puli, *Matai*, Village U.

Mara commented that the vast majority of the cleaning, rubbish removal and levelling of the land around her home, shop and beach *fales* was carried out by herself and her husband. That said, Mara did note that her brother, a Congregational Pastor in Apia, brought his congregation to Village U on a daily basis for about a week to assist with the clean-up. While none of the assistance mentioned helped directly with livelihood recovery, it did allow people to move more quickly into the recovery phase.

Emotional Support

It was noted by Alisi, Disaster Management Official, that psychological support provided by unaffected villagers assisted with livelihood recovery. This support was also provided by both volunteer groups of men from Village S, who went “especially to comfort the people who had been shocked” (Fred, *Matai*, Village S). Samoan people are very proud of their villages, and many compete in village beautification contests. The work volunteers did in cleaning the village provided a psychological boost to villagers:

And then the village look beautiful. People were happy, it was nice to see the clean-up had been done. But some [people] were still very sad because some of their family died in the tsunami

Puli, *Matai*, Village U.

The psychological support, ‘happiness’ and assistance enabled many people to find the strength to begin the task of rebuilding their livelihoods. Emma, a teacher and *fale* owner, was the only person interviewed who mentioned the loss of close family members (two

daughters). Throughout her interview she spoke of the love and support she received following the tsunami. This support had been instrumental in helping her and her husband re-establish their livelihoods, having recently re-opened their beach *fales*.

Beach Fale Networks

Local beach *fale* networks played a small role in livelihood recovery. Like much of the tsunami ravaged coastline of Upolu, Village U is a key tourist area. While no one in Village S appeared to have kin involved in the tsunami, they did have longstanding business relationships with the affected beach *fale* businesses.

There is a business partnership because in Aleipata, the area with beach *fales*, we normally talk to that area every day for reservations. So that partnership was still there as business traders. That is one of the reasons we were quite strong[ly inclined] to help

Viliamu, beach *fale* manager, Village U.

Beach *fale* employees of both Village S and Village U commented that business relationships are similar to before, where they still continue to liaise with each other re bookings and guest requests. There was no mention of any direct assistance from beach *fales* in Village S to assist with the long term recovery of affected beach *fales* throughout the affected regions. However, Viliamu commented that his family, as beach *fale* owners, donated to the Samoan Tourism Authority appeal as it was specifically for affected tourism ventures. As this donation went into a government account it is not considered direct Samoan to Samoan livelihood recovery assistance. None of the twenty five interviewees had knowledge of any direct support for sustainable livelihood recovery from Samoan villages or local Samoan churches.

Impediments to Samoan to Samoan Assistance with Livelihood

Recovery

Livelihood recovery was difficult for a variety of reasons; including: fear of the sea, the financial impact on the affected and Samoa's lack of previous experience with a disaster of this scale. There were comments from some interviewees that they wished there had been assistance for livelihood recovery in the weeks immediately after the tsunami. These aspects will be examined now.

One of the reasons that the provision of Samoan voluntary labour didn't continue into the recovery phase was the financial cost to the recipient and the volunteer. For some of the victims, while the assistance was greatly appreciated, the cost of hosting volunteers was a financial burden which they were in no position to meet. When asked if she thought the month that the young men had come to the village to help was long enough, Emma, replied:

It was long enough. Remember we lost everything. When these people came, our culture says we should do something in return for the favour they did for us. We should cook for them we should give them a smoke, a drink. So it was long enough for us, we didn't have much to give back in return of the favour they did

Emma, *fale* owner, Village U.

Just as assistance incurred a cost for the recipient, it also came at a cost to the volunteers. While the men were away from home they were unable to tend their plantations, fish or carry out their normal livelihood practices. These factors meant that the volunteers were unable to be away from their village for a protracted length of time.

Tourism had a significant impact on livelihoods in the Aleipata region prior to the tsunami. In the weekends, in particular, the villages would often be inundated with visitors from Apia. Following the

tsunami, international tourist arrivals declined and many local Samoans stopped visiting the affected coastlines for recreational purposes. Domestic tourism can have a significant impact on sustainable livelihoods in coastal communities. This was one way that local communities could have supported livelihood recovery. As Aleki, a worker in his family owned beach *fale* business commented:

We need local support, sometimes tourism can happen if more locals come and visit. After the tsunami no locals came here because they were all afraid of the tsunami

Aleki, untitled man, Village U.

For many Samoans not only were they now afraid of the sea, they were also unable to holiday in a region which was the scene of so much death and destruction. As one Samoan NGO worker who used to holiday in the area commented: "It is not the same. People have lost their lives there; I can't swim in the sea there" (Rose, NGO worker).

Conclusion

As soon as local people became aware of the tsunami they responded. Villagers willingly provided material goods, cash and labour during the response phase. Continued assistance for livelihood recovery was limited by three factors. Samoa is a poor country and the financial cost associated with providing additional aid, was a cost many villagers were ill equipped to meet. Likewise, field researches showed, due to cultural norms, recipients were expected to show tangible thanks to volunteers. To people who had lost everything, this was a huge burden. Finally and possibly most significantly, assistance from individual villages or through the Samoan Government was not requested for livelihood recovery. As a result, many respondents had not considered that affected villages needed additional/on-going help.

The response of resident Samoans was in accordance with the customs, beliefs and social norms associated with *fa'a Samoa*. Non-affected Samoans gave willingly as not only Christianity but also tradition reinforces the need to help their fellow man/family in times of need. Additionally, Samoa is a hierarchical country, where people of stature including *matai* and religious leaders are respected and their wishes are followed. Field research showed that villagers observed the wishes of *matai*, the pastor and village committees, assisting as and when they requested.

Likewise, the recovery within affected villages was dictated by aspects of *fa'a Samoa* where respect and reverence was also displayed. All affected villagers followed the wishes of *matai* to relocate to the new village. For some this meant building a new home on the mountain while maintaining another shelter in the old village, adjacent to their tourist related business. For others it meant permanently relocating to high ground. Also, even though there was dissention with regard to the distribution of gifts, villagers abided by the wishes of the *matai*, pastor and the distribution committee.

Social capital was shown to have a significant role in the immediate and long-term recovery of all affected Samoans. Villagers with strong bonding and bridging social capital were shown to have had the most significant recovery. For some it was links with overseas visitors to Samoa, and acquaintances which were hugely beneficial, for others it was local family. This and other aspects of the response and recovery is examined further in the final chapter of this thesis, Chapter Eight: Discussion and Conclusions.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Discussion and Conclusions- Acknowledging Cultural Frameworks as the Heart of Development

One thing that came out was the fast recovery. Samoan people recovered faster than other countries and the culture had a lot to do with that

Rewa, NGO Official.

Introduction

Research into the Samoan tsunami, response and recovery, and development research in general has clearly shown that people are central to development. Initially this thesis focused on *fa'a Samoa* and livelihood recovery. Following field research, it became clear that a bigger issue needed to be addressed, that is, the role of cultural frameworks in development. With this in mind, the objectives were re-examined and modified to accommodate this focus.

This chapter draws on the literature, reviewing it in light of the research findings to reveal how cultural frameworks, including *fa'a Samoa*, influence disaster response and recovery and development in general. This discussion is undertaken in five parts: research questions 1, 2 and 3, and objectives 1 and 2. Chapter Eight is brought to a close with the conclusion, consisting of: recommendations on crucial points arising from the discussion and areas for further research.

The overarching finding of this thesis is that development should employ an approach in which the acknowledgement of cultural frameworks moves from desirable to an essential requirement of policy and practice. Research findings show that central to the recovery of Samoan communities following the tsunami, and their development in general, is the Samoan cultural framework: *fa'a*

Samoa. By drawing on *fa'a Samoa*, Samoan communities were able to recover their livelihood with the provision of less official assistance than would have otherwise been required.

As outlined in Chapter One, the aim of this research project was to investigate:

How did *fa'a Samoa* influence livelihood recovery in Samoa following the 2009 tsunami?

The objectives of this thesis are as follows:

1. To examine how unaffected villages and church communities within Samoa contributed to the recovery of sustainable livelihoods in affected Samoan villages.
2. To examine how important cultural frameworks, (especially *fa'a Samoa*) are for development.

These objectives were addressed by way of village case studies and interviews with key informants utilising the three central research questions below:

1. Following the tsunami, in what ways did direct village/church aid from non-affected to affected villages compare to that from formal channels?
2. To what extent has assistance from unaffected communities in Samoa had a positive, long lasting effect on sustainable livelihoods?
3. To what extent has *fa'a Samoa* influenced the aid to and recovery of, affected villages following the tsunami?

Brief Overview of the Thesis and Reflection on Key Concepts

This thesis was undertaken using critical qualitative research to examine two case studies, one an unaffected donor village, Village S from Savaii, the other a tsunami affected village, Village U, from Upolu. This research was supported by interviews with key informants from Apia and a literature review as outlined below.

Chapter Two examined definitions of sustainable livelihoods and social capital before noting that the achievement of sustainable development requires social capital. Aspects of social capital pertinent to this thesis were shown to be bonding and bridging social capital, trust and reciprocity. Chapter Three provided definitions for disasters and disaster terminology followed by an examination of contemporary disaster trends. The significance of social capital in disaster response and recovery was discussed, revealing that communities with high social capital were more resilient to the effects of disasters.

The literature review concluded in the first section of Chapter Five. This section investigated the components of *fa'a Samoa*, contending that social capital exists in Samoa as *fa'a Samoa*. The history of disasters and disaster relief in Samoa was then discussed before closing with the disaster management processes and structures in place within Samoa.

Chapter Four, Methodology reflected on how the author's positionality influenced all aspects of methodology, including planning for and undertaking fieldwork, limitations and data analysis. Chapters Six and Seven presented results from the field work with Chapter Six focusing on assistance from formal channels and non-resident Samoans. Chapter Seven investigated direct aid from

resident Samoan communities, the role *fa'a Samoa* played in the response to and recovery from the tsunami, and the ways assistance from unaffected communities aided sustainable recovery.

In concluding this thesis, it is valuable to reflect on some of the concepts which are central to this thesis. Within the disaster management cycle, response is the relatively short emergency phase (Coppola, 2007; The Government of Samoa, 2006c) where immediate support to affected people is provided in the form of search and rescue, and the provision of essential supplies. This compares to the recovery phase which ranges from weeks to several years, and as Collins (2009) outlined, is a process which aims to fully restore infrastructure, lives and livelihoods.

Drawing on the literature explored in Chapter Two, I defined the cultural framework of any given community as the values, traditions and beliefs which cement the community together. The Samoan cultural framework is considered to be *fa'a Samoa* which consists of three interconnected pillars; *matai* (chiefs), *aiga* (extended family, kin group), and the church (Penn, 2010; Samoa Tourism Authority, 2011; Thornton, et al., 2010), where these three pillars enforce/reinforce the day to day cultural practices and traditions of the Samoan community. There is a strong overlap between the cultural framework of Samoa, *fa'a Samoa* and a Samoan community. A Samoan community comprises a group of people within the geographical confines of a village (*nu'u*) which includes the members of the church, *aiga* (extended kin groups) and associated leaders, minister, *matai* (chief) and *pulenu'u* (mayor).

The final key term which we need to be reacquainted with is social capital. A review of the literature in Chapter Two showed that social capital consists of cultural norms and social networks, and it is these networks which can be called upon in times of need to render

assistance (Adler, 2011; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Importantly, social capital is considered to exist in Samoa as *fa'a Samoa* (O'Brien & Stewart-Withers, 2006; Stewart-Withers, 2008).

Question 1: Following the tsunami, in what ways did direct village/church aid from non-affected to affected villages compare to that from formal channels?

Traditionally Samoan communities are self-reliant, drawing on their knowledge, resources and family networks in times of hardship. In spite of this, the extent of this disaster necessitated significant outside assistance, from villages, churches, governments and NGOs. Research findings revealed that direct village and church aid from non-affected villages was significantly different to that supplied by formal channels. Non-affected villages and Samoan church communities were only involved in the response phase. Aid included spiritual support, food, non-perishable items, labour and donations of *tala*. This compared to formal channels which played a significant role in disaster management, especially the response and recovery phases. Note: national and international church aid is discussed within Question 3.

Formal channels were responsible for the overall co-ordination of the response and recovery, with ultimate responsibility resting with the Samoan Government (Logistics Cluster, 2009; Overseas Security Advisory Council, 2012; The Government of Samoa, 2006c, 2010). Tasks undertaken included co-ordinating the collection and distribution of donations, the provision of specialists and equipment, co-ordinating the psycho-social response and the rebuilding of homes. In addition, formal channels were responsible for the restoration of infrastructure and the administration of beach *fale* rebuilding grants.

The rebuilding of homes highlighted both the role of the Government and the importance of working within the cultural framework of

disaster survivors. Literature within Chapter Three noted that following a disaster, new housing is often inappropriate to the needs of the people. Following the Boxing Day tsunami, housing in India ignored traditional knowledge and cultural practices, resulting in over-crowded 'sweatbox' homes (Parr, 2009; Sugimoto, et al., 2011).

In comparison, the Samoan Government undertook to provide survivors with two culturally and environmentally appropriate replacement housing options. Both options required survivors to contribute to the construction of their homes, thereby reinforcing the traditional cultural practices of work and mutual support. Additionally, contributing to the construction of their home, reduced the likelihood of affected villagers becoming aid depended.

Question 2: To what extent has assistance from unaffected communities in Samoa had a positive, long lasting effect on sustainable livelihoods?

Literature has argued that one of the key goals of disaster recovery is to restore livelihoods (Cannon, et al., 2003; Nakagawa & Shaw, 2004; Parr, 2009; Ruawanpura, 2008). To enable this to happen requires social capital. It was argued, within Chapters, Two, Three and Five, that communities or individuals with strong social capital were more resilient, compared to individuals and communities with weak social capital who struggled to respond to and recover from a disaster (Adler, 2011; Aldrich, 2011; Chtouris & Tzelepoglou, 2011). Research findings show this was also the case in Samoa.

Social capital can be divided into bonding, bridging and linking social capital, each of which provides resilience and aids livelihood recovery. Studies into the recovery of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010) and wards in Kobe following the Kobe earthquake (Aldrich, 2011; Shaw & Goda, 2004), brought to light that bonding social capital aided recuperation during

the response phase while, bridging and linking social capital aided livelihood recovery.

Research findings revealed there were no instances or knowledge of direct Samoan to Samoan assistance for livelihood recovery. However, there were examples of indirect support, as a result of bonding and bridging social capital, in the initial stages of remediation. This included assistance with psycho-social support, removal of rubble, vegetation and the levelling of land, as well as transportation of goods to new villages and the provision of shelter. As a result, villagers begin the task of livelihood recovery sooner than would otherwise have been feasible.

The reasons that non-affected communities did not provide direct assistance for livelihood recovery are twofold. Firstly, there is the cultural expectation that family networks rather than villages will provide support in times of need (Iati, 2000; Va'a, 2006). Secondly, some individuals and businesses supported livelihood recovery by donating to the Government appeal rather than directly to affected villages. Field research findings also showed that there was an expectation amongst key informants and respondents from Village S that the Samoan Government and NGO's would assist with livelihood recovery.

Grants from the Samoan Government and overseas donors had a significant positive impact on the livelihood of those families who owned beach *fale* businesses. However, grants were not available for the re-establishment of other livelihoods such as shops. There were strict criteria attached to beach *fale* grants, in-part to ensure that *fales* followed the build back better principle. This is in-line with the contention that disaster recovery should upgrade livelihoods and living conditions (Kennedy, et al., 2008; Nakagawa & Shaw, 2004).

Research clearly showed that overall, the greatest determinant of livelihood recovery was donations of *tala* and goods from overseas family, and to a limited extent, friends and acquaintances including *ex-fale* guests. Survivors used these overseas donations to purchase livelihood related equipment and rebuild shops, beach *fales*, and homes. This supports findings from Khao Lak, Thailand, following the Boxing Day tsunami (Calgaro, et al., 2009), that social capital in the form of kinship and tourism networks aided livelihood recovery.

Question 3: To what extent has *fa'a Samoa* influenced the aid to and recovery of, affected villages following the tsunami?

The simplistic answer to this question is: dramatically. *Fa'a Samoa* influenced every aspect of the aid to and recovery of affected villages. As the cultural framework of Samoa, *fa'a Samoa* guides the decisions of government, church, village, family and individuals. Findings showed that the areas of *fa'a Samoa* which were most influential were village governance, Christianity, family/all of Samoa is related, love, staying together on customary land, and reciprocity. While all aspects are considered, this discussion focuses on the three most significant aspects: village governance, Christianity and family.

Village Governance

As mentioned in Chapter Seven village governance includes: *matai*, *fono* (council of chiefs), *pulenu'u*, village *komitis*, pastors and church councils. The Samoan Government (2006c) and key informers considered the *pulenu'u* had an important role in disaster management, including liaising with the Government and providing impact assessment information. This compares to respondents from Villages S and U, who virtually ignored the role of *pulenu'u*. Rather, they credited village *komitis*, pastors and church councils as influencing aid to and recovery in affected villages.

Matai have several roles including, making decisions for their individual *aiga* and the village, as well as, controlling the collection and distribution of gifts and financial contributions (Thornton, et al., 2010). Field research showed that these cultural practices occurred in the aftermath of the tsunami. Responsibility for the collection and distribution of goods was undertaken by *matai*, various committees and church leaders, while *matai* were charged with deciding where to relocate the village.

Literature, including findings by Wendt Young (2010) and Kumaran & Torris (2011) show that the distribution of goods when left to people with influence or power can be contentious. Field research revealed that this was the case in Samoa, as the distributions of goods were undertaken along traditional cultural lines. As a result, many respondents expressed satisfaction while others voiced loud objects.

Christianity

There is significant literature, including that discussed in Chapters Two, Three and Five (Carballo, et al., 2005; Clarke, 2006; Farran, 2010; Schininà, et al., 2010), to show that religion influences the degree of resilience within an affected population, is highly networked and is embedded within the Samoan culture. Christianity, including the associated Christian principle of love, was found to be the greatest determining factor influencing the decision of non-affected villagers to contribute to the recovery. Coupled with their desire to help, was trust that as a result of their assistance, Samoans would receive blessings from God.

Research findings also showed that the utilisation of social capital by religious organisations within Samoa was limited. Few affected villagers were aware of support from Samoan churches/church organisations. Students and teachers from the three theological

colleges assisted with the psycho-social response, yet none of the affected respondents acknowledged the provision of this *palagi* based psycho-social support. Rather, findings show that the deep spirituality, strong family and community networks associated with *fa'a Samoa* catered too many of their psycho-social needs. This finding supports the position advocated by researchers including McGregor (2010) and Shan (2007) that there is limited need for western-style psycho-social responses within indigenous communities. Rather, traditional spiritual, social, and health practices should be supported.

Within the recovery phase, faith based assistance appeared to fall mainly to overseas organisations such as Habitat for Humanity and Elam Church who assisted in rebuilding homes. This finding is not surprising as it is in-line with the cultural framework of Samoan society whereby church leaders contend that responsibility for the care of people rests with the family, not the church. Accordingly Pastor, Village S, noted that it is “the church’s role to ‘feed and clothe’ the spirit while it is the *aiga’s* [family’s] role to ‘feed and clothe’ the man.” As a result, there is a lack of church initiated community welfare programmes within Samoa (Thornton, et al., 2012).

Samoan Families- Social capital in action

Family are an important asset which can be called on in times of need (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Therefore, it is of little surprise that the research findings showed that a significant determinant in the recovery of affected villages was family, one of the three pillars of *fa'a Samoa*. Immediate and extended family from within Samoa and overseas assisted in several ways.

Local Samoans provided tangible items, and those able to, travelled to the scene of the devastation to provide emotional and physical

support to loved ones. Equally, Samoans living overseas, mainly within New Zealand, American Samoa, Australia and USA, provided emotional support via telecommunications, significant financial support via remittances and many returned home to assist loved ones. This is a reflection of the Samoan cultural framework, *fa'a Samoa*, where family members are expected to serve/assist all members of the *aiga* and distance does not diminish the strength of these bonds.

A lack of family ties has a significant impact on the livelihood recovery of individuals and communities (Woolcock, 2002). In a similar vein, Bird, et al., (2011) noted that Samoan communities with strong family connections, including many family members living overseas, were more resilient to the effects of the tsunami. These assertions are consistent with findings from the field, which showed that survivors with overseas kin and strong bonding and bridging social capital, were found to more resilient than those without.

Literature brought to light that disaster-susceptible communities utilise their strong bonding social capital, drawing on each other and their families, to aid their recovery (Bankoff, 2007). Research findings concurred, showing that by staying together and rebuilding under the direction of the *matai*, families and the village as a whole were able to draw emotional and physical strength from each other. This is in-line with findings from the boxing day tsunami where McGilvray & Lawrence (2010) found that staying together provided emotional and tangible support, which in-turn aided livelihood recovery. Field research showed that access to customary lands enabled families to move on mass, thereby retaining the cultural framework of the village and its associated social capital. This is in accordance with the literature in Chapter Five which highlighted that family and customary land tenure provided resilience (Bird, et al., 2011; Cave, 2009).

Objective 1: To examine how unaffected villages and church communities within Samoa contributed to the recovery of sustainable livelihoods in affected Samoan villages

The overwhelming finding was that unaffected communities within Samoa did not contribute to the recovery of sustainable livelihoods in any tangible way. However, as mentioned previously, the provision of emotional support, goods and labour during the response phase enabled villagers to return to livelihood related activities, at an earlier stage than would have otherwise been possible. Livelihood related activities were found to be varied, but predominantly consisted of tending plantations, fishing and re-establishing beach *fales* and shops.

Objective 2: To examine how important cultural frameworks, (especially *fa'a Samoa*) are for development

The most important thing in the world is people and no more so than in relation to development. Research into the Samoan tsunami revealed that utilising the cultural framework of a community, in this case *fa'a Samoa*, can result in many positive effects. These include, optimising aid, delivering development outcomes appropriate to the needs of the people, reducing the amount of formal assistance required to aid livelihood recovery, strengthening communities and empowering survivors.

Chapter Three explored the call from development theorists and practitioners to acknowledge culture when undertaking development. With some, including Gegeo (1998) and Marsella, Johnston, Watson, & Gryczynski (2008) moving from acknowledging culture to contending that for development to succeed, practice must be based on indigenous knowledge and needs. This links clearly with the research findings which show that the cultural framework of Samoa with its strong emphasis on chiefly system of governance, family, reciprocity,

love, church and customary land tenure, provided Samoans with the knowledge, leadership, and collective strength to enact recovery. In spite of this, disaster management policy and practice utilised *palagi* (Western) methodology, relying to a large extent on overseas aid and international development experts. The only significant acknowledgement of the Samoan cultural framework was that of the role of the *pulenu'u* (mayor) by the Samoan Government (2006c).

Following a disaster, there is a sudden influx of non-resident humanitarian and disaster-related cash, goods, personnel and organisations into the affected areas. An illustration of this is that following the Boxing Day tsunami 400 organisations provided relief in Banda Aceh alone (Pettit, et al., 2011). Samoan fieldwork findings revealed that the work undertaken by many international responders was vital to the immediate and long term wellbeing of the survivors. Yet, literature in Chapter Three also highlighted the negative effects of foreign involvement on resident populations can include: undermining their cultural frameworks and weakening their ability to undertake their own recovery (Cosgrave, 2007; Kennedy, et al., 2008; Shah, 2007). Likewise, literature shows that to reduce the likelihood of communities becoming aid dependent, it is important that these communities are able draw on traditional practices and networks to assist recovery.

With this in mind, the Samoan Government and some development organisations drew in part on the cultural framework of Samoa, *fa'a Samoa* and its inherent social capital. An example of this was the desire from Samoan aid coordinators that Samoans accompanied *palagi* response and recovery practitioners in the field. This ensured that not only was a translator on hand but that culturally appropriate assistance was delivered. Calling on local residents to provide aid during the response phase is another illustration of culturally inclusive practice, and this is discussed now.

As a result of advances in telecommunications and associated disaster reporting, international donations of aid flood into many disaster zones, much of which is unsolicited or inappropriate (Dowty, 2011; 2011; McEntire, 2007; Pettit, et al., 2011; Telford & Cosgrave, 2007). As indicated in the findings the generosity of overseas donors was appreciated and acknowledged but some unsolicited aid became a burden to the Samoan Government. This was due to the costs associated with receiving, sorting and disposing of inappropriate aid.

In comparison to overseas aid, local Samoan assistance was culturally and environmentally appropriate. By utilising the cultural knowledge, and cultural framework of the Samoan people, the Government through its local social networks was able to source appropriate aid. This met the needs of those affected, without placing a significant strain on the resources of the Government and non-affected villages.

Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

The aim of this thesis was to determine how *fa'a Samoa* influenced livelihood recovery Samoa following the 2009 tsunami. Research uncovered two clear findings. *Fa'a Samoa* provided resilience, structure, guidance, emotional support and encouraged the provision of aid from the local community. This assistance was vital during the response phase and enabled the affected to move more quickly into the recovery phase. Secondly, it was bonding social capital, especially with local and overseas family that provided the most significant influence on livelihood recovery, coupled with access to grants.

Recommendations- Policy and practice

A key purpose of development research is to foster a better understanding of pertinent issues and use this information to enhance existing development policy and practice. With this in mind, research findings have been examined against the literature. Research showed that in the aftermath of the tsunami there was official recognition that as part of *fa'a Samoa*, local and overseas families would fulfil their obligations to assist kin in times of need. However, no procedures were put in place to encourage and ease this process. Similarly, non-affected resident Samoans commented that they would have assisted with livelihood recovery, but unlike the response phase where a call to assist was sent out to all non-affected villages and church congregations, this did not happen for the recovery phase. As a result the Samoan government, aid organisations and affected villages did not draw on the resources of their fellow non-affected Samoans to assist livelihood recovery. In view of these findings I present the following three recommendations.

Recommendation One: Acknowledging cultural frameworks as an essential requirement of development policy and practice

Samoan village life is a collective lifestyle which draws on tradition, love, family, church, and village governance. *Matai* have a track record of leadership, wisdom and service. It is these qualities and experience which make *matai*, both collectively and individually, a valuable asset to call on for development.

The research shows that *matai*, to a limited extent, and *pulenu'u*, to a greater extent had a formal role to play in disaster management, but this was an adjunct to *palagi* based disaster policy and practice. By basing disaster management on the village governance structures of *matai*, *komitis* and church, along with utilising/fostering; networks, reciprocity and love, *fa'a Samoa* will become the foundation of

Samoa disaster management. In so doing enhancing livelihood recovery, empowering local communities and individuals, and reducing the need for outside assistance.

Recommendation Two: Help families connect with their affected kin.

Following their research into the Samoan tsunami, Bird, et al. (2011) recommended that livelihood recovery within family orientated communities like Samoa, would best be supported by assisting families return home to help with the recovery. Findings from the research and literature revealed that family members are one of the major forms of informal aid and influence following a disaster. While these findings support Bird et al.'s recommendation, we must be mindful of the cost of repatriating overseas family and its potential for abuse.

Instead I propose making it easier for family to contact and assist affected kin within a limited budget. In the initial months following a disaster this could be done by:

- A. providing regular but limited free calling to family, both locally and overseas
- B. providing local families with free transport to affected villages
- C. providing an official pro-rata contribution for all remittances sent to affected kin.

These options would enable family members to provide financial, emotional and physical support to their kin. In turn, this would reduce the need for costly programmes, while enhancing livelihood recovery.

Recommendation Three: Call on non-affected citizens to provide assistance during the recovery phases.

The research showed that Samoans drew on their social networks and traditional practice of mutual assistance in the aftermath of the tsunami. While the Government called on non-affected villages to provide assistance during the response phase, no such call went out during the recovery. With consideration to this, it is recommended that Samoan disaster management policy extends the call to non-affected citizens to provide assistance during the response and recovery phases. Local communities have the cultural and environmental knowledge and skills to provide appropriate, timely and cost effective livelihood recovery assistance. Consequently, less outside assistance would be needed leading to less likelihood of aid dependency.

Areas for Further Research

This study focused on examining the ways in which the cultural framework of Samoa, *fa'a Samoa*, influenced livelihood recovery. Social capital, which is considered to be an intrinsic part of *fa'a Samoa*, or manifested as *fa'a Samoa*, was also examined. It is these two discourses which lend themselves to further research in relation to disaster policy and practice.

Firstly, the literature review associated with this thesis revealed a shortage of texts examining the role of social capital in livelihood restoration following a disaster. Literature appears to focus instead on either how social capital influences response and recovery, or examines livelihood recovery following a disaster. This study identified that social capital has the potential to be highly influential in livelihood recovery. However, as this research is a Master's thesis, it is narrow in its scope, focusing on just two case study villages, with supporting information from key informants. While providing clear insight into the practices and beliefs of people post tsunami, these

findings cannot be considered to represent all of Samoa, or developing communities in general. With this in mind, further case study research into how social capital influences livelihood recovery following a natural disaster needs to be undertaken.

The second area which calls for further research was brought to light during an interview with a key respondent. She presented a well-considered argument into how *fa'a Samoa* should have been utilised to aid recovery (refer Recommendation Three). If we take the time to listen to the voices of the participants in a disaster recovery process, then constructive, culturally appropriate, policy and practice ideas can be revealed. For these reasons I suggest that future research be undertaken into how cultural frameworks could be better utilised to aid disaster response and recovery, from the participants' perspective.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Information Sheet

Information Sheet

My name is Sandy Murphy. I am a Geography teacher at Pompallier Catholic College in Whangarei and a Development Studies student at Massey University, NZ. As part of my geography classes I teach the causes, effects of and responses to, the 2009 Samoan tsunami. To increase my understanding of the tsunami and further my knowledge of development studies I am conducting research in Samoa for my Masters thesis on the following topic:

Fa'a Samoa; an aid to livelihood recovery following the Samoan tsunami. A case study examining two Samoan villages.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research by taking part in an interview of approximately 1 hour in length, in which you will be able to share your knowledge and experiences relating to aid following the tsunami and its impacts on sustainable development in Samoa. I am particularly interested in examining the following: how unaffected villages and Church communities within Samoa contributed to the recovery of affected Samoan villages; if such aid can be better supported or used following a disaster; and in what ways fa'a Samoa aids recovery following a disaster.

If you decide to participate in this research, you will have the right to choose which questions you do or do not wish to answer, and you can withdraw from the study at any time. Written and electronically recorded material made during the interview will remain confidential and will only be seen by myself, my thesis supervisor, Professor Regina Scheyvens and a research assistant. It will be your decision whether you and your organization will be identified or will remain anonymous in published work.

As well as my Masters thesis, the information collected for this research project may be used for academic articles, reports, conference presentations and teaching purposes. I would be happy to provide summary reports and copies of published articles to any participants who request these.

I hope you will accept this invitation to participate in this research as I really value the input you could bring to this project. If you have any questions about this research project, please contact me directly:

Sandy Murphy

64 Whareora Rd
Whangarei 0112
New Zealand

Ph 06494377784
064212236167
spudpatch@xtra.co.nz

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researchers named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researchers, please contact Professor John O'Neill, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5599 x5249, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix 2: Samoan Translation of Information sheet

Pepa o Faamatalaga

O lou igoa o Sandy Murphy. O au o se faiaoga i le mataupu i le olaga fa'alenua i atunuu o le lalolagi (Geography) i le Kolisi o Pompallier Catholic i Whangarei Niu Sila. O lo'o o'u suesueina foi mataupu tau atina'e (Development Studies) i le Iunivesite o Massey i Niu Sila (Massey University). O nisi la o vaega o lo'o o'u aoaoina i le Kolisi pei ona taua i luga e aofia ai mafuaaga, a'afiaga po'o ni tali atu i le mala fa'alenua pei ona a'afia ai Samoa i le 2009 o le sunami (Tsunami). Ma o le fia fa'alauteleina la o lou iloa i le sunami atoa ai ma le fia fa'alauteleina o lo'u malamalama i le mataupu tau atina'e, ua ou filifilia ai Samoa e avea ma atunu'u oute suesueina ai le mataupu pei ona taua i lalo mo lo'u faailoga o le Masters Thesis.

Fa'a Samoa; O ni fesoasoani mo le toe tau faaleleia o Samoa ina ua mae'a le sunami. O leni suesuega o le a fa'aaoga ai ni nu'u se lua i Samoa.

Ma lo'u fa'aaloalo lava, ou te valaauina ai oe mo sou taimi fa'aavanoa e te auai mai ai mo se fa'atalatalanoaga pe a ma se tasi le itula lona umi, e te fa'asoa mai ai lou silafia ma lou malamalamaaga e fa'atatau i fesoasoani ma meaalofo ina ua maea le fa'alavelave fa'alenua o le sunami, ae o le a foi sona aoga i le atina'eina ma le toe faaleleia o Samoa. Oute fia fa'atauaina i au suesuega ia vaega o le au ta'ua i lalo.

- 1 Na fa'apefea ona fa'atinoina ni fesoasoani a afioaga ma ekalesia e le'i a'afia i le fa'alavelave fa'alenua o le sunami, i le toe tau fa'aleleia ma le toe tau atina'eina o afioaga ma alalafaga na a'afia.
- 2 Pe fa'amata o nei ituaiga fesoasoani e mafai ona lagolagoina ma fa'atauaina.
- 3 O a ni auala e mafai ai e le Fa'a Samoa ona fesoasoani i le tau toe faaleleia i le uma ai o se fa'alavelave.

Afai o lea e filifili e te auai i leni fa'amoemoe, e ia te oe le faitalia e te filifili ai i fesili e te mana'o e te taliina po'o fesili foi e te le mana'o e taliina, ma e mafai foi ona e tu'umuli pe e te mana'o foi e faamuta le fa'atalatalanoaga i so'o se taimi pea e finagalo iai. O fa'amatalaga ma fa'amaumauga o le a fa'amaumauina ma pueina i masini pu'e leo ma isi o le a fa'aaogaina i le taimi o le fa'atalatalanoaga. O ia fo'i fa'amatalaga ma fa'amaumauga o le a le fa'alauiloina i se isi se'i vagana ai na'o au ma le o lo'o vaaia au i leni mataupu (Thesis Supervisor) faapea le tamaita'i Polofesa (Professa) Regina Scheyvens atoa ai ma le o lo'o fesoasoani i leni mataupu. E ia te oe foi le faitalia pe e te mana'o e fa'alauiloa oe ma lau fa'alapotopotoga i a'u galuega tusitusia pe lei foi.

I le ese mai la i le fa'aailoga o le Master Thesis o lo'o o'u su'esu'eina nei, o fa'amaumauga ma fa'amatalaga o le a fa'amaumauina i lenei suesuega po'o lenei poloketi, e mafai ona fia fa'aaogaina i ni tala tusitusia i ni lomiga, ripoti, fa'amatalaga i koneferenisi atoa ai ma le mafai ona fia fa'aaogaina i ni a'oa'oga fa'alea'oga. E mafai foi ona ou saunia se ripoti o le aotelega o lenei mataupu po'o lenei suesuega atoa ai ma ni kopi o ni tala tusitusia i ni lomiga e uiga lava i lenei poloketi ma fa'ao'o atu i sui o le a auai pe a latou mana'omia.

Oute talitonu i lo'u agaga maualalo o lea e taliaina lenei valaau ina ia e auai mai i lenei fa'amoemoe ona e taua tele ia te au lou sao i so'o se fa'amatalaga atoa ai ma sau fa'asoa mai mo la'u poloketi. Mo nisi fa'amatalaga e fia malamalama ai e uiga i lenei fa'amoemoe, fa'amolemole fa'afesootai mai a'u.

Sandy Murphy

64 Whareora Rd
Whangarei 0112
New Zealand
Ph: 06494377784
064212236167
Email: spudpatch@xtra.co.nz

O lenei poloketi ua mae'a ona iloiloina e i latou e gafa ma lea mataupu ma ua fa'amaonia ai le maualalo o ni tulaga a'afia po'o ni afiaga e ono tutupu mai ai. O lenei foi mataupu e le'i iloiloina e se tasi o le Komiti o Tagatanuu Esee o le Iunivesite. O le o lo'o fa'atautaia ma fa'atinoina lenei suesuega pei ona ta'ua i luga o le a gafa ma ni a'afiaga i gagana ma amioga eseese fa'atatau i lenei suesuega. Afai ae iai ni fa'afitauli e tula'i mai i le o lo'o fa'atautaia ma fa'atinoina lenei suesuega e te mana'o e fa'aailoa mai i so'o se isi e ese mai i le o lo'o fa'atinoina lenei suesuega, fa'amolemole fa'afeso'ota'i mai Polofesa (Profesor) John O'Neill po'o le o lo'o fesoasoani i le sui fa'auluuluga o mea tau suesuega eseese (Vice-Chancellor Assistant (Research Ethics)) i le telefoni 06 350 5599 i le laina 5249 (ex 5249) po'o le imeli mai foi i le tuatusi imeli o le humanethics@massey.ac.nz .

Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

Fa'a Samoa; an aid to livelihood recovery following the Samoan tsunami. A case study examining two Samoan villages.

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree to the interview being sound recorded. Yes/No

I consent to my name or the name of my organisation being used when my comments or opinions are used in this research. Yes/No

Note here how you would like to be referred to in the thesis:

.....

I would like to receive a summary of the results of this research when it is completed. Yes/No

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

SignatureDate

Contact information for a summary of the research to be sent. (email, fax or postal address)

.....

.....

Appendix 4: Samoan Translation of Participant Consent Form

Pepa o fa'amaumauga o sui auai

Fa'a Samoa; O ni fesoasoani mo le toe tau fa'aleleia o Samoa ina ua mae'a le sunami. O lenei suesuega o le a fa'aaoga ai ni nu'u se lua i Samoa.

Ua mae'a ona ou faitauina le pepa o fa'amatalaga ma ua maea fo'i ona auiliili mai ia te au lenei suesuega. O au fesili ma tali i lenei mataupu ua faia ma le ato'atoa o lou iloa ma lo'u malamalama. Ua ou malamalama foi e ono fesiligia fo'i au i nisi fesili i so'o se taimi oi luma.

Oute lagolagoina le fa'aaogaina o masini pu'e leo i taimi o fa'atalatalanoaga. Ioe / Leai

Oute fa'amaonia le fa'aaogaina o lou igoa po'o le igoa fo'i o lau fa'alapotopotoga i manatu po'o ni fa'amatalaga e fa'aaoga i totonu o lenei suesuega. Ioe / Leai

Fa'amolemole e fa'ailoa mai i lalo pe fa'apefea ona e mana'o e fa'ailoa i lenei mataupu:

.....

Oute mana'omia se tali ma se ripoti o le aotelega o lenei suesuega pe a mae'a. Ioe / Leai

Afai e Ioe, fa'amolemole e fa'ailoa mai lau tuatusi imeli i lalo:

.....

Ua ou malie ato'atoa oute auai i lenei suesuega po'o lenei fa'amoemoe i lalo o aiaiga e pei ona ta'ua i le pepa o fa'amatalaga.

Saini:.....Aso:.....

Igoa Atoa (Tusi lolomi faamolemole):

.....

Fa'amatalaga po'o se auala e fa'afeso'ota'i mai ai mo se ripoti o le aotelega o lenei suesuega e faailoa, tu'uao pe lafo mai ai ia oe (imeli, fax po'o le tuatusi o le falemeli po'o le pusa meli:

.....

.....

Appendix 5: Research questions with questions for donor and recipient village participants and key informants

Following the tsunami, in what ways did direct village/parish aid from non-affected to affected villages compare to that from formal channels?

- Tell me about the types of assistance you (village/parish) received/provided/are aware of following the tsunami. [K, D, R]
- Describe the ways assistance from local village/parish differed from that of Governments and aid organisations? [K, D, R]

To what extent has Fa'a Samoa influenced the aid to and recovery of, affected villages following the tsunami?

- In what ways has fa'a Samoa influenced assistance to affected villages? (note to self: who decided to assist, what and where to assist)[K, D]
- Tell me about the ways that fa'a Samoa has influenced the recovery of effected villages. (note to self: distribution, reprocicity, networks) [K, R]

To what extent has assistance from unaffected villages and individual church parishes in Samoa had a positive, long lasting effect on sustainable livelihoods?

- Tell me about the ways that providing assistance for (or receiving assistance from) villages/local parishes has had a long lasting impact on your life. [D,R]
- In what ways do you see assistance from unaffected Samoan villages and individual church parishes had a positive, long lasting effect on sustainable livelihoods? [K]

Key to abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
K	Key informant
D	Donor village resident
R	Recipient village resident

Appendix 6: Disaster Advisory Committee members

Core Members – Response Agencies	
Ministry of Works, Transport & Infrastructure	Ministry of Communication & Information Technology
Disaster Management Officer	Ministry of Finance
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade	Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries
Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment & Meteorology	Samoa Red Cross Society Secretary General
Ministry of Police, Prisons & Fire Services Police	Ministry of Women, Community & Social Development
Ministry of Education, Sports & Culture	Ministry of Prime Minister & Cabinet
Ministry of Health	Origin Energy Samoa
Samoa Airport Authority	Samoa Broadcasting Corporation
Samoa Ports Authority CEO	Ministry for Revenue
Samoa Shipping Corporation	Samoa Water Authority
SamoaTel	Telecom Samoa Cellular
Electric Power Corporation	
Associate Members Representative	
CARITAS Oceania Samoa/ CCJD	Chinese Embassy
Foreign Aid Office	Head Office – European Union
Samoa Polytechnic	New Zealand High Commission
Office of the Attorney General	Samoa Hotel Association
Japan International Co-operation Agency	Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment
Samoa Umbrella for Non-Government Organisations	United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organisation
United Nations Development Programme	United States of America Embassy
US Peace Corps Samoa	World Health Organisation
World Meteorological Organisation	Australian High Commission

(The Government of Samoa, 2006c)

Appendix 7: Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) Samoa

Members

ADB	ADRA
Apitaga mo Tagata Soifua Samoa	AUS AID
Australian Red Cross	AYAD
Caritas	EU
Faasao Savaii	FAO
Habitat for Humanity	IFRC
ILO	JICA
Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC)	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAFF)
Medecins Sans Frontiere	Ministry of Health (MOH)
Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD)	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE)
Ministry of Finance(MOF)	Samoa Water Authority (SWA)
Samoa Electric Power Corporation (EPC)	Samoa Tourism Authority (STA)
NZ Red Cross	NZ AID
Telecom Sans Frontiere	UNDAC
UNDP	UNDSS
UNEP	UNESCAP
UNESCO	UNICEF
UNFPA	US Embassy
OCHA	OHCHR
Oxfam	Peace Corps
Resident Coordinator	Rotary NZ
Samoa Hotel Association	Salvation Army
Samaritan's Purse	Samoa NNDMO
Samoa Red Cross	Save the Children
School Aid	SOPAC
SPC	SPREP
SUNGO	WFP
WHO	WIB
WMO	World Vision
World Bank	National Council for Early Childhood Education

(UN Pacific Humanitarian Team, 2009)