

Chapter Three

Principal Territorial Concerns and Issues

3.1 Introduction

If a snap shot of American Samoa had been taken twenty years ago and compared to a snap shot of today, it would be evident that the island of Tutuila has outwardly experienced significant changes, while the development of the Manu'a Islands has ebbed.

Tutuila's population has increased from 30,538 in 1980¹ to 55,912² in the year 2000. It is an increase of eighty-three percent and represents a three percent annual increase. The rapid increase of the population has heightened the awareness of, or brought to the surface, many acute and long-standing social, economic and environmental issues that must be resolved by the government and community in subsequent years.

The following issues encapsulate the five principal areas of concern which were identified during the formulation of this Territorial General plan and frame its content:

- cumulative impacts upon the residents quality of life and the environment from population increase;
- government performance and the ability of the government to provide services and infrastructure to meet future needs;
- economic dependency upon the government and canneries and limited potential and opportunities for future economic growth;
- carrying capacity of the Territory's natural resources and an uncertain outlook for sustainable development; and
- adequate social development programs and services to maintain a secure social environment and offer adaptability for the future.

These areas of concern are broadly discussed in this chapter as an introduction to Territory's development milieu. In Part II of this Plan, which is under separate cover, the common and agency specific issues are treated in more detail. Policies are provided with strategies that the American Samoa Government can implement between 2002 and 2005 to remedy the issues.

3.2 Population Growth and Impacts

3.2.1 High Population Growth Rates

American Samoa's population grew at an annual rate of two percent between 1990 and 2000, from 46,773³ to 57,291 respectively. This rate of growth was observed to be lower than the previous, ten-year rate of growth of three and seven-tenths percent. This is an encouraging sign. However, the previous decade of very high population growth set the stage for a big increase in the population a generation later. In the 2000 Census, forty-eight percent of the population was under the age of twenty years.⁴

High fertility rates and increased migration to the Territory were observed to be the primary factors for the significant increase in population. Although fertility rates are expected to decline with the advent of more women in the workforce, the expected decline will not markedly alleviate the problems the government will face in satisfying the needs of the Territory's residents for the future.

3.2.2 Immigration: Unplanned Increase

Immigration has increased for a number of reasons, e.g., the need to maintain and support a workforce at the canneries, the desire of American Samoan families to sponsor relatives from the Independent State of Samoa to assist with domestic chores, and the pressure upon businesses and government agencies to sponsor skilled immigrants take technical positions that

are not being filled by American Samoans.

The 1995 Population and Housing Survey shows that the majority of migrants were of Western Samoa nationality⁵ and of the twenty to forty-four year age group.⁶ In theory, these migrants would have been responsible for raising the level of fertility beyond the Territory's expected growth rate. In addition, there has been an increase in the number of Asian immigrants recruited to work in the private sector and fill managerial and technical positions.

3.2.3 Immigration Policy and Weak Control

A recent publication by the Governor's Task Force on Population Growth, May 2000, has suggested that immigration policy is inadequate to slow the current rate of immigration and that immigration control at port of entry has been inadequate to enforce immigration laws.⁷

The official immigration quota, set thirteen years ago, allows two hundred and fifty Western Samoan 'units' and twenty-five migrants to enter the Territory for one year residency, where a unit may include family members. This policy has been weakly enforced and there appears to be more immigrants than permissible and many over-stayers resident in the Territory.⁸

3.2.4 Progressive Exodus of Human Capital

During the last two decades in-migration of new residents has exceeded out-migration of existing residents. Projections by the Task Force suggest that even higher ratios of exchange will occur in the future without suitable migration laws and better immigration management.⁹

The out-migration can be attributed to a lack of promise for a better future for American Samoans who want to remain. Job security and the ability to land a respectable job in this economy are principal factors for out-migration. A good job in government is hard to find and the private sector holds dubious promise for a lifetime of security. Secondly, students are sent off-island to Hawaii or the Mainland to acquire training or a university education. Some students return and find work, others return and are

frustrated by future prospects. They leave permanently to make a better life for themselves in the United States.

3.2.5 Population Concentration in the Youth

The 2000 Census count revealed that forty-eight percent (48%) of the population was under forty-four years of age. Forty percent of the the age of twenty and an equal percentage of people were of the age twenty to sixty-four (20 to 64).¹⁰

As the population ages and the population increases within these age groups, the government will find it more and more difficult to meet the demand for services and supply the infrastructure required to support a satisfactory quality of life for the Territory's residents. The educational system, social service provider agencies and medical services are already feeling the pressure of over-population. Infrastructure is inadequately funded to meet future demands and usable land is limited for all purposes.

3.2.6 Urbanization and Over-Crowding

The adverse and cumulative impacts of the population increase, development and residential growth are readily noticeable on the Tafuna Plain, which comprises a sizable portion of developable land in Tualauata County. In 1970, 3,404 people or thirteen percent (13%) of the Territory's population lived in the county. By 1990 the number of people living in Tualauata County had reached 13,237. This number represented twenty-eight percent (28%) of the Territory's total population. By the year 2000 the Census counted 22,025 people, or thirty-eight percent (38%) of the Territory's population. Thus, by the year 2000, the Tualauata County population had grown more than six-fold over thirty years.

Tualauata County and the Tafuna Plain have been the fastest growing area of the Territory. Residential development has resulted from the availability of individually-owned land and the opportunity for immigrants and American Samoans to live in areas not under the control of traditional village authorities. The aggregation of non-Samoan residents and American Samoans seeking a lifestyle unlike traditional village life is resulting in the development of ethnic enclaves, social stratification and fragmentation, together

with the avoidance of responsibilities traditional to cultural norms or faa'Samoa.

Rapid human settlement has occurred where growth has not been adequately enforced or controlled by regulations, such as land use planning or zoning. This has resulted in overcrowding in many areas. The rapid growth has also meant that basic infrastructure needs, e.g. water lines, sewers and roads, have not been installed in preparation for human settlement and the impacts of traffic congestion, noise and air pollution are evident. For further information on population projections, consult the Governor's Task Force report, *Impacts of Rapid Population Growth in American Samoa: A Call to Action*, May, 2000.

3.3 Economic Growth and Economic Stability

3.3.1 Base Economy and Dependency

The American Samoa Government and the fish processing and canning companies, Samoa Packing Company (COS) and StarKist Samoa, comprise the base economy. Together, they employ close to 10,000 people, or two-thirds of the Territory's workforce, and furnish about ninety-three percent of the inputs for the secondary economy, i.e., American Samoa's private sector.¹¹

3.3.1.1 Cannery Domination and Flight

Throughout the last two decades there has been an ever-present presumption that either one or both of the canneries will pack up and leave American Samoa or the government will lose a significant portion of its Federal funding with the result that employment will plummet and the quality of life will be dramatically lowered.

The potential closure of one or both canneries is taking on greater credence as world-wide competition in the fish processing and canning industry increases, as StarKist plans unfold to move a portion of its fish cleaning operations to the island of Savai'i, as tariff and tax relief is given by the U.S. government to foreign countries, and as the tariff and tax relief under Headnote 3a and Federal 936 tax credits

are about to expire for American Samoa.

3.3.1.2 Government Management Ability

The concern over loss of Federal funding has abated somewhat in recent years as Federal program support to American Samoa has grown. However, there still remains the problem of American Samoa's financial difficulties and its mounting debt which the government has not been able to reduce without rescue payments from a Tobacco Settlement and a hurricane insurance settlement.

The government's fiscal management policies and practices, or absence of suitable policies, have the U.S. Congress, the Department of Interior, the banks and local businesses concerned over the fiscal integrity and management capability of the government. The U.S. Congress has threatened to reduce program funding unless a fiscal reform package is implemented shortly. In the interim the private sector's investment opportunities are limited by the government's inability to pay its bills.

3.3.2 Escape from Economic Dependency

The private sector in American Samoa, exclusive of the construction business, is maintained primarily upon the expenditures of the canneries, the government and their employees.

They are responsible for the ninety-three percent of purchases within the economy. Government construction expenditures result entirely from Federal funds. Other than the retail trade and food sales, no other sector stands out as dominant and promising for future expansion.

Agriculture, fisheries and tourism have been touted as potential industries for economic growth, but they have not drawn employment away from the canneries or government, nor have they panned out as replacements for them. Where there was a possibility of integration among them to generate a lively visitor industry, actions, cooperation and coordination were lacking.

3.3.2.1 Economic Diversification: Difficult

Given these concerns, economists and politicians have aspired to see the economy diversified and the dependency upon the canneries and government ended. However, the reality is that restructuring the economy will be no easy task, as there is no clear vision or economic planning in place to drive the change.

Fundamental structural problems also exist within government and the private sector that would block the realization of such a formidable task. That is, the government lacks a potent planning program and implementation arm to carry out development programs and the private sector is hindered by the Territory's remote location, small size and lack of key resources

3.3.2.2 Private Sector: Marginal Prospects

Local commerce sells its products and services to local business and residents of the Territory, with relatively minor volume sales to the nearby Independent State of Samoa. In order for the private sector to grow, it needs products and services to sell within the Pacific Region and elsewhere. Expansion and diversification will not be easy as there must be investment capacity. In this regard, the Territory has no marketing board to provide the advertising and push. Capital and infrastructure do not exist on a scale large enough to compete with established merchandising networks and the labor force is not sufficiently skilled to handle the requirements for development that utilizes technical and technological capacity.

3.3.2.3 Agriculture: Under-Utilized Asset

There is a perception that the government and people have given up on agriculture production as a fundamental need of a society, a job due respect and an important means of employment, or simply a source of staples for the Territory's residents. In terms of employment capacity, commercial farmers hold only one-half of one percent of all jobs in paid-employment.

At the present time, while the Division of Agriculture, Community and Natural Resources (ASCC-ACNR) program (formerly known as the

Land Grant program of the American Samoa Community College) is undertaking an ambitious public information and program within the Territory, the American Samoa Government Department of Agriculture is languishing. At the local government level, agriculture has been under-valued for its contribution to the economy, and consequently under-funded, under-researched and under-developed as a commercial activity.

Agriculture is also under-linked with the local commercial sector and the visitor industry. American Samoa imports a vast majority of its foodstuffs, and therefore, a significant amount of income is not retained on-island to re-invest in the private sector.

3.3.2.4 Fisheries: Restricted Possibilities

The reefs of American Samoa, as a resource for fish and marine life, have been damaged, degraded or depleted to various degrees throughout the Territory. The Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources is considering restrictions on the taking of stock and villages are becoming more inclined to protect their resources.

Increased subsistence and commercial fishing are permitted activities, but threaten the sustainability of the stock. As the population increases and there is a greater demand for coastal marine resources, there will also be greater pressure to preserve the marine life and fisheries stock, and, therefore, a need to designate 'no take' areas. Thus, inshore commercial fishing will be less lucrative and fishermen will be looking to off-shore fisheries as a business.

The change from dependency upon inshore fisheries to nearshore and off-shore commercial fishing is already taking place, but not rapidly. This change will require financing and resources that are commonly not held by local fishermen. Commercial fishing is a capital intensive business and intensely competitive at all levels. The capital will be hard to acquire as fishing is considered a risky business by financial institutions. Foreign fishing fleets can compete more effectively without the requirement for

intensive fleet capitalization.

Furthermore, fishermen will require a market for their catch and infrastructure to support their activities. Presently, there is no organized system for sales of fish and the infrastructure, e.g. mooring or a cold storage facility, is lacking or inadequate to handle a sizeable increase in the local off-shore fishing fleet.

3.3.2.5 Visitor Industry: A Fading Mission

By just about everyone's reckoning, the visitor industry in American Samoa has been a dismal failure. In the mid-1970s tourism was at its peak. Visitors came to American Samoa by plane and cruise ship. Thirty some years ago, the Rainmaker Hotel was a first class accommodation, visitors were taken on a breath-taking trip to the top of Mt Alava in a tramway gondola, and planes flew almost daily. Today, the visitor industry is only a shell of its past and its infrastructure is in shambles. On the other hand, and on the nearby islands of the Independent State of Samoa, the tourism trade is flourishing.

A renaissance in the visitor industry is possible, but the local tourism sector is beset by fundamental problems that show American Samoa in a very bad light. The problems include:

- insufficient and inadequately supported and maintained visitor infrastructure, destinations, and attractions;
- some hostile communal land stewards that disallow access to beaches;
- highly-priced, often sub-standard hotel accommodations;
- an untrained, visitor industry workforce that provides poor service;
- a small number of good restaurants and safe food services;
- an unstructured, local transportation network with poorly kept and maintained vehicles; and
- insufficient and untimely air services from

Hawaii and the United States.

In addition, there is a deliberate policy by overseas agents and tour guide businesses to route tourists away from American Samoa to popular islands because of the Territory's reputation as an undesirable visitor destination.

On the government side, the Office of Tourism is seen as an ineffective organization incapable of effectively impacting marketing the island as a desirable visitor destination, for providing tourism services or developing tourism as a viable economic activity.

Finally, the strength of the U.S. Dollar in comparison to the currencies of countries like New Zealand or Australia discourages tourists from visiting American Samoa and makes American Samoa expensive.

3.4 Resource Management: Sustainable Development for the Future

The discussion thus far has been focused upon the issues of population growth and economic development with a few references to the natural and social environment. They were reported first as a means to understand how they will affect the overall future development of the Territory of American Samoa. The remainder of this chapter will now deal with the interface and cumulative impacts upon the natural and social environment brought about by population growth and American Samoa's economic situation.

3.4.1 Sustainable Development

There is no overall development plan for American Samoa that mandates the sustainable development of the Territory. Nevertheless, good judgement would conclude that the maintenance of a satisfactory quality of life and the natural environment should be sustainable for perpetuity.

Sustainable development is viewed as combining three basic concepts: economic development, social system stability and ecological sustainability. Sustainable development results from the ability to structure economic growth and maintain social and natural

ecological systems for maximum welfare of the population, while maintaining available resources.

Maximum welfare is an easy concept to grasp, but difficult to measure. Sustainable development requires a balance or equilibrium. Ecological sustainability can be measured and defined by a systems' carrying capacity, but ecological sustainability can be difficult to maintain under intense competition from human settlement and economic development initiatives. Currently, many American Samoans are asking if there can be a sustainable economy without the canneries, if faa'Samoa can be maintained for the future, or if population growth on Tutuila Island can be supported, in terms of its land availability, natural resources or social services delivery systems.

Thus sustainable development of the Territory should be an overriding factor in the development of the Territory and a primary concern of this plan.

3.4.2 Carrying Capacity of the Territory's Natural Resources

In a general sense, carrying capacity is applied in this plan as it would be in 'ecological' terms; that is, the carrying capacity of the Territory's islands, or its ecosystems, is the maximum population of humans, wildlife, marine life or plant species, which can be supported indefinitely in an area, without degradation of the resource base or the reduction of its maximum population.

American Samoa's resource management agencies know, in general, the carrying capacity of certain ecosystems and their natural resources. For example, the American Samoa Power Authority's Water Division, has tagged the maximum population on Tutuila at 115,000 people.¹² This is the maximum estimated population that can be supported by Tutuila's available potable water resources at any time.

3.4.3 Overview of Natural Resources Status and Environmental Concerns

The American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency (ASEPA) produced an

'environmental report card' entitled the *State of the Environment Report 2000*.¹³ The report was designed to provide American Samoan residents and policy makers with a foundation to understand the Territory's environmental issues.

Table 3.1, on the following page, was included in the report and reprinted in this plan because it concisely describes the status of Territory's natural environment and resources. (The bold letters in the Status column reference the lettered boxes at the bottom of the page to explain the status of the resource.)

3.4.4 Less than Effective Stewardship of Renewable Resources

Stewardship of American Samoa's land and natural resources rests upon traditional leadership and government resource management agencies. Prior to legislation enabling government agencies with management and enforcement responsibilities, lands and waters were fully under the control of traditional or village leaders.

At the turn of the Twentieth Century it is assumed that American Samoa's natural resources were affected by human and natural actions, but remained in good condition. Today, "although a few resources are improving, it should be noted that the majority of the resources are being severely impacted by human activities and the environmental issues are getting worse, not better." (State of the Environment Report 2000)

The decline, degradation or depletion of the natural resources should not be blamed on either traditional leadership or resource management agencies. However, the ability to carry out effective traditional or village leadership may have been eroded by the enabling legislation. Yet, some village leaders do not know laws, ignore the laws or are flagrant violators of the laws.

In addition to these factors, the ability to manage the resources effectively requires the ability to cooperate, communicate, coordinate, act and work responsively together with the

traditional village leadership. To be able to realize this, there must be overall leadership, a vision, a mission and an overall management organization to carry out the mission. To date,

Figure 3. 1 State of the Environment 2000

RESOURCE TOPIC	STATUS	TREND	UPDATE
<i>Marine Resources</i>			
Coral Reefs	C	↑	Reefs are slowly recovering from a series of natural disasters
Marine Protected Areas	C	↓	Enforcement is inadequate. New areas need protection
Pago Pago Harbor	D	↑	Harbor water quality is improving, but serious threats exist
Fisheries (Reef)	C	↓	Over-fishing remains a threat to reef sustainability
Giant Clams	C	↓	Enforcement continues as problem with over-harvesting
Sea Turtles	C	↓	Protective laws governing turtle habitats need enforcement
Whales	C	↓	Unexpectedly slow recovery from early fishing pressures
<i>Terrestrial Resources</i>			
Rainforest	B	↓	Though much forest remains, serious deforestation threats exist
Vertebrate Wildlife	B	↓	Several species becoming rare, fruit bats making a comeback
Wetlands	D	↓	Seriously threatened from uncontrolled development and filling
Pests & Introduced Species	C	↓	Numerous introduced species continue to plague islands
<i>Air & Water Resources</i>			
Air Quality	A	↓	Generally excellent. Cannery odors still present in Pago Harbor
Water Quality	C	↑	Quality is improving, however, localized threats are still present
Drinking Water	C	↑	Water quality is generally good. Numerous potential threats exist
<i>Environmental Issues</i>			
Climate & Global Warming	C	↓	Impacts of climate change might be heavily felt
Solid Waste & Landfill	C	↓	Solid waste is increasing. Need conservation measures
Hazardous Materials	C	↓	Increasing amounts as population/development increases
Plant Diseases	B	↓	Territory recovering from taro blight. Potential threats exits

A

The resource has been little, it at all, affected by human and or natural actions and continues to exist in ample supply

C

The resource has been seriously affected by human and or natural actions and is in danger of being permanently affected

agencies work together when needed, but not as a unit, primarily because their local and Federal mandates are dissimilar.

Panel discussions with resource management agencies have identified several causes that are common to all agencies that manage resource legislation:

- public awareness about the need to care for the environment is not fully ingrained in the residents of the Territory;
- enforcement of laws and regulations have not been stringently or consistently implemented by support enforcement agencies;
- some agencies may not be fully enlightened about the negative impacts of their inactions;
- immigrants and poachers tend to overlook traditional leadership and village controls, as well as local and Federal regulations;
- laws and regulations often have loop-holes or are fundamentally ineffective tools for management of the resource;
- the Attorney General's Office is too overburdened and under-staffed with lawyers and legal assistants to handle all the resource violations; and
- population growth is placing greater stress upon the Territory's resources.

3.4.5 Human Settlement, Land Use Policy and Unwanted Effects

3.4.5.1 Pago Pago Bay Area

As reported by ASEPA, the water quality of

B

The resource has been affected by human and or natural actions but continues to exist and appears in good condition

D

The resource has been severely damaged by human or natural actions and has been depleted almost beyond recovery

the bay is improving as a result of the requirement for the canneries to adhere to the Clean Water Act. Nevertheless, the bay's waters are still polluted, heavy metals are a danger, fishing is prohibited and swimming is not advisable.

Along the narrow shoreline, there is progressive dilapidation of buildings and aesthetic deterioration. There have been recent initiatives to improve the blighted conditions in Fagatogo village with urban redevelopment funding, but no resolution of the debilitating conditions elsewhere in the Bay area.

3.4.5.2 Urban Sprawl on the Tafuna Plain

As noted previously, the Tafuna Plain is under-going rapid residential and commercial growth as a result of population increase and redistribution. Because land in the Tafuna area can be purchased, there is strong competition for the available land to be used for commercial, industrial and residential purposes. There is also resistance from competing forces, e.g., cultural traditions of matai control of land, against the practice of land use and resource management to enable sustainable development

There has been no authorized rational and systematic land use planning for the area. Although land use plans have been developed, they have not been adopted by elected officials. The lack of appropriate zoning codes to control and filter development has resulted in the use of outdated legislation as an ineffective means to curb random and improper use of the land and contain commerce, industry and residential expansion.

The lack of planning and controls has resulted in very-high-density, single-family housing in certain areas and the random

development of roads, where roads were meant to lead to individual properties. Since there has been no planning, there is no systematic traffic grid and no control over traffic circulation. Thus, there has been an amplification of impacts from traffic congestion, noise, nuisances and unsightly and unaesthetic neighborhoods.

3.4.6 Undesirable Land Use Practices and Conservation of Land

The lack of land use policies and planning regulations makes conservation and preservation of areas in need of protection unduly arduous. Without the authority to place specific lands under protection, conservation of specific areas is difficult to execute. Lands that could have been used for recreation, open space or drinking water aquifer recharge, for example, have already been permanently removed by development.

Conservation and good land use practice go hand-in-hand, but development throughout the Territory has not always been carried out wisely. Undesirable development and land use practices are still observed.

There is paramount concern for the possible future unregulated residential and commercial development in watershed and recharge areas, like Malaeimi Valley which is the primary source of fresh drinking water for Tutuila island. Unregulated development and the use of septic systems could result in the contamination of the ground water and aquifer. The water system is already subject to contamination during periods of heavy rain. The conduct of intensive agriculture, utilizing fertilizers, pesticides and chemicals will also endanger the groundwater system.

Floodplain encroachment, in-fill and improper development practices for housing and businesses are altering stream flows and the absorption of rain waters to the extent that flooding is occurring outside the floodplain and erosion and flood waters are damaging ecosystems downstream.

Filling of wetlands and encroachment upon mangrove estuaries is destroying the natural

habitat that marine life relies upon for its continued reproduction and sustainability.

Development along coastal areas and mining of coastal sand and rubble is illegal, without the issuance of a permit, but is still practiced by those who deliberately circumvent the law.

Clearing of forest on steep slopes for agriculture and residential development not only depletes the Territory's forest but creates a condition of soil instability. This unsafe practice can lead to hazardous land slips, but it is commonly seen to create soil erosion and siltation of the streams and the reef shelf. Upslope erosion has been a significant factor in the decline of reef resources.

Solid waste disposal in streams and upon land create a serious health problem, contribute to the contamination of the water resources and debase the aesthetic beauty of the land. While the American Samoa Power Authority, Solid Waste Division, has done a commendable job in recent years to remove and control waste, the populace still continues to dump waste products inappropriately.

Secondly, solid waste disposal impacts the permanent long-term use of land. The Territory is accumulating wastes which cannot be exported, but would otherwise be shipped to destinations for recycling if this were a U.S. Mainland location. The Territory has no laws and regulations which would deny entry to items which cannot be recyclable and have a short life.

Finally, for years the Landfill in Futiga was in violation of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards. The landfill must not be allowed to return to its previous status.

3.5 Provision of Basic Needs and Infrastructure

3.5.1 The Government: the Source of the Territory's Basic Needs

The American Samoa Government, as a unitary political entity, and its semi-autonomous authorities are the primary suppliers of basic

needs, i.e., health care, public safety, education, potable water and electricity, to the residents of the Territory.

With the exception of private or parochial educational institutions, like the Catholic Diocese of Samoa and South Pacific Academy which support pre-school through high school instruction, all services are publicly funded.

There are no private hospitals, electrical or water systems. The American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA) and the American Samoa Medical Authority (Lyndon Baines Johnson Tropical Medical Center, derive their operating income from local taxes, revenues and fees, Department of Interior operating grants and capital improvement awards, Federal entitlement programs and Federal block grants.

3.5.2 Population Growth and Funding: Two Impediments to the Provision of Basic Needs Service and Infrastructure

3.5.2.1 Population Growth: Surpassing Service Providers' Capacity

Government service providers are presently reporting that the Territory's twenty-two percent population increase over the last ten years is straining their ability to offer adequate services to the public. The most demand is placed upon agencies that serve women and young children, i.e., the public health service, the hospital, the social service providers and the educational system, who respond to the need for maternal and child care, preventative health care, and educating the youth.

Population growth threatens to overwhelm these systems, lest there be an immediate response to add more facilities to accommodate the population and more doctors and nurses, skilled service personnel and teachers to provide the services.

3.5.2.2 Funding Deficiencies: Limiting Future Development of Services

While the addition of more facilities and personnel to render services may be a resolution to the issue of rapid population growth, in reality, it is not a probable solution.

The American Samoa Government is deeply in debt and has been unable to finance the construction of facilities from local revenues for many years. It has relied upon the Federal Government for virtually all of its capital improvements expenditures. Funds that have been received by the service providers have come primarily from the US Department of Interior and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Development Block Grant program. The latter has primarily provided funds for health clinics and the hospital in recent years, while virtually all school construction has been supported from DOI Capital Improvement Program(CIP) funds.

For the fiscal years 1996 through 2000, the Territory received \$40.3 million for an annual average of just over \$8.0 million per year. Hospital improvements, new school buildings, water and sewer line construction accounted for seventy-five percent of the funding use. These were the top priorities set by the Capital Improvements Committee. These figures may appear to be a reasonable sum for a Territory of 60,000 people, but the Capital Improvements Committee estimated in 1995 that the five year construction needs of the Territory would total to over \$300.0 million and the majority of the funding would be required for health, education and utilities. Thus, by the year 2000, the Territory had only been able to realize the acquisition of fifteen percent of facilities funding it noted as being required in 1995.¹⁴

Local revenues have not been used for facilities construction in the past. Local revenues have not been able to keep pace with the need to hire more employees. While more employees are needed, there is a need to reduce the debt that the government continues to incur. It continues to run an annual deficit because it collects fewer revenues than it expends on the workforce that it maintains. Thus, the government faces a serious dilemma over how it will finance its service providers and infrastructure.

While the Hospital Authority and ASPA are in the process of defining measures to increase revenues, they have found that the Territory's residents are unprepared to face the increased fees required to operate the systems in a financially sound manner.

3.5.3 Facilities and Infrastructure Needs and a New CIP Plan for 2000 through 2006

During fiscal year 2000 the CIP Committee under-took an assessment of the capital improvements and infrastructure needs of the Territory. The Committee found that it required almost \$273.0 million for the years 2002 through 2006 to satisfy most of the construction needs of the Territory.¹⁵ Capital improvements supported by Federal agencies, like the Federal Highway Administration that provides separate funding from the Department of the Interior, were not included

in the assessment. Thus, the improvements needs of the Territory exceed the CIP needs assessment statement in the CIP Plan.

As a prerequisite to the receipt of Department of the Interior funding, a Capital Improvements Plan for 2002 through 2006 was formulated. The completed plan consists of the needs assessment and a funding plan which allocates most funds for basic needs infrastructure. The funding plan was based upon the known annual amount that the US Congress has allocated to the Territory, until the annual allocation is changed, i.e. \$10.14 million per year. Over the five year period, selected government agencies would receive \$50.7 million dollars, if the US Congress did not change the current allocation. This would mean that the government would fall short of its funding needs by over \$220.0 million dollars.¹⁶

3.5.4 Basic Needs Facilities and Infrastructure

3.5.4.1 Health System

Most of the physical facilities of the Territorial health care system remain in a state of disrepair. These are primarily Department of Health facilities which have not received meaningful funding for improvements over the last five years. Although the HUD Community Development Block Grant and CIP program have recently funded a new Tafuna Family Health Clinic and an Emergency Services addition to the hospital, the overall needs situation has not changed markedly since the initial needs assessment in 1995.

The Department of Health would like to construct more health clinics, with at least one new clinic in the remote Manu'a Islands. These facilities will also require equipment which will not likely be supported by local budgets. Each facility, given the present cost of construction and fitted with equipment will cost between \$750,000 to \$1,250,000. The Department of Health's needs totaled \$2.5 million.¹⁷

The Medical Center Authority had identified \$10.3 million of improvements to the Medical Center (LBJ), which includes a broad range of renovation projects, new testing laboratories,

new wards and the acquisition of medical equipment.¹⁸

For the fiscal years 2002 through 2006, the new CIP Plan allocates \$255,000 for the Department of Health. The Medical Center is slated to receive \$8.9 million. That is a shortfall of \$2.2 million and \$1.4 million, respectively for the Health Department and Medical Center.¹⁹

3.5.4.2 Education

School age children represent approximately thirty-three percent of American Samoa's population. School classrooms are currently overcrowded and, based upon projected population growth rates, will become more crowded without the addition of new classrooms to accommodate population growth.

The projections of demand in 1995 showed that approximately seventy new classrooms would be needed during the course of the 1996 - 2001 to alleviate overcrowding. A further eighty to ninety more classrooms would be needed to accommodate new students for the 2002 - 2006 planning cycle. In retrospect, only fifty-seven elementary classrooms were built between 1996 - 2001, demonstrating the inability of the government' financing to keep pace with population growth.²⁰

More specialty rooms for science, computers, libraries and vocational training are also needed. However, the demand for rehabilitation and new classrooms limits the opportunity to construct these valuable facilities. Constructed in the 1960s and 1970s, most of the school or non-classroom facilities are deteriorating badly.

In total, the Department of Education has identified improvements to facilities and the addition of new facilities that cost in the vicinity of \$46.0 million. Over the five year planning period 2002 - 2006, the Department will only receive about a third of its required funding or \$15.8 million. The American Samoa Community College asked for \$1.7 million for improvements and will receive about half, or \$780,000.²¹

3.5.4.3 Public Safety

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) has jurisdiction over police, fire protection, detention and correctional facilities. Since 1996, DPS has been successful at satisfying some of its improvement needs from sources other than the Department of Interior CIP grant awards. However, the variety and number of DPS facilities, e.g., fire stations and detention facilities, are undeniably inadequate for the size of the population in American Samoa.

Detention facilities rate the highest concern in terms of public safety. The Tafuna Correctional Facility (prison) is in deplorable condition overall. The Tafuna area is rapidly becoming the new commercial and residential center of the island, but it has virtually no fire protection coverage.

The Department of Public Safety has identified \$5.4 million of needed improvements and construction over the next five years. It is scheduled to receive \$2.8 million or slightly over fifty percent of its identified needs, of which a third will go for fire protection.²²

3.5.4.4 Utilities

Adequate utility systems are essential to the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Territory. They are critical to the protection of the environment and a prerequisite to controlled development. The coverage of the water and sewerage systems, except along the Pago Pago Bay shoreline, remains inadequate throughout the Territory for the carrying capacity of the land and expected population growth.

The primary fresh water aquifer on Tutuila Island is located in the Tafuna Plains area and possesses most of the existing water wells that supply the central water system. Protection of this aquifer from the impacts of development is critical to the safety of the community and the preservation of the water supply. Without the installation of a proper sewerage system and with continued reliance upon septic tank systems, it will only be a matter of time until the water supply becomes contaminated.

The American Samoa Power Authority has identified \$11.6 of funding required to cover water

projects for fiscal years 2002 - 2006. To provide adequate sewerage to the Territory, ASPA has identified \$47.2 million dollars worth of system and line needs. Since the CIP Plan for 2002 - 2006 has only allocated \$2.0 million for water projects and \$10.0 million for sewer system improvements, there is a shortfall of \$9.6 million and \$37.2 million respectively for water and sewers. This is obviously a serious deficit that could significantly affect the water quality of the Territory in the future.²³

The American Samoa Power Authority appears to have overcome the problems associated with the electrical power system of earlier years when daily blackouts were a common occurrence. This can be attributed to good management and replacement of equipment with CIP funds from 1996 onward.

ASPA has prepared a lengthy list of improvements to keep the electrical system running well, that tally to a five year cost of \$23.0 million. Included in this amount are improvements to the Utulei Tank Farm and movement of fuel tanks at the airport for \$6.5 million. Although the improvements and equipment could be supported by Department of Interior funds, the CIP Committee has allocated no funding for the power system and thus ASPA will have to find its revenues from local legislative action, other Federal agencies or earned income from sale of electricity.²⁴

3.5.5 Other Infrastructure Needs

3.5.5.1 Ports

The Department of Port Administration is responsible for the operations of the Territory's air and sea ports, and fundamentally all of the materials and supplies that are imported into and exported out of the Territory. Therefore, the proper functioning of port facilities are critical to the well-being of the Territory on a daily basis.

The Pago Pago Harbor seaport facilities are outdated and have significantly deteriorated because of a lack of financial resources for maintenance and upgrades. Virtually every facility at the main port is in poor condition, including the dock and wharf. There are a

plethora of problems associated with the harbor ports, including the Manu'a ports, that have been identified in the *Port Master Plan 1999-2019*.

The CIP Plan needs assessment lists \$21.8 million worth of repair and upgrade projects and an additional \$22.4 million of new projects. In consideration that the CIP Committee has allocated a total of only \$4.8 million for the next five years, it is not likely that the Port Administration will find sufficient funding to carry out the work at the main port or Manu'a ports.²⁵

Airport runway extension improvements to Pago Pago International Airport and Fitiuta Airport at Ta'u in the Manu'a Islands were listed at \$17.5 million. No CIP funds will be used for these purposes. The Port Administration will receive funding from the Federal Aviation Administration to complete these projects, but the International Airport terminal refurbishment has been estimated to cost \$13.7 million. The terminal work will have to be completed using Passenger Facility Charge (PSC) fees over time.²⁶

3.5.5.2 Shoreline Protection

The list of needed shoreline protection and flood control projects has grown three-fold over the 1995 CIP Plan needs assessment and increased in value by a third from \$8.2 million dollars to \$12.5 million dollars. The reason is simply that no funds were devoted to shoreline protection which could be accounted for by capital improvement grants and shoreline erosion has increased.²⁷

The erosion threat to the southern shoreline along Highway One is one of the most serious situations the government faces. Virtually the entire Eastern District shoreline and some of the Western District shoreline along the main roadway are gradually being damaged or worn away.

Reclaimed insurance payments from Hurricane Val destruction will pay a portion of the shoreline protection and repair for the main highway, but there are not sufficient funds to pay for the needed work elsewhere on Tutuila or Manu'a. The estimates for shoreline protection will most likely rise to \$15.0 million by the end of

this plan period, for which there are no additional funds available from the CIP program.²⁸

3.5.5.3 Highways and Roads

The Territory's highways and roads are built primarily with Federal Highway Administration and Department of the Interior funding. A very small proportion of funding is local money. On the average the Territory receives about \$3.5 million dollars a year for highway construction from the Federal Highway Administration and \$360,000 from the Department of the Interior for village road construction.²⁹

Federal Highway One, which covers the distance from the eastern tip of Tutuila to the western shoreline is in good condition except for the distance between Pago Pago Harbor and the village of Leone in the Western District. This is an eight mile length of highway in poor condition that could take ten years at a cost of \$25.0 million to rebuild. There is no guarantee that the Federal Highway Administration will provide the funding toward the end of this decade and there are no other funds presently in sight to provide for the construction.

The Civil Highways Division of the Department of Public Works identified twenty-one village road projects in 2000 estimated to cost \$5.0 million that need to be constructed to meet the demand of the growing population.³⁰ At \$360,000 per year from the CIP program, the village road program will fall short of its needs by over \$3.0 million.³¹

In general, the inability to repair or construct new roads will result in recurrent damage to vehicles, causing the need for costly repairs by owners or the hastened replacement with new vehicles. In either case, the inability to maintain a good road system will put a greater strain on the Territory's solid waste disposal and storage capacity system as more and more vehicles are cast aside.

3.5.5.4 Parks and Recreational Facilities

American Samoans value recreation and outdoor activities highly, yet community parks and recreational facilities have been left to deteriorate in many instances. Park equipment

and public toilets should be replaced at almost all sites. In addition to the rehabilitation of the community parks, there need to be more community parks to service the residents of the Territory. There are only three satisfactory usable public areas, i.e., Utulei, Onesosopo and Lions Park. Pago Pago Park has deteriorated to such an extent that the site should not be used for recreational purposes unless it is rehabilitated.

There are no indoor arenas or swimming pools for recreation, competition among the schools or for public use. The Territory is at a great disadvantage if it wants to train its youth or compete in international sports. If the Territory wants to develop tourism, the absence of recreational activities places the Territory at an even greater disadvantage in comparison to islands that have recreational infrastructure in place.

The Department of Parks and Recreation identified almost \$2.0 million of projects for 2002 - 2006 funding cycle.³² These were primarily small projects and did not include any sports complexes that would drive the needs assessment past the \$10.0 million threshold. The department fared better than most for the next five years as it is scheduled to receive nearly fifty percent of its request. It must be said, however, that the Department of Parks and Recreation has received very little funding from the CIP Committee to this point.

3.5.5.5 Historic Preservation and Cultural Attractions

The Territory of American Samoa is a cultural and historical treasure that possesses archeological and historical sites dating from pre-colonial times through World War II. Some of these sites are still being used on a daily basis for government administration, but others have been left to decay.

There have been no funds allocated toward the restoration of American Samoa's cultural and historical artifacts for the next five years. Repair of these sites can play an important role in the survival of historic preservation practices and the support of tourism development in the future.

3.5.5.6 Economic Development Facilities and Infrastructure

The Department of Commerce is the lead government agency to foster economic growth and development of the Territory. Its CIP assessment of economic infrastructure needs in 2000 identified \$9.7 million worth of fisheries, agriculture, commercial and light industrial infrastructure support that could spur economic growth.

No significant amount of CIP funding will be allocated toward economic development during the 2002 - 2006 funding cycle.³³ Economic development packages, that include funding for infrastructure, may be the only foreseeable source of assistance.

3.6 Social Development and the Delivery of Social Services

3.6.1 Overall Balance

The overall development of American Samoa's society and the achievement of a satisfactory quality of life for its population relies, in part, upon the government's ability to provide a healthy environment, economic and social stability.

Because the Territory is finite and limited in its resources, the Territory could develop disproportionately. Without an emphasis on an integrated, balanced and holistic approach to development, the Territory could develop along an undesirable path. Ultimately, balance is necessary to maintain successful development. Healthy, well-educated, employed people that are pleased with their physical and social environment are going to grow the Territory in a positive direction.

Currently, there is fear of economic deterioration, the physical environment is being mishandled, and the social environment appears to be worsening by some accounts. These accounts are noted under section 3.6.5.1, Social Change and Social Stress.

3.6.2 Arts and Culture

The state of cultural resource management in the Territory is rudimentary at best and woefully under funded on the local level. The agencies directly mandated with the maintenance and continuance of the Territory's cultural resources are separated into different agencies and organizations.

The Office of Archives and Records Management is part of the Department of Administrative Services. The American Samoa Council on Arts, Culture and the Humanities is a non-governmental body. The American Samoa Historic Preservation Office is under the Office of the Governor. The Jean P. Haydon Museum has no status, with no governing board, no director, staff or budget. The Office of Tourism, to the extent that it is involved with cultural resources as part of the visitor industry, is part of the Department of Commerce.

Together, these organizations try to cooperate and meld activities as much as possible, but there is no established protocol or unified plans to assist with their cultural and historic functions. This makes it difficult to present a unified front for funding. Legislatively, these cultural resource management programs exist only fragmentally. Funding-wise, these programs receive very little money or are wholly supported by Federal funds.

These are both quality of life issues and economic development issues. American Samoa's strong cultural traditions can be an attractive draw for visitors in a world that has become more homogenized. Government commitment to program support through funding can both main cultural traditions and grow the economy.

3.6.3 Health Care

Over the past decade significant progress has been made in improving the health of American Samoans. The prevention and treatment of acute diseases and serious infectious diseases, and the maintenance of personal well-being will always be a mandate of the health system. However, the health system must now address the important

issues identified in the report *Health 2000 Plus: Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century*. They are:

- developing an appropriate mechanism for Territorial Health policy formulation and planning; i.e., the Territory has been without a Territorial health plan or agency for the last decade;
- developing a socially equitable and sustainable Territorial Health care financing strategy that shifts a significant portion of the cost of health care from government to consumers; i.e., the government and Hospital Authority can no longer financially support health care to the level that it had achieved in the past;
- improving the skills of the physicians and clinical staff that require upgrading in order to meet the Health Regulatory Board licensing requirements, i.e., without a properly skilled and licensed staff the authority could face possible termination of the Medicare and Medicaid programs;
- achieving a more cost-effective allocation of health resources between health care services and health improvement programs, i.e, finding the most beneficial mix of services between the provision of health prevention programs and hospital care for the benefit of the whole society;
- motivating and empowering individuals to take greater personal responsibility for their own health, and providing them with the necessary information and opportunities to act on their decisions;
- increasing the capacity of the health care system to respond to health needs through health workforce development, information based decision making, and improved cooperation and collaboration between government agencies and citizens; and
- increasing the capability of the American Samoa Hospital Authority to find additional sources of financial assistance, to increase local and Federal appropriations, and to

establish an effective cost-containment system.³⁴

3.6.4 Education and the Public School System

Education and the educational system are at the heart of preparing the Territory for the future. Looking at education from an overall perspective, there are three areas of concern for the educational system that are pertinent to this plan. They are: the relationship of the educational system to the overall development of the Territory; the impact the system has upon students; and the structure and mission of the system.

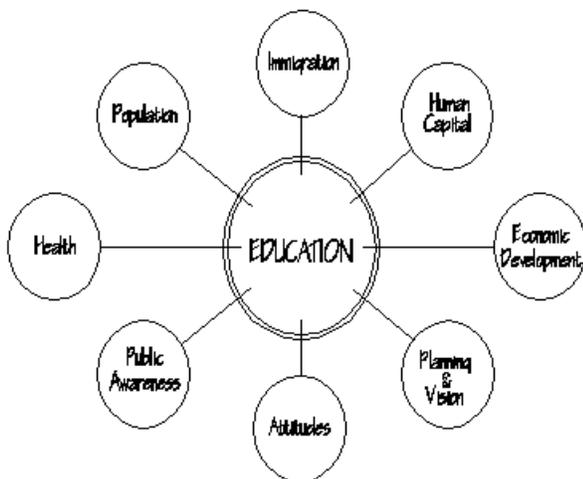
3.6.4.1 The Educational System's Impact upon Territorial Development

The educational system and the people that move through the system, whether they are well-educated or poorly educated, leave a mark upon society.

The following illustration shows the areas of concern by panel members as affecting or being affected by the educational system. The illustration shows only a one-way relationship between the areas of concerns, but in reality they are inter-related and inter-mixed.

Population growth is placing a burden upon

Figure 3.2 Education's Broad Impact



the educational system, particularly at the lower grade levels where children are outnumbering the spaces available for them. There are too many pupils per classroom and the teacher : pupil ratio is exceeding recommended standards.

Immigration of children and youth from the Independent State of Samoa and non-English speaking aliens who are not well-prepared to enter the school system are taxing the capabilities of the system.

The system has a role to play in educating children, youth and adults about health and the maintenance of well-being. Education starts at home, but parents may not be prepared to discuss the sensitive issues of sexual practices, drugs and high-risk activities. Bearing witness to the prevalence of acute diseases, like diabetes and heart disease caused by obesity, young people have to learn to take care of themselves properly. The educational system is the first point of contact for children who can also influence parents.

Public awareness is an especially important issue with regard to the maintenance of the Territory's natural environment and management of its resources. Too many people are still disposing trash improperly or ruining wetlands by development. Learning to care for the environment begins in school if it hasn't been taught at home.

There is a general concern that attitudes and fa'aSamoa are changing and that people are losing their perspective, initiative to maintain a high moral standard and personal ethics. Accompanying this are attitudes that affect the way people care for families members or that suppress good work ethics and lead to poor productivity. Poor attitudes can often be changed with education and incentives.

A vision for the future is lacking. It is not the fault of the Department of Education (DOE), but DOE has a major role to play in carrying out a vision once it has been defined by the Territory's leaders. The vision should include a development direction and the Department of Education must adapt its instruction and services

to meet the future needs of the Territory's defined vision.

Economic development and economic growth of the Territory will need an educational system focused upon employment goals and job types, especially for the private sector where more job opportunities will become available.

There is an absence of planning to develop the Territory's 'human capital.' Cooperation and coordination among government agencies is not adequate. The commissions that study the needs lack the mechanisms to move the system towards results. The Community College is best situated to provide the kind of analysis and direction, together with instructional courses to develop the Territory's human capital.

3.6.4.2 The Impact the Educational System has upon Students

The financial situation of the government and its inability to finance the educational system has an impact upon students and their ability to succeed:

- many of the classrooms and facilities managed by the Department of Education are in disrepair and educational tools are lacking. This puts students at a disadvantage in the global economy;
- there is very low spending on students per capita compared to the U.S. Mainland. The school system doesn't have many of the facilities found at U.S. Mainland schools. Students miss or do not accumulate experiences available elsewhere;
- the Department of Education can't attract enough high quality teachers. Teachers of mathematics and the sciences are hard to acquire, leaving students without proper instruction in these areas;
- the Department of Education has not assessed the long-term impact of its instructional services have had upon the community and whether students are successful in life;

- the American Samoa Community College provides open admission to those wishing to further their education, but reports that most of the incoming students must take non-credit remedial English and/or math classes before they can enroll in for-credit college classes. Eighty-five percent of students enrolling at the community college do not pass the English language proficiency test (ELI); and
- many high school seniors take the ASVAB exam (for entry into the U.S. military), but only a small proportion surpass the minimum benchmark necessary for enlistment in the Armed Services. In general, student achievement on national-normed exams reveal American Samoa's students to be lagging their mainland counterparts by several grade levels.

3.6.4.3 The Structure and Mission of the System

The lack of adequate funding will be a severe deterrent to the Department of Education and the Community College in carrying out their missions. The entrance of more students into the system, will only complicate matters. ASCC's desire to become a four-year college will have to be delayed indefinitely without additional funding.

Teachers and ASCC instructors are paid on a pay scale much lower than their Hawaii and U.S. counterparts which can cause morale problems within the system. Furthermore, ASCC may find it difficult to replace aging instructors with qualified personnel due to wage differentials.

Neither the Department of Education nor ASCC have plans for the future which include integration of the educational system with specific government agencies or private sector skill requirements. DOE and ASCC curriculums are customary curriculums meeting minimum educational requirements.

The educational management process is in need of revamping, modernizing, restructuring to provide better educational services. This

process is lengthy and requires personnel and budgeting which are not presently available.

3.6.5 Social Development

3.6.5.1 Social Change and Social Stress

American Samoa's population is beset by many of the social ills that plague other communities, including substance abuse, alienation of youth, and crime. There are even a few homeless or hungry children, adults and elderly in the territory that have been abandoned by their family.

There is substance abuse in American Samoa. Alcohol abuse is the most visible, and most crimes are committed by people under the influence. There have also been arrests for the importation of street drugs and marijuana is in common use.

While there is very little random or violent crime, violence does often occur between people who know one another and whose passions are aroused by drinking. Sexual crimes, including abuse of minors, have been increasingly reverted to the criminal justice system, although this might have as much to do with new attitudes about intolerance and prosecution as it does with an increase in the incidence of the crimes themselves. Non-violent, property crimes and burglaries are also on the increase.

Similar 'increases' in mental disease and disabilities are also being registered, as these conditions move from personal, domestic household matters to officially documented incidents of the social service system. In fiscal year 2000, of the 251 cases referred to child protective services, 79 were substantiated case of neglect (29.1%), sexual abuse (21.5%), physical abuse (48.1%) and medical neglect (1%). Some of the characteristics (in about one-third of child protective services cases annually) identify substance use directly related to domestic violence.³⁵

A recent 2001 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) of 914 high school students in six schools indicated a significant number of students expressing suicidal tendencies. The

2001 survey yielded the following information regarding high-risk behaviors of the students. During a previous thirty day period, 21.1% of the students surveyed said they carried a weapon; 37.3% smoked cigarettes; 8.7% drank alcohol; 21.7% used marijuana. During the previous three months 23.4% had sexual intercourse and during the previous twelve months, 20.9% said they made a serious attempt at suicide.³⁶

There has been great concern for many years about the youth, who are admonished to hold fast to fa'aSamoa, but who are brought up in an American-influenced world of individual aggrandizement and self-indulgence, rather than community centered indulgence. Samoan youth are expected to serve their elders with full obedience and no back-talk. Youth exposed to the MTV culture have an understandably hard time reconciling their American yearnings with the expectations of their parents and grandparents.

3.6.5.2 Quality of Life

There are no readily available numbers that indicate the status of a person's quality of life in American Samoa. The following analysis is meant to provide an indication of personal status relative to past years and individual and household in the continental United States.

Per capita income in American Samoa was \$4,357 as of April 2000. This represents a forty-three and four-tenths percent (43.4%) increase over the 1990 Census figure of \$3,039. However, the value and percent increase are not adjusted for inflation.³⁷

Median and mean individual income increased between 1990 and 2000. The median household income in 1990 was \$16,114. By April 2000, it had risen to \$18,219, an increase of thirteen percent (13%).³⁸ These numbers have not been adjusted for inflation and, therefore, there may have been only a marginal improvement in the financial welfare of the household. On the other hand, the number of persons per household dropped to six, as more households were created. On the whole, the numbers suggest that no significant improvement in raising incomes has resulted.

The U.S. per capita income in 1990 was \$14,420, or 4.7 times greater than the American Samoa level of \$3,039. Not only was per capita income much lower than in the continental U.S., but the money had to go much further, since the average household size in American Samoa was greater than twice the size of the average U.S. household size of 2.6 people.

One cannot directly compare spending patterns in American Samoa to those of the continental United States. Imported goods are generally more expensive to purchase in American Samoa than on the mainland as a result of the shipping charges to the South Pacific. But the great disparity in the value of individual incomes does show that American Samoans simply do not have the purchasing power of individuals on the Mainland. In 1995, roughly eighty percent of families in American Samoa had incomes below the U.S. poverty level.³⁹

The availability of plumbing fixtures in occupied housing units may provide a glimpse into the character of housing and the quality of life. Twenty-five percent of all occupied units did not have any plumbing facilities and ninety-two percent of all occupied units lacked complete plumbing facilities. Only seven percent of all units had complete plumbing facilities. If the ability to pay for heated water is an indication of quality of life, then seventeen percent of all occupied units had hot water for washing dishes and bathing.⁴⁰

Despite these poverty figures, the survey reported that: almost ninety-seven percent of units had electrical power; twenty-six percent of housing units had a microwave; telephones were installed in seventy percent of the units; and eighty-three percent of all units had a television. Vehicles per household were reported as 0.7.⁴¹

American Samoan households spend only one and two-tenths percent of their income on health care, which is heavily subsidized by the government. Very few residents have health insurance, and U.S. Medicaid is not provided in the territory. There is a two-tier fee structure for medical care, and while the cost for American

Samoans and permanent residents is very nominal, the cost for certain foreigners can be prohibitively high (though still far less than the government's actual cost).

Due to low income levels, all children attending public school in American Samoa receive free school breakfasts and lunch from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, School Lunch Program.

Perhaps the most revealing indicator of the quality of life in American Samoa is the well-being of its individuals for the Department of Health reports that a host of chronic diseases, such as diabetes mellitus and heart disease have become the primary causes of death in American Samoa.⁴²

3.7 Government Planning and Management

3.7.1 Planning and Lack of Vision

The emphasis on planning has declined significantly since the 1970s to the point where formal planning programs are not seen to markedly influence the activities of government, and people take planning activities lightly.

The concept of comprehensive planning was vested in American Samoa in the 1970s with legislation authorizing the formulation and enablement of the Territorial Planning Commission (TPC). In the American Samoa Code Annotated, the TPC was given the function of oversight and approval of plans for the development of the Territory.

Following the establishment of the TPC, the Economic Development and Planning Office (the Department of Commerce since 1997) undertook comprehensive planning efforts which included the production of a housing plan and an economic development plan in the late 1970s. These plans were the last Territory-wide, comprehensive development efforts completed by either the Economic Development and Planning Office or the Department of Commerce since the 1970s.

The perception of overall planning as an important aspect of government affairs may have deteriorated sharply within government agencies or with top leadership in the past decade. The number of planners in the Department of Commerce shrank significantly and the State Health Planning Agency disbanded in the early 1990s. An exception to this decline is the American Samoa Power Authority's continued reliance upon formal plans to guide development of its systems.

The Department of Commerce sought to prioritize its scarce planning resources and apply its efforts towards land use and master planning for Tualauta County since the early 1990s. This work eventually culminated with the completion of the Tualuata County Land Use Plan in 2001, which has been recommended and adopted by the Territorial Planning Commission, approved by the Governor, and is presently before the Legislature for authorization.

With the gradual lessening of the planning component of the Department of Commerce and the lapse of the Territorial Planning Commission in the oversight of planning, there has been an accompanied slackening of inter-governmental interest in overall development planning, and a concurrent lack of 'vision' of the government.

It is difficult to judge whether this a case of deterioration of comprehensive planning as a valid concept, a question of ownership of potential decisions for departments or agencies, a problem of communication with top leadership about the importance of overall planning, or a feeling among politicians and top leadership that comprehensive planning can restrict leadership's personal policies, programs and choices in the future.

Nevertheless, there is a general feeling among planning participants for this plan that:

- communication, cooperation and coordination among government agencies is lacking, or even missing;
- integration of planning, plans and development efforts are lacking or missing;

- there is insufficient planning expertise at the highest departmental levels;
- a mandate for planning does not exist at the highest levels of government; and
- planning will not be a proven commodity until there is a demonstration of its effective performance.

During this plan formulation, it was also pointed out that this lack of communication, cooperation and coordination extends to the private sector, which has lost confidence and become disenchanted with the government in its ability to encourage and cooperate in the future economic development of the Territory. This is substantiated by the lack of a standing private sector-government economic development commission that would guide development policy.

From the private sector's viewpoint, government has a diminished capacity to come up with overall strategic goals, policies or plans to deal with the future growth of the economy, for the educational system to meet the human resource needs of the private sector, or for the government to provide a development vision.

3.7.2 Human Resources, Leadership and Management

This perceived lack of vision is accompanied by the impression that government departments and employees often lack a mission. Without a mission, performance and the delivery of services suffer.

The lack of vision, communication, cooperation and coordination may have its roots in fa'asamoa. In traditional Samoan society, the matai dispenses leadership decisions and the untitled are expected to abide by those decisions. This equates to 'top-down planning.' In government, top management often relies upon the input of expertise and general public input to guide policy decisions. This is 'bottom-up planning.' If neither top-down nor bottom-up planning are effective, then the government faces management problems.

In the case of the American Samoa Government, there is evidence to suggest that communication is an issue from top to bottom and from bottom up and that an evaluation of the circumstances is necessary to obtain full working efficiency and performance from departments.

There also appears to be a problem with work ethics, attitudes and morale which result in low productivity from the government's employees. Several factors contribute to this situation:

- government's wage scale is low compared to the U.S.;
- due to a small pool of qualified people, appointees often receive jobs on the basis of their political and social standing, instead of their qualifications and abilities to handle the task; and
- poor working environments lead to disappointed and disgruntled employees, inefficient productivity and poor job performance; and finally
- some of the top government manager's are perceived by career service employees as having inadequate knowledge, education, skills, or experience when they enter government service (e.g. when new directors are appointed and approved).

The political appointment of top managers with insufficient skills is not unique to American Samoa. In many other organizations, top management officials are provided orientation and training in management principles (e.g. management by objective or performance management), office technology (e.g. project tracking or planning software), and technical

skills by personnel management experts and/or technical experts.

Currently, no systematic orientation or training program is provided to top management personnel who are not career service employees.

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