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Government of Tonga

Tonga 1st National Status Report

Millennium Development Goals *Today and Tomorrow*



National MDG Taskforce
March 2005

Tonga's National MDG Taskforce

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Central Planning Department (Secretary)
Statistics Department
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food
Ministry of Education
Department of Environment
Ministry of Health
Ministry of Finance
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Langafonua 'a Fafine Tonga

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Central Planning Department
Statistics Department
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food
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Department of Environment
Ministry of Health
Ministry of Finance
Women and Development Centre
Langafonua 'a Fafine Tonga

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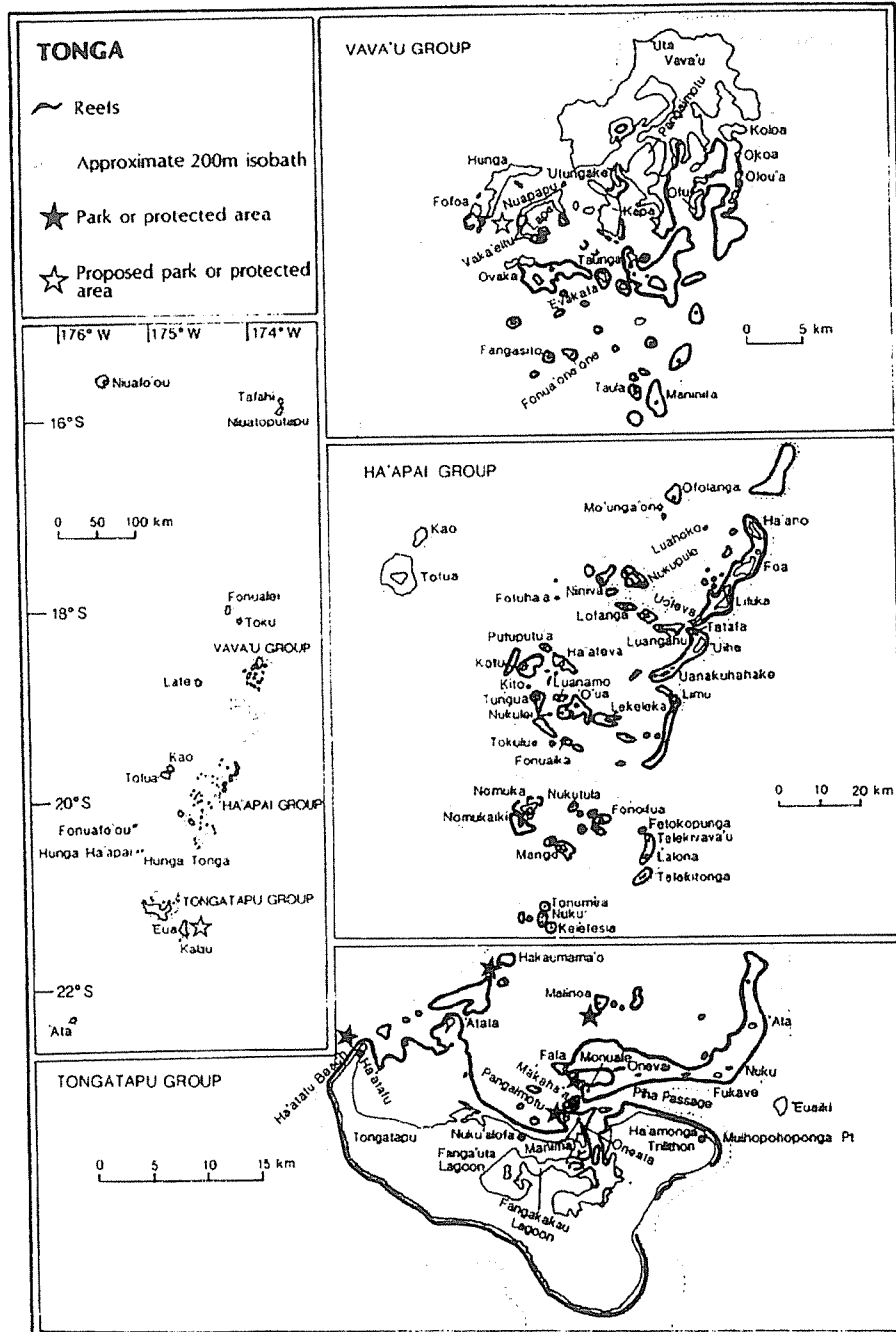
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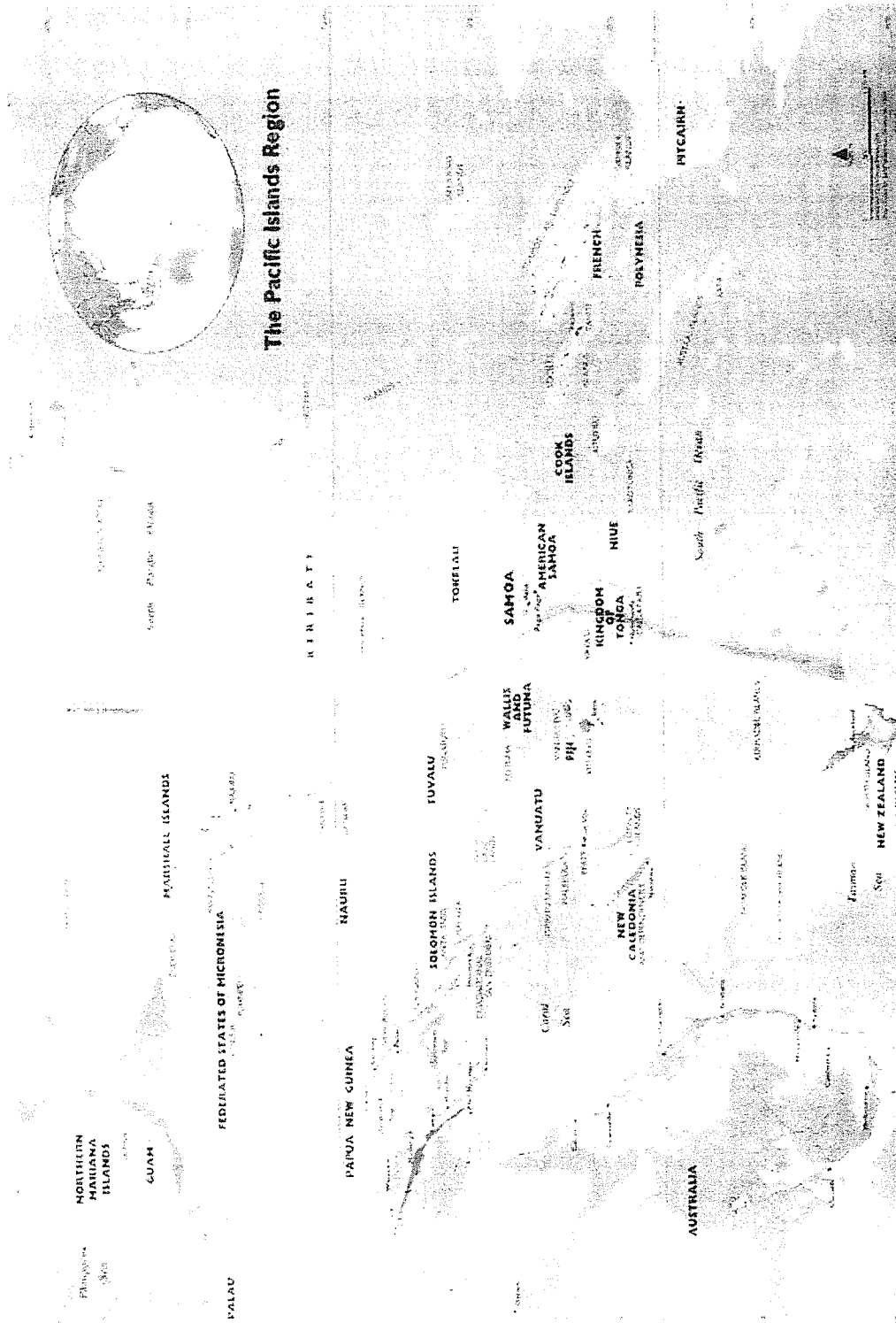
TONGA NATIONAL STATUS REPORT

*The Millennium Development Goals:
Today and Tomorrow*



Central Planning Department 2005

Map of the Pacific Islands Region



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Tonga First Report on the Millennium Development Goal

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asia Development Bank
CRC	Convention on the Right of the Child
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DOE	Department of Environment
GAD	Gender and Development
GDP	Gross National Product
GGP	Grant for Assistance for grassroots project
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GNI	Gross National Income
GOT	Government of Tonga
HDI	Human Development Index
HIES	Household Income Expenditure Survey
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LPG	Liquid Petroleum Gas
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (Food)
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NGO	Non Government Organization
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAH	Participatory Assessment of Hardship
PGI	Poverty Gap Index
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
SDP7	Strategic Development Plan 7
STI	Sexual Transmitted Infections
TESS	Tonga Education Sector Studies
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
TOP\$	Tongan Paanga
UN	United Nation
UNDP	United Nation Development Programm.e
UNIFEM	United Nation Development fund for Women
WHO	World Health Organization
WDC	Women Development Center

The Millennium Development Goals in the Kingdom of Tonga: Today and Tomorrow

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

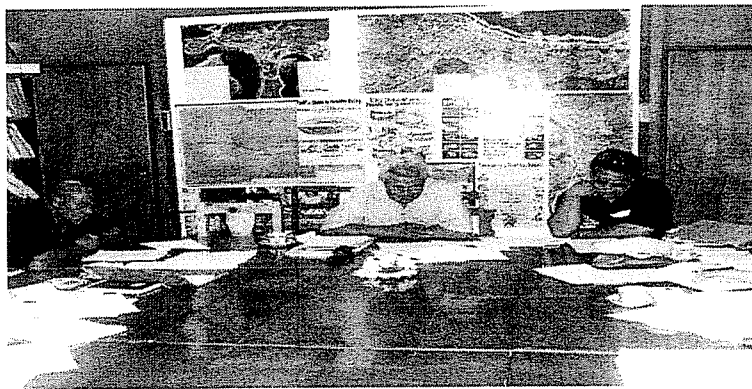
The Millennium Development Goals was born out of the historic Millennium Declaration adopted by 147 countries at the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000. The Kingdom of Tonga participated in this historic moment, with HRH Prince 'Ulukalala Lavaka Ata, the Prime Minister of Tonga, re-affirming this global commitment towards development.

The MDG comprise of eight overarching Goals specifying a global standard for development objectives and outcomes. At the very basic level, the Goals aim to improve the lives of people. As appropriately pointed out by the United Nations, ' the Goals, in many ways are a development manifesto for ordinary citizens around the world; time bound, measurable ... '. Unlike other international conventions/declarations/agreements, the Goals are somewhat different, in that they are specific and measurable targets are specified. This allows member countries to measure/compare on an international level how much/how far each member has progressed in it's effort to achieve the targets and indicators.

For Tonga, these Goals range from controlling the unprecedented rise in diabetes type II, to ensuring that all boys and girls throughout the Kingdom have attended a full course of primary schooling by 2015. Internationally, the Goals have transformed the conceptualization of development path. Indeed, in light of current international acceptance of these Goals, Tonga is committed to re-examining and refocusing her development policies and strategies.

Although ambitious, the Goals are achievable given a conducive political and policy environment. For the Goals to be operational, member countries must ensure that its policy agenda translates the Goals into nationally owned, and nationally driven development strategies. This can be achieved through good and sound social and economic statistics, as well as transparent and accountable governance.

In the last decade or so, Tonga has undergone rapid social, economic, environmental and political changes both at the national and global level. Despite these changes, at a glance, Tonga has made good and steady progress towards the MDG. To date it has achieved targets such as universal primary education and has made some considerable improvements in secondary enrolment rates. The majority of the population have access to safe water and sanitation facilities in both rural and urban areas.



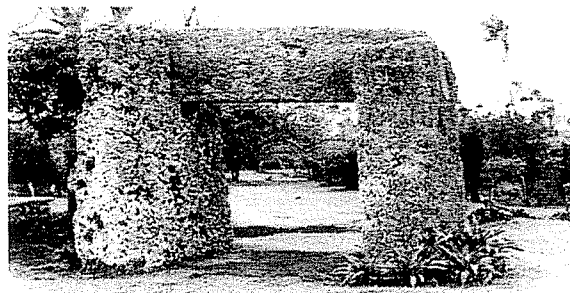
Tonga's performance on the human development index and the Human Poverty Index, in comparison to her regional partners, reflects a high level of expenditure in health and education, stagnant population growth and sustained high levels of investment in social sector.

Despite the impressive performance on many of the indicators, Tonga does not accept this as a justification for complacency. Although the education statistics on primary school enrolment is encouraging, Tonga needs to accord further attention to ensure that all parts of the population have access to essential and quality education, health care services and safe water. Similarly, while Tonga has performed relatively well on many of its health indicators, further work is needed in the area of preventative non-communicable diseases.

In the political arena, unfortunately Tonga is well behind its neighboring Island countries, in women participating in decision making, both at the national and local level. The lack of women's participation is largely attributed to cultural overtones, which discourages women to take part in such role. Despite this, efforts is currently underway by various government and civil society organizations to encourage women to register in the electoral role and to stand for election.

Despite the shortcomings in the progress towards the MDG, it is encouraging that Tonga's pro-active effort to address and rectify many of the social, cultural and financial hurdles, to ensure that the MDG are achieved, is in place. Not only so, but that these efforts are embraced by both government and non-government agencies.

As this is Tonga's first attempt to report on the MDG, each of the Goals are examined and assessed, major challenges faced and requirements for domestics and external resources are discussed. The capacity for monitoring progress is also included and highlighted.



2 INTRODUCTION

In 2003, the Government of Tonga established the Millennium Development Goals Taskforce. The mandate of the MDG Taskforce are

- To oversee the Government of Tonga intermediate and long-term national strategy for achieving and coordinating the reporting obligation of the MDGs;
- That MDG Task Force report regularly to the Development Coordinating Committee and His Majesty's Cabinet on the progress of compiling Tonga's first status report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on MDGs due at the end of 2004, and the long-term achievement of the MDGs by 2015; and;

- That financial and technical assistance from government and relevant UN agencies are to be sought to assist with anticipated assigned tasks, when and as required

In its series of meetings, the Taskforce realized the need to establish a technical working committee to be responsible for the compilation and confirmation of statistics required for the reporting of the MDG indicators.

The membership of the technical working committee comprised of representatives from government organizations and non-government organization represented in the taskforce. The Technical Committee is chaired by the Government Statistician and members actively invited other agencies to participate in this group. This group was largely responsible for compiling information and drafting Tonga's initial report for the consideration of the taskforce.

During the preparatory phase, there were several instances, where statistics for associated indicators were queried and often referred to the line agency for clarification. In Tonga, as in many of her neighboring island countries, some of the indicators and targets are less relevant and hence additional indicators and targets were warranted. As there is a significant increase in the incidence of non-communicable diseases or 'lifestyle diseases', such as diabetes and hypertension, it is more appropriate to add country specific targets and indicators to measures these life style related diseases.

In instances where data was difficult to obtain, Tonga's MDG Taskforce referred to the UNDP regional report (2004) and the UNDP Human Development Report (2003). These figures/statistics were discussed in great lengths and often referred back to relevant agencies for clarification and confirmation. The technical working committee of the MDG Taskforce comprised of relevant professional officers from line agencies and who were instrumental in verifying the data reported in this report.

The central part of this report is devoted to assessing the current status of each of the eight Goals, 18 Targets and 48 Indicators. Several sections assesses where the greatest problems are, analyzing what needs to be done, outlining Government's policy response to these issues. In cases where the indicators appeared to be achieved, other indicators are proposed as a contribution to accelerating the progress towards achieving the Goals.

Having assessed the relevance of the MDG indicators, only 45 indicators are reported for Tonga, as three of the indicators are deemed not applicable. Thus these indicators are not discussed and for which data is not relevant nor exists.

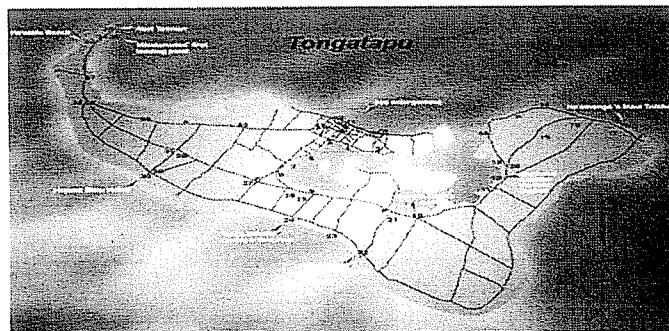
The report begins with a contextual overview of Tonga, followed by an individual assessment of the eight Goals and their associated Targets and Indicators. The report also provides a glance of the status of the Goals and how achievable it is within Tonga's social, economic and financial climate. As the Goals are specific and measurable, it is imperative and reliable, relevant and timely statistics are also readily available. The data provided for the MDG Indicators are those identified for the most recent period. As 1990 is the base year for reporting, in many instances, there is an absent of information for such period and hence, the data available for the most recent period is reported. In the event that such information is not available, data available for pre 1990 is presented. It should also be pointed out that there are significant gaps for almost every indicator provided. Further, there are also extensive problems in terms their relevancy, accuracy, consistency and reliability. The report highlights this shortcoming as an area that Tonga must confer priority in resource allocation.

3 CONTEXT

This section outlines broadly Tonga's development context with specific reference to its social, economic and political environment. *More specific details on social development issues such as education and health should be referred directly to relevant sections of this report.* This is to ensure that information is reported in appropriate sections for ease of reference for the reader. Equally important, the report is focused and adheres to the MDG country reporting guidelines.

3.1 Social Situation

3.1.1 Geographic location



The Kingdom of Tonga consists of 170 small islands which are scattered between 15 and 23 degrees latitude south and 173 and 177 longitude west. They range in size from the smallest reef to Tongatapu the largest island with an area of 256.4 square kilometers. The Kingdom is divided into three main clusters of islands; Tongatapu to the south, Ha'apai in the centre and Vava'u to the north. Tonga's total land area is approximated at 747 kilometers square, with only 36 islands inhabited.

3.1.2 Demographic profile

Tonga's demographic profile is characterized by declining trends in fertility and mortality, increasing life expectancy and a high level of mobility of the population among the region as well as from rural to urban areas. The interaction of these changes has resulted in reducing the rate of population growth, consequently altering the age structure of the population whereby there is a relative increase in the working age along with a slight increase in the dependent population. These demographic outcomes have and will affect the distribution, management and utilization of the Kingdom's resources.

Tonga's population is typified by a fairly young age structure with a median age of 19.9, an increase from 18.6 in 1986 census. The 1996 census results indicate that 39 per cent of the population is under the age of 15 and over 55 per cent of the population are under the age of 25 years.

Tonga's population was at 97,784, with approximately 51 percent being males and the remaining 49 percent females (Statistics Department, 1996). The higher proportion of males suggests a sex ratio of 103.0. Closer examination of the sex ratios indicates that the ratio is reversed in the age groups 30-59, reflecting slightly more females than males. This is highly likely to be due to changing pattern of mortality and migration, whereby more males are likely to migrate and dying. Sporadic surveys and administrative data seem to suggest this pattern.

Another feature of Tonga's demographic profile is its high rate of migration (estimated net migration rate -2.0%), declining mortality (14.4 per 1000 live births) and fertility (4.15 per woman), and a gradual increase in life expectancy (69.8 and 71.7 male and female respectively).

The interaction of these processes has led to a declining rate (from 0.5% to 0.3% between 1986 - 1996) of population growth. While natural increase seen to be considerably (2.3% for the same period) high, international migration has been a major regulator of population growth change in Tonga. An informative national air migration survey conducted by the Central Planning Department in 1999 revealed that the employed population of the age group 25-44 (Tongan-born) dominated the travelling industry during the survey period.

The changing demographic processes has consequently altered the nature of the population's age structure, whereby there is an increase in the working age, while on the other hand, an indication of an increase in the dependency ratio.

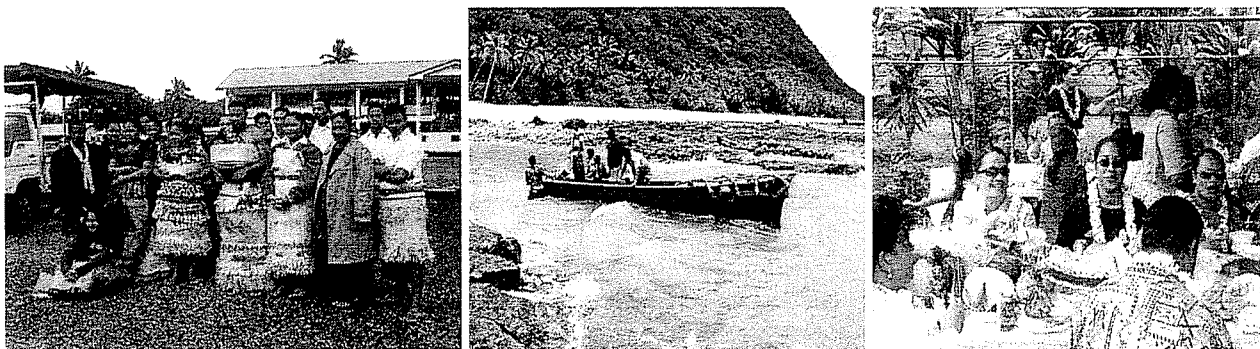
Ninety per cent of the population is Tongan. One language, Tongan is spoken throughout the Kingdom, and over 99 per cent of the population is literate in the Tongan language and around 70 per cent in the English language (Population census, 1996).

Regional distribution

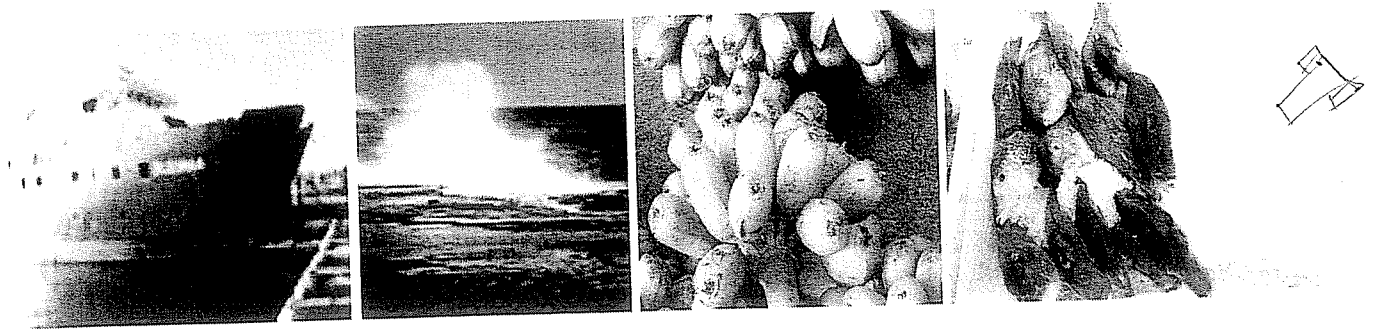
Of the total population, it is estimated that 68 per cent live on the main island; 16 per cent in Vava'u; 8 per cent in Ha'apai; 5 per cent in 'Eua and the remaining 3 per cent are scattered throughout the Niuaus (Statistics Department, 1996). Of the two thirds living in Tongatapu, approximately one quarter are residing in the capital, Nuku'alofa. This population distribution reflects the socio-economic change which has taken place since the turn of the century, which was more notable during post world war II period.

Social Development

On a comparative scale, Tonga ranks sixth (6th) in terms of UNDP's Human Development Index, out of 14 Pacific Island countries, just below Fiji and Samoa in 1999. Tonga's relatively high ranking arises from its social achievements in the provision of universal primary education, public health services, water and sanitation. The advancement in Tonga's social services have largely contributed to the rapidly increasing *average* life expectancy of approximately 70.7 years.



3.2 Economic Outlook



For Tonga, economic activities are concentrated around the capital of Nuku'alofa, and the economy is more monetised, and infrastructural development is focused in Tongatapu, the main island.

Economic growth in Tonga, as measured by GDP per capita, has averaged at a modest 2.2 per cent per annum between 1990/1991 and 2000/01. The average growth rate of the economy for 2001/02 and 2003/04 is averaged at less than 2.4 percent. The continuation of slow economic growth has exacerbated the problem of inadequate employment opportunities, which is prevalent largely amongst the young school leavers.

The official overall budget deficit for financial year 2003 is TOP\$10.5 million or 3.1 percent of GDP, slightly above the original target of TOP\$8.7million. There were shortfalls in external grants and non-tax revenue that were partly offset by tax revenue above the budget estimates.

Total expenditure and net lending were below budget at 32.1 percent of GDP, primarily because of below budget capital expenditure. Wages and salaries expenditure was less than the budgeted level, falling to approximately 48.8 percent of total current expenditure in 2003.

The budget deficit was financed 28 percent externally and 72 percent domestically through borrowings and drawdown of government cash balances.

In terms of inflation, it continues at a double digit figure. The annual inflation rate reached 11.6 percent in 2003 compared to 10.3 percent in 2002. The increase in inflation is appropriately explained by higher oil prices and further weakening of the pa'anga . During 2003, the currency appreciated almost 9 percent against the falling US dollar but depreciated substantially against the main import currencies (Australia 23% and New Zealand 15%)

The widening trade deficit (exports fell slightly, compared to a substantial increase in imports), together with deficits in services and investment income accounts is more than offsetting the 11 percent increase in the surplus on transfer account, resulting in a current account deficit of approximately 1.4 percent of GDP.

For 2003, foreign reserves averaged 2.3 months of import cover, but recovered reaching 3.5 months (as of December 2003) of import coverage. The increase being explained by the release of the second tranches of the Economic and Public Sector reform loan.

Debt servicing remains manageable at around 25 percent of GDP, however, government recognizes the need for closer attention to debt management.

Remittances

Migrants' remittances on the other hand increased from about 15 percent during 1970s to 25 percent of GDP at the end of 1980s and continued to increase to average 35 percent of GDP per annum (Statistics Department, 2002) during the last five years including 2001 against previous projections to fall¹.

For the period July-December 2003, Tonga's economic indicators suggest that the economy has performed below expectation. In summary a number of factors contributed to this poor performance, which included unfavorable price conditions for squash exports to low catch rates by fishing companies and subdued market conditions for commodity exports with the exception of vanilla.

Despite this, there appeared to have been a marked increase in the material wealth and asset ownership of many households throughout the Kingdom, particularly in Tongatapu. Much of this appears to have been financed from remittances which increased from the equivalent of 26.3 percent in 1990/1991 to 37.2 percent in 2000/2001



General Overview of Employment Trends in Tonga

Based on the 1996 census, Tonga's unemployment rate is estimated at approximately 13.3 per cent, of which 73 per cent were males and 27 per cent were females. Sex specific labour force participation shows a considerable increase, most prominent among males and females in the age group 15-19 years. Despite the higher ratio of men to women in the total population, there are more women (27,323) than men (27,155) in the working age population. This could be explained by a number of demographic factors, such as more men in the working age population tend to migrate coupled with a higher life expectancy of women in this age group.

Approximately 58 per cent of Tonga's working age population are economically active, of which approximately 87 per cent are employed. Formal paid jobs occupy approximately 40 per cent of the labour force in Tonga.

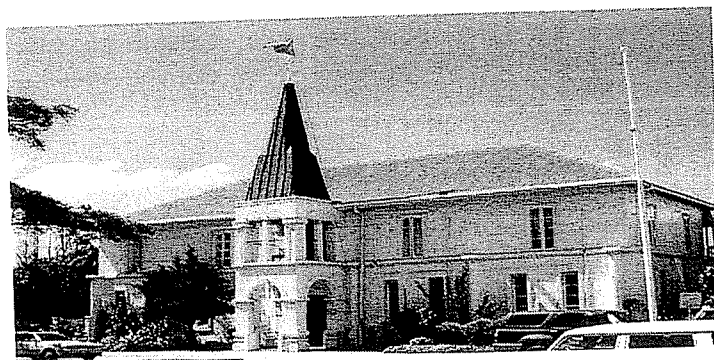
A noticeable trend in the labour market over the past 20 years has been the marked increase in the number of women officially engaged in the formal employment sector, especially between 1986-1996 inter-censal period, where numbers have grown dramatically from 2,743 in 1986 to 11,004 in 1996, representing 14.7 per cent and 37.4 per cent of the total number of persons employed. This is explained by the coverage of the informal employment sector participation in 1996, but not in 1986.

Given the smallness of Tonga's economy, an alarming number of young people are finding employment difficult to attain. It is estimated that approximately 700-800 students leaving secondary

¹ These estimates should be viewed as overstated as the recent increases seems uncharacteristic. Exports in particular fish are suspected to be understated which means that other receipts are overstated such as remittances.

school annually. This is excluding school drop-outs (Central Planning Department, 1998). This poses serious concern regarding employment prospects for this group. The challenge remains, the need to generate sufficient employment, specifically for the youth and in urban Nuku'alofa. The Government of Tonga has embraced employment creation as among its priority policy issues. The strategies for generating employment opportunities, is reflected in Government economic and public sector reform efforts. Programmes such as the youth employment/training scheme by the Ministry of Labour, Commerce and Industries, Micro-enterprise youth program scheme are indication of Government's commitment towards this area.

3.3 Tonga's Political System



The Kingdom of Tonga is a constitutional monarchy, representing a unique political system in the South Pacific region. Tonga is the only country in the South Pacific, which has never been formally colonized by any other nation state, a fact that contributed to preserving and strengthening Tonga's aristocratic system and cultural values for many decades.

Tonga's form of Government comprise of three parts. The first part is the Executive, being the King, Privy Council and Cabinet. The Prime Minister and his Cabinet are responsible for the overall administration of Government on behalf of Privy Council, both at the national and local levels.

The second part is the Legislative Assembly, responsible for enacting laws. The Legislative Assembly is composed of Privy Councillors and Cabinet ministers, the representatives of the nobles and the representatives of the people. The third part is the Judiciary, composed of the Chief Justice and Justices. All the three parts of Government are independent of each other.

At the local level, district and town officers, elected by villagers, have by law a variety of administrative and other duties, such as record keeping of births and deaths, organizing village meetings and attending official, traditional and ceremonial functions of government.

3.4 Environmental Situation

Tonga's limited land resources together with high population growth in the urban centre have put considerable pressure on the country's natural resources. This has consequently created many environmental challenges for Tonga's policy makers. Due to limited land, mangrove forests have been cleared for residential purposes. The conversion of forest area for agricultural development has contributed to the destruction of indigenous forest resources, with the remaining hardwood forest being located in some 4,000 hectares, most inaccessible areas of the 'Eua region.

The rapid growth in the construction sector in recent years, has led to over sand mining in many of Tonga's beaches. The dredging for such materials has consequently created adverse environmental

impact. Over fishing, both reef and deep sea, creates major challenges for the Government of Tonga regarding fisheries management and conservation. Similarly agricultural development has also created some major environmental implications, such as the use of chemicals for crops, clearing of bush allotment for commercial crops for export, such as squash

Tonga's solid waste management is poor and poses detrimental impact on the health of the community and the environment. Development progress has been accompanied by some adverse environmental impacts. Littering and indiscriminate dumping of solid waste is becoming a major environmental problem throughout the Kingdom. These dumping have included vehicles and metal parts, diapers, commercial and domestic wastes.

Tonga's limited indigenous energy sources also pose future environmental problems for the Kingdom. The increasing reliance on imported non-renewable energy for development poses a major challenge for the environmental decision makers to ensure that there is a balanced approach to fostering development heavily reliant on non-renewable energy and energy conservation.

4 THE GOALS IN TONGA TODAY

4.1 Millennium Development Goal 1

4.1.1 Status of progress to date

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

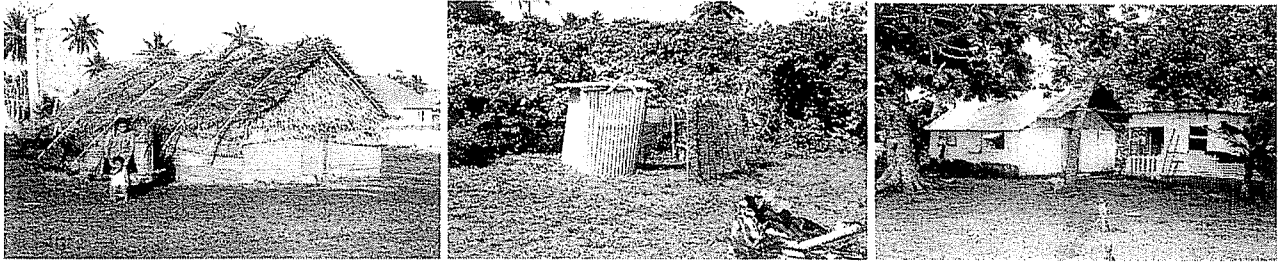
Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day					
MDGI 1:	<i>Proportion of population below \$1 (PPP) per day</i>				Source
	Year	%	Year	%	
	----	----	2001	4.0	2001 HIES
MDGI 2:	<i>Poverty Gap Ratio</i>				Source
	Year	%	Year	Value	
	----	----	2001	7.7	2001 HIES
MDGI 3:	<i>Share of poorest quintile (20%) in national consumption</i>				Source
	Year	%	Year	%	
	----	----	2001	7.7	2001 HIES
Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day					
MDGI 4:	<i>Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age</i>				Source
	Year	%	Year	Value	
	----	----	1986	1.6	1986 National Nutrition Survey
MDGI 5:	<i>Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption</i>				Source
	Year	%	Year	value	

4.1.2 Assessment

In general, poverty in its totality, has not been regarded as an issue in Tonga. This is largely attributed to the lack of a clear definition of the concept within a cultural context. To a large extent it explains the indifference many Tongans exhibits at the mention of the word. In the absence of a clear definition, one is left perplexed as to what is termed 'poverty'. Contextually, a standard definition of 'poverty' is fraught cultural interpretation and meaning.

Towards the end of 2003, the ADB in collaboration with the Government of Tonga, undertook an Assessment of Hardship and Poverty in Tonga was undertaken to; assess and obtain a better understanding of the concept of hardship and poverty in Tonga; monitor progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); formulate appropriate strategies to reduce hardship and poverty.

The Assessment study included both a Participatory Assessment of Hardship (PAH) in sixteen communities throughout the Kingdom, and a comprehensive quantitative analysis of available hardship/poverty indicators to provide Government with a basis for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).



Concept of Poverty and Hardship within a Local Context

The concept of poverty has several meanings and interpretations by many differing communities and societies. For many, 'poverty' connotes hunger and destitution, homelessness, often referred to as absolute poverty. The term poverty as perceived by many, does not appropriately reflect the nature of poverty that exists in Tonga. Instead the term 'hardship' has been proposed as more befitting to appropriately reflect the experiences of many families in meeting their basic needs, which includes food and non-food needs.

While no unified definition for the concept of poverty has been embraced in Tonga, there is an indication from the Participatory Assessment study that there is inequality, and tends to be more widespread than is presumed. Further, the results of the study suggest that is a prevailing Tongan perception of what constitute poverty. What is socially construed as poverty by Tongans is perhaps more appropriately identified as hardship, such as poor access to transportation to remote outer island communities, lack of access to essential services, good quality and regular water supply, primary health care and poor education. This social construction of poverty also included the inability to find secure employment to ensure regular income from which to meet school expenses and other family commitments.

It therefore appears, based largely on the result of the Participatory Assessment of Hardship study that in Tonga, poverty is associated beyond the income notion, and encompasses wide ranging social, economic and human development issues.

International definition of poverty

To standardize the discussion on poverty globally, the internationally accepted measure of absolute poverty is US\$1 per capita per day in 1993 purchasing power parity (PPP) terms is used. Adjusted to Tonga's 2001 prices, the PPP of US\$1 per day equates to approximately T\$1.42 per day, and T\$2840 per household per annum, which is T\$28-20 per person, per week.

It is important for the reader to note that the application of the PPP of US\$1 per day in 1993 prices is a crude measure.

Proportion of Tongan households below \$1 (PPP) per day

The income information from the 2001 Household Income and Expenditure Survey shows that on the whole, approximately 4.0 percent of households had per capita income of less than this level. This indicator suggests that these households have *insufficient income/expenditure* to meet the average daily expenditure requirements for basic minim diet plus the costs of other essential non-food items. This

result does not in any way suggest that people living below the poverty line are going hungry or experiencing destitution.

In essence, the Assessment study pointed out that poverty and hardship in Tonga is associated with difficulties in meeting basic needs, and not an inability to meet these needs. Based on this definition, it is estimated that some 23 *per cent* of households throughout the Kingdom are *experiencing periodic difficulties* in meeting daily cost of living for both food and other essentials.

The Household Income and Expenditure Survey indicates that just under 60 percent of all households in the Kingdom received some income from wages and salaries. The highest proportion receiving some income and wages were recorded from Nuku'alofa and lowest in the outer islands. Wages and salaries were significantly more important as a proportion of cash income compared to other regions. Remittances is also an important source of income for many households.

On average the Household Income and Expenditure Survey suggests that more families in Nuku'alofa could meet their cash expenditure for food purchases, had their demand for non-food cash expenditure been lower. Further, the data also indicate that basic needs hardship is likely to be experienced *least* by the outer islands.

The Assessment report further illustrated that levels of relative hardship and poverty in Tonga is comparable to other poverty/hardship estimates in other regional island countries. For Fiji in 1990/91, the national poverty level was estimated as 25.5 percent, and 20.3 percent for Samoa in the same year. The comparative level of hardship in Tonga is heavily influenced by the high reported levels of non-food expenditure, then elsewhere in the region.

The lesser need for non-food expenditure and the greater access to owned-produced food in the rural areas plays an important part in limiting financial hardship for rural households.

The Poverty Gap Index (PGI)

The Assessment of Hardship and Poverty in Tonga also calculated the Poverty Gap Index (PGI), which measures the combination of depth and severity of poverty of those below the poverty line. The estimated PGI is 7.7 percent, indicating neither deep nor severe hardship or poverty.

Throughout the Kingdom the PGI suggests that some hardship was being experienced by households, with minimal rural-urban differences.

On a more general note, poverty is not a severe problem, however Tonga is vulnerable to external economic shocks and natural disasters which threaten the sustainability of livelihoods. The United Nation's Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) calculated a vulnerability index that ranks Tonga as the third most vulnerable of 111 developing countries.

4.1.3 Major challenges and Policy response

In the absence of an explicit policy on poverty alleviation in Tonga, it does not negate Government's effort in addressing the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of society. In effect, Government have had in place, implicit policies that addresses poverty alleviation. These include sectoral policies that directly aim to improve the lives of people. Regional and rural development policies have been on the development agenda of the Government of Tonga for over three decades. These policy initiatives are mainly to mitigate poverty. The establishment of a regional and rural development division within the Central Planning Department was an effort by the Government of Tonga to provide direct assistance to disadvantaged residents, perceived to be vulnerable to poverty in the Kingdom.

In mid 2004, Government recognized the results of the Participatory Hardship Assessment study. Efforts are underway in the preparation of the National Strategic Development 8 and the budget estimates for 2005/2006 to ensure that issues are appropriately addressed.

Community assistance through civil society organization to alleviate poverty has been on government's development agenda for over two decades, but has mainly focused on infrastructural development. Recently, overseas development assistance has begun to refocus its community assistance to more income creation and employment generation type activities. The rationale behind the refocus is to align better the needs of the community to infrastructural development activities already in place. However, the actual impact of these assistance have not been adequately assessed. The community development schemes under the bilateral aid programmes, assistance by GOT to technical vocational training by non-government providers are efforts reflecting this commitment.



4.2 Millennium Development Goal 2

4.2.1 Status of progress to date

MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education

Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

MDGI 6: Net enrolment ratio in primary education

Year	%	Year	%	Source
1990	91.6	2000	89.4	Ministry of Education annual report, 1990 & 2000

MDGI 7: Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5

Year	%	Year	%	Source
1996	84	2001	93 [#]	1996 census; # 2001 MOE annual report 2002 MOE Annual report
		2002	92 [@]	

MDGI 8: Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds

Year	%	Year	%	Source
1986	98.8	1996	99.3	1996 Population Census

4.2.2 Assessment

The primary education system is a fundamental basis of Tonga's education system. Tonga's success in meeting the goal of universal participation in the first six year of primary schooling is a significant achievement. Nevertheless, further improvement of the primary education system is of high priority to the Government of Tonga.

Education is compulsory for ages six (6) to fourteen (14), or provided a child has completed at least six years of primary schooling, and is one of the priority areas for Government's public investment as stated in the Strategic Development Plan 7 (SDP7). It is also highly valued by Tongans and most

parents aspire to educate their children to the highest attainable. In Tonga today, formal educational qualification is increasingly becoming an enabled entry to any employment opportunities.

The access rate to primary schooling is universal (100%) as government primary education (class 1 to class 6) is free to everyone, subjected to the Minister of Education's discretion. This is a reflection of Government's long standing commitment that no pupils should have to walk more than two miles to schools facility. Unlike primary school, Tonga has yet to achieve near universal access to secondary schools, although enrolment rates are relatively high. For instance, in the 1986-1996 inter-censal period, secondary school attainment increased from approximately 56 per cent to 60 per cent. Tonga's education system is reflected in its impressive literacy rate of approximately 99 percent.

Constraints

A major constraint facing most primary schools is insufficient funding for non-salary recurrent inputs. For financial year 2002/2003, approximately 90 per cent of the education's primary budget goes to salaries (Ministry of Education)

Operational costs of primary school facilities are currently met primarily by parents and communities. Such arrangement therefore indicates that quality primary education is function of community means. This level of community support demonstrates the commitment of parents and communities towards the education of their children, especially primary.

There is increasing evidence that school related costs place a substantial burden on poor families, thus children affected by hardship may have difficulties in attending primary education. There is also evidence that children from poorer communities are under-represented in government financed secondary schools (PAH Study).

It is apparent that the operational constraints faced by primary school education is attributed to limited financial resources, as the allocation to the Ministry of Education continues to drop to 13 per cent from 20 percent of the total Government expenditure. What is also appearing, evidently, is limited assessment of basic skills, including assessment of literacy and numeracy development, to undertake a needs analysis of individual assistance. Educational statistics also point out that approximately 30 percent of students sitting for the Secondary Entrance Examination (SEE) are repeaters attempting the examination for at least the second time. Subsequently this creates a distorted age profile (9 to 14 years) of students in Year 6 and also leads to a substantial increase in the percentage of boys in Year 6. What this evidence also suggest is that girls appear to outperform boys in the SEE. Therefore, primary school assessment constitute largely of student's performance in the SEE, which teachers focus on. The high repeat rate of Year 6 students also indicates parent's high value placed on SEE performance. Little evidence, however, exists to suggest that repeating correlates to better marks in the SEE.

Despite the apparent universal literacy rate for Tonga, this estimate is disputed by various stakeholders in the education sector. Efforts are therefore required to re-examine the measurements used to measure the level of literacy throughout the population.

4.2.3 Major Challenges and Policy response

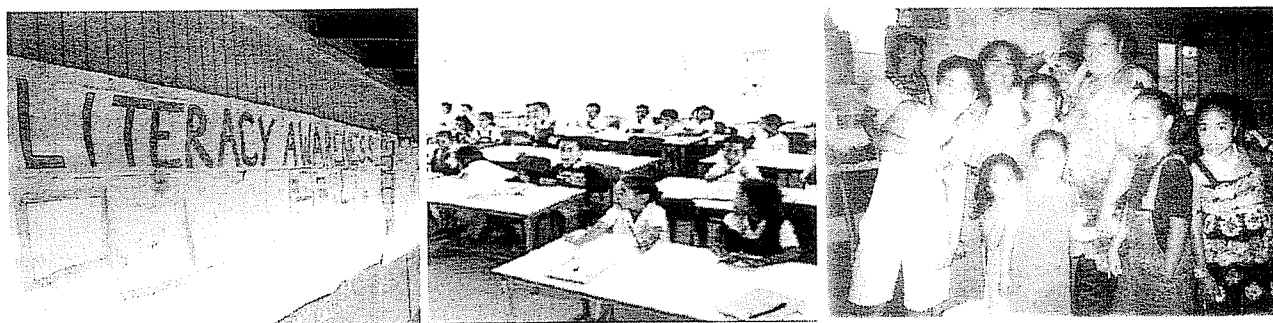
Education, in particular primary education has been a priority investment sector for the Government of Tonga for several decades. This is reflected in the high proportion of Tongans with doctoral qualification per population. The challenge remains for the primary education sector is capacity building and sufficient resources to finance priority areas covered above.

Government's long standing commitment towards the education sector, is demonstrated in the recent endorsement of the first comprehensive Tonga Education Sector Study in 35 years. The 28 specific recommendations furnished by the TESS was subsequently endorsed by the Government of Tonga (GOT).

The TESS was developed from results of a broad consultative process to identify changes needed to align the education sector with the demands of the 21st century and to meet Government's national development objectives. The 28 recommendations provided by TESS focuses on three priority strategic areas. These are; support and extend universal basic; promoting skill development through enhancing technical and vocational education; and administration and management reform in education.

From the TESS recommendations resulted in the development of the Tonga Education Policy Framework and the 15 year Education Strategic Plan (2004-2019). The latter sets out the policy response to implement Government's commitment to improve equitable access to and quality of Universal Basic Education for All children in Tonga up to Year 8 (Form 2). However, the major challenge here is the financing of the investment program and policy interventions to realize the objectives of the Framework. Financing agreements and negotiation is underway with NZAID, World Bank and other Education donors to Tonga.

Apart from national policies advocating basic primary education, international funding agencies are investing in educational initiatives that deliver basic education. This includes the EU and NZAID funded PRIDE project, located in Suva, Fiji, NZAID, Japan's Grant Grassroots Projects (GGP) and World Bank.



4.3 Millennium Development Goal 3

4.3.1 Status of progress to date

MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015

MDGI 9 : *Ratios of girls and boys in primary, secondary and tertiary school*

: *ratio of girls to boys in primary school*

value	Ratio	Year	Ratio	Source
1997	87	2001	89	1997 & 2001 MOE Annual report

: *ratio of girls to boys in secondary*

Year	Ratio	Year	Ratio	Source
1997	97	2001	99	

: *ratio of girls to boys in tertiary school*

Year	Ratio	Year	Ratio	Source
1997	67	2001	69	

MDGI 10: *Ratio of literate females to males of 15-24 year olds*

Year	Ratio	Year	Ratio	Source
1986	94	1996	95	1996 Population Census

MDGI 11: *Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector*

Year	%	Year	Ratio	Source
1986	33.74	1996	35.7	1996 Population Census

MDGI 12: *Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament*

Year	No.	Year	No.	Source
2003	1	2004	0	

4.3.2 Assessment

According to UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI), Tongan women are not deprived in terms of education and health indicators. The HDI for females in Tonga is six per cent higher than that for males (HDR 1999). This is explained by the fact that females have a higher life expectancy of 71.7 years, compared to 69.8 years for males. The Human Poverty Index (HPI) also suggests that women's status is slightly higher than her male counterpart. The primary and secondary enrolment ratios for females are 91 and 71 respectively. Total and teenage fertility rates for Tongan females are relatively low by Pacific standards at 4.3 and 22 respectively.

Education

The most striking features of Tonga's educational system is the tendency for girls to outperform boys. As already pointed out (Goal 1), girls outperform their male counterpart in the SEE. For the period 1995-2001, girls accounted for around 47 percent of primary school pupils, whilst their representation at secondary school level is estimated at 49 percent.

Evidence exists to indicate that girls also outperform boys at School Certificate level, despite the dominance of boys in the secondary school level and particularly at the upper level. Female performance at the secondary level is quite impressive, as majority of passes in Form 6 are girls. A plausible explanation for this, as English is a requirement for overall qualification in form 6, girls have traditionally performed better in English than boys.

In terms of dropouts, a higher proportion of boys than girls are more likely to dropout at all levels in secondary school except for Form 6, where girls tend to dominate. Of the total dropout rate (6.7%), approximately 61 percent are males compared to 39 percent females. Similarly, at secondary school level, approximately 37 percent of girls repeat compared to 67 percent of boys.

Until recently, scholarship awards were dominated by boys. The Government of Tonga commissioned a review of Tonga's scholarship system in 1998/1999. According to this review, for the period 1991-1996, approximately 55.5 percent of awards went to males and the 44.5 percent to females. The overall ratio of male to female awardees for the six year period was around 1:1.2, indicating that for every female awardees is one male awardees, achieving an almost gender balance in awards allocated for the scholarships awards managed by the Government of Tonga.

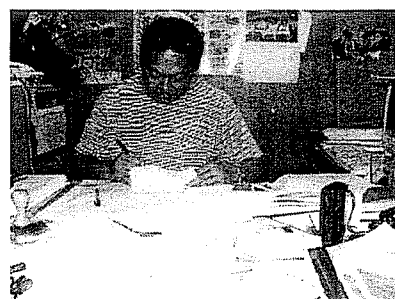
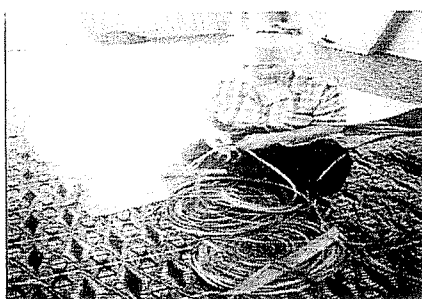
For award holders from 1999 to around 2000/2001, data suggests an almost gender balance in terms of award allocation. Interestingly the current awardees then consist primarily of younger females, with 50 percent of female awardees below the age of 22 years. In contrast, the average age was much higher for males.

The findings and recommendations of the 1998/1999 review of the Tonga Government scholarship system was endorsed by Government in 1999. Amongst the recommendations of this review was the need to further improve the selection process used by the Scholarships Committee in selecting awardees, with merit as the utmost priority, and gender equity as a secondary factor. Given Tonga's smallness and close kinship network, scholarship applicants were assigned a random identification number. Interestingly, the application of the new selection process and criteria, girls tended to outnumber their male counterparts in the award selection.

Clearly, girls are not disadvantaged neither at the primary and secondary level nor the tertiary level. More importantly, the traditional argument that males dominate the scholarship awards is questionable in light of the above evidence.

Whilst girls may appear to have limited opportunities for scholarship in recent years, it is important to bear in mind that the award of scholarships under the purview of Government is dictated by the priority training needs specified by Government, and certainly not based on any other reasons. Often in the selection process, students with outstanding academic results may actually miss out on an award if their preferred area of study is outside Government's priority training needs. Certainly and by no means are girls given less priority in the selection process. There have been instances where the preferred study field of female applicants is outside these priority needs. However, in the last five years or, scholarship awards offered to Tonga, outside Government's scholarship system requires that gender equity dictate the selection process and criteria.

Notwithstanding the educational performance of girls in the past decade or so, there is evidence to suggest that sexual stereotyping continue to permeate the national education system, particularly in terms of subjects that have been perceived as gender specific.



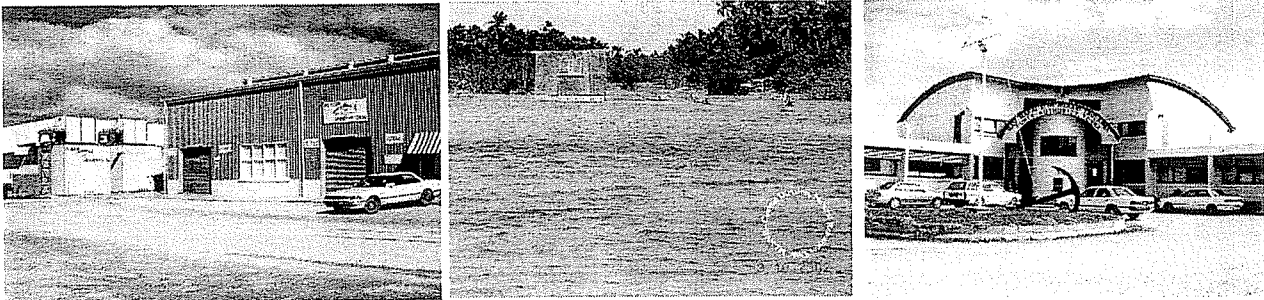
Labour force

Despite the higher ratio of men to women in the total population, there are in fact more women (27,323) than men (27,155) in the working age population. This can be explained by a number of factors, such as, more men in the working age population are more likely than their female counterpart migrate, coupled with a higher life expectancy for women in this age group.

Women constitute around 50.4 percent of the workforce in 1996. The participation rate for women increased from 18 percent in 1986 to 42 percent in 1996. This is explained by the involvement of women in the informal sector, which was not captured in the 1986 census. Despite the considerable increase in the proportion of women in the workforce, it also means that 58 percent of all women over the age of 15 are not considered to be economically active. The 1996 census data suggests of a vast majority of non-economically active women are engaged in unpaid housework. The bulk of non-economically men are students.

Women comprise approximately 38 percent of the paid employment population (1996 Population Census), of which a majority is engaged in craft and trade related work. This suggests that Tongan women are likely to be employed in small menial or subordinate jobs or jobs associated with caring/serving or traditional skills (clerical/secretarial). This is quite unusual as girls tend to outperform boys at both primary and secondary level education. However, this surprising trend is further substantiated demographic indicators. Examining the number of registered marriages, sex and age group for years 1990 and 1992 indicates that approximately 2.9 times more females marry between the ages 15 and 19, than males

At the professional level, women are typically found in the teaching and nursing occupation and are underrepresented in managerial and higher administrative positions. However since 1996, the representation of women in managerial positions in the civil service has increased somewhat. Recently, the appointment of women as Acting Cabinet Ministers, have enabled women to sit in the Legislative Assembly by virtue of their ministerial appointment.



Political Participation

Tongan women are absent from Tonga's modern political arena. Whilst women constitute almost 50 percent of the electorate population, very few have taken advantage of their right to vote and stand for election. Currently, there is one woman town officer recently elected by the village of Taunga in Vava'u earlier in 2004. This is a historical milestone for the women of Tonga, for this is the first time for a woman to be elected as a town officer.

There is an absence of women in the Legislative Assembly where the members consist of Ministers (appointed by His Majesty), nobles (elected by 33 nobles) and people's representatives, elected by the people. This reflects, to a large extent, the cultural legacy that decision - making is a man's role, and not so much intended discrimination against women, as many would believe. To date, only three

women have been elected into the Legislative Assembly, unfortunately though, only for a triennium each.

The lack of enthusiasm on the part of the female population to act on this right may be attributed to cultural barriers. Tonga's political culture that associates decision making, authority and political power as male prerogatives is surprisingly difficult to shirk as it has been internalized by Tongan society as norm, and far from political discrimination.

As women cannot claim hereditary nobility title, they cannot represent the nobles in the Legislative Assembly. To date, however, females holding senior managerial position within the Civil Service have been appointed as Acting Ministers and now can sit in Cabinet. The same women have represented Cabinet in Parliament and in the highest executive authority, Privy Council. The first Tongan females, in their acting appointment as Minister of Labour, Commerce & Industries, Minister of Justice, Minister of Finance and Minister of Foreign Affairs, have included the A/Secretary for Labour, Commerce & Industries, Solicitor General, A/Secretary for Finance and the Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

The limited political role of females, at both the societal and national level also transfers to the household, where women assume secondary role in decision making. However, as the 1996 household census shows, increasingly more women are becoming heads of households. This changing household structure is largely attributed to the migration of males in the working age group, for overseas countries in search of better economic opportunities. To a limited extent, there appears to be an increasing number of single parent families.

Tonga's land legislation explicitly discriminates against women. In accordance with the Law of Tonga, the principles of patrilineality (inheritance through the male lineage) and male primogeniture (eldest legitimate male), Tongan males have a legal entitlement to both a town and bush allotment. Although Tongan women have nominal land rights in their capacity as an only child or widow, these are legally controlled. Widows may lose their land rights if they re-marry or fornication is proven in court. Similarly, for daughters, they may lose their land rights if they marry or fornication is proven in court.

The rules of inheritance, puts Tongan women at a severe disadvantage. However, the widespread practice of land leasing provides some respite for women. At the national level, there is an indication of move towards gender equity in terms of appointment to the boards of statutory bodies and state owned enterprises. This trend, the educational achievement of Tongan women coupled with changing demographic structure of the household could act as a catalyst for instigating the advancement of women in political office.

4.3.3 Major Challenges and Policy response

As women comprise approximately half of the Kingdom's human resources, the Government of Tonga recognized the need to ensure that gender balance in all social, economic and political spheres through the integration of gender issues into a holistic framework. This resulted in the National Gender and Development (GAD) policy launched in 2002 by HRH, The Prime Minister. This was a reaffirmation by the Government that both men and women, as participants and beneficiaries in the development process, is the cornerstone for successful and sustainable development in Tonga.

The establishment of the National Advisory Committee on Gender and Development in 1999 was mandated to design and monitor Government of Tonga's Gender and Development policy (GAD). The GAD policy recognizes Government's desired outcome, through the need to increase, by

encouraging and supporting, the participation of women in the economic sphere (such as increase labour force participation) in order to promote sustainable development. Similarly, facilitating Government's desired direction of facilitating the improvement of Tonga's competitiveness of domestic export is expressed in the GAD policy.

Indeed, the GAD policy specifies strategies to encourage more women to be politically active, voters registration programme are in place to encourage both men and women to register to vote and vote. The integrative approach of the Gender policy recognizes the importance of women to participate actively in decision making process both at the national and local level.

The GAD policy plan of action clearly outlines the effort needed to ensure that gender issues are mainstreamed into to the national development agenda. Whilst efforts are in place to address gender equity throughout sectors of the economy, the most challenging issues is the availability of resources to implement these activities.

4.4 Millennium Development Goal 4

4.4.1 Status of progress to date

MDG 4: Reduce child mortality					
Target 5: Reduce by two thirds between 1990 and 2015, the under five mortality rate					
MDGI 13:	<i>Under five mortality rate (CMR)</i>				
	Year	Value	Year	/000	Source
	1990	27	2001	20	MOH Annual report 2001
	---	---	2002	13.9	HDR 2003
MDGI 14:	<i>Infant mortality rate (IMR)</i>				
	Year	Value	Year	%	Source
	1995	14.4 [@]	2002	13 [*]	[@] 1995 MoH Tonga Health 2000; [*] Vital statistics bulletin 2002
MDGI 15:	<i>Proportion of 1 year old children immunized against measles, %</i>				
	Year	Value	Year	%	Source
	1999	94	2002	96	MoH Annual report

4.4.2 Assessment

The health status of children throughout Tonga is regarded as overwhelmingly good. The prevailing low level of infant and child mortality testifies to the concerted effort by the Government to ensure that primary health care is effectively delivered. Within the Pacific region, Tonga is currently one of the best performing Pacific countries in terms of the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR). Similarly, based on UNICEF's global estimates, Tonga's IMR ranks quite well compared to other developing countries.

Tonga's infant mortality rate (IMR) is estimated at 14.4 per 1,000 live births in 1999 a decline from 19 in the 1996 population census. This is a decline from 26 in 1986. The advances made in maternal and child health have made an impressive impact on the national maternal mortality rate.

Primary health care has been one of the major development concerns of Government in the last 30 years or so. Presently, Tonga is enjoying the benefits generated by an effective and successful primary health care policies, which embraces a comprehensive, immunization, antenatal care, waste disposal, water and sanitation programmes.



Child mortality rates have been decreasing and are comparatively low, broad immunization coverage with more than 95 percent of children fully immunized against common infectious diseases.

Access rate to health care services in Tonga is quite impressive at 100 percent. Infectious diseases are very much under control, which is attributed by good standard of water and sanitation facilities as well as developing of primary health care delivery system that focused on both communicable diseases and maternal and child health. The reflection of Tonga's impressive performance on maternal and child health is revealed in the obstetric and immunization indicators. The total fertility rate (TFR) has been stable between 1995 and 1999, fluctuating between 3.1 and 3.8 (MOH Annual reports)

The life expectancy at birth for Tonga is estimated at 69.8 years for males and 71.7 years for females. These indicators suggest that mortality has decreased during the 1986-1996 inter-censal period (67.6 years for males and 70.7 years for females). The slow decline in mortality, however, could be attributed to an increase in non-communicable diseases (cancer, diabetes and heart disease) associated with lifestyle factors such as changing consumption of traditional food high in fibre to processed food high in fat and sugar, smoking and reduced physical activity.

4.4.3 Major Challenges and Policy response

Tonga's health policy has traditionally focused on primary health care. Despite the impressive health indicators, particularly those relating to infant and child health, it is recognized that further improvement is required in the area of child morbidity. Non-communicable diseases, amongst children is emerging and has been addressed in Government's NCD plan of action.

Important to note that the last comprehensive nutrition survey, which reported that approximately 98 percent of children having weights for age of more than 80 percent, and 23 percent of children with more than 120 percent, of WHO standards. The absence of a recent nutrition survey is difficult to assess the nutritional status of children, especially in view of the economic development, characterized by a significant shift away from traditional diets to a diet of energy dense foods.

Since the 1986 nutrition survey, there is evidence of child malnutrition and food deprivation, particularly amongst the poorer sections of the communities. In the mid 1990s, hospital outpatient consultation record, suggests that the main health problems affecting young children are respiratory and gastric infections.

Another health concern directly associated with social and economic development is the decline in breastfeeding of infants. Despite a proactive effort on the part of health workers, the participation of women in the paid employment, the short maternity leave entitlement contribute to reasons women do not breastfeed. According to the 1986 Nutrition survey, approximately 83 percent of babies were exclusively breast fed only for the first two months. In the last decade or so, available evidence indicates this situation has not improved.

Child sexual abuse in Tonga is not often spoken of nor publicly acknowledged as a social problem. Preparation of Tonga's initial report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 2001/2002 found substantial evidence that child sexual abuse and incest is prevalent throughout Tonga. In the absence of concrete data, it is believed that the occurrence of such abuse is more likely in the outer islands of Tonga. However, the exact incidence and prevalence is difficult because of the sensitivity of the issue.

4.5 Millennium Development Goal 5

4.5.1 Status of progress to date

MDG 5: Improve maternal health				
Target 6: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio				
MDGI 16:	<i>maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births</i>			
	Year	Value	Year	value
	1995	196	2002	78.20
				2002 MoH Annual report
MDGI 17:	<i>Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel</i>			
	Year	Value	Year	value
	1999	96	2001	95
				2001 MoH Annual report

4.5.2 Assessment

A severe shortage of trend data for Tonga makes it difficult to appraise the likelihood of achieving the MDG of reducing maternal mortality by three quarters by 2015.

The prevailing low maternal mortality rate and crude death rate indicates the relative good standard of health in Tonga, *a trend which has sustainably improved over the last 40 years or so and continues to be satisfactory*. Notwithstanding this, there have been instances within the last 10 years where the maternal mortality and morbidity in Tonga have been of some concern. Further, rural-urban differentials suggest that maternal mortality remains a concern particularly in remote areas of the islands. In the 1995, pregnancy related complications ranked first amongst the five leading causes of morbidity for Tonga.

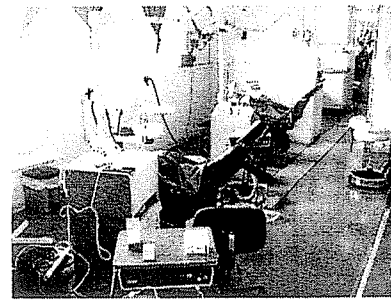
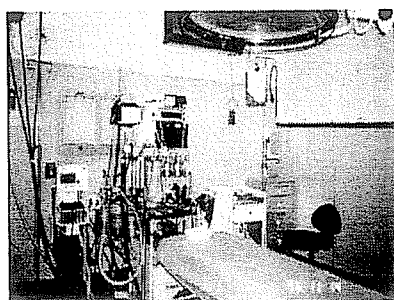
There are about 1800 deliveries per year at Vaiola hospital and approximately 95% of women deliver in the hospital. The proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel is also high 92 percent in 2000. This indicates that children birth is under the control of midwives and nurses, and to a lesser extent, traditional birth attendants.

4.5.3 Major challenges and Policy response

Health data on women's health are limited and suffers from inconsistencies. A major concern in the area of maternal health is the apparent low level of contraceptive use that has persisted. Amongst married women, contraceptive user rates averages 30 percent.

Stereotyping associated with the ability of women to bear a child affects women's reproductive health. The legislation forbidding abortion restricts the choices available to many women in the event of unwanted pregnancy, especially cases where it threatens the health of the mother.

Teenage pregnancies, may not be as high as other Pacific island countries, nonetheless around five percent of all pregnancies every year in Tonga is occurring among girls under the age of 19 years.



4.6 Millennium Development Goal 6

4.6.1 Status of progress to date

MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS and non-communicable related diseases

Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

MDGI 18:	<i>HIV prevalence among 15-24 years old pregnant women</i>				
	Year	Value	Year	value	Source
	1990	0	2002	0	MoH Annual report
MDGI 19:	<i>Contraceptive prevalence rate among women aged 15-49</i>				
	Year	Value	Year	value	Source
	1999	33	2002	23	MoH Annual Report

Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence/prevalence of NCDs and other related diseases

MDGI 20:	<i>Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS</i>				
	Year	No.	Year	No.	Source
	1990	0	2002	3	MoH Annual report 2002
MDGI 21:	<i>prevalence of diabetes per 100,000</i>				
	Year	/00,000	Year	/00,000	Source
	1998	280	2003	277	MOH Annual report
MDGI 22:	<i>death rates for diabetes per 100,000</i>				
	Year	/00,000	Year	/00,000	Source
	1998	11	2003	9	MOH Annual report
MDGI 23:	<i>Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis</i>				
	: <i>TB incidence rate per 100,000 population</i>				
	Year	/00,000	Year	/00,000	Source
	2000	24	2002	29	MOH Annual report
	: <i>TB death rate per 100,000 population</i>				
	Year	/00,000	Year	/00,000	Source
	1994	2	2002	4	MOH annual report
MDGI 24:	<i>Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short courses</i>				
	: <i>Tuberculosis, DOTS detection rate percent total population</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1997	74	2002	98	MoH
	: <i>Tuberculosis, DOTS treatment success, percent total population</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1999	82	2002	93	MoH Annual report

4.6.2 Assessment

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs)

Indeed for Tonga, whilst the ideology underpinning Primary Health Care have been transformed from abstract ideas to concrete action plans, what remains to be a major health challenge for Tonga is the high prevalence of non-communicable diseases, or those diseases associated with modernization/development, or what often termed as 'lifestyle' related diseases.

These emerging health patterns in recent decades that have come into existence have changed the major causes of morbidity and mortality.

Tonga experienced an epidemiological transition between 1950 and 1980. This was characterized by increasing life expectancy, falling fertility rates, child mortality and maternal mortality ratios. At the same time, non-communicable diseases are increasing to epidemic proportions, while communicable diseases have largely been brought under control. The proportion of deaths caused by infectious disease fell from 32 percent in 1950s to 6 percent in the 1990s. The proportion of deaths from diseases of the circulatory system grew from 5.6 percent to 38 percent during the same period.

Improved economic standards, better communication and access to processed and imported foods have led to a rapidly increasing problem of obesity and obesity related NCDs. These include diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. The prevalence of diabetes type II has more than doubled from 7 percent to 16.5 percent in 25 years. The most recent study was the National Diabetes Survey 1998 which recorded the 16.5 percent for persons over the age of 18 years of age.

In a partially published NCD survey in 1992, the rates of diabetes was reported as 1.6 percent, with 0.8 percent of men and 2.3 percent of women affected by the disease. Given that the majority of diabetes is adult onset (type II), the rates is underestimated, as many cases go undetected.

Dietary/nutritional intake

In Tonga, as elsewhere, consumption of inexpensive, high calorie, fatty foods are associated with increases in diet related non-communicable diseases (NCDs). In the last four decades or so in Tonga, consumption of imported and low nutritional value foods have increased at the expense of the traditional diets that are generally recognized as healthier alternatives.

Consumption of high fat content imported meats is of concern. Mutton flap consumption increased from 1,434,696 kg in 1976 (valued in TOP\$420,217) to 2,940,822kg (valued in TOP\$4,480,702) in 1996. Although between 1996-1999, foreign trade statistics indicate a dramatic fall in the import of muttons, however, this decrease have been more than offset by increases in other imported meats. On the whole, in the last ten years or so has been accompanied by massive increases in the consumption of imported high fat meats.

Import level of key meats (mutton flaps, poultry pieces, sausages and corned beef) show a cumulative increase from 3,389,228 kg in 1989 (valued at TOP\$5,331,364) to 5,559,418kg (valued at \$TOP10,235,756) in 1999. Given the relative slow population growth in Tonga, the massive increase in imported food consumption represents a large per capita change.

Given the association between diet related NCDs and the consumption of such foods, this is of major concern and hence an appropriate target for Tonga's Millennium Development Goals.

STI/HIV/AIDS

No baseline data on STI prevalence in Tonga, as risk behaviour for STI is the same for HIV. But more importantly, the presence of STI facilitates HIV transmission. However, Tonga has realized the importance of collecting such information. Tonga has requested WHO for assistance to develop a generic protocol for conducting a STI prevalence survey.

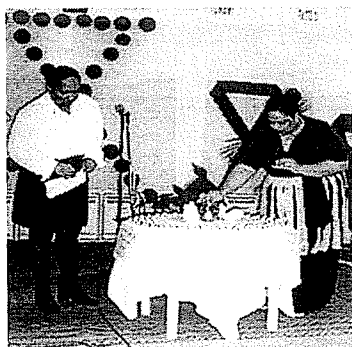
For the period of 1984-2004, 13 cases of HIV have been detected, out of which 12 have died from full blown AIDS. To date, one is currently living. A national strategy to control and prevent non-communicable diseases in Tonga has been endorsed.

4.6.3 Major challenges and Policy response

In recognition of the diverse health problems faced by its people, the Government of Tonga has committed itself to key national priorities includes developing an equitable health care financing system; an improvement of health information and surveillance, prevention and control of common NCDs, through the design of a national strategy.

A number of initiatives intended to address the situation have been contemplated and adopted. Food related behaviours remains a major challenge for policy makers, as educational initiatives are predicated on the notion that people's food preference and thus their consumption patterns can be transformed. However, the diverse and wide educational awareness campaign, have contributed in a limited way to the containment of the rapidly increasing diabetes rate and subsequently obesity prevalence. Due to the lack of available data, the management of NCD will continue to be health development challenge for the Kingdom of Tonga.

A follow-up National Diabetes survey in 2000, indicated that a large proportion of people with diabetes remained undiagnosed. The health system does not have the capacity to care for all these undiagnosed patients if they are identified. The management of NCD outside Nuku'alofa is also limited. The cause of the increasing burden of NCD is multi-factorial. The main factors though include increasing overweight rates, reduced physical activity and smoking, together with increasing life expectancy



4.7 Millennium Development Goal 7

4.7.1 Status of progress to date

MDG 7:	Ensure environmental sustainability				
Target 9:	Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources				
MDGI 25:	<i>Proportion of land area covered by forest</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1990	5.5	1994	11	DoE (2004)
MDGI 26:	<i>Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1998	6.7	1996	5.4	Environment 2004
MDGI 27:	<i>Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita) and consumption of ozone-depleting CFCs (ODPtons)</i>				
	<i>: Carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂), metric tons, per capita</i>				
	Year	Value	Year	value	Source
	1990	0.8	1994	3	Department of Environment, 2004
	<i>: Consumption of ozone depleting CFCs (ODP tons)</i>				
	Year	Value	Year	value	Source
	1991	0.71	2003	0.32	DoE
MDGI 29:	<i>Proportion of households using solid fuels</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	<i>: Population using biomass fuels</i>				
	Year	%	Year	value	Source
	1986	75.42	1996	73.7	Population Census, 1996
Target 10:	Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water				
MDGI 30:	<i>Proportion of households with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1986	91.5	1996	98.19	Population Census
	<i>: Proportion of households with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1986	96.57	1996	98.34	Population Census
	<i>: Proportion of households with sustainable access to an improved water source, rural</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1986	90.18	1996	98.14	Population Census
MDGI 31:	<i>Proportion of urban households with access to improved sanitation</i>				
	<i>: Population with improved sanitation, urban</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1986	54.82	1996	99	Population Census 1996
Target 11:	By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of slum dwellers				
MDGI 32:	<i>Proportion of urban households with access to secure tenure (owned or rented)</i>				
	Year	Value	Year	Value	Source
	1986	97	1995	98	Population Census

4.7.2 Assessment

Population growth together with urbanization has intensified the demand for land, that the regulatory entitlements for land can no longer be fulfilled. Between 1994 and 2000, the demand for registered tax allotments increased by approximately 3.5 percent (number of tax registered allotments 16,021), whilst registration of town allotments increased by 13.2 percent (15,406) and leaseholds increased by 29 percent (4,818). The highest land registration was recorded for Tongatapu, for tax and town allotments and also leaseholds. However, over the five year period, town allotment registration declined by 10 percent for Tongatapu, indicating the limited availability of land in Tongatapu.

The above trend is further supported by data indicating that only 35 percent of the male population recorded in 1996 could be accommodated had they fully exercised their rights to a grant of heritable land, as provided by the Law (MLSNR, 1999).

Urban and Rural Settlement

Approximately 70 percent of the Tonga's population live in rural areas, the remaining 30 percent residing in urban areas. Of the 30 percent residing in urban areas, 77 percent live in Nuku'alofa, 12 percent in Neiafu, 5 percent in Pangai and the remaining 6 percent in 'Ohonua, Hihifo (Niuatoputapu) and Angaha (Niuafou). As a result of rapid urbanization, agricultural allotment particularly surrounding the outskirts of Nuku'alofa has been subdivided for settlement.



Settlements in Swampy/wetlands areas

Newly emerging settlements appeared in swampy areas of north east and north west of Nuku'alofa during the early 1980s. This trend intensified following tropical cyclone Isaac in 1982. The new settlement resulted in the mass removal mangroves in order to construct residential homes. These areas often face inundation from the sea, heavy rain, poor drainage. As such a consequence, residents of the area are subjected to water borne diseases and other health risks associated with sewage problems.

Energy sector

Energy plays a crucial role in the Kingdom's sustainable development strategies and maintaining a fine balance between energy, environment and the economy is a national priority. The heavy reliance on imported fossil fuels and the underutilization of the Kingdom's renewable energy resources potential are major barriers to Tonga's social and economic development.

The pattern of energy use in Tonga in the past 10 to 20 years have changed dramatically, reflecting the rapid development of energy intensive economic activities, thus intensifying Tonga's reliance on imported petroleum products. To compound this, Tonga's wood resources are rapidly depleting as a response for land for agricultural purposes.

The Kingdom's increasing reliant on imported petroleum products to satisfy its energy needs, means that Tonga is particularly vulnerable to external events that affect the price and availability of petroleum products and export potential and foreign currency flows from remittances and aid.

Tonga's indigenous energy resources are limited. Wave and wind energy have been investigated, but no pilot or demonstration project as yet have been developed and implemented.

By 2000, the energy balance showed a growing demand for imported petroleum products for which petroleum products captured 75.3 percent of the total energy supply while biomass declined by 6 percent and solar energy significantly expanded by 10 percent thus 0.2 percent at the end of the

decade. The growing consumption of petroleum and LPG is clear reflection of the changing lifestyle of Tongans and their increasing exposure to modern technologies.

Direct impact of energy use on the environment is the visible traffic smokes in Nuku'alofa and the dumped waste oil throughout the island group.

Land Use

The profound change in Tonga's agricultural system is largely characterised by the shift from traditional agricultural system to large scale commercial agricultural activities. This has resulted in the extensive use of high level fertilizers and pesticides. The increase in Greenhouse Gas emissions are noticeably increasing in Tonga. The changes in land use and forestry are major contributors. As agriculture and forestry is important to Tonga's economy, it is essential that GHG mitigation strategies are in place to reduce emissions.

Forestry

Only limited areas of indigenous forests remain in Tonga, predominantly found in very steep or otherwise inaccessible areas, in coastal littoral areas and swamps, or in mangroves swamps. The total forested area has been estimated as 4,000 hectares (approximately 5.3% of total land area), the bulk of which is found in 'Eua. Due to limited availability of land, mangrove areas in Tongatapu and Vava'u have been subdivided and some already been cleared and filled for residential homes. This has resulted in a reduction in volumes of fish caught from the area and also inadequate sewerage is a severe health hazard due to flooding of pit latrines and septic tanks.

According to the UN definition of forested areas to total land area, approximately 5.5 percent of Tonga's land area is covered by forest. No inventory has been taken and so this is an estimate only.

In 1972 a strong re-forestation policy towards providing local timber needs and reducing overall loss of foreign exchange have led to 300 hectares of exotic trees being planted in 'Eua. This effort is being supported by the Government of Tonga with assistance from NZAID. The Eua forestry was commercialized in 2003.

Despite the reforestation policy, ecotourism activities such as tracking (which is now common in 'Eua), the cutting of stumps and branches for firewood purposes; and the extensive stripping bark for medicinal purposes have affect exotic species in 'Eua.

Solid Waste

Solid waste disposal produces Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission of methane gas, which have harmful effect on the environment. Studies in 1994 and 1999 revealed that approximately 65 percent of degradable organic wastes for total land fill waste arrival. If this 65 percent was managed effectively, further emissions from the solid waste disposal site will be reduced considerably.

The poor management of solid waste in Tonga is having detrimental effect on the health of local communities, apart from its environmental impact.

Poor management of waste includes; unsightly littering and indiscriminate dumping of solid waste in drains, waterways, on public and unoccupied private lands. Littering and indiscriminate dumping of solid waste has become a major challenge for environmental conservationist and to the Government. Similarly, a UN study in 1996 estimated that some 460,000 litres of oil is used each year in Tonga. This confirms the information from the 1996 Foreign Trade Statistics that of all import fuel (lubricant oil,

kerosene), around 90,000 litres per day is used. What proportion of this becomes waste oil is not known. The current practice for disposal of waste is not known.

Pollution and degradation of local drains and waterways eg: lakes, wells and coastal areas and wetlands, also produce detrimental impact on local flora, fauna and the livelihood of local communities.

Nuku'alofa in Tongatapu, Neiafu in Vavau are the only two Islands that have a designated rubbish dump throughout Tonga. The absence of a designated rubbish dump in Ha'apai and 'Eua have created environmental concerns for these islands.

Free ranging domestic animals

The pervasive problem of free ranging, unpenned animals, particularly pigs, pose major environmental concerns, particularly amongst the villages. Such animals destroy vegetation, valuable trees and affect repeated replanting attempts. Ironically, whilst such issues have surfaced, high cultural value is placed upon the rearing of pigs because they play an important role in Tonga's ceremonial and social functions. Because of this, they also provide attractive economic benefits for people to nurture these animals.

4.7.3 Major challenges and Policy response

Tonga's main natural resources are its land and sea. Very limited renewable (forest, agriculture and fish) resources are available, and no non-renewable resources (oil, minerals) have been discovered.

Biodiversity conservation is one of the most difficult environmental issues facing small Island countries and Tonga is no exception. The most challenging choices is often between environmental conservation and protection versus economic growth and development. Inevitably, what emerges between these choices is the unconditional land ownership as prescribed by the Land Act, versus government's increasing role in its stewardship responsibilities. Nonetheless, the Government of Tonga has statutory laws that have provisions for biodiversity conservation.

The Mount Talau Park was gazetted in 1994 and the Ha'apai Conservation Areas were established in 1996. Since 1976, only five marine parks have been established under the Parks and Reserves Act of 1976.

Inshore biodiversity is vast, however, this is the most vulnerable and degraded habitat due to easy and open access, threats from coastal and land based development and threats from natural disasters.

Only limited areas of indigenous forests remain in the Kingdom, primarily in very steep or otherwise inaccessible areas, in coastal littoral areas and swamps or in mangrove swamps. There are signs of depletion of limited natural resources, especially land and forest due to increasing commercial pressures from agricultural activities, such as squash exports and commercial farming. Proportion of land area covered by natural forests of primary and secondary growth is approximately 80km² or 11 percent (Department of Environment, 2004).

In an effort to address environmental consequences of development policies, the Government has taken measures to execute programmes in the area of climate change; biological diversity and solid waste management.

The Government is currently executing a large scale project to establish a sustainable solid waste management operation in Tongatapu, through appropriate policy and legislative measures. As part of the solid waste management initiatives, includes the relocation of the existing dump site in Nuku'alofa to Tapuhia, located east of Nuku'alofa. Effort is also underway to rehabilitate Popua following its relocation.

Tonga also joins other Pacific countries in introducing legislative and policy measures to reduce the growth rate of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and the phasing out of the ozone depleting substances. Tonga's GHG mitigation measures include programmes that encourage communities to use renewable energy and energy efficient resources. Effort by the Ministry of Forestry is also underway to develop a National Forestry policy with the assistance of FAO, to address the issue of depleting forest areas.

4.8 Millennium Development Goal 8

4.8.1 Status of progress to date

MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development				
Target 12:	Develop further an open, rule based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system			
Target 13:	Address the special needs of least developed countries			
MDGI 33:	<i>Net ODA (including the total and that is given to LDCs) as a percentage of the recipients' gross income</i>			
	<i>Donors' gross national income (GNI)</i>			
	Year	%	Year	%
	----	---	---	
	OECD/calculation in progress			
MDGI 34:	<i>Proportion of bilateral, sector allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors for basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation)</i>			
	Year	%	Year	%
				Source
MDGI 35:	<i>Proportion of bilateral ODA of OCED/DAC donors that is untied</i>			
	Year	%	Year	%
				Source
MDGI 36:	<i>ODA received in landlocked countries as proportion of their GNI (NOT APPLICABLE TO TONGA)</i>			
MDGI 37:	<i>ODA received in small island developing states as proportion of their GNIs (OECD)</i>			
	Year	%	Year	%
	-----	----	2002	9.1
	Ministry of Finance /Statistics			
Target 14:	Address the special needs of small island developing States			
MDGI 38:	<i>Proportion of total developed country imports (excluding arms) from developing and least developed countries admitted free of duties countries</i>			
	Year	%	Year	%
	1996	3.5	2000	8
	Source HDR 2003			
MDGI39:	<i>Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and clothing from developing countries</i>			
	:	textiles	(NOT APPLICABLE)	
	:	clothing	(NOT APPLICABLE)	
MDGI 40:	<i>Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as a percentage of their GDP</i>			
	Year	%	Year	%
			2003/04	1.21
	Source MAFF			
MDGI 41:	<i>Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity</i>			
	Year	%	Year	%
	1994/95	9	2002/03	14.3
	Source IMF Article IV 2004			
Target 15:	Deal comprehensively with debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term			
MDGI42:	<i>Total number of countries that have reached their Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative) - NOT APPLICABLE TO TONGA</i>			
MDGI 43:	<i>Debt relief committed under HIPC initiative - NOT APPLICABLE TO TONGA</i>			
MDGI 44:	<i>Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services</i>			
	Year	%	Year	%
				Source

1996 2.9 2002/03 45 Ministry of Finance/IMF Article IV, 2004

Target 16:	In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth				
MDGI 45:	<i>Unemployment rate of 15-24 year olds, each sex and total</i>				
:	<i>Unemployment rate of 15-24 year olds, females</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1986	48.19	1996	26.95	1996 census;
:	<i>Unemployment rate of 15-24 year olds, males</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1986	17.11	1996	32.01	1996 census;
:	<i>Unemployment rate of 15-24 year olds, total</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	1986	25.27	1996	30.28	1996 census
Target 17:	In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries				
MDGI 46:	<i>Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
			2002	> 95%	
Target 18:	In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies especially information and communications				
MDGI 47:	<i>Telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 1000 population</i>				
:	<i>telephone lines per 1000 population</i>				
	Year	Value	Year	/000	Source
			2003/04	274*	Prime Minister's Office, 2004
:	<i>cellular telephone subscribers per 1000 population</i>				
	Year	/000	Year	/000	Source
MDGI 48:	<i>Personal computers in use per 1000 population and internet users per 100 population</i>				
:	<i>personal computers in use per 1000 population</i>				
	Year	%	Year	%	Source
	----	----	----	----	(Note: Difficult to obtain Information)
:	<i>Internet users per 1000 population</i>				
	Year	/000	Year	/000	Source
	----	----	2003/04	1.8/000	Prime Minister Office, 2004

* includes PSTN, fixed line, mobile, cellular



4.8.2 Assessment

Official Development Assistance

Aid, or official development assistance, is critical for the development of Tonga, and in particular represents an important contribution to the improvements in certain sectors, notably, health and education.

Since the 1960s the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, including Tonga's traditional donors, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and others have committed themselves to provide 0.7 percent of their Gross National Income (GNI) in Official Development Assistance (ODA). This criterion for donors to aspire towards stemmed from the statistical difficulties in measuring aid and complexities in comparing various countries aid performance.

Most of Tonga's bilateral aid partners, have signed up the MDG, providing the framework for their official development assistance objectives. Similarly, The Monterrey Consensus (declaration of global commitment to meeting challenges of financing development), reached during the meeting of Heads of State in 2002, was a commitment reached by participants to significantly increase aid flows over the next five years.

Despite the effort by members of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to ensure this, total assistance as a percentage of donor's total income, fell during the 1990s, reaching an all time low of 0.22 percent in 2000/2001. It is projected that the ratio of ODA to donor's total national income will gradually increase and expected to reach 0.26 percent by 2006 (UN, March 2004 - review of progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States).

Overall ODA to the Pacific has fallen steadily from 5.5 percent from the 1980s to around 2.0 percent in the 2001/2002. For Tonga, during the period financial year 2002/03, total actual expenditure on development projects was approximated at \$33.6million. The source of fund for these development activities were from development assistance programmes, both bilateral and multilateral. This is outlined in Table 8.1 below. This amount can also be treated at the total aid fund transferred to the Kingdom during the period, as this was the amount compiled by the Planning Department.

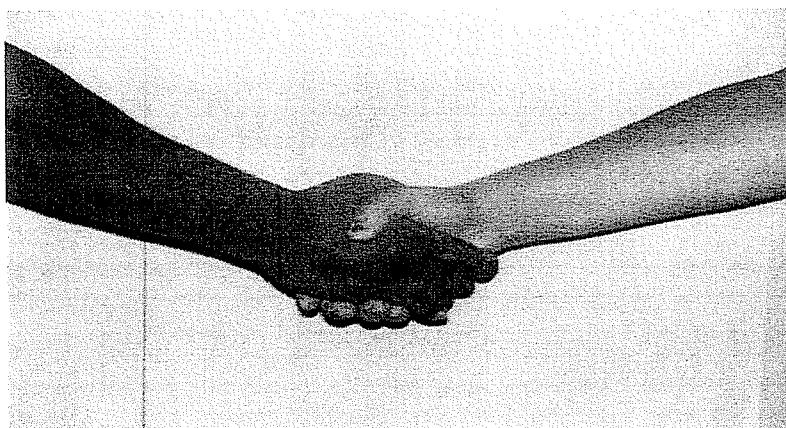


Table 8.1: Source of Aid Fund for Development projects for the period 2002/03

	Source Funding	TOP\$ (millions)
1	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	1.81
2	AusAID	12.9
3	World Health Organisation (WHO)	0.659
4	Canada	.01
5	European Union (EU)	2.3
6	Forum/Japan	.15
7	Global Environment Facility Fund (GEF)	.244
8	Government of Tonga	.222
9	NZAID	5.6
10.	Japan	1.43
11	STABEX	.18
12	UNDP	.002
13	UNESCO	.005
14	UNEP	.006
15	UNICEF	.008
16	World Bank	7.7
17	WTO	.1
TOTAL		33.18*

* It should be pointed out, that despite this amount, it is approximated that only \$2.9 million of grant was actually transferred through Government financial management system during the same period.

The ODA received by Tonga as a proportion of her Gross National Income is relatively high. In 2002/03, this was estimated at 8.9 percent.

Aid coordination in Tonga has been quite fragmented, with over five (5) government agencies coordinating various bilateral and multilateral aid programmes. In an effort to ensure that aid is well coordinated and managed, Government in 2004, decided that the Ministry of Finance would be responsible for the coordination of all aid programmes to the Kingdom.

The figures presented must be interpreted with caution. The figures compiled by the Central Planning Department for the period 2002/03 represents net disbursements by donor countries to Tonga. Disbursement figures vary widely because of the mixture of grants and loans and in loan terms. Moreover, there are statistical difficulties in aid figures largely because of the following factors:

- * aid coordination is fragmented and therefore the compilation of data will be associated with incomplete coverage
- * differences between commitments (deposits) and encashment (finance to confirm?)
- * differences between measurements made on the basis of fiscal year, those made on a calendar year, those committed on a three yearly programme cycle
- * resource transfers by private, non-government organisations (evident among the churches)

* problem of aid coordination is compounded by the weakness in the flow of information on regional programmes which Tonga benefits from

Untied Aid

Tonga's traditional partners such as AusAID and NZAID have undertaken a firm commitment to increasing untie its development assistance to Tonga.

Sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services

A significant proportion of ODA to Tonga is towards social services, in the areas of basic education, primary health care and water and sanitation. For the period 2002/03, based on a review of all development assistance by sectors, approximately 25 percent of development assistance went to human resources development, perhaps adequately referred to as 'social services sector'. For the period, the assistance went towards training both long and short term; health sector planning and management and secondary schools expansion programmes. Similarly, a further 22 percent of assistance for the same period went towards improving government services in the outer islands and rural areas. This included assistance towards upgrading primary school facilities, enhancing income generating and employment creation opportunities in the outer island through eco-tourism and provision of power stations throughout the remote islands of Ha'apai.

Combining both these results is an overwhelming proportion of development assistance (approximately 47 percent) focuses on provision of or improvement of basic social services.

Employment and Youth

The formal employment sector in Tonga is small, and hence the opportunities in the formal labour market are limited. While places in post secondary education exist, there are a large number of youths exiting the education system (either at completion of secondary schooling or as drop outs at different level of secondary school) for whom there are limited opportunities in further education or employment. The choices for this significant proportion of the youth population are for the most part limited to non-financial remunerated activities such as housework and subsistence farming.

The Participatory Assessment of Hardship in 2003, clearly identified the lack of jobs and alternative ways of earning cash as the most critical issues for all communities included in the study, both in urban and rural areas. The youth population was identified as experiencing hardship as a result of lack of educational and income opportunities.

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2003 confirms that Tonga's population is predominantly a youthful country with about 56 percent of the total population under 25 years and about 19 percent classified as youth, aged between 15-24. Fifty percent of youth are in the education system. Thirty nine percent of youth are classified as participants in the labour force. This included both formal and informal employment sector.

The youth unemployment rate is approximately 12 percent, and out of this approximately five percent of youth overall are considered to be formally unemployed. Most youths outside the education sector do not have access to either income generating activity or meaningful developmental activities, which could lead to income generation.

Some variations exist between Tongatapu and other administrative divisions. The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for youth is lowest in Tongatapu (about 38%) and highest in Eua and Ha'apai (about 45%). Youth unemployment rates are highest in the Niua (18%) and lowest in Vava'u

(8%). There is also considerable gender difference in the employment data, with female inactivity rates significantly higher than that of male inactivity rates.

Communication and Information Technology

The Government of Tonga has recognized that the development of its Communication sector is imperative to Tonga's overall economic performance. In response, the Government has made a concerted effort to ensure the modernization of communications infrastructure and restructuring the service delivery of the sector so that it is on par with global development. Moreover, such exercise should also ensure that the information economy transcends national borders and interests.

Tonga has two major telecommunication carriers. This has resulted in intense competition in the telecommunication sector, resulting in a significant reduction in the costs of telecommunication services. It is expected that the falling costs will generate and encourage demand for such services.

4.8.3 Major challenges and Policy response

Clearly, the youth comprise a significant proportion of Tonga's population. This trend, accompanied by the continuation of slow economic growth in Tonga over several years has worsened the problem of inadequate employment opportunity, especially for school leavers. This added to the hardship reportedly experienced by over 20% of households, as suggested by the Participatory Hardship Assessment.

Whilst post-secondary education opportunities is available for the youth, the challenge remains for policy makers is ensuring that youth remain in school longer, through appropriate policy measures that improve access to and quality of post basic education. Equally important, these policies must ensure that Tonga's school curriculum is responsive to the needs of the industries. This issue is evidently addressed in the Education sector policy framework and the sector's 15 year strategic plan.

The unemployment and underemployment of youth, and the associated real and potential social exclusion of this group have been of concern to the Government for some time. There is evident which suggests that the increasing crime rate is associated with the high youth unemployment level.

In response, there are a number of initiatives demonstrating Government's effort to promote the economic and social inclusion of young people. In 2002, the Government launched its youth training programme, targeting young school drop-outs whom require short term, skilled based training. For around ten years, the Government through the Ministry of Labour, Commerce and Industries (MLCI) has provided job search service, matching registered job seekers with vacancies. Assistance is provided to job-seekers.

The MLCI has a new Business Development Service aimed at improving the skills and productivity of employees, providing advice and training to small businesses and promoting the development of business skills. Local service providers provide training in marketing, customer service, bookkeeping and accounting, and business management. Recently, the Government of Tonga has agreed to provide match funding for ADB assistance for a Micro-enterprise Youth programme. The programme focuses on support for unemployed youth and the rural poor, and urban social services.

5 STATUS AT A GLANCE

As indicated throughout the report, Tonga's performance as measured by the MDG Indicators is quite impressive. Nonetheless, it has been pointed out that there are several areas that require further attention.

The preparation of Tonga's initial report on the MDG has provided the opportunity for members of the MDG Taskforce to critically examine where Tonga is today regarding the goals, targets and the indicators. More importantly, the outcome of this report has been more or less a re-examination of past and present efforts in pursuing the goals. Just as important, the process of re-examination has allowed the Taskforce to take a concerted effort to ensure that the Goals are mainstreamed throughout policy decisions and resource allocation.

A crude assessment of whether targets will be met and state of support is provided below:

Table 9: Status at a Glance

Indicator and data sources	If yes, latest year and institution responsible	Periodicity	Coverage (national, urban only, etc)	Data disaggregating (sex, region, etc)	Use of data in policy making	Quality of data
Poverty Income and Consumption Surveys	Statistics The latest HIES was in 2000-2001 and did not include poverty objectives. The next HIES should include poverty objective	Every five years and not to clash with the planned five yearly LFS that should fall in the mid-census period	National	Should be available	Much in use	Good
	National Nutrition Survey	Expected to be undertaken within the next 12 months				
Gender equality Economic Activity, Work Participation, Labour Force, etc	Latest census 1996	Next census will be in 2006. there is a need to consider the feasibility of five yearly censuses	National	Available	Much	Good
	Latest Labour force Survey 2003 monitor annual employment statistics	The current plan but not yet implemented is to conduct a Labour Force Survey mid Population Census i.e Pop Census period 2006-2016, to have one during 2011. Survey to monitor employment profiles	National	Available	Much	Fair
Child mortality	Population Census 1996	Every 10 years	National	Available	Much	Good
	Vital Statistics 2002	Annual	National	Available	Much	Good

Indicator and data sources	If yes, latest year and institution responsible	Periodicity	Coverage (national, urban only, etc)	Data disaggregating (sex, region, etc)	Use of data in policy making	Quality of data
Drinking water	Population census	Every 10 years	National	Available	Much	Fair
Sanitation	Population	Every 10 years	National	Available	Much	Fair
Trade Statistics	Annual Foreign trade statistics 2003	Annual and Quarterly basis	National	Not Applicable	Much	Good
Maternal Health	Health Yes, latest	Annual	National	Yes (sex)	yes	Vital Statistics
HIV/Aids Surveillance reports health administrative records	Ministry of health	Annual	National	Yes (sex)	Yes	Good quality
Education question in MICS/DHS/Isms/cwid/other	Education 2003 Ministry of Education	Annually	National	By district, island,sex	Fair	Fair
Gender Equality	Women Development Unit Yes latest	Information when required	National/urban		yes	Fair

6 STATISTICS AT A GLANCE

What is evident from the report is the lack of appropriate and timely statistics to be able to provide an adequate assessment of the development progress. Based on the indicators set forth by the members of the United Nations, Tonga has indeed progressed relatively well compared to her neighbouring island countries. Admittedly, from the challenges for Tonga tomorrow, there is clearly a need for relevant, reliable, timely statistics to set policies, and to hold decision makers accountable, monitor progress and evaluate results.

It is evident from this report that the lack of reliable data precludes assessing progress towards the Goal and Targets. Despite considerable progress and improvements in recent years, meeting the demand for basic data on human development remains a challenge, not only for Tonga, but perhaps elsewhere globally.

Though the data situation varies across sectors, those provided by national statistics or compiled by international agencies is interesting, many of which warrants concern.

In examining the prescribed Indicators, it is apparent that there are significant gaps for many of the indicators. In addition to this, there are also extensive problems in relevance, accuracy, consistency and reliability. Many of the indicators chosen for the MDG are based on available data - not necessarily the data most appropriate for the Goals. This is evident throughout Tonga's report.

Another striking feature of data availability in Tonga, is the limited institutional capacity of many agencies to compile and analysis the information collected mainly through administrative routine. This is perhaps a priority for many of the agencies required to collect information pertaining to the MDG. Similarly, aid related information is difficult on a timely basis because aid coordination is

dispersed throughout several government ministries/departments. The coordination of such information is also quite complex because of varying institutional requirement and conditions.

7 WAY FORWARD

Following consultation with Non-Government Organisations, Civil Society Organisations and the Donor communities throughout Tonga, the effort towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals requires concerted effort and close and strong partnership between all development stakeholders in Tonga. There is a realization that government is not the only actor in the progress towards the Goals. Indeed, most successful and sustained efforts rely equally on the participation of civil society which includes non government organizations, community groups, private sector and the churches.

Weaknesses in data collection and the limited availability of an appropriate information system inhibit the detail analysis of trends and patterns. Nonetheless, the importance of the Goals as a measure of the Kingdom's development progress is placed on the national development agenda.

The effort of all development partners is a prerequisite for the achievement of the Goals. Espousing the status of Tonga's development in the context of the Goals, and recognizing the need to aspire towards the Goals, Tonga recognizes that the tangible results could only be achieved if supported by resources sufficient to enable its implementation. Resource mobilisation requires more than merely raising official financial resources for expenditures, whether generated internally or through cooperation among countries, as official development assistance. Not all resources need to be limited to official sources, but that some may originate from, and be utilized by civil society itself, thus lessening the burden on official resources and capabilities. This poses different challenges particularly for government, since mobilizing the resources of civil society may require different skills and capacities than those traditionally involved in routine bureaucratic administration.

The upcoming preparation of the Kingdom's National Strategic Development Plan 8 anticipates applying the Goals as the basic targets for the country's aspiration. The formation of the Government's MDG Taskforce is a milestone in the development effort as representatives from the non-government organizations are selected to participate in the development dialogue of the country. This is a reflection that Government embraces the concept that development is about people's quality of life.

Commitment and continuing effort on the part of the MDG stakeholders will form the basis of the successful implementation of programmes and activities that contribute to the achievement of the Goals.

