

A THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON THE
IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT AID IN WESTERN SAMOA

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by
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ABSTRACT

The project, 'A Theological Reflection on the Impact of Development Aid in Western Samoa,' is an attempt to look at the effects of aid, and then see what the Bible and Christian teachings say in relation to it in the context of the island country of Western Samoa. It is always good to look deeper into the underlying motives of the donor countries in giving aid, but not to take for granted their humanitarian concerns. A lot of these aid, in one form or another, have had tremendous impact on the environment, culture, traditions and values of Western Samoa as well as causing social problems as addressed by this paper. The idea of this exercise is for the Church (the Congregational Christian Church of Western Samoa, in particular) to be more open and widen the scope of its mission to include the political and economic structures of the country as well, but not to confine itself to the ecclesiastical structure only. Nevertheless, to address the effects, impact and problems of aid does not totally discredit the validity and positive contributions development aid has had for Western Samoa.

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INTRODUCTION

Thirty years ago, Western Samoa, as one nation and people, accepted full responsibility for making decisions which affect its destiny and the generations to come. Samoa became independent. Yet, in the modern society, the notion of independence is no longer a valid concept. An example to illustrate this view can be found in the area of external assistance, or as more commonly known, Foreign Aid. Western Samoa has been dependent on Foreign Aid for its economic development since Independence. Now, it is almost totally dependent on aid.

The usual rhetoric of aid-giving is to benefit the recipient. Western Samoa, however, has found it difficult to establish in relation to her aid donors a resolute position on how she (Western Samoa) prefers aid resources to be utilized. In effect, Western Samoa has surrendered her right of self-determination. It is from this, that comes the knowledge that we are never independent of others.

The aim of this paper is to reflect theologically on the impact of development aid on the people and the country of Western Samoa as a whole. It is unfair for anybody to say that economics is something that the church should not interfere with. This is not right. As Kevin Barr stated, "Economics concerns human beings"¹ and human beings are the concern of the church. Hence, the church cannot sit silent while human beings are suffering because of the economic development system. It is my intention to set the present realities of the economic system of Western Samoa as an integral part of the church's mission. This is because the majority of the Christian population of Western Samoa are

ignorant of the fact, that the undesirable elements in the present

economic development system are degrading human beings from their wholesomeness as was intended by God when He created them. This degradation of humanity from the fullness of life have ruined the reciprocal relationship between people and God, hence the church in its mission must restore this relationship and return people to their intended status.

I have narrowed the scope of this paper to Development Aid only, which is an aspect of Foreign Aid, as well as limiting the time period from 1985 to 1991. I feel that to try to cover the whole area of Foreign Aid in Samoa is too broad a task for the stipulated length of this paper.

I must admit, however, that trying to analyse the impact of development aid on Western Samoa is a very difficult task. This is because there is no yardstick to measure such a phenomenon. Nevertheless, the methodologies employed in this project includes analysis of primary and secondary sources, and of some publications of the Western Samoan government; interviews of key figures in Government, in the community and ordinary villagers; as well as some personal observations. Moreover, I have also analysed some published statistics and data on which some of my own conclusions are based.

¹ Kevin J. Barr, Poverty in Fiji (Suva: Fiji Forum of Justice, Peace and The Integrity of Creation, 1990), 5

CHAPTER I

NATURE AND PURPOSE OF DEVELOPMENT AID

The Concept of Development

The concept of development is a debatable issue, and a number of theories have been written on it. Development is not a term that has recently appeared on the scene, but people's understanding of it in different perspectives brings new meanings, especially in the field of the social sciences.¹

To use the term development in relation to poor countries, the emphasis is usually on the methods of progression in people's standards of living.² It is therefore quite natural that economics plays a dominant role in this context. The concepts of development and economic growth have been considered synonymous.³ It is from this perspective that Gustavo Gutierrez sees the term development as "an expression which synthesizes the aspirations of mankind for a more human living conditions."⁴

The term 'development' originated as the antithesis of the term 'underdevelopment', and as such, the term began with a negative connotation. As Gutierrez pointed out, "underdevelopment expressed the situation and the anguish of poor countries compared to the rich countries."⁵ Development as a concept has neither one meaning nor a single definition; hence, to clarify its meaning as used in this project, I adopt Gutierrez's method of identifying the perspective in which development is viewed.

(i) Modern economists, by and large, see development from the point of view of 'economic growth', and to many, the two are synonymous. Likewise, the International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences

equates development with economic growth.⁶ From this perspective comes what is called the "Growth" model.⁷ Bjorn Hettne metaphorically expresses this growth model as something "conceived as organic, immanent, directional, cumulative, irreversible and purposive."⁸

This particular idea of economic growth has become linked with the idea of progress, that is, the advancement to a better state. This idea of progress assumes that the standard of living, definable in composite ways through Gross National Product or per capita consumption, is the goal of development. In the same manner, Francois Perroux defines growth as "the increase in the size of a unit, usually a country, expressed in terms of its gross national product (the total of goods and services produced within a given period, allowing for depreciation) in relation to the number of inhabitants."⁹ The growth model therefore assumes that the standard of living is the goal of development. To achieve growth and a higher standard of living means an increase in productivity.¹⁰ Historically, this increase in productivity as a meaning of development was the first to appear, and Gutierrez ascribes its origin to the development process in England.¹¹

(ii) The concept of development is also seen "as an overall social process, which includes economic, social, political and cultural aspects."¹² (Gutierrez's emphasis.) Gutierrez's understanding of development as such, is that, these different aspects are interdependent of each other, and that the development of one facet produces the development of another.¹³ It is important also to consider both the external and internal factors that affect the economic evolution of a nation because the "dynamics of world economics leads simultaneously

to the creation of greater wealth for the few and greater poverty for the many."¹⁴

(iii) The concept of development from the "humanistic perspective"¹⁵ widens the notion of development. From this perspective, development may be defined as 'humanization' whose purpose is "to make people more human by lifting them out of the dehumanizing conditions of poverty, unemployment, ill-health, ignorance and the like."¹⁶ Through this process of 'humanization', development leads precisely to a change in perspective which Gutierrez calls "Liberation."¹⁷

In analysing the three perspectives, we can draw the conclusion that all discussions are centred on the well-being of the human person. This is clearly expressed by M.A. Oommen when he says, "Real development takes place when the dignity of man is fully assured."¹⁸

Development Aid

Its Institution and Evolution:

Aid can be defined as "all activities by governments or citizens of one country which are primarily intended to help citizens of another."¹⁹ However, such a definition is too broad to be an accurate and effective measurement of the amount or kind of aid given to a particular country. This single definition of aid is unlikely to include the diverse interpretations which follow because it is associated with the terms 'development' and 'economic development', which themselves are subject to wide interpretations.

Following are three definitions of aid which show the diverse interpretation of the term 'aid' as well as the term 'development'. Teresa Hayter refers to aid as "conditional transfer of financial resources intended to serve the interests of the donor government."²⁰

Robert Cassen discusses the "transfer of money and resources on concessional terms from governments of rich countries to the governments of poor countries."²¹ John Healey uses the term loosely to refer to the "flow of long-term official financial resources between developed and developing countries."²² Healey's definition covers bilateral and multilateral flows. These are some of the definitions. But the more standard use of the term "aid" as employed by this study, refers to the "financial and technical resources made available to developing countries."²³

The aid relationship between donor and recipient countries originated after the Second World War. Healey pointed out that aid is a "post-war phenomenon"²⁴ which was initiated because of the great depression experienced during the late 1920s and early 1930s, the establishment of safeguarding policies within many nations, and the failure of most Latin American countries to meet loan repayments.²⁵

The Western nations' experience after the two world wars, together with the growing awareness of individual nation states of their responsibilities, and the hope for a lasting global peace, urged the Allied powers to meet in Bretton Woods, San Francisco in 1944.²⁶ There, it was agreed that there were diverse tasks which needed urgent considerations to secure a better world. These tasks included the reconstruction of war-torn Europe, the restoration of international trade, and the development of 'backward areas'.²⁷ To achieve these tasks effectively, financial support was necessary, and therefore the establishment of two new financial institutions, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) now known as the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Their respective functions were to provide long-

term loans and to bring relief in case of temporary balance-of-payment difficulties. It was not until the founding of the United Nations in 1945 that the sentiments of the Bretton-Woods agreements were enhanced and became effective indiscriminately. This is reflected in the wording of the United Nations Charter which is: "To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems, economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character."²⁸

With the above establishments in place, it can be said that from the end of World War Two, available aid focused primarily on the reconstruction of Europe; for instance, American aid to Europe under the Marshall Plan. David Burch argued that "the Marshall aid significantly conditioned the post-war relationship between the European powers, their colonial territories, and the United States."²⁹ In the short term, the Marshall Plan increased the capacity of the European metropolises to develop their colonial territories, whilst in the long term, such action was to strengthen the United States' influence on both the emerging satellite peripheries and the metropolitan centres. The objective of the Marshall Plan, according to Willem Gustaaf Zeylstra, was fashioned along the lines of the Truman Doctrine whose "primary goal was not to satisfy the need of assistance outside the United States, but to ensure national safety and the restoration of American foreign trade."³⁰ America's concern was not solely to satisfy its economic dominations, but also took humanitarian reasons as the objectives of giving aid. In addition there were also some other ulterior motives which included commercial, political and strategical rationales behind them.

International trade was dominated by America with all its wealth and expansionists policies. Trade imbalances noticeable during the post-

war reconstruction period led to the establishment of another international institution to assist member countries. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) came into existence in 1947. Its guiding principles of substantial reduction of Tariff barriers to trade and the elimination of discriminatory treatment reflected the need for free trade and world prosperity.³¹ But like other well-meaning international creations, the GATT's principles worked in favour of the developed countries overlooking the plight of the Least Developed countries.

The beginning of decolonization for all Pacific territories in the late 1940s, 1950s and 1960s prompted the West and the former colonial powers to rethink their ethno-centric attitudes and development strategies. It was generally felt that economic aid was appropriate to promote development in the Third World countries. The misleading assumption upon which this was based was that aid from Western countries would help to develop the Third World (humanitarian rationale). In reality, however, this post-colonial relationship was ideal only for the West to retain built-in advantages with former colonies, leaving Third-World nations still under-developed.

There was also a threat that unfavourable conditions in the Third World would subsequently affect advanced industrialized countries in a variety of ways. In order to safeguard Western interest (political, commercial, and strategical), aid was promoted as a panacea to the problems of underdevelopment in the Third World. Since then, the rules of the game have changed but the underlying principles remain the same. K. D Suter wrote that "Western nations replaced their direct control over most of the world by an indirect form of control, neo-colonialism."³² Through neo-colonialism Western nations control the terms of trade and

the international financial system. Similar to the Western ideas of integration, the notion of development aid is related to extension beyond the natural frontiers.

Forms of Development Aid

Project Aid

Project aid is ear-marked for a particular item or expenditure. Leelananda de Silva defines it as "a cluster of tightly designed activities for which a predictable outcome could be engineered."³³ Project aid is best preferred by donors because the accountability for its resources is more easily managed.

Much of Western Samoa's Development aid falls into this category. In its planned development expenditure for the period 1988 to 1990, 70% of the total amount went to the infrastructure sector of which much (approximately 2/3) was funded externally.³⁴ However, such aid focuses on individual projects and insufficient attention is given to the general framework of development as a whole.

Project aid also entails the use of technical assistance for consultations and project planning such as shown in the assistance given by Australia to Western Samoa in the following project.

Assistance to upgrade the mechanical workshop, plant pool and transport pool of Western Samoa.

Commenced: 1988

Expected completion: 1992

Estimated total cost: \$8,800,000

Consultants: Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation³⁵

Programme Aid

If aid is not for a project, then necessarily it is for a programme. Programme aid is a flexibly-interpreted term for all non-project aid, and is "based more on the Keynesian approach to gaps in savings and foreign exchange within an economy. Their supply . . . enables the economy to sustain its momentum."³⁶ An example of such aid is the type of balance-of-payment assistance provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In Western Samoa, the STABEX³⁷ payments received from the European Economic Community (EEC), which compensated for losses in export earnings, had a significant role as balance-of-payments support for the economy (see Appendix-Table 1).

Multilateral and Bilateral Aid

Development aid can be given multilaterally and/or bilaterally. The bilateral aid relationship is between two countries: the donor country and the recipient country. Both the source of aid and the aid channel are in the control of the donor country's government.

The two traditional and predominant bilateral aid donors to Western Samoa are New Zealand and Australia, but since 1985, Japan has also emerged as one of the major donors (see Appendix-Table 1). In the Round Table Meeting Report of 1988, nearly half (46%) of the total amount of \$114,000,000 bilateral aid received by the Government of Western Samoa, between 1985 and 1988, was contributed by New Zealand and Australia.³⁸

Multilateral aid, on the other hand, are those provided by groups, agencies and organizations. The source of aid remains the prerogative of the donor-country government, but the channels are multilateral and controlled to varying degrees by the donor governments. The advantages of multilateral aid, as stressed by de Silva, are:

- (1) It is insulated from the domestic political pressures upon donor governments and, therefore, military, strategic and commercial considerations are minimal.
- (2) It is assessed on technical criteria and the aid relationship becomes a more objective technical relationship.
- (3) Standards can be set and maintained and aid will be more efficiently managed.
- (4) Recipient country participation is ensured in the decision making process.³⁹

Technical Assistance:

This type of aid is made up of three elements:

- (1) Supply the recipient country with consultants and technical assistants.
- (2) Provide further training and transfer of skills.
- (3) Make available the necessary equipment required for the above two components.⁴⁰

Developing countries, because of the lack of indigenous skills to perform economic development tasks, need technical assistance. The primary aim of technical assistance is the development of human resources, either by direct training or by the transfer of skills.

Western Samoa is no exception to the need of technical assistance. The activities of the Japanese Overseas Volunteers (JOCV) are greatly appreciated in Western Samoa. Statistics stated that 166 JOCV volunteers were sent to Western Samoa from 1983 to 1987, making Western Samoa the largest recipient of JOCV volunteers in the South Pacific for that period.⁴¹

Loans

This is another form of development aid where Capital is borrowed from the lender on terms that will be repayable in a given period of time, and carries an interest rate. The lenders are usually international institutions like the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which is the most important source of external loans for Western Samoa in the development of the economic sector.⁴² Others include the World Bank (IBRD), the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). They usually provide soft term loans.

However, external loans as a source of financing is not so favourable now for Western Samoa as it used to be. This is because the external debt position of the Government of Western Samoa is very serious, and the cost of servicing the loans increases this debt. (See Appendix-Table 2).

The Donors' Motives For Giving Aid

Donor countries do not always give aid on compassionate grounds. There is a reason and a purpose for such acts. Aid-giving is a two way process, and hardly any aid-giving flows in a one-way-traffic. Aid is usually expensive, inefficient, and tied in various degrees to a range of needs of the aid donor. Some aid suppliers are more demanding than others in the conditions attached to their giving and to what they expect in return for their aid. However, the overall primary stated objective for global aid-giving is based on altruistic motives although the donors' self-interests are also acknowledged.

Australia's and New Zealand's motives for aid-giving are no different, except for the degree of emphasis between their various interests. The primary motives of these two donors are strategical, political and commercial. Australian aid programmes are given as the

promotion of "economic and social advancement of the peoples of developing countries in response to Australia's humanitarian concern, ... as well as strategic, economic and foreign policy interests."⁴³ Likewise,

New Zealand's overseas development assistance programme is designed primarily to assist the world's developing countries by providing assistance that better enables them to meet their own economic and social needs. It also contributes to the achievement of New Zealand's own external relations and trade policies by strengthening international economic prosperity, maintaining peace, security and stability, and protecting the global environment.⁴⁴

Japan gives aid along the same lines. The twin objectives of Japanese aid policy is the "recognition of interdependence" and "humanitarian consideration."⁴⁵ However, the stated principle of Japanese aid policy is "to assist developing countries in their self-help efforts for economic development, thus in the long run contributing to the security of Japan and global peace and stability."⁴⁶

Although these donors may differ in their emphasis between their various interests, we cannot deny the fact that they are all equal in giving aid for humanitarian purposes. But humanitarian motive aside, Australia, New Zealand and Japan are also motivated by national self-interests which have been served indirectly by assisting the economic development of aid recipient countries. For example:

(a) Commercial motives: Economic growth in the developing countries (aid recipients) also brings with it many benefits for donor countries. It opens up new markets and help boost donor exports. Japanese aid is motivated by the pursuit of narrow self-interest. Export promotion is the predominant objective, while desire to show good faith is secondary.

Technical assistance is seen as a tool of export promotion. Such assistance will spread Japanese techniques all over the underdeveloped world inducing demand for the export of Japanese plants and equipment.⁴⁷

(b) Strategic Motives: Australia, for example, is in a region of developing countries. Stability in Asia and the Pacific is of special importance. "Aid, by promoting self-sustaining growth in these countries can contribute to the maintenance of this stability."⁴⁸

(c) Political Motive: Japan, a country which commands 12% of World GNP and 8% of World trade, has to give aid to economic and social developments in developing countries to gain recognition and to maintain her status as an economic superpower.⁴⁹

Aid and Development Policies in Western Samoa

As stated in Western Samoa's Fifth Development Plan (1985-87), the paramount development ideology is "to promote the well-being of all Samoans particularly in ensuring adequate food, housing and satisfactory education and health services."⁵⁰ To achieve this end, development objectives, including both economic and social elements, were laid down as guide-lines:

To increase production, particularly in the case of village agriculture by working through existing leadership and social organizations.

To move towards true economic independence and self reliance.

To provide greater opportunities for Western Samoan citizens to participate more actively in the development process.

To ensure a fair distribution of the profits of economic development and the satisfaction of basic economic, social and cultural needs

To protect and conserve the environment.⁵¹

Aid has a direct influence on the direction of development in Western Samoa and on the policies which have emerged. This assertion is based on the following observations:

(a) The bulk of development resources are financed by aid. While Western Samoa, as a recipient of aid, is perceived to have the final say in the identification of her development needs, the aid donors also have the right to refuse funding of any project they are not agreeable with. In essence, therefore, Western Samoa's development has tended to be shaped to a certain extent by the type and form of aid available.

(b) Personnel or expatriates working in the key ministries in the Government have a tendency to promote their respective governments' view of development rather than what is appropriate for Western Samoa.

(c) The lack of a clear coherent strategy in the planning apparatus of the Government has led some donors to identify for themselves the sort of project they will fund.

In brief, aid to Western Samoa has been shaped by the development policies of the donor countries, either directly through the selective process of projects and funding, or indirectly through the influence exerted by aid personnel.

Western Samoa sees no major difficulties in donors having their own ideas about how development in Western Samoa should proceed. Ideally, donors should take the lead, if they wish to do so, from the Western Samoan development objectives, and not their own. In reality, however, Western Samoa has a much better chance of obtaining aid-

funding if her philosophy about development falls in line with that of the donor involved.

Yet, the development ideology seems to be only for a few and the rest have to swim for survival. Even the development objectives have yet to be fulfilled.

NOTES

¹ Gustavo Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation (London: SCM, 1974), 22.

² Juliet Clifford and Gavin Osmond, World Development Handbook (London: Charles Knight, 1971), 16.

³ Magnus Blomström and Björn Hettne, Development Theory in Transition (London: Zed Books, 1984), 8.

⁴ Gustavo Gutierrez, "The Meaning of Development," in In Search of a Theology of Development (Geneva: Sodepax, 1969), 121.

⁵ Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation: 22.

⁶ Gustav Ranis, "Economic Growth," in International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, Vol IV (MacMillan & Free Press), 408.

⁷ Richard D. N. Dickinson, Poor, Yet Making Many Rich (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983), 26.

⁸ Björn Hettne, quoted by Richard D. N. Dickinson, 26.

⁹ Francois Perroux, A new concept of Development (Paris: UNESCO, 1983), 26.

¹⁰ Dickinson, 26.

¹¹ Gustavo Gutierrez, "The meaning of Development," 121.

¹² Gutierrez, "The Meaning of Development," 122.

¹³ Gutierrez, "The Meaning of Development," 122.

¹⁴ Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation, 24-25.

¹⁵ Gutierrez, 25.

- ¹⁶ M. A. Oommen (ed), Development: Perspective and Problems (Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1973), 5.
- ¹⁷ Gutierrez, 25.
- ¹⁸ Oommen, 8.
- ¹⁹ Clifford and Osmond, 101.
- ²⁰ Teresa Hayter, Aid as Imperialism (London: Penguin, 1971), 15.
- ²¹ Robert H. Cassen and Associates, Does Aid Work? (N.York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 24.
- ²² John Healey, The Economic of Aid (London: Routledge, 1971), 2.
- ²³ Clifford and Osmond, 101.
- ²⁴ Healey, 2.
- ²⁵ Paul Mosley, Foreign Aid: Its Defense and Reform (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), 22.
- ²⁶ Willem Gustaff Zeylstra, Aid or Development: The Relevance of Development Aid to Problems of Developing Countries (Leydon: A. W. Sigthoft, 1977), 26.
- ²⁷ Zeylstra, 28.
- ²⁸ Zeylstra, 26.
- ²⁹ David Burch, Overseas Aid and the Transfer of Technology: The Political Economy of Agricultural Mechanization in the Third World (Aldershot: Avebury, 1987), 38.
- ³⁰ Zeylstra, 37.
- ³¹ R. H. Green (ed) The International Financial System: An Ecumenical Critique (Geneva: Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development, 1984.)
- ³² K.D. Suter, Reshaping the Global Agenda - The UN at 40 (Sydney: United Nations Association of Australia, 1986), 45.
- ³³ Leelananda de Silva, Development Aid: A guide to facts and issues (Geneva: Third World Forum, n.d), 10.
- ³⁴ Government of Western Samoa, Seventh Development Plan, 1992-1994, (Draft for Cabinet, 25 November, 1991), 17.
- ³⁵ AIDAB, Program Profiles: Australian Overseas Aid Projects 1987-1989 (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing, 1989), 76.

³⁶ de Silva, 12.

³⁷ STABEX stands for 'Stabilization for Export Earnings'. A sum of money received from the European Economic Community which compensate for losses in export earning, especially in Copra. If the export earnings from Copra this year is less than the average earnings of the previous years, then 'stabilization for Export Earnings' (STABEX) will compensate for the loss.

³⁸ Government of Western Samoa, Socio-Economic Situation, Development Strategy and Assistance Needs. (APIA: Government of Western Samoa, 1990), 52.

³⁹ de Silva, 14-15.

⁴⁰ de Silva, 16.

⁴¹ Association for Promotion of International Cooperation (APIC), A Look at ODA and International Co-operation (Tokyo: APIC, 1990), 23.

⁴² Government of Western Samoa, Socio-Economic Situation, Development Strategy and Assistance Needs, 83.

⁴³ AIDAB, COOPERATION: A Review of the Australian International Aid Program 1987-1988 (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing, 1988), 4.

⁴⁴ New Zealand Ministry of External Relations and Trade (MERT), Program Profiles 1989-1990 (Wellington: Development Assistance Division, 1989), 1.

⁴⁵ Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan's ODA: 1989 Annual Report (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1990) 14.

⁴⁶ Junko Edo, "Japanese Aid Policy to the Pacific Islands," Pacific Perspective Vol. 14 No. 1, 71-72.

⁴⁷ Conversation with Manfred Ernst, Pacific Theological College, Suva, 10 April, 1992.

⁴⁸ AIDAB, 3.

⁴⁹ Japan, 15.

⁵⁰ Government of Western Samoa, Western Samoa's Fifth Development Plan, 1985-87 (APIA: Department of Economic Development, 1984), 12.

⁵¹ Government of Western Samoa, Western Samoa's Fifth Development Plan, 1985-1987, 12.

CHAPTER 2

IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT AID

Despite the large inflow of aid to Western Samoa, its economic prospects are still generally discouraging. Major constraints such as remoteness, limited natural resources, geographically small and scattered, lack of skilled labour and overseas markets for exports, and high population growth have contributed to the sluggishness of the growth of Western Samoa's economy.¹ These characteristics do not only appear in Western Samoa, but are also common in most Pacific Island countries. A survey by the World Bank suggests that these characteristics constitute a set of formidable constraints to any form of socio-economic development.²

Further to non-economic improvement, the External Debt position of the Government of Western Samoa is also discouraging. As Table 2 (See Appendix) indicates, the increase in debt is a sign of no progress in economic growth, hence, Western Samoa will never achieve her sole objective of self-reliance and economic independence.

But above all, development aid has direct disastrous effects on the country itself. Lloyd Timberlake stated clearly that "Development Aid is used by many nations more as a tool of foreign policy than as a tool of development . . . Development aid organizations and policies may be doing more harm than good, both to human and to the land."³ Development aid therefore can cause environmental, social, political and economic problems. In these particular areas, I have discussed them as follows.

Environmental Impact

The growing seriousness of environmental problems caused by development, and development aid as a tool for development, is already a global issue. Environmental problems, including the depletion of tropical forests, deterioration of soil quality, and the destruction of nature through development, are particularly noticeable in Pacific Island countries where there have been significant commercial agricultures and logging.

For an under-developed country like Western Samoa, economic growth has been the first priority. However, she has to rely on aid to finance the bulk of its development expenditure. A World Bank publication indicates that "70% of development spending on agriculture, 80% in the social sectors and 100% of transport investments are funded by aid."⁴ Thus developments have been undertaken without considering immediate and long-term effects on the environment. Jeremy Carrew-Reid in his assessment of development assistance suggests that "development assistance has been accepted without adequately assessing the needs, cost and benefits. In Aid projects such as port developments, power stations have seldomly been properly assessed for their potential impact on the bio-physical and human environment or even for their long term maintenance requirements." To Carrew-Reid, "the donors lack the incentive for any comprehensive environmental assessment."⁵ Because of this, or because of a lack of adequate environmental management technology, Western Samoa is now confronted by the problems of environmental destruction.

A study by Randy Thaman suggests that the Pacific Islands environment is its "natural and cultural capital."⁶ However, the burning desire of the Western Samoan government for better economic growth by

means of economic development depends entirely on money-capital, new technology, and external expertise, with the aim of developing the natural resources. As a matter of fact, such modern developments and associated technologies destroy or lessen the value of the natural and cultural environment of Western Samoa. In other words, the government of Western Samoa uses money capital in the form of aid to destroy the value of the natural capital of the country, i.e. its environment.

Forests

A 1990 World Bank publication reported that almost 90% of Western Samoa's total exports are agriculturally based.⁷ The percentage itself suggests that agriculture dominates the economy. Another report verifies a total of 181,000 acres being taken over by agriculture.⁸ Of the total government development expenditure on agriculture, 70% of development spending is to be financed by aid.⁹

As a result, areas of extensively virgin indigenous forests are rapidly diminishing in Western Samoa. Very little forest remains, particularly in the lowlands. Clearance today is proceeding at a rapid pace, largely for agricultural plantation. The estimate rate of clearance on Savaii is in the order of 5,000 ha per year.¹⁰ A forecast stated that if such a rate is to be continued, then by 1994, all lowland forest will be cleared.¹¹ An assessment in Western Samoa's Seventh Development Plan (DP7) estimated an exploitable forest land area of 5,425 ha lost over the last two and a half years due to logging and agricultural purposes.¹²

Apart from agricultural purposes, Western Samoa has had to manage its timber industry for the past 30 years without a forest policy in place. This accounted for 40% of Western Samoa's forest being

cleared in this period, and the survey by the National Population Policy suggested they were probably the most productive forest.¹³

The consequence is that very little coastal forest remains today outside water catchment areas. Worse still, even the water catchment areas are now being progressively cleared and farmed with deleterious effects on the quantity and quality of drinking water.

Soils

The soil is the base resource of an agriculturally based population, whether for subsistence or commercial production. As with the rainforest ecosystems, the productivity of Samoa's soil depends on the forest itself. Productivity is seriously depleted by the forest clearance, more so by clearance of steep slopes and by the use of techniques which do not minimise either soil erosion or the loss of its productivity. The change in soil structure and productivity, induced by unwise clearance and wasteful utilization, may seriously compromise its future potential for either productive use or the regrowth of indigenous forest. Many areas of once-productive soil in Samoa have been degraded in this way, and forest clearance now proceeds on even steeper slopes and on land with very high value for water catchment protection.

In addition, contamination of our soils with agricultural chemicals is also posing a serious problem. Many of these chemicals compounds (e.g. weedkillers, fertilizers) have already been banned overseas because of their known toxicity, and yet Western Samoa continues to import such toxic products.

Another development project that has had a negative effect on the environment is the Western Samoa power project. In a study by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) it found that "service roads, for

transmission equipment gave access to formerly inaccessible forests thereby promoting poaching, deforestation and flooding in these areas, resulting in losses in forestry, agricultural land and fisheries...¹⁴

For a country like Western Samoa, which has mainly a subsistent farming economy, the increase in agricultural production depends on the richness of the soil. However, modern discoveries have proposed two development modes that yield increased productions, namely 'spatial expansion' and 'intensification'.¹⁵ The former is an extension of agriculture onto previously unused land, and the latter is applied when there is no further frontier of available unused land. Intensification implies the use of machinery and an increased input of chemicals into a fixed unit of land in an attempt to increase the output of crop. Both processes have significant environmental impact and they are assessed as follows:

Impacts of Agricultural Intensification

Economic/development goals	Increase crop yield to improve nutrition, increase exports, increase national and individual incomes, limited expansion onto marginal land.
Technical activity	Intensification of agriculture.
Changes in the Environment	In TRADITIONAL system: Increased manual labour In Agro Industry (Green Revolution) Systems: Inputs of Agrochemicals, extra-somatic energy, machinery, genetically standardized seeds. Increase production costs

Environmental Impact

Local: Toxic outflow of Agro-chemicals from agro ecosystem, loss of organic matter in soil. Increased vulnerability of yield to climatic variation. Monocultural vulnerabilities to pests and diseases. Antipathetic to polyculture, soil erosion/ compaction if no mulch, continuous cultivation and heavy machinery.

Impacts on human health and welfare

Immediate health menace from improper use of agro-chemicals, water contamination from outflow, possible deterioration in local diet, possible loss of equity among farmers, Increased dependence, narrowed range of exports, labour involution if traditional intensification.¹⁶

The implementation of this development mode can be made possible in terms of aid. An example of intensification of agriculture in Western Samoa is the

Demonstration Plantation on Village Land¹⁷

Summary

1. Project Title	Demonstration Plantation on Village Land
2. Sector	Agriculture
3. Implementing Agency	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

4. Project Objectives

1. To demonstrate the benefit of commercial plantation modes in village agricultural land;

2. To develop market-oriented crop production

3. To increase rural incomes through increase productivity of land and labour, and

4. To establish effective linkages between concerned Government Departments and village plantation

5. Estimated total cost

WS\$2.19 million

6. External financing required

WS\$2.19

7. Description

The project envisages the establishment of three (3) crop production units (CPUs) of 200 acres each on leased village land. Although these units will be operated on commercial basis in order to make them economically viable, the primary objective of the CPUs will be to serve as demonstration centres for the village farmers.

9. Project Duration

Five years.

Location and cropping Pattern of CPU

Crop	LOCATION			Total
	South West Upolu (Safata)	North Savaii (Safune)	East Savaii (Puapua)	
		ACRES		
cocoa/coconut	30	50	65	145
cocoa		50	95	145
coffee	90			90
banana	30			30
fruit trees	20	80		100
vegetables & spices	10	20	10	40
taro	20		20	40
Total (a)	200	200	190	590

(a) 10 acres are left for buildings, roads, etc.

Water

Water is already a seasonally scarce resource in Samoa. Some districts have water-shortage for most of the year. Catchment protection is already a serious problem for some of the key catchments such as the Vaisigano. Maintenance of natural vegetation in water catchments results in a greater availability of water. Fragmented catchments discharge larger volumes of water during periods of rainfall, thereby increasing the periods of low flow and minimizing the long term availability of the water. As forest clearance continues, so the availability of surface water is reduced. Unwise agricultural practice also degrades the quality of available water by contaminating it with silt, rotting vegetation and agricultural chemicals. Worse still, Western Samoa's water is being depleted in some areas faster than it can be replaced and, of course, is being polluted with agricultural chemicals, human sewerage, and industrial and household wastes.

Extensive roadworks are also seriously contaminating the fresh water streams and lagoons as thousands of tonnes of valuable topsoil are dumped into the water catchment areas and subsequently wasted into the lagoons.

The establishment of the Hydro Power Station has also had severe environmental effects. Energy development projects are a critical component of national economic development goals and plans. Power is necessary for growing urban populations, industries, agriculture, and tourist resorts. In Western Samoa, and of course the Pacific Islands, electric power generation and fuel importation are the most common answer to energy needs.

Electric power is usually generated by thermal power plants and hydro power projects. Hydro power projects require the natural and renewable resource, water, and need an assured supply of that resource. Hence, facilities are often built as combined power and water supply projects, which therefore require the protection of water catchments. Graham Baines' "Environmental Assessment of Energy Development Projects" has found that "Although hydro-power projects do not have the pollution problems associated with other forms of power generation, they can bring a distinctive set of environmental problems - especially those requiring water impoundments." Baines goes further to say, "These problems arise because dams and reservoirs can cause extensive manipulation of the natural drainage pattern with consequences for the natural environment and for those who may depend on that environment in its natural form."¹⁸

Kevin Doig, an employee of the Public Works Department of Western Samoa, discovered that riverbeds were dry, but seem to believe that this was caused by some cunning plot of the electricity and water supply people. According to him, there is "no water at all in any stream in the Western third of Upolu."¹⁹ Such a proportion increases when

Western Samoa faces dry seasons and of course poses incredible problems to the country.

All these projects mentioned above are aid-funded projects. We cannot deny the fact that Western Samoa is in the midst of the modernization era. However, the plea is for the Government to consider the problems that arise because of development backed by aid.

Social Impact

The social life of the Samoans at the moment is in a crisis. Economic wisdom proposes a modernization model for under-developed countries like Western Samoa through development aid. To achieve development, she must break out of traditional mores, adopt a profit incentive model, and discover newer ways to become productive.

Prior to European contact, the people of Western Samoa were self-supporting. Communities subsisted on the available natural marine and terrestrial resources, and maintained traditional systems which generally ensured an equitable distribution of resources. However, the so called modernization model brought fundamental changes to these systems in the form of cash economies, new technologies and more specialized forms of resource exploitation. These changes came through the pursuit of the strategic and economic interests of foreign nations.

Urbanization

Table 3 (see Appendix) gives the urbanization percentage as 21.2% of the total population of Western Samoa, a figure endorsed by George Thomas Kurian.²⁰ There are several reasons for such a huge concentration in the urban area - families migrating from rural villages in search of better education for their children, the restrictive social control existing within villages force many to move, and above all, the

search for better job opportunities. The attractiveness of acquired income in an urban livelihood is an indirect effect of aid.

Almost all foreign aid goes to the government of Western Samoa. Aid to government tends to result in increasing civil servants' and politicians' salaries and wages. This in turn puts pressure on other sectors, particularly in urban areas, to increase salaries and wages. Therefore, urban employment looks attractive to the rural dwellers, and they come in search of job opportunities. Those who flock to Apia, and they are mainly the work-force of the village communities, find limited or no job opportunities. In hope for better times, they settle in squatter settlements, swell the number of the urban poor, and contribute to the crime rate in the area. So the development aid in this case affects both the urban and the rural sides at the same time.

Equally sad is the effect on the economy as a whole. What is left behind in the village communities are the old, the very young and the incapable members of the households. They cannot cultivate the land and therefore bring disastrous effects to the agricultural production. The drift to the town of Apia, not only deprives the rural communities of their workforce, but also of its intellectual elite.

Unemployment

According to the Commissioner of Labour in Samoa, Tate Simi, "The myth that there is no unemployment in Western Samoa is one of the most dangerous contentions to be entertained." To him, "acceptance of unemployment not only ignores the plight of its victims, but also suffocates both social and economic development directly rooted in the ability of people to make a living to survive, and to be productive."²¹ The problem of unemployment has increased dramatically since Western

Samoa's independence in 1962, because of a continuing drift from the strictly subsistence way of living towards more reliance or semi-reliance on money wages. This is why Simi said that "Western Samoa's labour and employment situation is one surrounded with myths of paradisaical peace."²²

According to Simi's survey, there is an estimated 3,000 annual school leavers, of which a third will probably find good jobs or advance to further education. The remaining two thirds, however, will either engage in subsistence employment or enter into underpaid jobs or simply become unemployed.²³

Simi says that it is usually presumed that development creates employment, and that it will increase if the economy progresses.²⁴ But since Western Samoa became independent and has had to manage its own economic affairs, this assumption has not proved correct. Furthermore, "the country still has no manpower plan to assist it in the utilisation and development of its manpower resource. The development of training institutes to help upgrade the skills of the country's workforce continues to be extremely slow."²⁵ In Simi's view, even when agricultural production is threatened with increased migration and urbanisation of its workers and the diversification in the industry, nothing is done to control it.²⁶

Under these circumstances, the Commissioner of Labour has commended that:

the forecast for the future of employment is not bright. Labour shortages in the rural areas will worsen and will have serious implications on agricultural development. Unemployment in the urban area will also continue to increase, and its adverse effects will most probably be reflected in

corresponding increases in juvenile crime, affecting urban residents.²⁷

Suicide

As the small society of Samoa is being swept up in the current of modernization and development, changes in lifestyles associated with education, urbanization, and wage labour are having systematic negative effects on the health and well-being of its people.

Suicide is a social problem that the Government and the Church have yet to solve. Western Samoa's suicide rate was considered one of the highest in the Pacific and in the world in 1981.²⁸ There are several reasons behind this problem according to those who have done research on it, but they are outside the perimeters of this paper. However, there seems to be a link between the suicide problem and development, of which the latter is assisted by development aid. Table 4 below indicates the number of attempted suicide and fatalities from 1986-1990 in Western Samoa.

Table 4					
SUICIDE IN W. SAMOA, 1986-1990					
YEAR	CASES	DEATHS	MEANS UNDERTAKEN		
			Paraquat poisoning	Gunshot	Others
1986	47	19	18	1	
1987	47	23	18	3	2
1988	41	17	16	1	
1989	21	15	10	4	1
1990	31	22	20	1	1 ²⁹

It is quite clear from the Table that 95% of suicidal deaths are paraquat poisoned victims. It is the fastest means of inducing death and that accounts for its popular use. These paraquat are part of agricultural chemicals employed in the intensification of agriculture. So the availability of these poisonous chemicals as part of the Government's agricultural strategy not only damages the environment in the long-run but also eliminate human beings.

Impact on Culture, Traditions and Values

Aid is a conduit whereby the values and ideas of donors are transmitted to developing countries, eventually influencing the ideas, values and more of the recipients. It seems that if we, as recipients, are not willing to accept these foreign values and ideas, then aid will be withdrawn. For Western Samoa, development aid has been the main resource supplement in the development of higher education. It is the Government's objective to improve the development of human resources.

A vast majority of university graduates have been recipient of aid-funded scholarships in one form or another, and there is no reason to doubt that this trend will continue in the future. These students study at the University of the South Pacific, and of course, at metropolitan universities especially in Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom.

Once these university graduates return home, the impact they have on the society as a whole is significant, especially in their role as channels of new ideas. The skills they acquire through their training may be a positive contribution to the economic development of the country; however, after many years of studying overseas, the skills and knowledge they acquire are more fitting to that particular country, and thus, they return with ideas of development that are not relevant to Western Samoa. Moreover, they are a means of promoting products of such countries. For example, a student undertaking studies in Japan will prefer to use Japanese computers, or even Japanese-made equipment because they are more relevant to his acquired knowledge and skills. Likewise, the same could be said of a student who had studied in New Zealand or Australia.

Equally significant is the influence they exert not only on other members of their immediate families, but also on other members of the community as a whole. Different lifestyles, attitudes and mentality will definitely threaten the unity of the community. In particular, younger members of the family unit will look upon these graduates as role models and they can be a powerful means of change within the community. Because such people were educated overseas, the youth regard them as the cleverest people in the community, and what they say are the only correct answers to any problems.

However, part of the problem is that some of these aid-funded students do not return to serve the country when graduated. Some return but after one or two years, they decide to migrate. Western Samoa has suffered a brain-drain for many years, with debilitating effects on all aspects of her economy. The retention of a larger number of unskilled workers while those with skills continue to drift overseas will aggravate the existing imbalance in the labour force. This brain-drain of aid-funded students clearly indicates that aid in this sense is a 'curse in disguise'. Statistical records show that from 1985-1987, an estimated 200 Samoans have gone overseas for higher education, but 60% did not return.³⁰

Worse still, aid further widens the gap between the rich and poor in Samoa. In Western Samoa, education is neither compulsory nor free. Thus, the ability of a family to pay fees often determines whether or not a student can complete secondary school. Under the present educational system, it is often only the children of the well-to-do who have better chances of completing their education, and thus eligible to compete for aid-funded scholarships. The poor on the other hand, though they have

the ability, have little chances due to a lack of financial support at secondary school level. Tertiary scholarship awards, therefore, do not address the imbalance in education opportunities available to the rich and to the poor.

NOTES

¹ Teo.I. Fairbairn, "Foreign Aid for Pacific Island Development," Pacific Perspective, Vol 6, No. 1, 1977, 33.

² World Bank, Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies, Lessons from the 1980s, Vol 1, (Washington D.C.: World Bank Publication, 1991), 79.

- ³ Lloyd Tumberlake, Only One Earth, Living for the Future (New York: Sterling Pub. Co., 1987), 17.
- ⁴ World Bank, Trends in Developing Economies 1990 (Washington D.C: Sterling Pub. Co, 1987), 580
- ⁵ Jeremy Carew-Reid, Environment, Aid and Regionalism in the South Pacific (Canberra: ANU, 1989), 118.
- ⁶ R R Thaman, "Challenges and Constraints to Sustainable Development in the Pacific Islands: Is There A Way Forward?" (A paper presented in the UNDP Regional Workshop on Environmental Management and Sustainable Development in the South Pacific). Copies of the paper were made available by Thaman when he spoke to the CS211 (Contemporary Social Problems) class at Pacific Theological College Suva on 14 April 1992, 5.
- ⁷ World Bank, Trends in Developing Economies, 578.
- ⁸ World Bank, Western Samoa: Agricultural Sector Strategy Review Report No.9343, June 28, 1991, 1.
- ⁹ World Bank, Trends in Developing Economies, 578.
- ¹⁰ National Population Policy Committee, "Current Status of National Resources in Western Samoa," (Draft document for participants at National Population Policy Workshop, Apia, 3-5 Dec, 1991), 21.
- ¹¹ National Population Policy Committee, 23.
- ¹² Government of Western Samoa, Western Samoa's Seventh Development Plan, 1992-94, (Draft for Cabinet, 25 November 1991), 18.
- ¹³ National Population Policy Committee, 21.
- ¹⁴ Quoted by Jeremy Carew-Reid, Environment, Aid and Regionalism in the South Pacific, 118.
- ¹⁵ Richard A Carpenter and James E Maragos (ed), How to Assess Environmental Impacts on Tropical Islands and Coastal Areas (Honolulu: Environment and Policy Institute, 1989), 131.
- ¹⁶ Carpenters and Maragos, 133
- ¹⁷ Government of Western Samoa, Socio-Economic Situation, Development Strategy and Assistance Needs - Vol 2. Project Profiles (Apia: Government of Western Samoa, 1988), 28.
- ¹⁸ Graham Baines, "Guidelines for Environmental Assessment of Energy Development Projects in small island countries" (Prepared for the United Nations Pacific Energy

³ Lloyd Tumberlake, Only One Earth, Living for the Future (New York: Sterling Pub. Co., 1987), 17.

⁴ World Bank, Trends in Developing Economies 1990 (Washington D.C: Sterling Pub. Co, 1987), 580

⁵ Jeremy Carew-Reid, Environment, Aid and Regionalism in the South Pacific (Canberra: ANU, 1989), 118.

⁶ R R Thaman, "Challenges and Constraints to Sustainable Development in the Pacific Islands: Is There A Way Forward?" (A paper presented in the UNDP Regional Workshop on Environmental Management and Sustainable Development in the South Pacific). Copies of the paper were made available by Thaman when he spoke to the CS211 (Contemporary Social Problems) class at Pacific Theological College Suva on 14 April 1992, 5.

⁷ World Bank, Trends in Developing Economies, 578.

⁸ World Bank, Western Samoa: Agricultural Sector Strategy Review Report No.9343, June 28, 1991, 1.

⁹ World Bank, Trends in Developing Economies, 578.

¹⁰ National Population Policy Committee, "Current Status of National Resources in Western Samoa," (Draft document for participants at National Population Policy Workshop, Apia, 3-5 Dec, 1991), 21.

¹¹ National Population Policy Committee, 23.

¹² Government of Western Samoa, Western Samoa's Seventh Development Plan, 1992-94, (Draft for Cabinet, 25 November 1991), 18.

¹³ National Population Policy Committee, 21.

¹⁴ Quoted by Jeremy Carew-Reid, Environment, Aid and Regionalism in the South Pacific, 118.

¹⁵ Richard A Carpenter and James E Maragos (ed), How to Assess Environmental Impacts on Tropical Islands and Coastal Areas (Honolulu: Environment and Policy Institute, 1989), 131.

¹⁶ Carpenters and Maragos, 133

¹⁷ Government of Western Samoa, Socio-Economic Situation, Development Strategy and Assistance Needs - Vol 2. Project Profiles (Apia: Government of Western Samoa, 1988), 28.

¹⁸ Graham Baines, "Guidelines for Environmental Assessment of Energy Development Projects in small island countries" (Prepared for the United Nations Pacific Energy

Development Programmes: UNDED) in How to Assess Environmental Impacts on Tropical Islands and Coastal Areas. (Honolulu: Environment and Policy Institute, 1989), 160.

¹⁹ Kevin D. Doig, "Where Has All The Water Gone?" Samoa Environment, Vol 1, No. 4, 1.

²⁰ George Thomas Kurian "Western Samoa" Encyclopedia of the Third World 3rd edn Vol 3 (New York: Facts on File, 1987), 2135

²¹ Tate Simi, "Independence, Labour and the Future in Western Samoa: Myths and Realities" Pacific Economic Bulletin, Vol 2, No. 2 1987, 23.

²² Simi, 22.

²³ Simi, 24.

²⁴ Simi, 24

²⁵ Simi, 24

²⁶ Simi, 24

²⁷ Simi, 24

²⁸ John R Bowles, "Suicide and Attempted Suicide in Contemporary Western Samoa," Culture, Youth and Suicide in the Pacific: Papers from an East-West Conference (ed) by Frances X Hezel, Donald H Robinson, Geoffrey M White (Honolulu: East West Centre, 1985), 17, 31.

²⁹ Prepared from "PULE ILE OLA" (Suicide): A paper presented by Tupuola Simi Tafunai in the Ministries Gathering in Malua Theological College, August 10, 1991. Copy in the author's possession.

³⁰ Government of Western Samoa, Socio-Economic Situation, Development Strategy and Assistance Needs - Main Report (Apia: Government of W. Samoa, 1988), 99.

CHAPTER 3

A THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

For development to be Christian, it should be a "transformation of the person and social structures that frees persons and societies to move towards a state of increasing wholeness in harmony with God, with themselves, with others, and with the environment."¹ However, as I have shown in the first two chapters, this is not the case in the development process of the small Pacific Island nations. Economic and social changes generated by the development process have in fact provided disintegration of many aspects of the community life, which has given people a sense of identity and belonging. These changes have also brought injustice to society, as well as alienation and dehumanisation through destructive structures.

A Christian evaluation of economic development will focus on the goal of making people more human, and recognising people as people. The Catholic Bishops of the United States in their letter, Economic Justice for All, reflect the same idea when they state that "The dignity of the human being realized in community with others, is the criteria against which all aspects of economic life must be measured."²

In this theological reflection I will take the two themes of human nature, and the person of Jesus Christ as my base in looking at the total impact of development ideology in a Christian perspective. This is because the dignity and integrity of humanity which development has failed to fulfill was achieved by Jesus Christ as the embodiment of the new person.

Human Nature

The creation story of Genesis clearly states that "we were created in God's image" (Gen 1:27). This means that men and women are created in the divine image. This status of being created in the image of God grants a person the identity of "sonship."³ As sons and daughters of God, people must be treated with reverence.

The purpose of development is to allow all people to achieve their full potential as children of God, or as I have referred to in previous chapters, "humanization." Nevertheless, too often what determines the value of individuals is their achievements, and this leads to the exploitation of some people by others so that the wealth of the rich is accumulated at the expense of the poor, both individually and internationally.

Yet, humanity becomes the victim of development ideologies, reducing people to dehumanizing conditions. Such conditions reflect what Gustavo Gutierrez calls "mental and cultural" death⁴. The development process has penetrated our cultural boundaries and resulted in destructive changes. The culture is our heritage and identity giving us a sense of unity and of being in community. Human dignity can be realised and protected only in community. "The only life worth living is life in fellowship, fellowship with God and with one's neighbours."⁵ Wherever development fails to support people in their relationship with each other and with God, it has failed to be humanizing, therefore in Western Samoa, it is clear that most development has not been humanizing.

God has put humanity in charge of the creation (Gen 1:28) "to subdue the earth and have dominion over its creatures". This dominion is

not just for certain people but for everyone. Humanity is in partnership with God in having dominion over the earth, and is required to exercise this God-given responsibility in the way God would. It is not to exercise greed and power, but to recognise everyone's human rights and encourage harmonious living.

When people were given charge of the creation, a part of their management duty was to acknowledge the integrity of God's creation. To do this, they had to have a right mode of relationship for "maintaining a right relationship with our physical environment ... is just as important to the well-being and survival of our societies as is maintaining right relationships with other humans".⁶

The concept of right relationship reminds us of the 'covenant people' (Ex 19:5). Here God promised blessings to Israel in every aspect of life, and in return, the Israelites were to "honor and worship Yahweh", and at the same time, "love, serve and deal justly with one another."⁷

Being a covenant people has to do with establishing and nurturing right relationships with God and with each other ... We focus a lot of attention on encouraging and deepening our personal relationship with God and this is crucial to fulfilling the covenant. But ... we don't do nearly as well on ... treating one another justly or building up right relationships between groups of persons. And yet actions aimed at social justice are just as crucial for our salvation; for as Jesus says in Mtth 24:45, 'I tell you this, anything you did not do for one of these, however humble, you did not do for me'⁸

In using this concept of 'right relationship' to evaluate development aid, it can be seen that the relationships created by aid are not healthy. Despite claims of assisting the poor country to be

economically self sufficient in the future, development aid takes more from the country than it gives. The aid - recipient remains underdeveloped and less self-sufficient than before. Gutierrez refers to this as "the by - product of the development of other countries"⁹ This is not justice and it is not right relationship.

What development has over-looked is that all human beings must be treated with reverence. No one is superior to the other and no one should exploit his or her brother/sister for a better living. The richer nations should not use cunning ways to make use of the poor nations because the end result is that it widens the gap between the rich and the poor nations. "There is in the created order no hierarchy or ranking, no inferiority or superiority, no dominance or subordination."¹⁰ In this respect, the economic development plans, visions and institutions of a society should be for safeguarding the dignity and integrity of humanity because "human dignity comes from God, not from nationality, race, sex, economic status, or any human accomplishment".¹¹

Development requires change, yet humanity's dignity and self-worth must not be taken away when changes proceed. Wayne Bragg pointed out that "Many development projects have been vitiated by donor-recipient relationships that rob recipients of dignity. The very fact that people are seen as 'target groups' or 'recipients' of programmes creates paternalism. They sometimes internalize a feeling of inferiority . . ." ¹² Development patterns and structures have kept the people in bondage, and therefore they need to be freed from subjugation to ignorance, institutions, ideologies and, of course, people.¹³ These forms of bondage deny human beings their most valued birthright, the right of freedom - freedom from international and institutional economic policies, freedom

from economic sanctions, and freedom to decide humanity's own destiny.¹⁴

Development in Western Samoa is an ideology generated by development aid and economic policies which are totally "alien."¹⁵ Our entire life has been denied of the gift of freedom. We have been victimised in our own land and seem to be living in a "foreign land"¹⁶. We have come under the control of international institutions that neither understand nor respect us as human beings. The more we are hooked up with developmental ideologies, the more debts we have. According to Table 2 (see Appendix), the size of the debt clearly shows that we, our land, people and everything are 'mortgaged'; where are our human dignity and human rights?

The Person of Jesus Christ

The humanization that development should aim to achieve is best seen in the example of Jesus. He is the embodiment of a new humanity in its totality. In him, God establishes a relationship with humanity by taking on the human form through the incarnation. Jesus Christ manifests a liberated and free human being who stands in contrast to the old sinful figure depicted in the person of Adam. Yet, Jesus denied his liberty in order to die on the cross for the sake of others.

Christ, the ideal example of the new humanity related himself to the lower class of his society, the unwanted and the neglected those whom Gutierrez calls "the dispossessed and marginalised"¹⁷ This is because Jesus Christ entered the world in the same condition. "The incarnation of the Lord took the form of the birth of a poor child . . . Christ's condition of poverty was an integral part of the mystery of his self-humbling and self-emptying".¹⁸ Jesus took as the first fruits of his

ministry those at his level - the poor. His association and solidarity with them brought new meaning to their lives. "His identification with the people restored for them what they had lost - wholeness, health and dignity, hope and faith: life in its fullness, in fellowship with one another and with God."¹⁹

The poor are the very people of today's societies who are victims of the international network of development. They have been victimised by the unjust distribution of wealth and resources, the exploitation system and the exercising of power in societies. The people of Western Samoa in today's situation have started to experience the reality of poverty. For the first time in its history people are seen begging in the streets. This is because this foreign ideology of development which was implanted since independence does not work. A society which has had strong community ties has started to experience the gradual rise of individualism. There is a contradiction between modernization and traditions, the impact of which falls on the people. A country which is half way through modernization finds it very difficult to return to traditions because traditions also have been changed by modernization. Just as Jesus was concerned for the socially, politically and economically marginalised in his society, he continues to enter into similar situations in Western Samoa.

His death and resurrection, the so called "Christ event"²⁰ restored wholeness to culture, community and, above all, humanity. All injustice, oppression and evil connected with death have been negated by Christ. The fulfillment of Christ's resurrection moves humanity from death to the negation of death because on the Cross Jesus was identified with the then reality of the world in all its negativity -- its subjection to sin,

suffering and death. But since this same Jesus was raised from death, his resurrection constitutes God's promise of a new creation for the whole of humanity which the crucified Jesus represents.

The Church continues Jesus' ministry of change and transformation. In the light of what God has done through Jesus Christ, we are participants in that transforming mission of God. The 'Christ - event' calls for peace, justice and the overthrow of the powerful - a call to transform. Our mission is not just an ecclesiastical thing. It is a work on ecclesiastical structure, on the political structure and on the social and economic structures, because what was revealed in the resurrection is passion for justice. Therefore transformation calls for a reformed economic system, both locally and world-wide.

Notes

¹ Wayne G Bragg, "Beyond Development to Transformation," International Review of Mission LXXIII (April, 1984): 165.

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³ Löffler, 70.

⁴ Henri J. M. Nouwen, foreword to We drank from our own wells: The Spirituality Journey of a people by Gustavo Gutierrez, (New York: Orbis Books 1984), XV

⁵ Duncan B Forrester and Danus Skene (ed), Just Sharing: A Christian Approach to the Distribution of Wealth, Income and Benefits (London: Epworth Press 1988). 62

⁶Suliana Siwatibau, "Born into a Living Hope - Proclaiming a Living Hope", in Proclaiming a Living Hope, Report of the Sixth Assembly, Pacific Conference of Churches (Suva: L.P.P. 1992), 21

⁷Dr Jack Johnson-Hill, "Being a Covenant People." A sermon preached in the Pacific Theological College Chapel on the 6th March, 1992.

⁸Johnson-Hill, "Being a Covenant People".

⁹Gustavo Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation (London: SCM Press 1974) 26

¹⁰Duncan B. Forrester and Dany Skene (ed) Just sharing: A Christian Approach to the Distribution of Wealth, Income and Benefits (London: Epworth Press, 1988), 67.

¹¹United States Catholic Conference (USCC), IX.

¹²Bragg "Beyond Development to Transformation," 160-61.

¹³Bragg, 161.

¹⁴Bragg, 161.

¹⁵Gustavo Gutierrez, We drink from our own wells, 10

¹⁶Gutierrez, 11

¹⁷Gutierrez, 31

¹⁸Clodovis Boff and George Y. Pixley, The Bible, the Church, and the Poor (New York: Orbis Books, 1989), 110

¹⁹Forrester and Skene, 64

²⁰Faitala Talapusi, Lecture Notes on "Theology of Hope" (TH 231)", Pacific Theological College, Suva, 17th September, 1991

CHAPTER 4

SUGGESTED PROPOSALS

The present system of channelling development aid through the Government of Western Samoa has not yielded any real economic progress since it was introduced. Rather, corruption has occurred within the Government itself, and aid contributes to increasing political powers. Because there are moral and ethical issues involved in the whole framework of development aid, and because these issues affect the well-being of society, they need to be addressed. The church, as a powerful factor in society and as part of its mission, is the appropriate agent to redress these issues.

It is with this idea in mind that the following proposed options are suggested:

Re-orientation of the present structure

It is necessary to re-orientate aid programmes and channel them through non-government organisations¹ such as the National Council of Churches (NCC), Public Servants Association (PSA), Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and many others. The appropriate mechanism could be set up to facilitate this aid flow. The challenge for donors is to identify viable and productive options for stimulating development and to develop workable mechanisms for effective aid delivery. Advantages of this option includes discouraging the centralization of economic decision making, and minimizing the misallocation of aid and unfairness of distribution.

The non-government organisations, especially the NCC of Western Samoa, YMCA, and YWCA work very closely with the people. The YMCA and YWCA have developed projects in rural areas in an effort to upgrade the

living standards of the rural dwellers and to contribute to the economy of Western Samoa. The scheme includes agricultural projects such as vegetable gardens, and taro and banana plantations. They also conduct training programmes for specific trades like mechanical engineering, plumbing, carpentry, sewing, and cooking for unemployed youths. The aim is to provide some sort of trade for these youths so that later in life they may find jobs, or otherwise return to their villages and contribute to the well-being of the village by using their special trade.

However, the point is, these projects and trade training more or less work within the priorities of the people. Local churches as well have associated themselves with the people and they know the people's economical, political, and social priorities best.

If development aid is channelled through the NGO's, a 'check' and 'balance' system could be put in place to monitor the allocation of aid. This can be implemented by establishing a committee composed of Government, NGOs and donor representatives. Every application for aid by the Government should be screened by this committee, and a thorough investigation be made of the positive and negative effects before granting the aid request. In this way, moral and ethical decisions can be applied from the side of the church whenever the decisions are made for aid allocations.

Selecting the right priorities

The underlying philosophy that governs the selection of priorities is "the greatest good for the greatest number."² Therefore, proposals that go well with this philosophy are:

1. Provision of free education

In the interview with Misa Foni Retzlaff,³ he mentioned that the best investment Western Samoa has is its people, its human resources. "To be truly independent and self-sufficient is to encourage human resource development."⁴ The implementation of this view, however, is hindered by the present fee-paying education system, and consequently, hinders the economical, political, and social developments of Samoa. Despite the enormous amount of aid pouring into the country, the provision of a free education is still over-looked by the decision makers. Instead, the government has given priority to secondary matters such as the building of a twenty million dollar Government Building currently under construction and funded by the People's Republic of China.

However, free education is one aspect where morality in development aid can be seen and justice can be served. Free education is inclusive and offers equal opportunities to all. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the present education system widens the gap between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. Alternatively, the provision of a free education would furnish everyone, both rich and poor, of the same opportunity offered by aid donors.

2. Establishment of a Technical Institution

Although there is already a Technical Institution, there is still a need for another one. Every year the number of students that can not enter University increases, and the present Institution can not cater for them all because of the limited number of intake each year. Therefore, there is a need for more institutions to train those who are less academic-oriented towards acquiring more technical skills. Not all students finishing secondary level will enter university. A few will find

jobs in the Government or in the private sector. The majority will return to villages, and either work in the plantation or become fishermen. However, not all of them will have the skills in these traditional trades. Thus the availability of technical institutions to provide the necessary training in these trades would provide the opportunity for these people to utilize their talents and maybe earn a living from it.

Although much have been said on disadvantages of aid, it cannot be denied that there are advantages from Development Aid. However, they need to be administered justly in order to yield a balanced result and therefore benefit all people of Western Samoa.

NOTES

¹ There is a discussion between economists and sociologists about NGOs as partners for the distribution of development aid.

² Misa Foni Retzlaff, interview with author, 15th January, 1992.

³ He is a member of Parliament, the present vice-chancellor (elect) of the UNIVESETE OF SAMOA, a lawyer by profession, and a successful businessman.

⁴ Retzlaff, interview with author, 15th January, 1992.

CONCLUSION

In considering the role of foreign economic assistance, it is important to differentiate between humanitarian aid and development aid. Humanitarian aid are those designed to meet human needs resulting from disasters, famine and the like. Development aid, on the other hand, are those designed to develop the infrastructure necessary for economic expansion. There can be no doubt that the Biblical model of the Good Samaritan places a direct moral responsibility on international organisations and nations to respond to human suffering. Nations of goodwill have a moral responsibility to care for those in need, whether through public or private channels. This responsibility is especially more so for Christians.

If there is a clear moral justification for humanitarian relief, is this also the case for development aid? It is very hard to have a clear vision of any morality in development aid per se, despite the enormous amount that Western Samoa has received. But since the aim of development aid is to improve the standard of living for the poor, the level and type of development aid should be determined, not by Biblical and moral analysis alone, but also by ascertaining which policies and programmes will most likely improve the living conditions of those suffering from absolute poverty. The challenge, then, is to devise a discriminating policy which ensures that those who are in greatest material need will be assisted most, and this can only be best achieved when the church works in partnership with Government and the relevant organisations to formulate such a policy.

APPENDIX

Table 1

EXTERNAL GRANTS RECEIVED

Amounts in Tala (million)

During Period	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Projects Grants						
New Zealand	7.6	3.2	5.0	5.6	5.1	5.8
Australia	9.1	2.6	8.8	10.8	8.1	12.0
European Development Fund	1.6	-	1.3	0.2	0.5	0.8
Federal Republic of Germany	1.0	2.7	3.2	2.6	3.4	2.2
Japan	4.0	18.0	9.0	8.8	13.7	8.0
Netherlands	0.4	-	-	-	-	-
U.N.D.P.	1.7	0.3	1.2	1.0	2.4	1.5
Other	0.8	0.3	0.6	2.7	1.8	1.6
Total	26.2	27.1	29.1	31.7	35.0	31.9
(Of which:						
expenditures abroad) (1)	(3.6)	(3.9)	(4.8)	(4.4)	(5.6)	(5.3)
Cash and Commodity Grants	0.3	8.9	8.3	10.8	4.7	6.7
European Economic Community (2)	0.3	8.8	8.3	4.7	4.7	3.1
Other	-	0.1	-	6.1	-	3.7
TOTAL GRANTS	26.5	36.0	37.4	42.5	39.7	38.6

Source: Treasury Department, Western Samoa

(1) Includes expenditure on scholarships and consultancies for which direct payments are made by donors.

(2) STABEX

Table 2
EXTERNAL DEBT OWED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN SAMOA
Amounts in Tala (million)

End Of Period	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
II. FOREIGN DEBT	124.76	129.47	142.20 (6)	155.10	161.57
A: Governments	11.09	11.51	12.00	12.17	10.30
New Zealand	1.13	1.07	1.15	1.10	1.03
Germany (KFW)	5.97	6.77	6.40	4.99	4.37
China	3.99	3.87	4.45	6.08	4.90
B: Official International Institutions	106.18	111.28	120.08	132.12	138.90
Asian Development Bank	63.16	67.79	76.27	86.36	88.45
IDA (2)	23.39	24.47	25.82	29.01	33.04
OPEC (3)	11.61	9.81	7.62	6.49	5.13
European Economic Community (4)	6.59	7.55	8.43	8.17	10.03
IFAD (5)	1.41	1.66	1.94	2.09	2.25
C: Other	7.51	6.68	10.12	10.81	12.37
New Zealand Money Market	3.82	2.68	3.06	3.11	3.13
Eurodollar Loan	3.69	2.64	1.61	0.86	-
Saudi Fund	-	1.36	5.45	6.84	9.24
RONFIN	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Treasury Department, Western Samoa

(2) International Development Association (World Bank)

(3) Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries

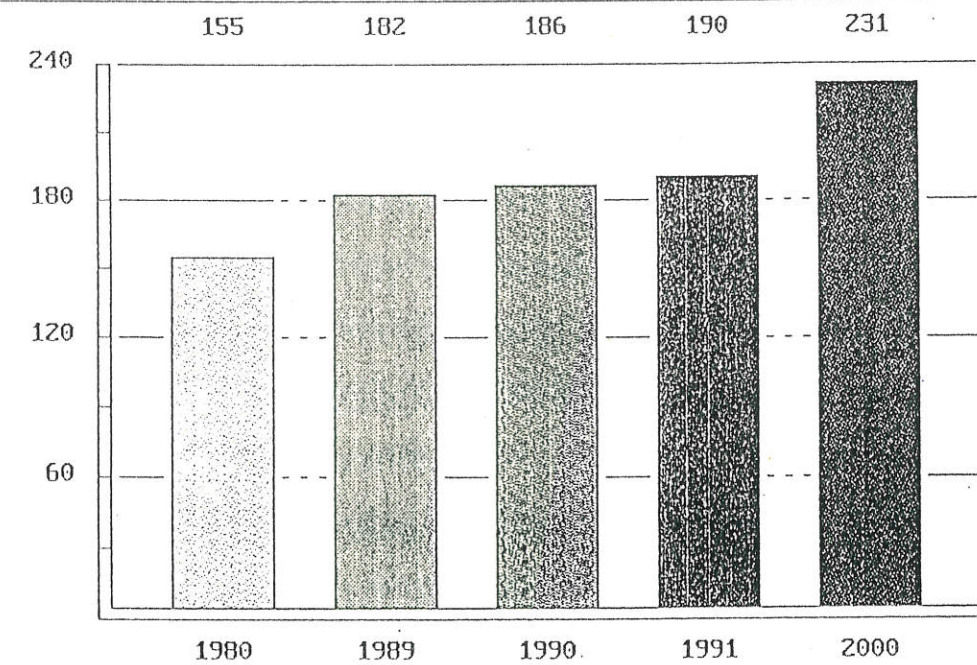
(4) Includes European Investment Bank

(5) International Fund for Agricultural Development

(6) Include \$68 million due to valuation changes in 1987 compared with 1986

TABLE 3

WESTERN SAMOA
Population (in thousands)



- Annual Pop'n Growth: 2.2% ■ Pop'n Density: 165 inhab./sq mi
- Pop'n Doubling Time: 32 years ■ Urbanization: 21.2%

Source: PC Globe, Inc. Tempe, AZ, USA, 1990

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