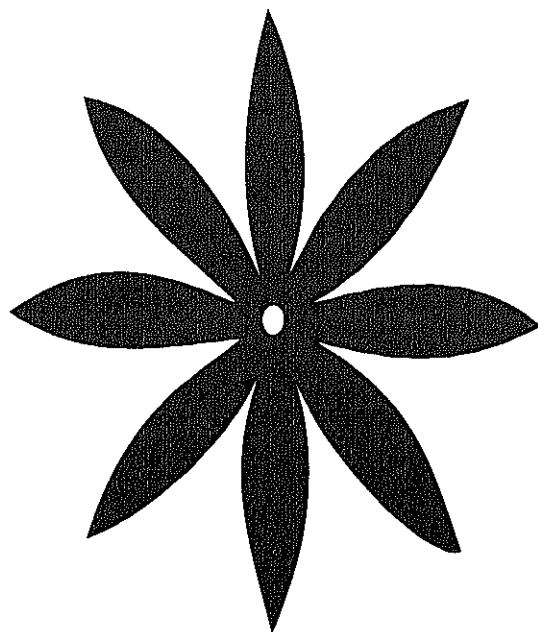


Niue Education *for the 21st Century*

PRIORITIES & NEEDS



Alofi, Niue ♦ March 1997

Acknowledgements

The University would like to acknowledge with gratitude the support and assistance of the Niue Government in facilitating the successful staging of the seminar. The Hon Minister's own personal interest in, and encouragement of the seminar is much appreciated. Particular mention is made of the hard work by the national Planning Committee in the organisation and smooth running of the seminar. The contributions by the authors of the various papers, the panellists as well as all seminar participants, are gratefully acknowledged.

The support of the New Zealand Government in funding the Niue seminar is also acknowledged with appreciation.

Preamble

Education, by its very nature, is about change. It is therefore crucial that USP is not simply just a spectator, but an active participant in the process of change. It would be a serious error of judgement to assume that the institution will be shielded from regional and global changes that are taking place in the tertiary education sector generally. Member countries of the University will need to ensure that their priorities, values, assumptions, organisational structures, current and future technology, and quality controls can contribute to a successful future for USP as well as to their own national education structures.

That there are no roads maps to the future presents member governments and USP with a unique opportunity to map out their own. To chart a course that will achieve our collective purpose and is financially responsible, we must first not only understand ourselves, but also the likely trends in the external environment in which universities are expected to operate. And as USP nears the beginning of the 21st century and its fourth decade of service to the region, it is opportune to pose the question of whether its course offerings, research and consultancy activities are still responding effectively and efficiently to the real needs of its member states.

While another regional "Future Directions" conference similar to that held in Suva in 1983, was possible, the University was of the view that it would be inadequate for the purpose, given the changes in its clients' base. A minimum requirement for such a conference would be participation by large numbers of government departments, statutory bodies and private concerns usually interested in the services of the University. Clearly, this was not feasible because of resource and time constraints. As well, the University wished to ensure that its strategic planning took account of the training services offered by national tertiary training institutions, and their medium term development plans, in each country.

For these reasons, the decision was taken by the Ministers of Education to hold, over a period of 12 months, a series of national seminars in education in each of the University's twelve member states, as part of the process to develop a USP Corporate Plan. The format adopted for the seminars was designed to facilitate maximum local participation in the preparation of papers, the delivery of these papers, their discussion and analyses, and finally acceptance of decisions concerning their priorities in the education sector. The outcome of these discussions and deliberations for Niue, the third in the series of seminars, is recorded in the following pages. It should be emphasised that the recommendations and proposals represent the collective wishes and aspirations of the local community.

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INTRODUCTION

The Niue seminar was held at the Matavai Resort over a three-day period from 17-19 March 1997. Its main purposes were for the Niue community to advise USP of their requirements for future tertiary training, and for all sections of the community to be more involved in the process of identification, formulation and determination, particularly of educational policy at the national level.

A total of five papers (see Appendices) were presented representing the views and aspirations of the public sector, NGOs, the private sector, parents and students, and the aid community. At the conclusion of each paper presentation, members of the general public were invited to comment on any aspects of the paper or any other matter they felt was relevant to the discussion (see Attachment A for seminar programme). A Panel, comprising of local representatives (names presented in Attachment B) were then asked to discuss and analyse the paper, take into account any comments made during the public forum session which they deemed useful, and to prioritise the needs of that section of the community as they saw them. In both the public forum and panel sessions, it was not a requirement to speak in English. Participants were welcomed to communicate in their own language and this opportunity was used by some people.

The final session of the seminar was used to bring together the various priorities of the sectors involved in a consensus "list of priorities" that represents the national interest.

This report, then, reflects what the people, Government, and education authorities see ahead for their national education system, and for their University, USP.

Summary Record of Seminar Proceedings

Monday 17 March 1997

OPENING

1. The Reverend Vilitama presided over the dedication hymn and prayer. He noted the important role of education in the future development of Niueans and challenged the participants to be honest and forthcoming in their comments over the duration of the seminar. Reverend Vilitama also observed that the University of the South Pacific needs a clear signal from Niue on the country's priorities so that it can respond to them in an effective and responsible manner. He concluded by noting that planning for USP was akin to planning for Niue.

2. Dr Vijay Naidu, Head of School of Social and Economic Development, spoke on behalf of the USP. He extended a warm welcome to all participants and in particular thanked the government and people of Niue for their support and assistance in facilitating the smooth organisation and planning of the seminar. He made special mention of the hard work done by the Planning Committee especially, Atapana Siakimotu as Chairman. According to Dr Naidu, the objects of the University were twofold. First, it is mandated to respond not only to regional needs of its member states, but also to address the unique and special needs of individual countries, where feasible. Second, the University as a member of the global university community is also committed to maintaining international standards. He cited the Morris Report which urged the University to maintain the highest standards in all of its programmes of study. Maintaining a balance between these two objectives of the institution was not always an easy task to achieve. And as the member states and USP move into the 21st century, tensions between these two aims were bound to be intensified.

3. The principle of academic freedom, Dr Naidu argued, is one of the cornerstones of any university for it defines the boundaries under which its members operate in the pursuit and expansion of the frontiers of knowledge. He noted, however, that while USP subscribes to and values academic freedom, the fact that it is funded by 12 independent countries has meant that it must be accountable to these countries. The issues of accountability and transparency were therefore of paramount consideration for the University.
4. Dr Naidu then informed the seminar that the last future directions conference for USP was held in 1983 in a regional forum in Suva. In highlighting the objectives of the seminar, Dr Naidu noted that the University hopes that this exercise will generate a greater awareness among Niueans about their ownership of USP and the importance of their involvement in charting future directions for the institution. The information and recommendations distilled from the seminar would be used by the University in putting together its Corporate Plan. Equally important, it was hoped that the report would also serve as an input document in the future development of education in Niue.
5. The Honourable O'Love Tauveve Jacobsen was then invited to officially open the seminar. The Minister welcomed everyone to the seminar and in particular the USP delegation. In highlighting the crucial role of education to the development of Niuean society as a whole, the Minister also noted that everywhere, education is being asked to do more with diminishing resources. The public and private sectors, parents and students, and NGOs all look to education to provide that vital ingredient that would allow them to cope with modern day changes and demands. However, if people are realistic, then they should also accept that education cannot be the panacea to all their ills.
6. In closing her address, the Minister claimed that choosing a type of education system for Niue is similar to choosing the type of society the country wants for the future. The Hon. Minister then declared the Niue Strategic Planning Seminar in Education open.

SESSION ONE

PUBLIC SECTOR PAPER: Hon. O.T. Jacobsen, Minister of Education

7. In presenting the Government's perspective on education generally, the Minister welcomed the timing of the seminar and noted that this exercise was long overdue as an evaluatory process in assessing and promoting its relationship with USP. She also informed the seminar that government has not as yet formulated policy documentation or direction on this matter but the views presented in her paper should give notice to intentions and opinions that may influence the level of decision-making in the future. The full text of the Minister's paper is reproduced as Appendix 1.

8. According to the Minister, it is government's thinking that the focus on education should be directed primarily to children and young people who will become the future of Niue. As such, she argued education should be about expression of affection for the young. For Niue, the purpose of education was given by the Minister as: *to train people for citizenship, provide for transmission of knowledge and culture from one generation to another, develop people's talents, and empower the mind, preparatory to change*. On higher education, the Minister observed that only a small proportion of the country's total eligible population would be able to access and utilise such a facility. Higher education was therefore regarded as a privilege offered by government.

9. On Niue's close relationship with New Zealand the Minister acknowledged the bonding that has developed over the years between the two countries and for many Niueans, New Zealand is their second home. It is also the case that the education system currently used in the country is modelled along the New Zealand system and will remain so for some time yet. Turning to USP, the Minister noted certain advantages that the institution has to offer. These included:

- * Culturally and geographically appropriate setting.
- * Cheaper compared to costs in similar institutions elsewhere.

- * Uniqueness in terms of its being own by twelve independent governments.
- * Diversity within its walls of learning.
- * Common concern and mutual helpfulness.
- * Bonding of student relationships with lasting memories and experiences.
- * A pioneering leader in distance education.
- * International recognition of its qualifications.
- * USP graduates achieving in their chosen fields of work.

10. The public sector paper also raised the issues regarding recognition of USP qualifications and accrediting. Although Niue do not necessarily associate itself with the view that USP qualifications were inferior compared with those from New Zealand, there was merit in exploring further the second issue especially in relation to New Zealand. Because of Niue's special relationship with New Zealand, there was also a perception that training in that country was less expensive. Reasons in support of this claim include: students staying with families, no hassles with immigration for study and employment visas, and access to medical, social, and educational benefits. Given the situation prevailing on the main campus in Fiji over the past ten years, the issues of security and natural disasters were also raised by the Minister. The need to decolonise our minds and trust in the ability of our own people to determine, without unnecessary outside intervention, what is best for our region and our future should be rigorously promoted and encouraged, the Minister argued.

11. The development of Niue's Strategic Development Plan in 1994 saw government and the private sector coming together to discuss and formulate plans in areas of mutual interest. It is Government's view that the concerns of the private sector in the area of education and training were properly addressed in the 1994 Strategic Development Plan. The Minister assured the seminar that despite perceptions to the contrary, Government has not lost sight of its mission to give each

human being the means to take full advantage of every educational opportunity. Government has therefore concentrated on the concept of lifelong education so as to reconcile three forces:

- Competition which provides incentive
- Co-operation which gives strength
- Solidarity which gives Unity

12. The paper then identified major areas of need for education in Niue as follows:

- (a) Tourism studies.
- (b) Non-formal education, for example in hand dyeing and music.
- (c) Ethnic arts.
- (d) Shortage of teachers, managers, and nurses.
- (e) Returning graduates who can consecrate their lives and dedicate their time and energy into the welfare and upkeep of Niue.
- (f) Further training or retraining of in-service staff (problems associated with mortgages payments, disruption to spouse career, relocation of students to new schools etc.)
- (g) Extension and expansion of activities at the Centre.

13. On the issue of continued government scholarships to USP, the Minister reaffirmed her government's commitment to USP and noted that there are no government plans to cut ties with USP although she acknowledged that Niue may have underutilised USP services and facilities in the past. The Minister also confirmed that the issue relating to the quality of USP qualifications is a non-issue as far as the Niue Government was concerned. The possibility of private sector financial support towards education, according to the Minister, was very low. Government was committed, however, to supporting initiatives aimed at further strengthening the private sector. The paper also noted that Government has no immediate plans to establish a national post-secondary institution, although it would like to see the USP Centre being relocated to Paliati as soon as possible. A new funding proposal for financing the University was also raised by the Minister. In her paper she proposed that two thirds of each government's total assessed contribution be designated to cover expenses incurred by Extension

Centres, and one third towards the upkeep of the University as a whole. In other words, 2/3 of Niue's contribution should be directed towards supporting activities at the Niue Centre and 1/3 for other university activities. In addition, should Niue wish to send students to Fiji, it would then be required to pay the normal tuition fees as well as accommodation costs.

14. The need to decentralise USP activities was also raised. The Minister called for a study to determine the feasibility of proceeding with this matter. Hon Jacobsen also drew attention to several matters affecting Government's relationship with the University Centre that needed resolution by both USP and government. These include:

- (a) Matters of "understanding" with Government must be documented.
- (b) Clarification where Government's responsibility begins and ends was needed.
- (c) Assessment of Centre's work to be documented properly and a monitoring system established.
- (d) Niueans on USP committees to be informed more clearly of their responsibilities, chain of command, and lines of communication.

15. In concluding her presentation, the Minister thanked the University for organising the seminar. She said that the seminar has assisted in focusing attention on Niue's future educational needs. The Minister further highlighted the need for the University to continuously monitor and evaluate its programme offerings to ensure that they were addressing the modern day needs of its member countries.

16. The Chairman thanked the Minister for her thought-provoking and interesting presentation before inviting comments from the floor.

PUBLIC FORUM DISCUSSION

17. The first contribution from the floor sought clarification on two issues. These concern the Minister's statement that education was a privilege and the recognition of USP qualifications. The speaker stated that education is a social service and viewed as a matter of right and not a privilege. The Minister replied that government regards tertiary education as a privilege because it is paid for by the country.

18. On the question of recognition of USP qualifications, the speaker cited cases where USP graduates have found it difficult to be admitted into overseas universities and often have to first obtain a Certificate of Proficiency (COP) before being accepted. The Minister replied that she had been assured by the University that their degrees are recognised internationally. She added, however, that she would ask USP for some documentation from outside universities to be provided to support this claim.

19. In response, Dr Naidu, said that there were many factors involved in understanding fully this matter, such as the nature of the qualifications. In most cases there was a need to meet entry requirements using grade point average (GPA). He gave the example that even USP does not accept its own students for postgraduate studies if they have GPA below 3. In other places such as Australia, there were no uniform entry requirements because they vary from State to State. Dr Naidu went on to say that USP is a member of the New Zealand Vice Chancellor's Committee, the Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee, and a member of the Commonwealth Universities. Through these memberships the USP is able to be informed of changes in entry requirements of universities in these countries. It is also the case that in some countries there were professional associations which seek to protect their own interests as well as those of their members. This may require the new graduates from outside the country to undertake extra courses before gaining entry.

20. The question: "What is Government's policy on USP"? was put to the Minister by one of the participants. The speaker claimed that the Minister's paper had urged Niue to utilise USP services a lot more, yet the Government policy as provided in the confidential Cabinet minute (Attachment 1) has clearly opted for the New Zealand system. He

wanted to know whether there was a similar policy in place for USP. In reply, the Minister said that there was no formal policy as yet because the current review of higher education in Niue is still under way. The policy as given in Attachment 1 was a result of the Ministry of Education's consultations with the wider community where the unanimous consensus was for Niuean students to undertake studies in New Zealand.

21. With regard to the difficulty associated with further training and retaining of existing staff, it was claimed that one of the problems was due to Government's policy of reducing salaries by 50% for those staff proceeding on training. The Hon. Minister stated that with the current financial situation faced by the country, it was very difficult for Government to justify paying full salary in addition to the comfortable allowances that trainees receive from their sponsors.

22. One participant referred to Government's paper where tourism was identified as its base economy and cautioned that Niueans must not forget agriculture as also a very important base. He wanted to know about other training possibilities in agriculture offered by USP for those students who were not able to gain access to Alafua. In reply, the Hon. Minister said that in her presentation she had recommended "beefing-up" the Extension Centre so as to enable it to address the needs of Niuean society through non-formal training. The Director of Education warned that the organisation and planning of such training must be done properly to avoid failures and disappointments, as had happened in the past. In response to a query on Government's policy to bond students on scholarships, the Minister replied that bonding was not enforced. The Hon. Minister also proposed that the University Council meets once a year and not twice as is the current practice. One meeting, she claimed was sufficient and the University could arrange for air-fares to be paid out of member countries' contributions to ensure their full attendance.

PANEL DISCUSSION

23. The Chairperson opened the discussion by outlining very briefly the purpose of the session. He said that panellists should focus on the issues raised in the Minister's paper in addition to any comments made during the public forum session which they judged to be of relevance to the issues under consideration before making their final recommendations. Mr Siakimotu summarised the main issues as follows: need for a government policy on USP; due recognition of USP qualifications; relevant courses and programmes geared towards tourism; community education; extend and expand the role and involvement of the USP Centre in addressing local needs; financing of USP activities; shortage of teachers, managers and nurses; and decentralisation of university functions. He then invited comments from the panellists.

24. On the issue of USP qualifications and their recognition within Niue, it was pointed out that this matter needs to be address at two levels; with parents, and employers. While it was clear that parents would need to be made aware of the benefits and advantages of studying at USP, it was equally important that employers "rethink" their perception concerning the worth of USP qualifications. The message for USP was clear; it must advertise its activities more in the various villages in Niue. In terms of its qualifications, USP would need to publicise information pertaining to these qualifications as well as an assurance that they were equal in quality, if not better, than qualifications from rim countries. In response to a question, the Public Service Commissioner confirmed that USP qualifications were now being regarded on equal par with qualifications obtained from New Zealand and Australia.

25. The panel was also advised that there was no apparent difference between USP qualifications and those awarded by New Zealand and Australian institutions. While acknowledging the importance of global knowledge and the impact of technology in the transmission of information, there was, however, a strong feeling that USP should focus more on issues of relevance to the region and individual countries. It was also argued that it is what graduates do with their degrees after graduation that matters, not where they were obtained. According to one panellist, true recognition of USP qualifications must begin at

home; by Niue government, private sector and the general population. When Niue decides to send students to USP, it is also making a statement about the worth and relevance of USP programmes and courses. Those that returned with qualifications should therefore be given the due recognition they deserve in terms of salaries and other benefits.

26. The discussion then moved to the issue of an education policy towards USP. This issue generated much discussion but all converged towards the need for Government to articulate a clear policy in this area. In arriving at this recommendation, the Panel was also aware of the constraints imposed on Government by both donors and parents regarding this matter. On the issue of relevant formal programmes and training courses which could be offered to assist in the overall development of Niue, the panel endorsed the focus on tourism as one of the priority areas for overall national development. A range of activities could be considered under this heading, however, the panel agreed that the details could be worked out at a later stage between the relevant parties involved. The need to extend and expand continuing education activities at the USP Centre was also discussed. It was pointed out that the main constraint was the lack of resources to support these activities at the USP Centre. The possibility of tapping into regional aid funds was noted and encouraged by the Panel as one possible source. The perennial issue relating to decentralisation of University functions was also raised. Where possible, it was desirable for the University to move in this direction.

27. After further deliberations, the Panel identified following priority areas as requiring immediate Government attention:

- (a) **That Government put in place as soon as feasible a policy on USP.**
- (b) **For employment and all other purposes, USP qualifications should be treated in the same manner as similar qualifications obtained from New Zealand and Australian institutions.**
- (c) **Endorse the focus on tourism studies as the top priority area for future development.**

- (d) Fully support the need for the Extension Centre to expand and strengthen its activities in the continuing education area (eg. ethnic arts and music) as well as formal courses available through the extension mode.**
- (e) That the USP looks at viable ways and means of decentralising more of its activities.**
- (f) Problems associated with the training and re-training of in-service staff be addressed as a matter of priority.**

The Chairperson thanked the panelists for their contribution and then called the session to a close.

SESSION TWO

PRIVATE SECTOR PAPER: Mr Terry Chapman

28. The views of the private sector were presented by Terry Chapman. In prefacing his presentation, Mr Chapman quoted from a report submitted to the New Zealand Parliament in 1926 which had this to say about Niue at the time: "*A relatively high standard of formal education, such as is found in countries that have reached a high standard of civilisation, is of little value to the Niuean . . . even though a high standard of primary education were given, it would, under the conditions obtaining, be of little use, because there are no opportunities offering whereby such knowledge could be put to practical use and become a benefit to the state, or, at least, to the island.*" The paper then went on to argue that the vision of that report is as relevant today as it was in 1926. The full text of the private sector paper is reproduced as Appendix 2.

29. The paper then discussed some of the issues and problems relevant to modern Niue society as perceived by the private sector. These include a non-existent manufacturing, and industry-based economy. The difficulty associated with a highly educated population with no appropriate jobs was also highlighted. According to Mr Chapman, outward migration of Niueans is at the heart of Niue's present socio-economic dilemma. If development is to take place in any serious and meaningful way, then people are needed to make things work. Underpopulation was therefore a major constraint in the overall development of the country.

30. In restating the Niue Government's economic development policy, that is, the maintenance of a living community to be independent of external assistance, Mr Chapman also noted that the main strategy for the achievement of this goal was through the promotion of tourism, encouraging private sector development, and reducing the role and size of the public sector. According to the paper, about half of the working age population do not have work. From the private sector perspective, emphasis in the medium term should be placed on technical and vocational training rather than on tertiary qualifications. The argument against the latter is that those with degree

qualifications were more likely to migrate to New Zealand or Australia as a result of employment opportunities.

31. Hands-on training was considered a priority by the private sector, as was the need for basic accounting services. Turning to the Tourism and Private Sector Training Programme, Mr Chapman highlighted the following as requiring attention:

- (a) Public awareness education programme targeting tourism in Niue.
- (b) Workshops/training programmes for village leaders and aspiring entrepreneurs.
- (c) Workshops targeting business opportunities.
- (d) School curricula to include relevant topics in tourism.
- (e) Exploration of existing regional programmes aimed at strengthening Chambers of Commerce.
- (f) Use of distance education in appropriate areas.
- (g) In-country workshops on supply and quality issues involving fresh fruits and vegetables.
- (h) Workshops for business organisation.
- (i) Training programmes for tourist accommodation personnel, restaurant operations, reception, bedroom service and interpersonal skills.
- (j) Training techniques for carrying out extension work in villages and for cultural groups.

32. The Chairperson thanked the presenter for his contribution before inviting comments from the general public.

PUBLIC FORUM DISCUSSION

33. One of the participants pointed out that the private sector paper had advocated the need for local people with technical skills to write reports and not rely on outside consultants for this task. It was also pointed out that the relevant question to ask was: "What kind of people does Niue need"? In a country with a population of 2000, it was argued the focus should be on the development of small business enterprises and not necessarily on people with degrees and other high academic qualifications. Further, it was claimed academics do not necessarily make good businesspeople. What was needed was for aspiring business people to possess relevant business skills and adequate finance. Another view advocated the use of the "training of trainers" concept where one person is sent for training and on returning helps the private sector to train people in basic business concepts, for example, the preparation of accounts. The Minister of Education told the seminar that USP cannot be expected to meet all the demands of member countries in a timely and effective manner. However, she acknowledged that one of the University's primary roles is to prepare the minds of people and to prepare them well to cope with the challenges and changes in the future. The USP representative also pointed out that although smallness is a problem, Niue still needs a full range of skills, with technicians, blue collar workers and trades people. The argument that hands-on experience is what Niue needs is not a guarantee that people will stay, as skilled technicians are usually in great demand and leave for better pay overseas.

34. Several queries were directed at USP, including the possibility of providing book-keeping training to assist small businesses. Another query sought the proportion of USP courses that were geared to private sector demands. The seminar was advised by the USP representative that even though most courses meet public sector demands, a significant percentage of SSSED courses such as Business Studies, Accounting and Financial Management, Management, and Economics also address private sector needs. These were, however, dependent on the labour markets. It was suggested that USP should consider including a course in Small Business Management. Another area where USP's assistance could be explored was hands-on assistance that the private sector paper was promoting. It was claimed the private sector definitely needs help in accounting and legal matters.

35. The necessity of proper coordination was raised and it was suggested that a Human Resource Plan for both the short and long-term be put in place as soon as possible. As part of this process, Government and the private sector should collectively address the future direction and role of the private sector in the overall development of the country. Moreover, it was desirable for Niue to have a strong and active Chamber of Commerce and for the National Training Council to include private sector participants in their courses.

36. It was clear from the discussions that most speakers were in favour of the hands-on approach proposed by the private sector paper. The smallness of the place dictates the type of training that can be offered for Niue and the training of trainers concept was seen as a viable option. One of the panel members wanted to know whether the private sector has ever put up a list of priorities to Government or to the Chamber of Commerce. It was claimed, that there were some duplications in training courses offered by several organisations in Niue. The Minister for Economic Development said that Government policy has resulted in enhancing the development and promotion of the private sector. He was therefore interested to know what USP can offer in the hospitality and tourism areas. The USP representative advised the seminar of the various tourism studies courses offered by USP, in addition to others in the managerial and marketing areas deemed relevant for such industries. USP can also liaise with other institutions in catering and hotel management courses. The Chair then thanked the public for their comments before closing the session.

PANEL DISCUSSION

37. The panel took note of comments made in the public forum session and observed that there was a need to assist in the development of the private sector. The right attitudes towards business was one of the key prerequisites for success in this area. There was, however, doubt expressed as to whether the local environment was conducive to operating a successful business. It was argued that business ethnics and local cultures it was argued are not necessarily compatible partners in Niue. The idea of strengthening the Business Advisory Service (NDB) to provide professional advice to people contemplating entering the business arena was supported.

38. There was also a call for the establishment of a focal point to coordinate the requirements of the sector, especially in the human resource development area. The Panel was informed that some of the hurdles currently faced by the private sector should be removed if it is to develop fully. These included involvement of public servants in private businesses which could involve a conflict of interest situation, and favouritism in awarding contracts, to name two. After further discussion, the Panel agreed that the priorities of the private sector are as follows:

- (a) **In the medium term, technical and vocational training should be promoted and supported.**
- (b) **Hands-on training in basic business concepts and skills.**
- (c) **Training of trainers**
- (d) **Tourism studies involving the following:**
 - **public awareness education programme on tourism.**
 - **workshops/training programmes for village leaders and aspiring entrepreneurs.**
 - **school curricula to include relevant topics on tourism.**
 - **use of distance education in appropriate areas.**
 - **in-country workshops on quality and supply issues involving fresh fruits and vegetables.**
 - **training techniques for carrying out extension work in villages and for cultural groups.**
 - **training programmes for tourist accommodation, restaurant operations, reception, bedroom service and interpersonal skills.**

It was noted that the private sector did not expect USP to necessarily be the appropriate vehicle for addressing all of the above concerns.

39. The needs of the primary sector (agriculture, forestry and fisheries) were not addressed due, possibly, to misunderstanding of definition as to what constituted the private sector. As it happened, the private sector paper dealt with commercial and services industries etc. as defined by licensed business. As the term primary sector suggests there is a need for this vital component to be examined and addressed

accordingly. It is therefore suggested that the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in consultation with the Niue Growers Association and the Niue Fisherman's Association take the initiative in producing a paper with recommendations to be later included as an addendum to the final report. The mechanism for achieving this be determined by the department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, representatives of the two private sector associations, the Director of Education and the USP Extension Centre.

Tuesday 18 March 1997

SESSION THREE

PARENTS AND STUDENTS PAPER: Heleiki Ikimotu

40. Heleiki Ikimotu presented the parents' and students' perspective on educational requirements for Niue. In introducing the paper, Heleiki Ikimotu gave a brief history of USP since its inception in 1968. He said that the institution has been an asset to the region and its most notable achievement has been in the number of students graduating with various qualifications at all levels. As well, the USP has been a place where long lasting friendships have been formed and understanding and tolerance of different cultures and values have been nurtured. However, not all is well at USP. The University also has its problems both in the areas of student life and management in general. But these are to be expected given the multi-cultural nature of the institution and the diversity in values and norms which exist within its walls. Mr Ikimotu's paper is given in its entirety as Appendix 3.

41. The paper noted the high percentage of USP graduates currently being employed by government and in some cases holding very senior positions confirming the value of USP qualifications to the country as a whole. Heleiki also noted that Niue started sending students to USP in the seventies but the numbers dropped, especially towards the late eighties. This trend seemed to have now been arrested, with an increasing number of students being sent to USP over the past three years. The paper also observed that Niue accepted full membership of USP because of the perceived benefits to the country. It was time, therefore, that Niue make full use of available University services and facilities to ensure that this original aim is achieved.

42. Heleiki then raised several issues which he claimed has impeded the full development of beneficial relationship between Niue and the USP. First, the perception that USP is a second class university. This attitude has, unfortunately, prevented more students benefiting from studies at USP. It was also claimed that parents have had a large part to play in forming this perception amongst their children. The paper cited cases where students selected for study awards tenable at USP have refused to take up these scholarships because of this perception. This is

clearly a major problem and every effort should be made to minimise and eliminate this perception. As a move towards addressing this problem, and to maximise Niue's returns on its investment in USP, the paper proposed the following recommendations for consideration by government:

- (a) All new awards for the next few years should be allocated on equal basis between USP and other overseas tertiary institutions.
- (b) If USP is unable to offer a programme of study for which a particular student had been selected, then Government is justified sending the student elsewhere.

43. Government's policy towards payment of half salary to those on overseas training also received attention in the paper. The paper argued that for those with large families, and other commitments (mortgage payments, school fees, and uniforms), this policy effectively discourages people from seeking university studies. Given these reasons, the paper argued strongly in support of a review of the current policy on salaries paid to scholarship students. The author also claimed that students at USP tend to suffer more financial hardships compared to those studying in tertiary institutions elsewhere. Attention was also directed towards the relatively low number of Niuean students attending USP both on-campus and extension studies.

44. The role and performance of the USP Centre in meeting local needs was discussed. The poor performance of students enrolling in extension courses was attributed to several factors. First, most of those taking extension courses also have full-time jobs either in Government or the private sector. Finding the time to study is therefore a problem. Second, the late return of assignments has contributed directly to poor performance by students. It was noted that students taking correspondence courses in New Zealand do not appear to have the same problem. USP urgently needs to look into this matter. The USP Centre library also needs upgrading in terms of available textbooks and other materials for use by students. The need for adequate support services to students and the availability of qualified and experienced tutors were also raised, especially given the unavailability of satellite communications with Fiji.

45. The paper then presented statistics on the number of public servants holding university qualifications. It was noted that 19 graduated from USP, 17 from New Zealand and five from Australia. Further statistics showed that of the 27 students who graduated from USP, 17 are employed by Government, two by the private sector, two are retirees and the rest are either in New Zealand or Australia. The figures showing the movements of graduates from other other countries were not available. However, a detailed study will be carried out in the near future. Public servants holding formal qualifications from other tertiary institutions were not included.

46. The Chair thanked Heleiki for his presentation and then invited inputs from the general public.

PUBLIC FORUM DISCUSSION

47. This session generated a lot of discussion and several issues and points of clarification were raised. The first issues raised were in relation to the Extension Centre - clarifications on the Commonwealth Fund For Technical Cooperation (CFTC) scholarships mentioned in the paper, and the concern over the appointment of a USP Centre Director for Niue. There was a strong view expressed that the position of Centre Director should be reserved for a local person and that this policy should also be extended to include acting appointments to the same position. In reply to the first issue, the Acting Centre Director elaborated on the CFTC scholarship awards which are an allocation given to all the Centres in countries belonging to the Commonwealth. The allocation given is dependent on the previous semester's enrolments and are awarded to extension students based on academic merit and needs.

48. The USP representative then explained the rationale behind all USP appointments. He said that it is normal University policy, everything being equal (qualifications, experience, publications etc), to appoint a regional over a non-regional to vacant positions within the institution. The USP representative urged Niueans interested in the position of Centre Director to apply when the post is advertised. The Hon. Minister of Education took the opportunity to comment and

referred to her paper on the not so clear “understanding” that Government has with USP. She said that since there were no documentation available, this can be a problem for a new appointee given the possibility of misunderstanding due to different interpretations of this “understanding”. She called for USP to clarify its position in relation to her Government’s role, especially in the selection of a Niue USP Centre Director. She felt that a Niue Government representative should be included as a member of the Appointments Committee for the Centre Director’s post.

49. The issue of decentralisation raised in the public sector paper was again highlighted by Mr Ikimotu. One participant wanted to know the benefits Niue will get if such a proposal is accepted and put in place. Such benefits, according to Mr Ikimotu, include easy access to University services by Niuean students and also direct economic benefits to the economy through spending of students, staff, and the organisation.

50. The possibility of USP assisting students who have been unsuccessful in their exams such as School Certificate, and who do not seem to get anywhere, was raised. The Minister of Education pointed out that the matter is under consideration by Government since every Niue High School student will not have the benefit of a University education. She directed attention to the Continuing Education programmes of USP that some of these students can enroll in, thereby providing them with necessary practical knowledge as well as enhancing their personal development.

51. Several ex-USP students in the audience spoke favourably of their USP education and they cited the many benefits accrued as a direct result of their studying at USP. The difference, according to one member, was that USP graduates have tended to remain and work in Niue because their training was much more relevant to the needs of the country. The Manager of National Training and Development Council challenged a claim made in the paper that Government is not providing any financial assistance to Niuean students at USP. She confirmed that Government does provide financial assistance as part of bilateral agreements between Government and donors. The seminar was also informed that not all award holders are sponsored by external agencies as some awards are paid for by the Niue Government. In addition,

Government assists with airfares of the spouse and one child, as well as school fees, and some transportation cost.

52. Several members of the forum spoke in favour of government's policy of paying 50% of salary to public servants awarded training leave overseas. With the prevailing economic circumstances experienced in Niue, it was felt that government does not have a choice. The public was challenged to think seriously about the future and in particular the future of Niuean children. It was noted that education in Niue is provided free by government. Since this is a seminar about future directions perhaps it is timely for Niueans to ask: "Should Government continue paying for our education"? The meeting was warned that Niueans must not rely solely on Government to cater to their every need but should be encouraged to develop a self-help mentality and to make sacrifices. There were also some differing views on the claim by the presenter that Niue students are financially better off in New Zealand than at USP. Some of the members of the public who had undertaken training in New Zealand stated that they also had to go through some of the hardships experienced by students at USP. The issues of lack of textbooks and late return of assignments by University Extension were mentioned as deterring factors to prospective students. The USP should take immediate steps to rectify these problems, which have been in existence for the past 20 years.

53. The Chairperson thanked the presenter and members of the public for their contributions. He ended by saying that he was one of the founding members that established the University Centre in the heart of Niue. Now it is time for the University Centre to go out to the villages.

PANEL DISCUSSION

54. The panel discussion that followed revisited some of the issues already aired and discussed during the public forum session. In particular, the 50% reduction in salaries of scholarship holders issue again received much attention with arguments both for and against the policy. On the one hand, it was pointed out that the economic environment currently faced by the Government makes it difficult to restore full salaries as in the past. It was the case that in addition to

their salaries, students also receive allowances paid by donors. On the other hand, it was argued that married students with families need their case to be looked at favourably. Other factors which could impinge directly on resolving this matter included the number of years for the training concerned, the number of dependents for the married student, level of allowance received from the donor and so on. Another suggestion advanced was for the institution of a loans facility available to students for study purposes.

55. There was a strong consensus that USP needs to do more in selling its programmes and activities to Niue. In response to a query, the University confirmed that there are promotional materials that could be used for this purpose, as well as annual school visits by staff to explain to potential students what is available at USP and how to go about applying to register. Moreover, the University on all its campuses and centres also has an open day where anyone interested in the work of the institution can attend and obtained relevant information about the University. In response to a question directed towards the financing of the University, it was explained that the funding formula currently used by the University divides its income from member countries into three major components; the general grant, special grant, and medium works. The first component is student related while the special grant is calculated according to the number of USP staff working in each country. The medium works component is for minor capital improvement in university facilities. The seminar was also informed that the more third country awards (TCAs) Niue is able to attract to USP, this will have the effect of reducing its total assessed contribution.

56. After further deliberations, the Panel identified the following areas as requiring attention as perceived by parents and students:

- (a) **The need for a review of Government's policy relating to the payment of 50% of salary to students proceeding on training.**
- (b) **That all new awards for next few years should be allocated on an equal basis between USP and other overseas tertiary institutions.**

- (c) The urgent need to change the attitude of parents about USP studies and qualifications.**
- (d) USP should aggressively promote itself in Niue through the provision of information regarding its offerings and the quality of its qualifications.**
- (e) USP to look very closely at management issues at the Centre and also the mechanisms it currently employs to deliver extension studies to students in Niue.**
- (f) Expand and strengthen USP activities to cater to the continuing education needs of the community.**
- (g) The urgent need for USP to rectify the problem of the Centre's satellite equipment as students need to attend tutorials conducted by their tutors in Suva. Furthermore, the Centre should endeavor to identify and recruit local tutors to assist wherever possible.**

SESSION FOUR

DONOR PRESENTATION:

H.E. Warren Searell, New Zealand High Commissioner

57. The New Zealand presentation was mainly intended for information purposes only. The New Zealand High Commissioner, H. E. Warren Searell, thanked the USP and the Government of Niue for the opportunity to speak as part of the seminar. The full text of the High Commissioner's paper is reproduced as Appendix 4.

58. In his introductory remarks, the High Commissioner noted that Niue had gone through significant changes over the past five years. His Excellency pointed to changes in Niue as a result of the economic restructuring and the implications this would have, especially in the development of its human resources. New Zealand has placed emphasis on development of skills and expertise in the South Pacific. This was reflected in the fact that \$24 million was channelled to Human Resources Development in the South Pacific in 1994, representing about 40% of New Zealand's total aid programme. He went on to add that Human Resources Development is not a choice but a necessity. Trained people are required to do the job in all sectors be it in government or in the private sector. Despite this high investment by New Zealand in HRD in the region, Mr Searell pointed out there was still a chronic shortage of accountants, economists, managers, lawyers, engineers, and on another level, electricians, plumbers, carpenters and technicians essential even in a small economy such as Niue.

59. He then proceeded to identify ways in which such assistance have been provided, especially to USP. For instance, in the 1996/97 financial year, \$2.5m was provided by New Zealand for core budget support and extra-budgetary activities at USP, in addition to South Pacific Fees Scholarships for tertiary study at regional institutions. The advantages and strengths of a USP education are many and New Zealand is very proud of the achievements of the institution which include:

- * Recognition of USP as a world centre of excellence in education especially in distance education, with academic

high standards and many qualifications recognised by NZ universities.

- * The offer of education which is relevant to the region, such as agriculture and marine studies.
- * A very appropriate cultural context. Minimal disruptions and distractions often associated with metropolitan universities are minimised resulting in a high return-home rate for USP scholars.
- * Provision of opportunities for potential young leaders in the region to establish inter-country networks.
- * The contribution of USP to regional development which can be seen in the large numbers of graduates presently occupying senior positions in the region.

60. Mr Searell then posed the question of: "Where should Niue's policy on training and education be heading"? He said that it was up to the Government of Niue to decide. He offered his observations, however, on the prevailing situations and some suggestions that might be useful to the discussion. Mention was then made of the Niue National Strategic Plan with its national development goal and national objective focussing on the development of human resources to levels which at least match Niue's economic aspirations. His Excellency went on to outline the findings of the UNDP/WTO Tourism and Private Sector Development Report published last year, which carried out extensive consultations with government and the private sector and commented on the need for long-term analysis and planning so Niue's education requirements might be met. The Report's recommendations, he observed, would be useful for the consideration of the seminar. In brief they were:

- (a) less emphasis on government training and more on private sector needs.
- (b) Too much emphasis being placed by Niue on university qualifications at the expense of technical or sub-

professional qualifications. The report noted that 'Niue is educating its young for New Zealand and Australia'.

- (c) The Niue Training and Development Council to take up wider functions beyond an award administration unit.
- (d) More in-country training with more input from the private sector.

61. In order to identify the potential contribution USP can make to education in Niue it was necessary, the High Commissioner said, for Niue to carefully identified its HRD needs first. It was also important to keep in mind that the needs of the country must be placed before those of the individuals. The issue of accountability is essential to ensure Niue and also New Zealand get value for money from any expenditure on training of Niueans. He suggested that an improvement will be made if at least half of the tertiary awards for both university and lower level study were to be allocated to regional institutions such as USP. He acknowledged that in a small place like Niue with strong links to New Zealand, this would not be popular with parents but national goals must be satisfied first. Even with the higher cost at USP, New Zealand would be prepared to pay and receive better value for money. More use of the Extension Centre for in-country training and Foundation year was another possibility proposed by Mr Searell, with scholarships set aside for these students. USP was seen as the main provider of in-service and on-the-job training for Niue.

62. In conclusion, Mr Searell reiterated that New Zealand sees a need for Niue to divert its tertiary education gaze from New Zealand to the region of which Niue is a part and to support the quality, relevant, and Pacific education offered by USP. He challenged New Zealand's partners in development (USP and Niue Government) to plan well, implement efficiently and follow up to ensure that value for money is maintained.

63. The Chairperson thanked the High Commissioner for his positive and timely contributions before she invited comments from the floor.

PUBLIC AND PANEL DISCUSSION

64. Several views were aired during this session but what was clear from the High Commissioner's paper was the need for Niue to re-direct its focus to acquiring an education which was relevant to the needs of the country. According to the Director of Education, this would involve making some hard decisions. For example those students who are unable to get a place in New Zealand for Form 7 can be channelled to the Foundation programme at USP, but there is a danger here that USP will be perceived again as a place for second raters.

65. On the suggestion that at least half of the award be offered to regional institutions, one participant asked whether New Zealand was prepared to make it a condition. Mr Searell said this was a matter for the Niue Government to resolve. Another view expressed was that Niue has huge problems due mainly to its small population base. There was therefore a need to re-look at the number of awards being granted and consider who people were training for. It was also observed that the reality is that families comes first, before national needs. The Pacific, it was observed, has its own peculiar way of doing things. Sometimes this appears strange to the outside world, but Niue did know what it wants and how to get there. It was important for Niue to be allowed to determine its own priorities and frame a response to address these priorities without unnecessary outside intervention. This is a concept that must be appreciated and promoted by all. The seminar was also advised that irrespective of Government's policy, outward migration of qualified people will inevitably occur. What is more important is to focus on those Niueans who decided to stay and assist in nation building and development.

66. In response to a question, it was explained that a degree from a New Zealand polytechnic was likely to be more skill-based compared to a more generalist degree from USP. At the end of the day, the best investment for the country is the training of its people. There was also a call for a change in current policy to allow all Niuean students to enrol in the USP foundation programme rather than in form seven in New Zealand. The High Commissioner then clarified that one of New Zealand's main concerns was to ensure that its aid-funded programmes were not encouraging people to migrate out of Niue. One of the most

effective ways of keeping people in the country, it was claimed, was through the creation of more job opportunities.

67. The Chairperson thanked both the presenter and the participants for their valuable contributions.

Wednesday 19 March 1997

SESSION FIVE

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS PAPER: Maru Talagi

68. In introducing the NGOs paper, Maru Talagi firstly noted the position of NGOs in Niue. He said that there is no NGO umbrella organisation that acts as the focal point for all NGOs in the country. As a way forward, he informed the seminar that he was in the process of formulating a constitution for what he hopes will materialise into an association of Niue NGOs (NENGO). He made reference to the Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO), which is an umbrella organisation for all Pacific Islands NGOs of which Niue is not a member. The full text of Mr Talagi's paper is reproduced in Appendix 5.

69. In his presentation, Mr Talagi gave the scenario that education is a compelling yardstick and is about making choices. It was also about the capacity to develop the human mind which in turn is dependent on the structure of the institution. According to the paper this structure needs to change in order to meet new demands. The paper also argued that education, instead of equalising opportunities for the people in society, has actually had the opposite effect. The author noted that education has been used to widen the gap between the poor and the rich. It was a self-perpetuating process; the educated using education to enhance and maintain their position within the community at the expense of the needy. Maru Talagi further highlighted the importance of the University seeking the views and ideas from its member countries to assist it in its future programme planning. Given the vital role of NGOs in the overall development of the region, it was proposed that a representative of PIANGO be coopted as a member of the USP Council.

70. Mr Talagi then posed four questions:

- (a) Has our University become a "Melting Pot"?
- (b) Are paper solutions used to respond to the concerns of society?

(c) Has our University become a subservient entity?

(d) What, How and Where does NGO fit into the USP schema?

71. The first question, according to Mr Talagi, was a caution to USP planners and decision-makers. He claimed that the individual needs of member countries such as Niue were not being met. It was appreciated, however, that USP is a regional institution and as such its main focus must be on those areas/programmes which are of priority to the majority of its members. Despite this situation, it was argued that USP was still in a position to help Niue and the following options were floated for consideration:

- (a) USP to participate in the formulation of local curriculum for formal training to complement what Niue has adopted from New Zealand.
- (b) plan for an outreach programme in the private sector for youths, with proper consultation to take place beforehand.
- (c) provide full-time Foundation level courses for those unable to continue to Form 7 in New Zealand.
- (d) the use of Niue graduates to teach Foundation level courses and Niue Government to include such tasks in their job descriptions.
- (e) practical attachments in industries, regional offices, and fields of employment for new graduates before conferring of degrees and diplomas.

72. On the second question, the presenter cautioned about the production of glossy reports that are hardly ever read and actioned. He expressed the hope that the outcome of the present exercise would be acted upon by all concerned. The third question was primarily a reminder and a caution regarding the need for USP to put in place a structure which would be relevant to meeting the requirements and demands of member states. The issue relating to the recognition of USP qualifications in other countries either for employment purposes or for

further studies, was considered of utmost importance otherwise USP will be by-passed or become a last resort for potential students.

73. On the last question, Mr Talagi was of the opinion that an NGO representative be included as a member of the local USP Advisory Committee. This would facilitate easy access to information and exchange of ideas. There has been little information known about Niue's University. At a different level, he suggested that a representative of PIANGO become a member of the USP Council to take in the views of Pacific Islands NGOs.

74. The Chairperson thanked the presenter and invited comments from the floor.

PUBLIC FORUM DISCUSSION

75. Most of the views expressed from the audience were related to PIANGO's role in Niue. At this very early stage, most of the public were not aware of the existence of PIANGO let alone NENGO which Mr Talagi was trying to establish. In reply Mr Talagi said he has recently received information on PIANGO which he is happy to circulate. He explained that PIANGO is an umbrella organisation for Pacific Islands NGO and is a vehicle to get messages across to Governments and vice versa. The Hon. Minister for Community Affairs stated that at present all NGO bodies in Niue come under the jurisdiction of the Department of Community Affairs. It was therefore difficult to see the benefits Niue could receive as a result of a PIANGO membership as compare to the present arrangement where the NGO bodies sit with government.

76. There was also a concern raised as to the lack of consultation between the author and women in Niue given that women form the backbone of Niuean society. In reply, Maru Talagi admitted that due to time constraints, he was only able to obtain the views of the President of the National Council of Women. Some executive members of NGOs who were present also confirmed that they were happy with the current arrangement of working with Community Affairs and admitted they know very little about PIANGO and NENGO. It was suggested that Mr

Talagi seeks views of individual NGOs by taking the “bottom-up” approach rather than the “top-down” view.

PANEL DISCUSSION

77. Inputs from panel members followed the issues raised in the earlier public forum discussion. There was consensus that the NGOs would need to first identify their requirements before the University is in a position to respond to these needs in any meaningful way. It was also important, given the small size of the country, to utilise existing structures, if appropriate, rather than establishing new ones for obvious reasons. The concern for students who do not progress beyond form 6 received much discussion. It was felt that this was one area where USP can assist with in proposing relevant programmes in association with government and NGOs.

78. Because of the demand for continuing education courses at the village level it was suggested that some coordinating body was necessary. Perhaps the experience of other Pacific island countries in this area would be useful for Niue to consider. The discussion then moved towards formal training. A number of suggestions were made aimed at informing Government on a number of possibilities that could be considered in meeting the needs of those completing form 6. One suggestion was for students to undertake the USP Foundation programme before they can be considered for an award to study at university. Another suggestion supported the continuation of the current practice where students are sent to New Zealand for form 7. Yet another recommendation was for all students to do bursary studies and Foundation studies locally. The Government can then make a decision at the end of that year as to where the student should be sent for university studies.

79. Whatever is finally agreed to, it was important to note that the final decision rests with the people of Niue and no one else. In concluding this session, the Chairperson summarised the views of the NGOs as follows:

- (a) **The need to seriously consider the formation of an umbrella organisation to better coordinate the**

requirements of this sector of the community. However, care must be exercised to ensure that duplication of efforts with existing structures do not occur.

- (b) Urgent attention be directed to the youth who do not proceed beyond form 6 and appropriate outreach programmes be identified to address the needs of this important section of the community.**
- (c) Encourage the exploration of the practicality of attachments to industries, regional offices, etc before graduation.**

The Chairperson thanked Mr Talagi for his presentation and also extended appreciation to the panel members and the general public for their inputs.

UNIVERSITY PRESENTATION

80. This session was devoted to USP staff responding to queries and matters requiring clarification on its information paper as well as other matters raised during the course of the seminar. Most of the questions centred on management issues and financial matters. Dr Naidu responded on behalf of the University and he also suggested the establishment of a regional scholarship fund to support students at USP. This proposal was well supported by the seminar.

CONCLUDING SESSION

81. The following is a summary of the collective priorities and problems in education as identified by each of the sectors involved in the seminar:

- (a) That Niue Government put in place as soon as feasible a policy on USP.**
- (b) For employment and all other purposes, USP qualifications obtained should be treated in the same manner as similar qualifications from New Zealand and Australian institutions.**
- (c) Endorse the focus on tourism studies as the top priority area for future development.**
- (d) Fully support the need for the Extension Centre to expand and strengthen its activities in the continuing education area (eg. ethnic arts and music) as well as formal courses available through the extension mode.**
- (e) USP to look at viable ways and means of decentralising more of its activities.**
- (f) Shortage of teachers, managers, and nurses be addressed.**
- (g) Problems associated with the training and re-training of in-service staff be addressed as a matter of priority.**
- (h) In the medium term, technical and vocational training.**
- (i) Hands-on training in basic business concepts and skills.**
- (j) Training of trainers.**
- (k) Tourism studies involving the following:**

- public awareness education programme on tourism.
 - workshops/training programmes for village leaders and aspiring entrepreneurs.
 - school curricula to include relevant topics on tourism.
 - use of distance education in appropriate areas.
 - in-country workshops on quality and supply issues involving fresh fruits and vegetables.
 - training techniques for carrying out extension work in villages and for cultural groups.
 - training programmes for tourist accommodation, restaurant operations, reception, bedroom service and interpersonal skills.
- (l) The need for a review of Government's policy relating to the payment of 50% of salary to students proceeding on training.
- (m) All new awards for the next few years be allocated on an equal basis between USP and other overseas tertiary institutions.
- (n) The urgent need to decolonise the mind of parents towards USP studies and qualifications.
- (o) USP to aggressively promote itself in Niue through the provision of information regarding its offerings and the quality of its qualifications.
- (p) USP to look very closely at management issues at the Centre and also the mechanisms it currently employs to deliver extension studies to students.
- (q) Expand and strengthen USP activities to cater to the continuing education needs of the community.
- (r) The need to seriously consider the formation of an umbrella organisation to better coordinate the requirements of this sector of the community.

However, care must be exercised to ensure that duplication of efforts with existing structures do not occur.

- (s) Urgent attention be directed to the youth who do not proceed beyond Form 6 and appropriate outreach programmes be identified to address the needs of this important section of the community.**
- (t) Evaluate the present arrangement concerning the practical requirements of qualification offered by USP to ensure that these are relevant to the present day needs of member countries.**
- (u) To establish a scholarship fund tenable at USP for regional students.**

CLOSING

82. The closing prayer was offered by Reverend Folekene. The Hon O'Love Tauveve Jacobsen thanked all participants for their contributions and the spirit in which discussions during the seminar were conducted. She expressed the hope that the outcome of the seminar will be put to good use not only by USP and government but everyone concerned. She then declared the seminar close.

USP STRATEGIC PLANNING SEMINAR
PROGRAMME

ALOFI, NIUE
17-19 MARCH 1997
VENUE: MATATVAI RESORT

DAY ONE: **Monday 17 March**

MC: MR A. SIAKIMOTU

08.00 - 08.30 Participant and Guests arriving

08.30 - 08.40 Dedication: Reverend M. Vilitama
* Hymn -" *Mitaki e Tau Mena Oti*"
* Verse
* Prayer

08.40 - 09.15 OPENING
* Speeches: Dr Vijay Naidu
(Head of SSED, USP)

Hon. O'Love Tauveve Jacobsen
(Minister of Education)

09.15 - 09.45 Public/Government Sector Paper
* Presenter: Hon. O'Love Tauveve Jacobsen
(Minister of Education)

09.45 - 10.30 Public Discussion / Comments

10.30 - 11.00 MORNING TEA

11.00 - 12.00 Panel Discussion
* Proposals and Recommendations

12.00 - 13.30 LUNCH

13.30 - 14.00 Private Sector Paper
* Presenter: Mr Terry Chapman

ATTACHMENT A

- 14.00 - 14.45 Public Discussion / Comments
- 14.45 - 15.00 AFTERNOON TEA
- 15.00 - 15.45 Panel Discussion
* Proposals and Recommendations

DAY TWO: **Tuesday 18 March**
MC: V. BALAWA

- 08.30 - 09.30 Teachers/Parents/Students Paper
* Presenter: Heleiki Ikimotu
- 09.30 - 10.30 Public Discussion / Comments
- 10.30 - 11.00 MORNING TEA
- 11.00 - 12.30 Panel Discussion
* Proposals and Recommendations
- 12.30 - 13.30 LUNCH
- 13.30 - 14.00 New Zealand Paper
* Presenter: H.E. Warren Searell
- 14.00 - 14.45 Public Discussion / Comments
- 14.45 - 15.00 AFTERNOON TEA
- 15.00 - 15.45 Panel Discussion
* Proposals and Recommendations

DAY THREE: **Wednesday 19 March**
MC: A. DOUGLAS

- 08.30 - 09.00 Non Government Organisation Paper
* Presenter: Maru Talagi

ATTACHMENT A

09.00 - 10.00	Public Discussion / Comment
10.00 - 10.15	MORNING TEA
10.15 - 11.00	Panel Discussion * Proposals and Recommendations
11.00 - 11.30	USP Presentation
11.30 - 12.15	Public Discussion / Comments
12.15 - 13.30	LUNCH
13.30 - 14.30	Full Forum Summing Up * Dr Pa'o Luteru (Co-ordinator, Strategic Planning Seminars, USP)
14.30 - 15.30	CLOSING * Speakers: USP - Dr Vijay Naidu Niue - Hon. O.T. Jacobsen

ATTACHMENT B

LIST OF NIUE SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS

17-19 MARCH 1997

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation/Designation</u>
1. John Funaki	Speaker of the House
2. Hon. O'Love T. Jacobsen	Minister of Education, Health and Community Affairs
3. Jack Willie	Associate Minister of Education
4. Hon. Aokuso Pavihi	Minister for Economic Development, Business & Private Sector
5. Fakahula Funaki	Tamakautoga Women's Group
6. Becky's Christmas Tauasi	Avatele Women's Group
7. Rev. Taao Folekene	Tuapa Ekalesia
8. Rev. Falkland Liuvaie	Ekalesia Niue
9. Fisa Pihigia	Tuapa Village Council
10. Peter A. Funaki	Ekalesia Tamakautonga
11. Iki Lapana	Ekalesia Niue
12. Lagavalu Haiosi	Alofi South
13. Ahi Cross	Liku Village Council
14. Lose Siakimotu	Manager, National Training Development Council
15. Ataloma Misihepi	Makefu Village Council/NTDC
16. Matagi Vilitama	Avatele Ekalesia
17. Joanna Matagi	Avatele Ekalesia
18. Ezra Talamahina	Director for Administration Services
19. Charlie Tohovaka	Makefu Village Council
20. Sunlou Freddie	Hakupu Youth Council
21. Speedo Hetutu	Electrical Power Supply
22. Easter Togiamana	Hakupu/Police/Vaiea
23. Billy Talagi	Chairman, Avatele Village Council
24. John Tiakia	Associate Minister for Education

ATTACHMENT B

25.	Sione Pokau Sionetama	Tuapa Youth Council
26.	Fuku Togahai	Private Sector
27.	Phyllis Richmond-Rex	USP Advisory Committee
28.	Frank Sioneholo	Premier's Department/Mutalau Village Council
29.	Tina Tavita	Premier's Department/Alofi North Village Council
30.	Young Vivian	Assembly Member, Hakupu
31.	Richard Hipa	Director, Telecom Niue
32.	Takili Talagi	Niue High School
33.	Elder Radio S. Watch	LDS Church
34.	Terai McFadzien	Niue Development Bank
35.	Rita Levy	Niue Development Bank
36.	Mohe S. N. Mougavalu	Tamakautoga Youth Council
37.	Ligi Misikea	Hakupu Council of Women
38.	Rheumatic Alapaki	Hakupu Village Council
39.	Holo U. Tafea	Liku Village Council
40.	Keti Hetutu	Department of Health
41.	Susan Searell	Catholic Community, Alofi North
42.	Afele. R. Paea	Alofi Ekalesia
43.	Pati Paea	Alofi Ekalesia
44.	Mata Tahafa	Niue National Council of Women
45.	Sionetasi Pulehetoa	Liku Village Council
46.	Moka Togakilo	Ex-USP Student
47.	Lapasi Paka	Chairperson, Mutalau Village Council
48.	Maureen Melekitama	USP Student
49.	Milino T. Talafasi	Hikutavake Youth
50.	Sifakalipa Pulehetoa	Treasury
51.	Ian Puheke	Niue High School
52.	Manogi Folekene	Tuapa Village Council
53.	Fifita Talagi	Director, Community Affairs
54.	Sherran Kaulima	Niue Star
55.	Uhotau Pasisi	Niue Public Service Commission
56.	Malava Siataga	Alofi South Women's Group
57.	Malama Lavini	Alofi South, LDS
58.	Kupa Magatogia	Principal, Niue Primary School

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59.	Mary Magatogia	National Training Development Council
60.	Terry Chapman	Private Sector
61.	Dion P. Taufitu	Member of Assembly, Toi
62.	Vika Liumaihetau	Toi Women's Group
63.	Kini Tokimua	Toi Youth Group
64.	Togia Sioneholo	Chief Registrar, Justice Department
65.	Eva Koloni	USP Student
66.	Maru Talagi	Acting Director, Public Works Department
67.	Ken Tukutama	Public Works Department
68.	Patrick Jacobsen	Alofi South
69.	Hima Douglas	General Manager, Broadcasting Corporation of Niue
70.	Stafford Guest	Private Sector
71.	Esther Pavihi	Environment Officer, Department of Community Affairs
72.	Pao Helemoni	Alofi North Village Council
73.	Manogi Kulupa	Education Department
74.	Alva Douglas	Planning Unit, Premier's Department
75.	Atapana Siakimotu	Director of Education, Education Department
76.	Vilisi Balawa	Acting Centre Director, USP Centre
77.	Heleiki Ikimotu	Deputy Principal, Niue High School
78.	Mata Okesene	Tuapa Village Council
79.	Sifa Ioane	Private Sector
80.	Sionesene Tupuolamoui	Lakepa Village Council
81.	Tiva Toeono	Hakupu Women's Group
82.	Robin Hekau	Alofi South Youth Group
83.	Maihetoe Hekau	Chairperson, Niue Public Service Commission
84.	Ricky Makani	Niue Youth Council
85.	Hariesa Faitala	Ekalesia Niue
86.	Bradley Punu	Secretary to Government

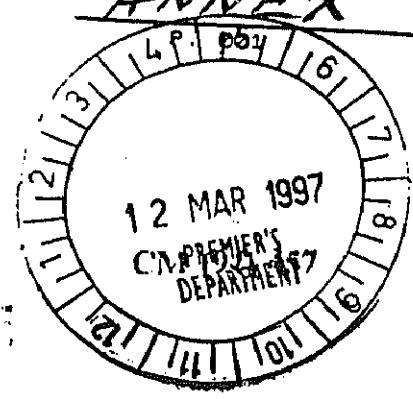
ATTACHMENT B

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 87. | H.E. Warren Searell | New Zealand High
Commissioner |
| 88. | Jean Poumale | USP Centre, Niue |
| 89. | Maryanne Talagi | USP Centre, Niue |



"CONFIDENTIAL"

GOVERNMENT OF NIUE



For Action:

For Information:

Minister of Education

Minister for the Premier's Dept
NIUCON

NIUE EDUCATION SYSTEM TO FOLLOW THE PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE NZ EDUCATION SYSTEM TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN 1997

At its meeting of 16 May 1995, Cabinet noted and approved the following proposals from the Department of Education:

1. The Niue Education system to remain with and follow the New Zealand system, to be implemented in 1997 or when New Zealand implements its changes;
 2. The Department of Education to establish and action/implement whatever is necessary to enable Niue High School to meet the New Zealand accreditation requirements by October 1996;
 3. The staff/teacher training/developmental programme and costs in the preparation of Niue High School to teach the new subject curricular and be eligible for the new qualifications in 1997;
 4. The seeking of funds from New Zealand or elsewhere for the preparation of Niue High School to meet the above proposals;
- noted (6) the comment from NTDC re (4), that any assistance to be agreed to from NZ be outside of the ODA Training and BCTES Projects;
5. The allocation of funds from Niue's own resources or the MTA vote item, in the event that No. 4 above was unsuccessful;
 7. The time frames available i.e. October 1996 accreditation approval, 1997 current target date for implementation of changes and the developmental/training programme, August and November 1995 planned visits of New Zealand officers, priority attention be given this item.

F F LUI
Premier

S L Nicholas
S L NICHOLAS
Clerk to Cabinet

Recognition of USP Degrees

USP degrees are recognised internationally.

The Australian Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications announced in 1989 that USP degrees are comparable to degrees awarded by Australian universities. New Zealand has also given similar recognition to USP degrees.

Many USP graduates have gone on and obtained higher degrees from overseas universities. The admission of USP graduates to study for higher degrees at universities in Australia and New Zealand, Britain, Canada, and USA is testimony in itself to the high regard with which the quality of USP degrees are held by the universities in those countries.

USP graduates have, on the strength of their USP degrees, gained employment, both in government and with the private sector, overseas. A number of students from Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, and the Maldives, for example, who have studied and graduated from USP are now holding responsible jobs in their own countries.

The United Kingdom Department of Education and Science had informed USP in 1979 that it had after a review of the standards maintained by USP decided that the degrees awarded by USP can be accepted, for employment purposes, in the same way as similar degrees obtained in that country.

Regional and donor countries continue to support USP because of the high quality of education it provides.

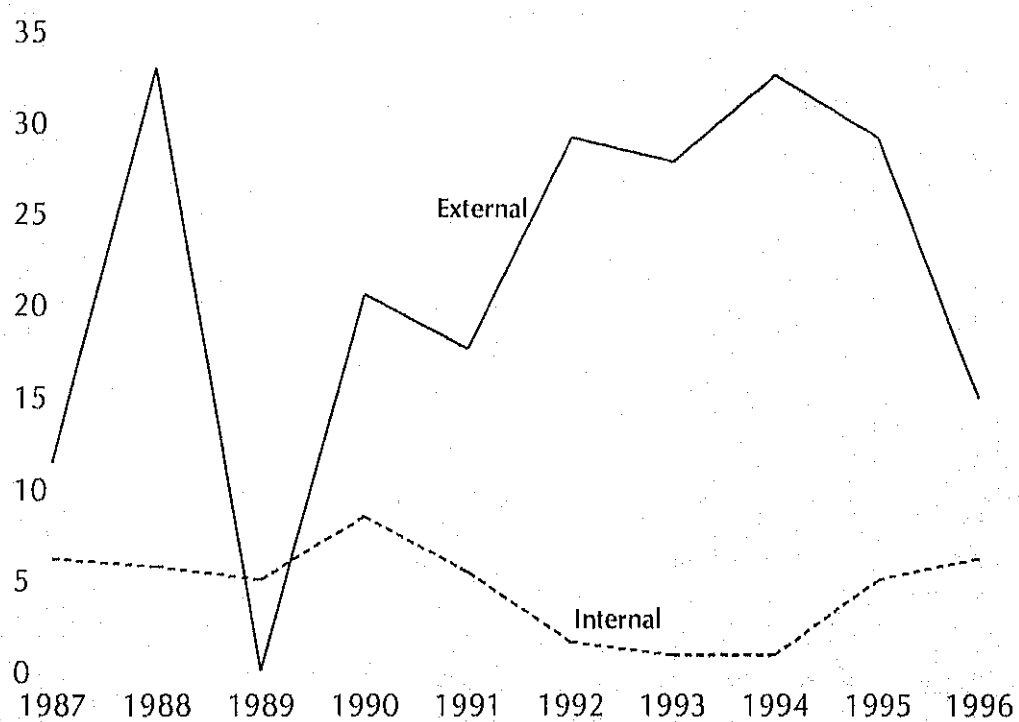
USP programmes of study are assessed by senior academics from other universities.

c:\tito\usp.rcg

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
External	12	33	0	22	18	29	28	32	29	15
Internal	6	6	5	9	6	2	1	1	-5	6

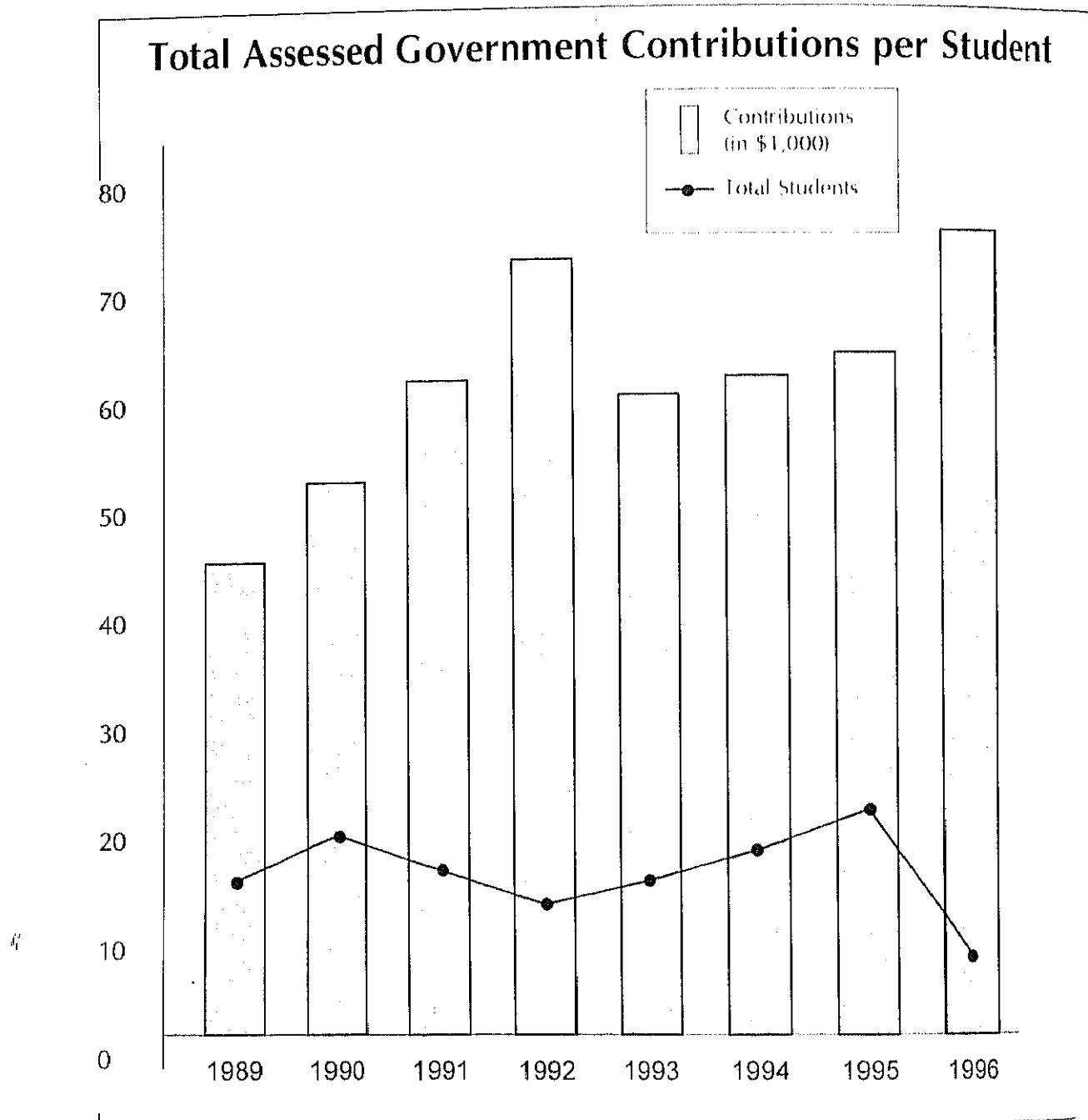
Note: External refers to Niue Extension Services and Internal refers to students on campus in Fiji.

Comparison of External versus Internal Students



	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
External	0	22	18	29	28	32	29	15
Internal	5	9	6	2	1	1	5	6
Contributions (in (\$1,000))	46	53	61	73	60	61	62	73
Total Students	5	16	12	12	10	12	15	11

Note: 3 External (Part-Time) Students = 1 Internal (or Full-Time) student



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GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE for the USP STRATEGIC PLANNING SEMINAR 17-19 March 1997

MATAVAI RESORT

**Hon O.T. Jacobsen
Minister of Education**

INTRODUCTION

“In confronting the many challenges that the future holds in store, mankind sees in Education an indispensable asset in its attempt to attain the ideals of social justice, peace and freedom”. UNESCO

Study and the quest for knowledge are a way of life. If you continue to fill the reservoir of your mind, you will make yourself a more capable person.

Mr Chairman, Cabinet Ministers, Excellency, USP Representatives, The Niue Public Service Commission, Ladies & Gentlemen, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu.

I feel particularly honored to be asked to convey to you Government's perspective on this Seminar. I have reason to be humble because for the first time I am made to seriously study the relationship of USP and Government. With my heavy schedule of responsibilities I cannot say that I have done justice to USP, however, this evaluatory process is very much welcomed by the Government and timely indeed. It is my desire that the contributions made here in the duration of this seminar will generate the dialogue so long overdue in order to promote, assess and evaluate our relationship. I look forward to hearing from my learned and fellow citizens who will deliver viewpoints that would significantly impact your holistic approach in this seminar, in an effort to determine whether or not USP have met the needs and priorities of Niue.

APPENDIX 1

The review of USP was envisaged to be conducted in line with the national and overall review of Education in Niue this year.

Government have had informal discussion on this subject but have not as yet formulated policy documentation or direction and so most of the views in this paper remains raw material and unedited, but all the same views that gives notice to intentions and opinions that may well influence the level of decision making in the future.

PREAMBLE

At the dawn of a new century Government is thinking principally about children and the young people who will take over from today's generation of adults - the later being all too inclined to concentrate on their own concerns and problems.

Education should be an expression of affection for children and young people who we need to welcome into society unreservedly, offering them what is rightfully theirs, a place in the education system, a place in the family, the local community and the nation.

The purpose of education systems is to train people for citizenship, provide for transmission of knowledge and culture from one generation to another, develop people's talents, and empower the mind, preparatory for change. Provision of Higher Education for Niue is a privilege offered by Government.

Given the population of Niue at 2,300 there can only be a certain percentage of eligible people that would utilize such facilities - it is relatively small, compared to other islands who have the numbers to draw on because of academic competitiveness.

The establishment of the USP in 1968 discharging the function of uniting the region in higher education and recognising the potential level of academics among its own Pacific people have raised the profile standard of academia in the region and equating itself with other universities internationally, although relatively young in comparison.

Niue believes there is a 'SOLIDARITY IN UNITY' issue, similarly in the same veins we associated ourselves with the South Pacific

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Commission, Forum Secretariat, Tourism Council of the South Pacific and most recently SPREP, SOPAC and other smaller organisations.

There is another issue of Constitutional relevance; that have fallen conflict with USP, and must be understood clearly in order to appreciate our relationship. Niueans are NZ citizens enjoying the privileges of 'FREE ASSOCIATION', with New Zealand. The traditional ties in terms of external affairs and defence, economic and administrative assistance, and Co-operation between the two countries, have a "BONDING" element often referred to as a PARENT and CHILD relationship.

The early contact in the 1900's with NZ have influenced Niuean mentality and also exposed to more foreign ideas, foreign technology and foreign knowledge. There are 15,000 Niueans in NZ and only 2,000 on Niue. Most of the families are well establish in the NZ setting making it attractive to mobilise when convenient. In the 60's and 70's most families migrated to NZ for the purpose of seeking better education for their children. For Niueans, NZ is their second home where they can find employment to support their families. Most of what is imported to Niue is from NZ, business transactions are dealt with NZ, exports from Niue goes to NZ markets and many more. The freedom and equal privileges are exploited by our people.

The Niue Education system is modeled along similar lines as NZ's. Cabinet¹ at its meeting of the 16th May 1995 approved the Niue Education System to remain with and follow the NZ system. Thus the yardstick to measure success in terms of education is going to be NZ standards, coupled by the fact that word of mouth claims Niuean children have achieved well in the NZ education system.

USP on the other hand have the following to offer and certain advantage points to capitalise on - the setting is culturally and geographically appropriate, it is supposedly cheaper, it is a unique institution serving independent countries converging into the 'HUB' of the pacific, there is cultural diversity within its walls of learning, there

¹ Annex 1

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is a spirit of common concern and mutual helpfulness, technology has made it possible to unite the expanse of ocean distance;

Bonding of student relationship with lasting memories and experiences.
Winning over another intellect, if marriage takes place, loss to one or gain for another.

International recognition of Qualifications.

Graduates achieving on the political arena, Professional entities, head of missions, Board representative in the international scene.

RELEVANT ISSUES

Let's reflect on the scenarios given and comment on some of these:

a) Recognition of Qualifications:²

Some claims USP Qualifications are not recognised internationally. I have been assured that this theory is not quite correct. There are other factors involved in determining what is to be Accredited.

Parents deem it a waste of time to obtain qualifications from USP which demands further study time in NZ before accrediting. They would be better off studying in NZ once through.

b. Expensive :

Niuean officials claims training in NZ less expensive for the following reasons.

Exchange Rate - Nil.

Student may stay with families or families help out.

No hassles with immigration for employment and residence.

Accessible to medical, social and educational benefits.

Course fees are cheaper by grace of being NZ citizens.

Airfares, depending on routes, would be cheaper to NZ.

c. Tensions to be overcome:

However similar and areas of commonalities we have there is still an 'Air of Scepticism when it comes to "Cost Benefits'.

Security factor is of concern, and frequent natural disasters poses as threat.

² Annex 2

d. Vote of Confidence:

Threads of colonialistic attitude is still filtering through.

We need to DECOLONIZE our minds and start trusting our own people in the Pacific to assume roles of responsibilities in areas of regional co-operation and assistance.

Whilst graduates are role models, they must also be seen to have performed with integrity, they must have aspiration and motivation to instill confidence and obtain approval and respect.

This is the only way to conquer colonialistic mentality.

SPECIFIC ISSUES

Preamble

When Government came in, in 1993 Cabinet at the time focused on the attitude that we “TRAIN PEOPLE FOR LIFE” meaning the concept of life long education. It was not until the relocation of the Niue Public Service Commission later that year we realised the demands for more specific professional and skilled personnel in the service as development set in. We were also very new in the job.

In a country whose fragile economy and infrastructure it was realised that Government was unable to offer or sustain training in the field of personal preference, thus lessons were learnt from that experience, and of course priorities in major areas of economic development to sustain a viable community took precedence over human resources. The development of Niue's Strategic Plan in 1994 meant, co-operation between Private Sector and Government. The Private Sector requires for its survival, education and training elements, the strategic plan have now I believe undergone review so to give human resources its proper perspective and priority, in respect of economic development.

It is not unusual in our society where an over abundance of transient information and emotions continually keeps the spotlight on immediate problems such as education. Public opinions cry out for quick answers and ready solutions, whereas many problems call for a patient, concerted negotiated strategy of reform. This is precisely the case where education policies are concerned. You can be rest assured that Government have not lost sight of its mission, which is to give each human being the means to take full advantage of every educational

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opportunity. This has led the Government to talk on the lines of the concept of lifelong education so as to reconcile three forces:

Competition which provides incentive
Co-operation which gives strength
and Solidarity which give Unity

MAJOR AREA OF NEEDS FOR EDUCATION IN NIUE WILL BE DISCUSSED AS FOLLOWS.

FORMAL

If the University is to act as an Empowerment centre preparatory for CHANGE then there is a need to look at

WHAT is taught?

WHO is teaching?

HOW are subjects taught?

USP has covered a good cross section of subjects offered.

In light of the tourism activities in the South Pacific Niue would like to see a raise in the impetus of tourism studies.

The Government is most happy with all of the above and believes that USP is prudent and reliable in monitoring the performance output. The Vice Chancellor must be congratulated for his leadership.

INFORMAL

Niue's experience endorses and welcome this area of learning and believes the Extension Centre should facilitate more of this kind of work since most things are small time in nature and usually with humble beginnings. To name a couple I recall 'TYE DYEING' and 'MUSIC' was most popular to the point some people are taking it seriously and others are now in successful business. Initiatives like this related to tourism will assist with our developing industry, and right now this is an area of need for Niue.

Another area requiring attention is ETHNIC ARTS, peculiar to Niue and central to the development of our Culture. The Extension Centre is envisaged to help facilitate and promote this area of need.

GENERAL

Niue have great problems attracting Teachers, Managers, and Nurses, and again with the constraints of population not having enough to draw on and sometimes attracting unsuitable candidates, we run the risk of

having little or no control over the end product. A bonding system in reality does not work, and is time consuming if not enforced.

There are other factors that contribute to apathy in this area such as incentive and job dissatisfaction. In some cases Lack of local employment carrying appropriate salary incentive makes NZ more attractive for job opportunities. A loss to Niue which have invested a lot of money educating someone who then migrates to a wealthier country and never to return.

As a Government we're working on this.

Government have very close liaison with the Niue Public Service Commission (NPS) and its move to review the overall education of Niue has impact and significance, of which USP being an important part of a whole. To my knowledge the NPS Commission is actively promoting and encouraging the use of the Centre for formal learning whilst at the same time earning a living. Government welcomes this procedure as it retains the students on Niue and thereby control population movement.

As a matter of policy the employee is given time off in his working day to pursue his/her studies.

Predicted manpower requirement are done in collaboration with Government and the National Training Council, of which is the key and focal body for facilitating students, in their fields of endeavour.

The kind of graduates we want are people who can consecrate their lives and dedicate their time and energy into the welfare and upkeep of Niue, a sacrifice under the constraints of economy which was willingly invested to achieve some return at the very least.

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Where these graduates will serve is again a part of a whole picture where responsibility and collaboration is ongoing with all Departments and the NPS.

Niue has no trouble with requirements for new graduates to USP, though requirement for further training or retaining of existing staff is an area we have experienced difficulty; and not working well. Most

who apply under this category are usually middle managers or teachers requiring to complete a degree but are 'family people' and families carries an added responsibility. They have mortgages to settle, children to put through school, a disruption in the spouses' career if he/she is working and many more. It is worthy noting that most of Niue's students currently in Campus (Fiji) are males and females almost always end up sacrificing.

Plans for financing of education in the future and the Private Sector have in the past utilised a Business Community training and employment subsidy scheme (BCTES) initiated by Government to assist development in the private sector, but this I believe is gradually phasing out and giving way to an "APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME" which is still under making. The office of the NZ High Commission have assisted greatly in the development of Private Sector. This is apart from what Government allocates.

Government Policy in the allocation of future scholarships to USP have yet to achieve dialogue with the people, but Government's attitude is NOT TO CUT TIES WITH USP even though it appears in recent years we have under utilised the services and facilities. The option will remain open for future studies. The under utilisation of USP had been influenced by factors debated earlier in this paper, and public perception on the standard of USP Qualifications. The question of the merits of USP qualifications in my opinion is a non issue and Niue must encourage and promote USP through its use after all it is Niue's University too. In retrospect, perhaps Government ought to have been a lot firmer in its direction to utilise USP more, but it would be fair to say also that parental opinion and pressure influenced the dictates of Government policy.

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On the issue of resources in the Niue Private Sector to assist in the development of Education is really - nil resources - if anything it would be the other way around - what resources have USP to offer Private Sector? Especially Private Sector Niue - so young and fragile. I'll let my learned colleague presenting the Private Sector views deal with that.

When Government declared TOURISM as its BASE ECONOMY we still have a lot to learn from grassroot level upwards and at tertiary level there could be more done at USP to accommodate for small island economies whose not quite ready for the next step, such as what we see in Fiji and Tahiti. It is Government's desire to continue initiatives that would further strengthen the Private Sector.

Plans to establish national post secondary institution on Niue is not considered viable at this stage, we would be tapping into other sources to assist in the meantime and this is where the decision by both USP and Government to relocate the Centre to Paliati where the only High School is located so facilities and services offered may be used accordingly, and where appropriate ensure co-operation and compatibility of curriculum and systems used.

SOLUTIONS

USP programmes has in the past and of recent times fulfilled an important role in our community. Niue will remain determined to build on the foundation of what has already been achieved.

With a steady nerve and a determination to succeed I have every confidence we shall achieve.

Having studied the statistics provided one thing is very clear³:

WE COULD BE AND SHOULD BE UTILISING USP A LOT MORE.

Annexes 3 & 4 compares the use of both centres. Given the debate on connections and ties with NZ plus other views under Relevant issues the ideal solution would be to 'BEEF UP' the use of the Extension Centre. Member Government Contributions determined by a 'sharing formulae' should reflect TWO THIRDS of total Government Contributions designated to the expenditure of the Extension Centre and ONE THIRD to the University itself. Should Niue wish to send

³ Annexes 3 & 4

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students to Fiji it therefore must pay tuition fees accordingly plus other accommodating factors.

This next idea is my own initiative and perhaps food for thought but worth a try all the same. In my dealings with 'sticky proposals' in politics - 'NO IT WON'T WORK', because of one reason or another, is the most easiest task to accomplish, I hope USP will not 'shun' the idea but perhaps 'try it' and 'try to make it work'.

If the University is made up of 'COUNTRY MEMBERS' then the concept to decentralizing FACULTIES may prove to confirm in the minds of nationals that yes we truly have a University. The faculty would have to be appropriate for that island setting, for Niue something with less 'Practical Demand', because of its size. However it would be very conducive to learning for some of the following reasons:

- No night clubs not too many 'Water Holes' that pub crawling would be a problem
- Not too many distractions - fancy shops, and dancing girls/boys
- Quiet and Tranquil
- People friendly
- Generally safe
- Minimum natural disasters and
- Politically STABLE

The exercise to conduct a feasibility study into this would be a good one for economic students of USP and Niue to conduct another for comparison purposes. Of course we would require the co-operation of USP to provide the necessary statistics and data.

The host member country would be responsible for its up keep that way the cost benefits return to the people. The idea may be a bit far fetched for the ears of the intellects but all the same I hope it can be tried.

OTHER

As I draw near to concluding the views of Government there is an area I wish to address. This concerns the Extension Centre itself.

- Matters of 'understanding' with Government must be documented.
- Where does Government's responsibility begins and end. This needs to be clearly defined.
- Evaluation of the Centre could be better documented and not assume that all is well. There should be a 'Prevailing Eye' over the affairs of the unit, from USP and the Government of Niue.
- Nationals representing on committees of USP be informed more clearly of their responsibilities and chain of command, to channel concerns and recommendations.

CONCLUSIONS

Please allow me to applaud the foresight of USP organisers in putting this Seminar together so that all of us can see our direction and focus in the role of USP to better serve the needs of Niue. USP must provide for a modern day need. I do not see USP as an Ivory Tower with Brain

power but a market place of ideas out in the world ready to be used to 'GEL' our regional society into the way we would like it to be. Government asks of all its people in the service to earn through honesty and integrity the means we need to sustain ourselves and lives of those who depend on us.

May we serve our people faithfully and Remember, "THE FRUITS OF OUR TOMORROW ARE IN THE SEEDS WE SOW TODAY"

**USP STRATEGIC PLANNING
SEMINAR, NIUE, 17-19 MARCH 1997**

**DOES THE NIUE PRIVATE SECTOR NEED TERTIARY
EDUCATION TO YEAR 2000 AND BEYOND**
(By Terry M. Chapman, MBE)

A. Introduction

Going into the next millineum is probably just another day, another month and another yeaser for most of the people of this world of ours. For the money making world, however, a large profit making opportunity is being developed right now to record the dawn of the new millenium. The understated Chatham Islands of the Maoriori and Maori of New Zealand is being publicly touted on an international scale as aplace of history, not so much as a significant piece of unique anthropology in Polynesia, but as a projected multi-million dollar monetary event. Simply it is said to be the spot where the first rays of sunrise will appear to herald the new millenium. Apart from that the Chathams, like Niue, is nothing but a miniscule piece of coral in the largest body of water in the world. It has taken Niue, as one of the tiniest pieces of coral, some 70 years to come to what resembles a realisation that being rojected into a world beyond 'subsistence affluence' is a lot more than a taro and fish culture.

2. In 1926, following an assessment of New Zealand's role in the Pacific Islands of small pieces of coral, it was reported to the New Zealand Parliament, in relation to Niue, as follows:

A relatively high standard of formal education, such as is found in countries that have reached a high standard of civilisation, is of little value to the Niuean. The potentialities of the island are small. There are no manufacturers and few industries, there are no trades and professions. On account of all this the Niuean is at a disadvantage, and even though a high standard of primary education were given, it would, under the condition at present obtaining, be of little use, because there are no opportunities offering whereby such knowledge could be put to practical use and become a benefit to the State, or, at least, to the island.

[AJHR A-3 1926]

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That conclusive vision of the 1926 report is as relevant today as it was then. The only significant difference between then and now is that for the past 70 years, the public sector was overwhelmingly predominant by virtue of New Zealand's paternalistic transfer of some aspects of the 'social welfare contract' from Wellington to Alofi. The result, as we see it today, is a highly educated Niuean population with little opportunity to satisfy a non-existent manufacturing and/or industry-based economy.

3. But in the two decades 1941-1960, the period when Niueans started to become "hungry for education" the subsistence affluence surplus, whilst in decline, still produced amazing results. Today's generation, for example, do not know that before 1970 we used to export:

Kumaras	162,000
Bananas	136,000
Copra	1,126,000
Handcraft	370,000

Up to now, to this very moment in fact, there has been no acknowledgement that the two decades of "subsistence affluence" acting together with "hungry for education" produced the means for the outward migration chain to New Zealand that has become, uniquely the heart of Niue's present socio-economic dilemma. Whilst the world, and more relevantly Niue's Pacific neighbours, are struggling to face the challenge of over-population, Niue faces an unprecedented and unstudied situation of underpopulation. This situation is what decides and what challenges the transfer of economic responsibility from the public to the private sector.

4. That the private sector has grown is undoubted. In 1980 there were 39 licensed businesses. Today, 16 years later, it is 163. The trend goes against demography in that in 1979 the population was 3500 compared with 2000 today. Numerically the private sector would appear to have grown substantially. But in real economic terms its value impact on the economy is highly questionable. Reliable raw data is not readily available to demonstrate that contention beyond reasonable doubt. However, Government revenue from company tax provides at least one

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indicator. For example, in the year ended 30 June 1996 company tax was \$115,000. For the current year the assessment is \$224,000. Some of this however, is retrospective. Company tax arrears notwithstanding, the company tax take for the last two years was dramatically influenced by the one off tourism infrastructure capital investment in airport extension, the Matavai Resort and road sealing projects worth in excess of \$10 million. For the current year the expectation is that the company tax take will revert to the 1995/96 level (about \$120,000). Personal income tax for the same period was \$1.7 million which will recede to \$1.3 million. It is to be noted, however, that the bulk of personal income tax comes from the public sector salaries and wages, and public sector funded activities.

Private Sector Profile

5. The author is not aware of any business categorising of licensed businesses, but for the present purpose, these are classified as follows:

163 Licensed Businesses-

1.	Import/Retail	51
2.	Hospitality (Food and Beverages)	16
3.	Technical Services	47
4.	Transport (Inc. Fuel)	20
5.	Public Accommodation	10
6.	Handcraft and Clothing	12
7.	Primary	10
8.	Sports and Recreation	4
9.	Others	10

6. It is clear from the classification that imports/retail and technical services (51+47) dominate private sector participation in the economy of Niue as a tiny piece of coral. Not surprisingly transport ranks third (20). Together the three sub-sectors (118) represents 66% of the private sector contribution to the economy. However, of the remaining 34% only 6% represent primary productive effort.

7. In 1990 the Government, faced with a no choice situation but to restructure, by down-sizing the ever dominant public sector, decided against political preference to transfer a great deal of economic responsibility from the public to the private sector. That momentous decision was simply that of transferring what was predominantly state subsidised enterprises to mostly redundant public servants. But these were almost entirely in the area of support services such as transport, technical services, and import/retail businesses. Thus, since 1990, at least 64 new businesses has emerged, most being owned and operated by self-employed former public servants. Today more than 50% (90 from 163) are self-employed one person businesses and significantly half (46) are licensed by women.

National Policy Towards the Future

8. National economic development policy has just been redefined in a report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Tourism Organisation(WTO) released in January. The report "Tourism and Private Sector Development Programme" states-

"The ultimate national development objective of the Government of Niue (Government) is to maintain a living community and to lessen its dependence on external assistance. The Government of Niue's main strategy for achieving this objective is to foster and promote tourism and private sector development while reducing the size and role of the public sector".

9. The report contain well analysed specific goals and strategies. It is thus not necessary to make too many specific references in this presentation. It is however, appropriate to cite what it says in summary about 'Human Resources Development Strategies'.

"The Directory of Business in 1980 showed 39 licensed business. The Niue Economic and Social Review (1996) indicates a total of 157 [163] registered businesses. The considerable increase has come about from the sharp reduction in public sector employment, privatisation of

Government business activities and of course the range of initiatives by the private sector. More than half the resident population of 2,300 is of working age but only a total of 708 are in paid work. This represents around half of the workforce.

The provisional Release of the 1994 Census of Population and Households and shows the very high emphasis being placed on tertiary education at the expense of technical and sub-professional qualifications. Whilst it may be argued that the emphasis on tertiary makes for an educated population, the end result is that there will be very few technicians skilled and willing to undertake the technical areas which Niue will depend on. With the downsizing of Government and the lag envisaged before the private sector activity brings about an increase in employment opportunities, the continued emphasis on tertiary awards is resulting in Niue educating its young people for employment in New Zealand or Australia."

Accompanying that situation analysis is a 'Tourism and Private Sector Training Plan' for the five years 1997 to 2001, a copy of which is attached.

Private Sector View About Its Education Needs

10. Regretfully it was not possible to undertake a response survey of the private sector participants. Sampling discussion was, however, held with some of the private sector leaders who intimated that tertiary education is not a priority at this time. This view was vocalised by at least one member of the Niue Chamber of Commerce at a well attended meeting held recently during which members were advised of the Strategic Planning Seminar (USP). The perception is that what the private sector needs in the short to medium term is "hands on assistance" towards making existing business viable. It was also suggested that USP might not necessarily be the most effective source for this. However, there are aspects of the Tourism and Private Sector Training Plan which caters for the "hands on assistance" perceived by some in the private sector.

11. Discussion with the Inland Revenue authority suggests that most of the local businesses need basic accounting services. At present there are only two people performing that service, one of whom mostly serve the requirements of one company. The other may opt to retire at moments notice. In past years, there have been several USP graduates (diploma and degree) in accounting. Some had been originally sponsored for employment in the private sector. Those still in Niue are in fact employed in the public sector in non accounting roles. The reason for this is obvious in that public sector rewards are considerably more attractive than what the private sector can afford. Nevertheless, the need for those skills exists in the private sector and somehow should be met. Perhaps there is merit for the sector to make a direct contribution to a private sector accounting service in the form of subsidies for a given period. Such contribution could include a specific component for studying accountancy through the USP as in the past. But in order to ensure an ultimate return to the private sector service, rewards similar to those in the public sector would need to be guaranteed and again for a given period. Should tourism and private sector development objectives materialise successfully, there ought then to be a viable private sector accounting service in its own right.

Private Contribution to Education

12. Again it will be obvious that the private sector is not financially in a situation at present to make any significant contribution towards their own future needs. There is potential however, for continuing the allocation from external assistance. For example, New Zealand's components to the private sector. What is probably required for the private sector itself to take the initiative in producing its own concerted tertiary plan.

Conclusion

13. It has to be acknowledged that the private sector is at present more vulnerable than the public sector in terms of retention of professional and technical skills. One of the reasons for this is that it is unable to compete with the public sector on the labour market. The other is that those with skills who see no opportunity in the public

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sector will inevitably continue to set their sights on New Zealand and Australia as in the past and present. It is therefore not easy at present to project with confidence the private sectors' future needs in specific terms either for the USP or other tertiary institutions.

USP STRATEGIC PLANNING SEMINAR

**PAPER REPRESENTING THE VIEWS OF PARENTS AND
STUDENTS**

Heleiki Ikimotu

INTRODUCTION.

To Cabinet Ministers, Excellencies, USP Officials, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Fakaalofa lahi atu kia mutolu oti.

This paper was prepared on behalf of the parents and students who have some interest in what USP can offer our small nation. You may also find that this paper is full of contradictions due to their opposing views.

A. USP IN GENERAL.

The University of the South Pacific (USP) started operating in 1968 as a relatively small entity that now has become a well-established university that is admired regionally and also internationally. Since its inception, it has trained people ranging from Presidents to ordinary farmers. This university is rather unique that it is owned by twelve regional countries, including Niue.

The university has provided the region with untold benefits. The most noticeable benefit is the number of citizens who have gained some sort of qualification(s) from this institution. In addition, it has also provided a place where lifetime friendships were created. Not only friendships were cemented there, a lot of intercultural marriages took place. Some of our Niueans returned with USP qualifications and Fijian wives. So from our point of view, it was all worth it.

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On my few opportunities to travel to other Pacific islands, I always make it a habit of calling up my old friends to come over to where I was staying for a few and to catch up with the latest. In fact, those that I did not know personally still recognized the old face and even took time out for a chat.

The cultures of all Pacific nations are well represented at USP and this is more evident during Pacific Week where all island nations are expected to put on performances, an event not to be missed. The Solomon Islanders dancing with their backsides bare is always a performance to look forward to, and not forgetting our friends up in the Cooks with their display of swinging hips and so forth.

However, one should not be fooled by the serenity of the place. Traditional conflicts between certain groups are still evident at USP, but that is to be expected, especially during the tri-nations clash between the three rugby powers of the Pacific.

All in all, USP has survived and it has far exceeded the expectations of all the regional owners.

B. THE PAST.

Niue is fortunate to be a part-owner of this institution. It is fortunate in a way that a lot of our citizens were educated at USP. Not only we had the opportunity of sending our students there, we also have access to the local extension center for our extension requirements. Looking at our public service, I can only feel proud by the number of USP graduates employed in various departments. Some of them are holding senior posts in government and this can only endorse the excellent work that USP has done for this country.

Niue started sending its students to USP in the seventies and it reached a peak in the eighties. Since then, very few students were sent there and the reasons are obvious. I will deal with these reasons later in the paper.

C. THE PRESENT.

Currently, we only have three campus and forty-one extension students. One may wonder as to why this low number when our government is paying a lot of money to be a member of USP. To help answer this query, lets now look at some of the reasons behind this.

USP versus other overseas institutions.

Niue joined USP not because we are in the region or as a matter of obligation, but the government felt that we will benefit from doing so. So why are we not fully utilizing the services offered by our own university?. First of all, there is a clear division between people supporting USP and those against it. The following arguments are based on the feedback from those parents and students who responded to my questions.

It has been known for a very long time that a lot of our people here regard USP as a second class university. This mentality has somewhat deterred our students from showing any interest in attending USP. Some parents are instilling this into the minds of their children and it will be very difficult to change that unless the Niue government come up with some alternative measures. Even sixth form students at Niue High School dread the thought of attending USP. This clearly demonstrates how widespread these nonsense has traveled.

In the past few years, training awards tenable at USP were not simply filled as students did not want to go there. Instead they would opt for a scholarship offered at other overseas institutions. All training requirements and selection of scholarships are directly under the National Training and Development Council (NTDC). The blame therefore should be directed at this council since they are the very people who were given

Student Life.

Niuean students who attend USP tend to suffer more compared to those at other overseas institutions. Since our students are not entitled to any form of financial assistance from our government, they find it very difficult to concentrate on their studies. Speaking from experience, I only survived on the insufficient allowance that was paid to me as part of the award. This allowance is provided by the sponsor, not by the Niue government. To make matters even more complicated, the allowance was paid in two installments at the beginning of each semester. As a result, the students went on a shopping spree and discovered later that this money is for one semester, not for a fortnight as most of us thought. Those students who attended institutions in New Zealand are considered well- off as they all have families there.

Enrolments.

To illustrate how low our enrolments are, the following table looks at how many Niuean students attend USP full-time from 1987 to 1996. And for comparison purposes, listed below the number of students are figures representing Niue's assessed contribution to USP in F\$000s.

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
No. of students	6	6	5	9	6	2	1	1	5	6
F\$000s			46	53	61	73	60	61	62	73

If one cares to analyze the above figures, it is clear that we are indeed paying a lot of money just to send a few students to USP. Not only our internal enrolment is low, the same scenario exists for extension students.

The Njue Extension Centre.

The extension center was set up to cater for the needs of those who cannot attend full time studies at USP. A lot has been said about the performance of our USP Center in terms of enrolment figures. The critics failed to take into account the factors behind this alleged low performance.

Firstly, most of our extension students are public servants and they are finding it very difficult to attend to their studies because of their obligations to the employer. As a result, we have a high rate of withdrawals and incompletions. I am also taking two papers through extension and my employer can only allow two hours per paper per week for study. In my capacity as both a teacher and an administrator of a school, I do not have the time to devote to my studies. If I was to utilize this four hours per week as agreed on, I would have to forego some of my teaching times and other responsibilities as well. One must understand that we are paid to work, not to study. The final result would see the student withdrawing from the course.

Secondly, the students have been complaining about the lateness in the return of marked assignments from Fiji. A lot of students did not receive all the marked assignments before examination time and this can be very frustrating. On a similar nature, some of us did not receive our examination results before the next semester begins. Perhaps part of the fault may lie with the headquarters in Suva with their internal arrangements with the tutors of these courses.

Some of our students are taking correspondence courses through the Open Polytechnic in New Zealand and their arrangements are far better than that of USP extension. An increasing number of students are showing interest in their courses. I was led to believe that students are frustrated with USP extension and this has led to them looking for alternative measures.

Thirdly, the center library is not well stocked with the materials that students require to assist with their studies. This is especially worse if one

enrolment figures for bigger countries is high. If you have a university qualification, chances are you will have a better chance of securing a job than the person without any formal qualification.

Perhaps it is appropriate that I congratulate Vilisi for her initiative and determination in promoting USP extension that resulted in a very high number of student enrolments this semester.

Our Graduates.

To prepare for the seminar, I contacted a few officials requesting for statistics on Niue's university graduates and their movements. I was told that very few statistics are available and no one seem to know who is responsible for keeping that sort of information . Anyway, I relied on certain government officials for an update on such statistics.

From this it was ascertained that a total of 27 Niuean students graduated from USP. The following gives an account of their whereabouts as of now.

Employed in Government	: 19*
Retired - still on Niue	: 2
Private Sector- Niue	: 2
New Zealand	: 5
Australia	: 1

* Two graduates are Fiji citizens married to Niueans.

As one can see, most of our graduates are still here on Niue. For comparison purposes, the following figures show the number of Niue public servants holding university qualifications.

USP	: 19*
New Zealand	: 17
Australia	: 5

* As above

Note: (1) Some USP graduates went for further studies in New Zealand and Australia.

(2) Public servants with qualifications from other tertiary institutions are not included.

The above figures showed that the Niue government is indeed benefiting from our association with USP. So why not send more students there?. If it feels that the qualifications earned from elsewhere are superior, then why is it that a lot of USP graduates are employed in government?.

D. THE FUTURE.

USP was set up for a purpose. That purpose is, to educate the citizens of the Pacific region. Judging from what has been happening since its inception, one can only agree that this institution will continue to flourish and to deliver what it set out to do. For instance, the recent establishment of the law school in Vanuatu, the construction of new buildings and so forth, are encouraging signs of better things to come.

As far as Niue is concerned, the Niue government needs to assess its relationship with USP if we are to utilize to the fullest the services it offers. I have already pointed out one alternative regarding allocating scholarships on an equal basis with other overseas institutions. It is pointless contributing financially to USP's operations when we continue to send most of our students elsewhere.

E. OTHER BENEFITS.

Not only USP offers education, it also provided a place where lifetime friendships are created. In addition, there are also indirect benefits to be enjoyed.

USP has three main campuses located in three different countries. These countries are reaping the benefits from having a campus in their respective islands. At the Suva campus, most of USP's employees are made up of Fiji citizens. This is one of the indirect benefits that resulted from having

a campus there. Not only that, the spending by students, employees and the university itself directly benefited the Fiji economy. One may argue that since Fiji's contribution to USP is the highest out of the member countries, Fiji should have a bigger share of such benefits.

I am not disputing that, but efforts should be made to ensure that other member countries do enjoy such benefits. Decentralization of some of its schools is one method of ensuring that such benefits are distributed amongst its members. Staffing is another area that USP should seriously consider as other Pacific islands have equally qualified people to fill some of the jobs.

F. CONCLUSION

USP has faced a lot of obstacles since it started operating in 1968. To survive thus far is a fair indication of its success and I wish that USP will continue to develop as all twelve owners will reap the benefits. As far as parents and students are concerned, we felt that we are not in a position to dictate to our government what direction to take in regards to USP. But considering what USP has done for this country, it would be inappropriate for Niue to detach itself from this institution.

I wish to conclude by saying that my decision to go to USP instead of New Zealand was the best decision that I have ever made. Not only I returned with a degree, I also brought back with me a wife who is also a USP graduate, a gain for Niue and a loss for Fiji.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen.

USP/NIUE GOVERNMENT

STRATEGIC PLANNING SEMINAR

MATAVAI RESORT NIUE

17-19 MARCH 1997

A NEW ZEALAND VIEW

W.Searell

I would like to thank the University of the South Pacific and the Niue Government for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you as part of this seminar. This is a timely and important initiative. Niue has changed significantly over the past 5 years. The government sector has reduced, the private sector has increased, essential infrastructure has improved, and Niue has become more self sufficient.

Niue celebrated 21 years of self government in 1995. Appropriately, Niue is making more of the running for itself these days in the international arena, and in setting domestic policies. It is therefore a very good time to examine where Niue is heading in the development of its human resources. New needs have arisen. You have issues to resolve which may have a lasting impact on the economic and social health of Niue.

New Zealand places very considerable emphasis on the development of skills, expertise, and experience in the South Pacific, to enable countries in the region to manage and develop with a minimum of outside advice. Indeed in 1994 for example, New Zealand contributed \$24m to Human Resources Development in the South Pacific, from a total aid programme of \$64m.

Human Resources Development is not a choice in our rapidly changing world, but a number one necessity. You cannot deliver Public services without the trained people to do the job. National planning and execution, and the management of public finances cannot be done without the right expertise. The private sector cannot function without trained and competent people. Natural resources and environment cannot be properly managed and protected without the right people with the right knowledge. It is all very well to rely on expensive foreigners to do these jobs, but they will rarely do as well as indigenous people working within their own culture, and who have a long term stake in the country.

We often ask ourselves if we and the countries we are working with are getting value for money with our education and training expenditure. Roughly \$100m (in 1997 \$\$) has been invested by New Zealand alone in HRD in the region over the last 20 years, and yet the region remains chronically short of accountants, economists, managers, lawyers, engineers and electricians, plumbers, carpenters, and technicians who are essential to an economy - even a small one like Niue.

New Zealand assistance to the University of the South Pacific is an important part of these educational efforts. We were in there at the time USP was set up in 1968. In 1996/97, we provided \$2.5m for core budget and extra-budgetary activities. In addition many tens of thousands are spent on South Pacific Fees Scholarships for tertiary study at regional institutions.

New Zealand is proud of the achievements of USP. It is a world recognised centre of excellence in education, particularly in distance learning. *Academic standards are high.* Many USP qualifications are recognised by New Zealand universities.

USP offers education tailor-made *for the region* - it has the capacity to adapt to the changing needs of the region to meet development priorities.

USP offers tuition in a familiar *cultural context* not found in Canberra or Wellington.

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USP offers opportunities to study in a location which does not overly influence students away from their future contributions to their countries. The bright lights are not as bright in Suva or Apia as in the metropolitan centres. The permanent *return-home rate* from USP compared with metropolitan universities is better, giving a better return on the educational investments.

USP provides opportunities for young potential leaders in the region to establish long-term relationships with counterparts, thus establishing inter-country *networks* which are of benefit to the individuals and their countries.

USP's contribution to regional development can be seen in the large numbers of graduates presently occupying senior positions in the region.

What this adds up to is this. New Zealand has a great deal of confidence in USP and supports very strongly USP activities. We encourage Pacific member countries to use the facility, not least by allocating significant funding to USP scholarships and staff resources in Suva to administer New Zealand funded regional students.

Some of you will be aware that I have on a number of occasions suggested that Niue make better use of your university. I can do that with confidence. From 1983 to 1986 I was in Suva, where part of my job was to be the link between New Zealand and the University. I have some first hand knowledge of the institution.

So where should Niue's policy on training and education be heading? I am not going to suggest an answer to that question. That is up to you, the participants to this seminar, and ultimately the Niue Government, to decide. What I will do is summarise my understanding of the present situation, and offer some suggestions.

Niue has a National Strategic Plan. The national development goal is stated as

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The Government and private sector of Niue are committed to the creation of a sustainable self-reliant community, united within the framework of a dynamic economy, whilst recognising the contribution of its environment and culture.

The national objective of interest here is

The development of human resources to levels which at least match our economic aspirations.

The broad policy framework is therefore clear.

The Plan also notes that "Niue's labour market provides the most frustrating conundrum". And that is the fact that Niue is part of New Zealand's labour market. This not only leads to leakage - with free access to the NZ market (and to welfare and other benefits), but also puts pressure on wage levels on the island.

The Plan also outlines the need for

good and comprehensive primary and secondary education...care needs to be taken not to overskill for Niue's limited requirements....this will require careful analysis of sector objectives and plans to ensure skills are matched to requirements....current level of development probably means placing greater emphasis on technical and trade education than on university education.

My understanding is that these observations have not been carried forward yet into a long-term plan aimed at filling Niue's human resources gaps. Indeed a review of New Zealand's contribution to Niue's education and training needs in 1995 recommended the preparation of a 'human resource development plan which identified skill priorities in the public and private

sectors to meet the objectives of the Niue Strategic Development Plan'....to....'reassess existing priorities (secondary/tertiary;

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preservice/in-service; academic/skills based) for education and training'. This recommendation was repeated in a similar 1996 report.

The UNDP Tourism and Private Sector Development Report published last year after extensive consultation with government and private sector people also commented on the need for long term analysis and planning so Niue's education requirements might be met.

Firstly it noted changing needs. Less emphasis on government training and more on the private sector is needed to reflect reduced government numbers and increased private sector participants.

Secondly it noted that Niue had placed too much emphasis on university qualifications, at the expense of technical or sub professional qualifications. Niue had nearly twice as many graduates as technical people in 1994, and if you were to take into account the number of graduates who returned to New Zealand to work permanently prior to 1994, I believe the imbalance would be even more marked. The report says that 'Niue is educating its young people for New Zealand and Australia'. If this continues the goal of a sustainable self reliant community' will not be fulfilled.

Thirdly the UNDP report recommends that the Niue Training and Development Council take up wider functions beyond being an 'Award Administration Unit for the benefit of the Public Service' to develop and implement HRD policies which more closely serve Niue's economic and social needs. We too have advocated more private sector participation under New Zealand's annual \$420,000 funding for Niue training.

Fourthly more in country training is recommended, with more input from private sector organisation.

These observations, I would submit, are essential considerations for the participants of this seminar. In order to comment on the potential contribution USP can make to education in Niue, it is essential for Niue's

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future HRD needs to be carefully identified. In this process the needs of the country must be put before the needs of individuals. It is essential too for past trainees to be tracked - I suspect that the overwhelming majority of graduates, mostly trained in New Zealand, are not currently working in Niue.

From a donor perspective, given that at present New Zealand taxpayers provide free tertiary education for many Niueans, while their own children must pay for that privilege, more accountability is required to ensure that Niue and New Zealand are getting value for money from this expenditure.

We believe that an immediate improvement would be made if at least half of the tertiary awards for both university and lower level study were allocated to regional institutions. That education would be more relevant to Niue's needs in most cases, and a greater proportion of the qualified students would return to and remain in Niue in the long-term.

In a small community, long used to New Zealand institutions, and given the close family ties with New Zealand, such a policy will not be popular with parents. But it must be asked why the Niue and New Zealand Governments are paying for this training. The answer is to help fulfil Niue's national goals, not satisfy individual ambitions and preferences. We believe that Niue and New Zealand would get much better value for money if more Niue students attended regional institutions, particularly USP.

We know it might cost more to educate someone at USP than in New Zealand given Niue's open access to New Zealand institutions. But we are saying that we would be prepared to pay for that, because even at a higher cost it would still be better value for money.

I would now like to comment on in-country study. The USP centre in Alofi offers Niueans of all ages an opportunity to obtain, or update, skills at a very reasonable cost. To be honest it mystifies me that the centre has been so little used in the past. Perhaps too much emphasis has been placed

on overseas training courses and attachments. I believe this area of policy needs to be examined. Our in-country training allocation could be made available to cover the costs of extension training at the centre.

Most students who miss out on a 7th form scholarship to New Zealand can and should do a foundation year at the USP Centre, with a view to obtaining a scholarship to USP at a later date. This would provide for the ongoing education of young people who presently have nothing to do and

often end up in New Zealand. Perhaps some USP incountry scholarships need to be set aside for these students. With the USP Centre moving to a location near the High School, such a programme would be convenient.

The Centre also offers some very effective options for upskilling people in government and in the private sector by undertaking part-time study. This is a very efficient means to maintain ongoing improvements in the management of public and private enterprises. It may not be as attractive as a year in Melbourne or Hamilton to the individual concerned, but in many cases such training will provide Niue with a better return on the investment. Overseas training could then follow.

Our aid programme includes a Business and Community Training and Experience Scheme. This provides a short term subsidy for employers to take on school leavers. It is not altogether successful in leading to full time or long term employment. It is to be reviewed this year, and the High Commission will be recommending that it be changed to provide an employment subsidy, or perhaps a living allowance where full time study is undertaken, conditional upon undertaking extramural studies. All costs of these studies (and the cost of materials) could be refunded providing pass rates are satisfactory. We would see USP as the main provider of this inservice or on-the-job training.

In conclusion I would reiterate that New Zealand sees a need for Niue to divert its tertiary education gaze a little from New Zealand to the region of which you are a part. USP offers quality, relevance, and a Pacific education which in a holistic sense is likely to be superior to that available

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in New Zealand or Australia. Niue is probably not getting value for money at the present time.

I have tried to put forward some practical ideas, in addition to the background views from a donor perspective. I am very conscious that there is mounting pressure on the New Zealand aid dollar, to be used wisely, to meet clearly thought out objectives, with an assessment of the expenditure made at the end of the day. This is a challenge to an office like mine, charged with ensuring accountability to the New Zealand taxpayer. But it is also a challenge to our partners in development, to plan well, implement efficiently, and follow up to ensure that value for money is maintained. We look forward to working with the Niue Government and USP to obtain the best results.

New Zealand would very willingly support a partial change of focus for the provision of tertiary education for Niue, should this seminar identify that as a priority. In addition we are prepared to consider new and innovative ways to help Niue get the best from USP. The Director of Education noted on Monday that USP is Niue's university. As a donor to both USP and to Niue, we would like to see USP more fully integrated into Niue's plans, so more might be made of the available opportunities for long term on-campus education, and for inservice/incountry training through the USP centre in Alofi.

**EDUCATION AT USP -
THE PERSPECTIVE OF NGO**

Maru Talagi

ABSTRACT:

Education is a compelling yardstick. As such, it stands to reason that questions about choices, needs, values, expectations and delivery are inevitable. It also raises queries about the reality of the system as well as the problem of who actually decide its content, direction, and delivery.

Whilst these are not easily discernible, it is so much easy to lose them in the web of generalisations and educational rhetorics. Colloquial euphemism too often used in the debate leads to, and at the same, creates euphoria in society to the extent, that, parameters are clouded and confused.

Viewed from a normative perspective, education is undoubtedly about making choices ... choices which ultimately shaped and mould our perception of what ought and ought not to be.

We often talk about setting goals to achieve what is generally accepted as a step towards achieving the "realisation of the human potential". We talk about the ethics and values of the people who inadvertently decide the education needs of society. Because within this rubric of choices and goal setting are the superimposed values of decision-makers and the unwritten agendas of the people responsible to plan, administer, and deliver the service.

Moreover, peripheral players both within society and USP, acting under the guise of "informed" have become dogmatic and more articulate in goal setting.

Given this scenario, and given also the non-representation of PIANGO in the USP Council, this paper ask the following questions.

1. Has our University become a "Melting Pot"
2. Are paper solutions used to respond to the concerns of society?
3. Has our University become a subservient entity?
4. What, How, and Where does NGO fit into the USP schema?

Finally, this paper concludes by pointing out that we cannot proceed with USP business as usual, adding only a few bits here and there. What is required is to reorientate ourselves: the USP; Government; and NGO and to include PIANGO in the decision-making forum.

EDUCATION A YARDSTICK?

If education is used as a measure of wealth, then groups in society suffer the ignominy of differentiation, not by gender, race, and/or creed, but by income levels. A higher than an average income, affords one the right of membership in the power brokers club and a higher education.

A nation is not only just a single national entity, or one happy family. It is composed of people with many and often conflicting interest. That those who occupy positions of power, or whose membership are endorsed by the power brokers club, uses education to promote their own interest. And choices about what and who ought to get a higher education strengthens their interests at the expense of the rest of the society.

On the other hand, a resource rich country affords a good education as compared with the not so well off. In a regional institution such as USP, those same nations have the largest numbers of on-campus students.

In the case of Niue with its false economy, the level of contribution to USP dictates the number of on-campus students. Aid donors have reluctantly agreed to a third country training funded by them.

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Higher tuition fees for distant education via the Extension centres limits the number of enrolments, or students taking the courses.

A comment by a member of the Niue Youth Council reflects, that, it was not the inability to meet the enrolment criteria, but rather that of too high tuition fees.

Education by definition is "the capacity to develop the human mind". Significantly, capacity building largely depend on the structure of the institution. To increase the capacity, the structure needs to change; it needs to introduce new paradigms; new outputs; and to establish new sources of inputs or new uses for them (inputs) and to find new demands for outputs.

The university must elicit the viewpoints of the people outside the normal channels of communication, and together decide on appropriate and feasible goals towards which direction an education at USP might be taken.

Similarly, there is also a need to adopt different mode of assessments on the extent to which change can, or should be managed and directed.

Education need not be a yardstick by any means. We must cast aside the perception that a nation's well being is reflected by its education. It breeds inequality, resentment, and exploitation, and the end result could only be an absolute and relative decline in the actual output and participation.

What needs to be done, which this seminar partially provides, is to encourage all sectors of society to provide timely, accurate and usable information to the Planners and decisions-makers. Reliance on professional data collectors and research workers is to be discouraged, because the expressed opinion of target groups are lost in the professionals band wagon of precedence. Moreover, the prevalence of an endemic "optimal ignorance" among the professionals is contagious.

USP - A MELTING POT?

The expression of a "Melting Pot", is a caution to USP planners and decision-makers. For I do not believe that the particular needs of Niue or any other Pacific Island is considered by USP on its own merit. As a regional institution, a common ground must always be established before a final decision is reached. Put simply, everything has to go into the melting pot, and the resulting brew is the fix.

But regardless of which, the major areas of needs for education and training is to be considered in tandem with technological changes. USP needs to participate in the formulation of local curriculum for formal training and to complement that which Niue has adopted from New Zealand.

Niue's manpower training is dictated by the opportunities available in the public and private sectors. Whilst, the public sector is the main employer, reformation such as now undertaken by Niue might open up opportunities in the private sector. Should this become a reality, a programme of outreach is a necessity to plan for.

"A CASE IN POINT" (1997)

What is clear now, is, that, there are over thirty (30) secondary school students taking 6th Form Studies. At the end of the 6th Form year, the top ten (10) may attend seventh (7th) form in New Zealand. The rest are either absorbed by the public sector or else lost to outward migration.

It is at this level and instance the USP must step in with Fulltime Foundation Level courses. Because rather than to see students terminating formal education after the sixth (6th) form year, those who took and completed the USP Foundation Courses do have a "choice" of continuation with USP studies or give it away.

Scholarships to continue at USP are then offered to the students who took up the Foundation Course and not those who attended the New Zealand seventh (7th) form.

FINANCE

The finance for this initiative is to be included in the national education budget and supplemented by USP. What is also clear is, that, Niue has an abundance of graduates with which the USP might draw from to supervise/teach the Foundation Level Courses.

Should this option be considered, graduates employed by Niue government are to include in their job descriptions the allocation of their time to USP for the purpose outlined above. It means therefore, that the cost of supervision/teaching will already have been met by the Niue government, and the cost to USP would only be the provision and printing of course materials.

Likewise, the role of Nengo in this scheme of things is to provide additional resource persons if so required. And because of Nengo's affiliation to PIANGO, monitoring becomes mandatory.

NEW GRADUATES

One of the more compelling and intractable problem of graduates entering the work force for the first time, is , that, there is an increasingly frustration driven by the rigours of "dos' and dont's", "status quo," "red tape", bureaucratic bull" and/or culture in the work place. The solution would appear to be the necessity of providing practical attachment in industries, regional offices, and/or other field of employment already earmarked for graduates in their home country.

USP is to seriously consider this service prior to the conferring of degrees and diplomas. Because failing to do so, would have negative impact on the performance of the graduates and service delivery would reflect badly on the institution from which they graduated.

EDUCATION FOR THE YOUTH

Admittedly, the pace of development of the human mind is not the same for any two individual. Circumstances also play a vital role in this whole scheme of things. So what is there for the youth who do not proceed beyond secondary education?

The question is undoubtedly that which correspond to a two way traffic. Firstly, there has to be an incentive offered by society for youth participation in the training and retraining programmes. Society in this

sense refers to the government, the private sector, educational institution and NGO. Secondly, the choice and will must come from the individual, because the legendary fable says, "you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink"

Disregarding that fable, have we asked the youth about their aspirations in life? I have made reference to one of the responses of the youth to a question of what would the youth like their University, the USP, do for them. "Tuition fees for USP extension courses is the limiting factor:

Indeed, I have also made reference to a need for USP to elicit the viewpoints of people and individuals outside the normal channels of communication. Similarly, I have cautioned about the vices of employing professional data collectors; researchers; and arm-chair academics.

Having considered the above, it would appear that a first step towards reaching out to the youth is consultation at the level they are comfortable with/in. The outreach exercise is paramount and emphasis must focus on the particular rather than a whole host of facts not worth knowing.

We have witnessed countless numbers of glossy reports that are hardly ever read. I refer to these as paper solution, for that is all they are worth. Just as a matter of interest, is this seminar heading the same way? Is it to become just another paper solution of the USP?

PARENTAL VISION AND MOTIVATION

Education in Niue has long been recognised as a key towards which improvement in social standing is made possible. If we cast our minds back to the perception of parents of yester-years, we will find that the whole purpose of education at that particular point in time is for their children to get a white collar job.

The perception however changed in the 1950's onwards when scholarship berths to study in New Zealand post primary schools was opened up to the locals. It became a matter of pride to those parents whose children were selected to go on such scholarships and a white collar job at the end of it.

From the 1980s onwards, the emphasis had completely changed. Two income earning parents are not just looking at a white collar job, nor a scholarship berth but a degree in a chosen field of study for their children.

Inevitably, parental vision and motivation for their children is an adjustment which corresponds with their own circumstances as well as that of society. Again it is inevitable that visionary and motivational change has to be accompanied by a corresponding change in the structure of the institution. In this case, the USP structure must be prepared to cater for new demands.

Parents and student alike are more likely to look at USP to turn out graduates with degrees that are recognised in other countries either for employment or for further studies. Failing this, then an education at USP would be by-passed or else become a last resort or what I coined a subservient entity.

NEW DIRECTION

Having generally touched on some of the issues pertinent to an Education at USP, it is now time to turn to specific issues.

CREDIT COURSES

The trend as recalled by USP statistics, is, that, students preference is for in-country studies via the Extension services. This is inevitable given the cost of on-campus studies and the impossibility of taking up full time studies in Fiji as compared to say, New Zealand.

It is perhaps rather unfortunate, that, Niue does not have additional institutions such as Atenisi in Tonga, the University of Samoa, or some other post secondary school institution. And with a declining population, it is unlikely that the Niue Teachers Training will be revived in the foreseeable future. This leaves us with only a single alternative; The Extension Services of USP.

Students taking Extension courses should have their papers cross credited towards a degree course at a later time if this is already not the case. I know of graduates from Atenisi who are required to take up a COP course of Four Stage III papers prior to taking up studies for a Master's degree at Auckland University.

Perhaps USP should look at arrangements of this nature, especially for post-graduate studies. The question of global recognition of degrees conferred by USP such as mentioned beforehand must be addressed first.

RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY

Graduates with aptitudes for research and consultancy work are to given additional supervision before they are released from USP. The danger here, is the creation of researchers and consultancy 'nets', but then again, it is an individual thing rather than a USP concern.

It would be good to involve the locals in the research within their own countries for reasons that are only too obvious. Likewise, researchers and consultants should be able to approach their work with confidence and without prejudice.

PLACE OF NGO IN THE USP SCHEMA

Having spoken to some members of non-profit organisations prior to the preparation of this paper, it is alarming to know that, apart from

some members of the Niue Youth Council, the majority of those spoken to are not so informed on matters concerning their University - the USP.

Personally, the revelation is a pathetic state of affairs and it is a reflection of our failure to promote an open dialogue outside the normal channels of communication. For we have come up with nicely phrased words such as, 'participation networks', 'community sanctions' and the like, yet the opposite has happened.

To address this shortfall on our part, it is logical that a local USP committee be formed. Committee members are to be drawn from the various organisations within Niue and it is through this committee that information and ideas are exchanged. There are downsides to this suggested arrangement but there is no other way possible.

CONCLUSION:

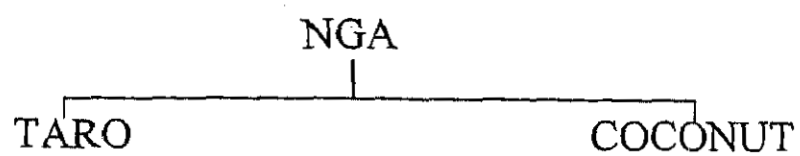
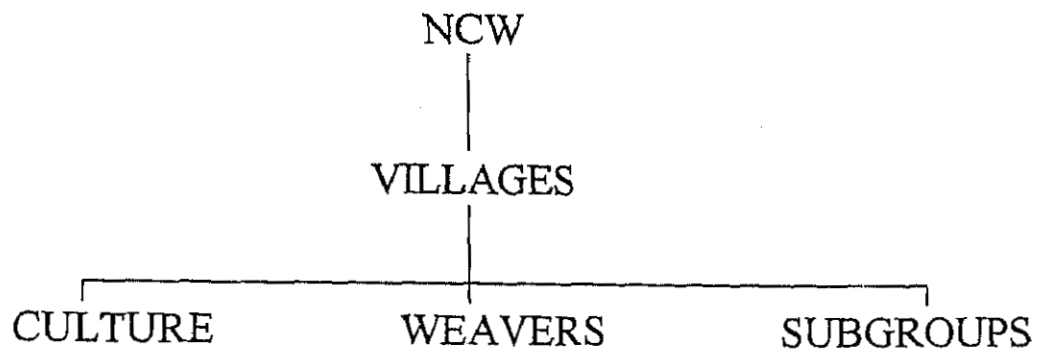
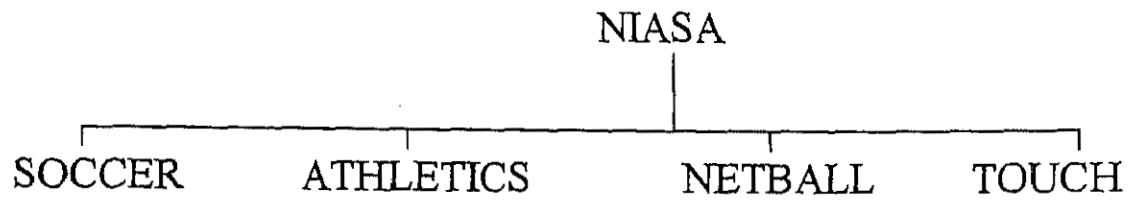
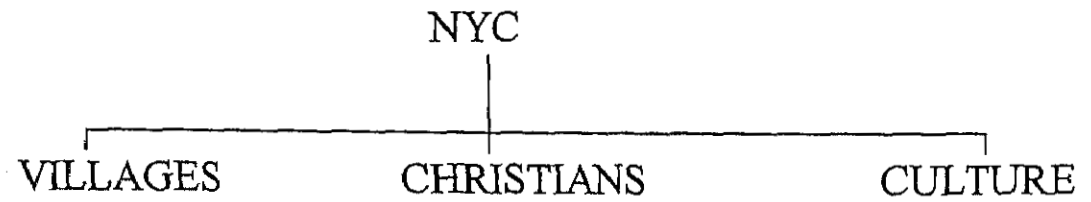
I have made reference to some issues in general terms because given the limited time to consult the members of non-profit groups in Niue, and given also the yet to form NGO umbrella in Niue, the presentation is limited in its approach.

It is not logical to present my person views while speaking as a representative of non-profit groups. The overlapping of memberships within these groups makes it more difficult to get a precise overview of needs.

What is clear though, is, that, in order to match the changing inspirations of society with respect to the place of Education in its members well-being, the institution needs to make the corresponding changes without having to incur additional costs.

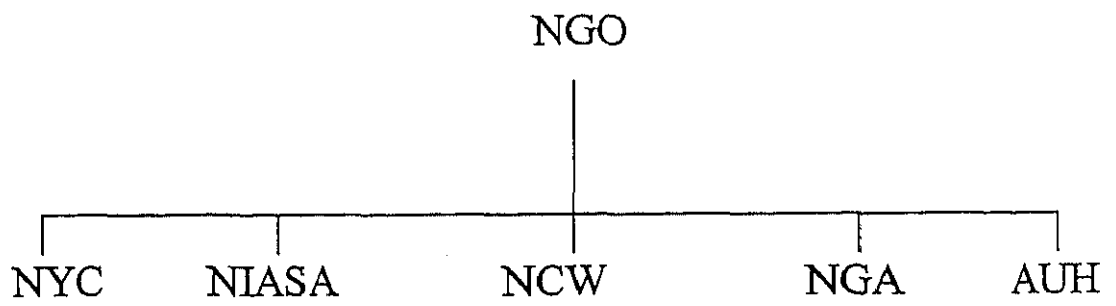
NON-PROFIT GROUPS

CURRENT:



PROPOSED:

NGO UMBRELLA



APPENDIX 5

I have suggested the use of graduates within Niue to supervise, and/or teach Foundation Level Course at the Extension Centre. Similarly, a recommendation is made to improve the process of consultation if the people are to be informed of developments and so forth.

Research and consultancy programme is also re-emphasised as well as providing an attachment service for graduates before they are given their diplomas and degrees. Placements of course are dictated by their qualifications as well as the intended employment in their own home countries on their return.

As a speaker representing NGO, I recommended the inclusion of a PIANGO representative at the Council, quite apart from a NGO representation in-country on the USP Committee.

Finally, I applaud the approach with which USP had adopted in an endeavour to make our University more accountable as well as serving the needs of the member countries. Come to think of it, it is still a 'melting pot', but that is circumstantial more than design.

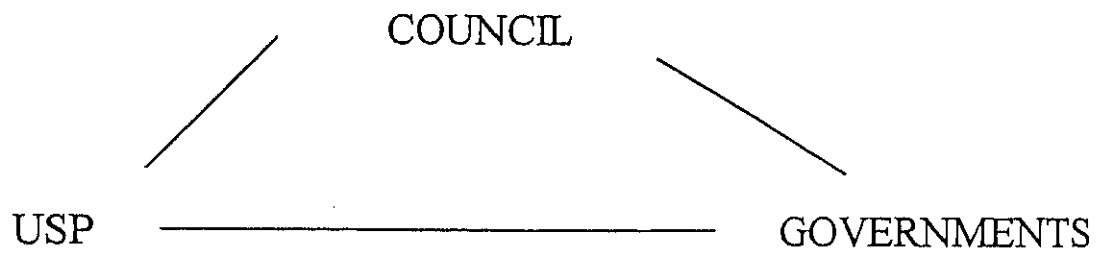
Ladies and Gentleman, thank you.

M. Talagi

NGO REPRESENTATIVE

- Annexes:
- A. Current Communication Linkage
 - B. Suggested Communication Linkage

A.



B.

