

*The UNDP Multi-Country Office in Samoa aims to strengthen democratic governance in the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tokelau through e-governance and e-government initiatives.*

### E-Governance and e-government initiatives

In the Cook Islands, assistance focuses on creating an enabling institutional environment that maximises the use of ICTs to increase public sector efficiencies and reduce barriers to accessing electronic information.

In Niue, initiatives include enhancing information management in public services, further developing e-learning to increase ICT access in rural areas and in the outer islands, and strengthening e-tourism to boost the country's marketing strategy.

For Tokelau, an e-government project covering all telecommunications is linked to an overall good governance programme including drafting the constitution, strengthening the legal framework, training local authorities, and gender mainstreaming. Highlights in Samoa include an innovative approach to powering computer systems in school buses using solar

*The geographic isolation of Pacific Island Countries (PICs) from other nations and even within small island states provides an important opportunity for the use of the latest in information and communications technologies to create linkages that can significantly enhance development and democratic governance.*



panels and wind energy. The mobile e-learning bus will also deliver essential teaching materials and curriculum to teachers and students in isolated district schools. Greater use of computers and the internet is expected with greater visibility of the Samoan language in ICTs.

### Human Development Report

The annual publication of the UNDP Human Development Report helps bring global development issues to the attention of people in the region.

The National Human Development Report (NHDR) for Samoa seeks to highlight constraints and opportunities for sustainable development in this country.

Some of the key development constraints identified in this landmark report include:

#### HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS (SAMOA)

- limited opportunity for waged employment;
- enterprise development;
- access to social services;
- access to information; and
- exclusion from decision making processes.

The NHDR, launched at the National University of Samoa (NUS) in July 2006, is widely acknowledged for its local authorship, a fact that has contributed greatly to the unveiling of many sensitive issues that may not have been raised otherwise. Human development is now a core subject in various degree courses at the NUS and the NHDR is compulsory reading for a number of these subjects. An advocacy programme on the core messages of the NHDR is being planned to help inform citizens of the many factors that affect *sustainable livelihoods* in Samoa, the principle theme of the NHDR, and possibly influence national policies for future development, particularly as these affect achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

## MDG 8

*Develop a global partnership for development ...including a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction - both nationally and internationally.*



## People-centred development

# democratic governance fact sheet

In Niue, a Situational Analysis has been conducted. Similar to the NHDR in Samoa, this analysis highlights constraints and opportunities for sustainable development.

Raising public awareness on justice and human rights issues is critical to building an enabling environment for democratic governance. A rights-based approach to development programming is currently being applied by UNDP to all its development work. Through a partnership with numerous civil society organizations, the UNDP Multi-Country Office in Samoa and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, awards small grants to assist human rights education initiatives in the region. In 2006, five NGOs (4 Samoa and 1 Cook Islands) were awarded small grants under the Assisting Communities Together (ACT) Phase V Project administered by the UNDP Multi-Country Office in Samoa.

UNDP supports Tokelau's public sector reform process through upstream policy development and capacity building aimed at preparing the country for decolonization in the future. Nation-building activities such as the drafting of the Tokelau Constitution, strengthening the justice system, holding a national competition for its national flag and anthem, as well as wide consultations with its people on the meaning of self-determination and decolonization, were some of the initiatives supported by the governance programme. Support for the national Referendum on the Treaty of Free Association with New Zealand conducted in Tokelau from 11-15 February 2006, resulted in sixty percent of the voters saying YES, but this was not sufficient to meet the required two-thirds majority to win the vote.

The voting was conducted in the presence of a United Nations monitoring mission, who deemed the election process a credible reflection of the will of the people. A second Referendum on the Treaty is planned for 2008 and UNDP will continue to support areas of governance needing to be strengthened.

Urban governance initiatives in Samoa will focus on the emergence of non-traditional villages such as in the Vaitele area on the periphery of Apia. A programme will be undertaken with technical assistance from the Regional GOVPAC programme to develop a suitable rights-based governing system for such an area and will be implemented by the Samoa Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA), as a pilot project for the region.



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