

The Idea of Ownership: The Flaws in the Samaritan's Dilemma

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Dedication

Because we deserve to do more
than just survive
we deserve to thrive¹

¹ excerpt from *Dear Matafele Peinem*, by Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Address to the United Nations Climate Summit Opening Ceremony, 23/9/14.

Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university. To the best of the author's knowledge, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.

Suzanne M O'Neill

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Thank you

Vinaka

Fa'afetai Tele Lava

Te Mauri Te Raoi Te Tabomoa

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Abstract

The idea of Ownership was at the heart of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the key policy agreement for global aid effectiveness reform, in 2005. The Paris Declaration, the OECD claimed, would rebalance power relations between donors and aid-receiving governments. Despite the global consensus in Paris, Ownership emerged as a contested idea.

My research examines the influence of the idea of Ownership on development partnerships in two Pacific countries by exploring the model for policy change which underwrote the Paris Declaration and its regional counterpart, the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination. My research in Samoa and Kiribati demonstrates that local policy actors attributed a different significance to the idea of Ownership to that agreed in Paris. They chose, instead, to assert locally-situated values and beliefs around aid and development. Ironically, I argue, although this reflected the exercise of Ownership in each site, it did so in ways that contested the policy logic claimed by the idea of Ownership at the heart of the Paris Declaration. As a result, the exercise of Ownership in Samoa and Kiribati led to outcomes which challenged their largest donor and development partner, Australia, and its expectations of aid relations.

List of Abbreviations

ACC	Aid Coordination Committee
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ALP	Australian Labour Party
AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
AusAID	Australian Aid Program
BPC	British Phosphate Commission
BPoA	The Barbados Program of Action
CDC	Cabinet Development Committee
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCCC	Development Coordination Committee of Cabinet
DCP	Development Coordination Policy
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs
DWFN	Distant Water Fishing Nations
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council, United Nations
FEMM	Forum Economic Ministers Meeting
FICs	Forum Island Countries
FfD	Financing for Development
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GFC	Global Financial Crisis 2008-2009
GNI	Gross National Income
GoK	Government of Kiribati
GoS	Government of Samoa
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
HLFAE	High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness
HRPP	Human Rights Protection Party
IAD	Institutional Analysis and Development framework
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDA	International Development Association
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPA	Interpretive Policy Analysis
IPCC	International Panel on Climate Change
KDP	Kiribati Development Plan
LDC	Least Developed Country
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MSE	Multi-Sited Ethnography
NEPO	National Economic and Planning Office
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PAEPs	Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability

PFTAC	Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre
PICs	Pacific Island Countries
PIDF	Pacific Islands Development Forum
PSIDS	Pacific Small Islands Developing States
PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PC [SPC]	The Pacific Community [formerly SPC: the Secretariat for the South Pacific and the South Pacific Commission]
PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PoA	Programme of Action
P-SIDS	Pacific Small Island Developing States [grouping at the UN]
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
P4D	Partnership for Development
RERF	Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
SDS	Strategy for the Development of Samoa
SES	Samoa Economic Strategy
SMERF	Samoa Monitoring and Evaluation Resources Framework
SPEC	South Pacific Bureau for Economic Coordination
SPF	South Pacific Forum
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference[s] on Environment and Development
UNCDP	United Nations Committee for Development Policy
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
USP	University of the South Pacific
VDS	Vessel Day Scheme
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WB	The World Bank

Abbreviations and Glossary

The Compact	The Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination 2009 [also known as the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination 2009]
The Pacific Road Map	The Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development 2017
The Paris Declaration	The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness 2005
The Partnerships Policy	Development Cooperation Policy: Partners in Development Promoting Aid Effectiveness (2010), Government of Samoa
Rio+20	The second Rio Conference on Environment and Development in 2012
The S.A.M.O.A Pathway Ownership	The SIDS Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway 2014 I have treated the global idea of Ownership as a proper noun and adopted upper-case <u>O</u> wnership when referring to the global idea – and the lower-case <u>o</u> wnership when referring to the local significance attributed to the local understanding of <u>o</u> wnership.
Aid or ODA	I use the terms aid and ODA interchangeably to refer to a measure of the development assistance or development cooperation a donor spends in a country or region – while the Development Policy Centre’s Australian Aid Tracker advises: Official Development Assistance (ODA) as a percentage of a country’s Gross National Income (GNI) is the most commonly used measure to assess the generosity of a country’s foreign aid.

Samoaan Terms

<i>aganu’u</i>	a concept which draws on the duality of nature and nurture in life, balancing the essence of the natural world and the sum of learned experience
<i>‘aiga</i>	the family [and by implication, the family networks by blood marriage and adopted connections] across the village]
<i>Fa’a Matai</i>	the chiefly way
<i>Fa’a Samoa</i>	the Samoan way
<i>fale</i>	house, shelter
<i>Fono</i>	the Samoan Parliament and as <i>fono</i> , the village council
<i>matai</i>	the acknowledged chief or leader for the family, the senior member of the family on whom the title is conferred by the family. As the head of the <i>‘aiga</i> , the <i>matai</i> was responsible for overseeing family and village relations through production and distribution networks across and outside the village. Selected by common consent of the <i>‘aiga</i> , the <i>matai</i> assumes responsibility for directing the use of family lands and other assets belonging to the <i>‘aiga</i> . The <i>matai</i> must, by his/her behaviour, honour to the title he/she bears and the people whose social status is

	bound up with it...in return for his/her leadership, the <i>matai</i> is rendered services by the <i>tutua</i> [untitled].
<i>Mau a Pule</i>	Samoa's independence movement, sometimes referred to as <i>Mau a le Pule</i> , the opposition movement of Savai'i
<i>Nu'u</i>	the extended networks of villages
<i>palagi</i>	foreigner
<i>pule'aga</i>	reign or governance
<i>pulega</i>	regime
<i>soalaupule</i>	a guiding concept which encourages <i>a consultative and inclusive approach to decision-making</i> which involves ensuring all the relevant people affected by a decision are part of the decision-making

I-Kiribati Terms

<i>batua</i>	leadership, usually the eldest male, who led the <i>kaainga</i> , and able to reprimand or expel any who went against accepted standards of behaviour; he organised the distribution of work and regulated affairs within the <i>kaainga</i> and represented the <i>kaainga</i> in relations with other <i>kaainga</i> across the islands.
<i>imatang</i>	foreigner
<i>kaainga</i>	a primary social grouping in the northern island groupings and the basis of the organisation of the <i>maneaba</i> or meeting house; the <i>kaainga</i> was constituted by several extended <i>te utu</i> , or families, would have authority over an area of land. In the southern islands grouping, the <i>kaainga</i> did not necessarily have a <i>maneaba</i> of its own but exercised rights to a <i>boti</i> , or sitting place, in a district <i>maneaba</i> , where social and political and economic matters of significance were negotiated and discussed
<i>maneaba</i>	meeting house in the village, the place where the <i>te utu</i> gather to discuss matters of social political and economic significance.
<i>Maneaba ni Maungatabu</i>	the Legislative Assembly in Tarawa, Kiribati
<i>te Beretitenti</i>	President of Kiribati
<i>te utu</i>	families
<i>unimane</i>	in the north, the political and social traditions were led primarily by a system of chiefly leadership amongst the <i>batua</i> , while and in the south, a <i>unimane</i> , or elders council, held authority in the <i>maneaba</i> .

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis examines how the idea of Ownership influenced development partnerships in the Pacific. Ownership was acclaimed as the guiding principle at the heart of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005).² It was adopted as the foundational “best practice” of the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination (2009), the Pacific region’s counterpart to the Paris Declaration.³ I examine the influence of the idea of Ownership on the effectiveness of the development partnership between Australia, the region’s leading donor, and Samoa and Kiribati, two long-standing recipients of Australian aid, between 2008 and 2018, the decade of the Compact’s formal operation.⁴ The starting point for my research lies in my experience, as a development practitioner who has worked across the Pacific, of the mismatch between the rhetoric of Ownership and its practice.

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was the second of four High-Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness [HLFAE] held between 2003 and 2011.⁵ The global aid effectiveness reforms agreed by the four HLFAE dominated aid and development discourse in the first two decades

² OECD. 2008. Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and Accra Agenda for Action (2008). The Paris Declaration promoted five principles: Ownership was the pre-eminent principle. Its implementation was the precursor to engaging the remaining four principles: alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability.

³ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2009. Forum Communique. 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns, Australia, 5-6/8/2009, Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific.

⁴ The Compact was agreed amongst Forum Leaders at their annual meeting in Cairns in 2009. The Forum Secretariat was made responsible for overseeing its implementation. The Forum Leaders endorsed the Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development [PRM4SD] at their annual meeting in Apia in September 2017 [The Blue Pacific narrative was endorsed in the same meeting]. The PRM4SD integrated key strategies and programming responsibilities previously supported through the Compact. A final report on the evaluation of the Compact was accepted by the Forum’s Secretary General in November 2017.

⁵ The four High Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness [HLFAE] were: the 1st High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Rome, which led to the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation (2003); the 2nd High Level Forum on Joint Progress toward Enhanced Aid Effectiveness (Harmonisation, Alignment and Results) in Paris, which resulted in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005); the 3rd High Level Forum Accra, which produced the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) and the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, leading to the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011).

of the 21st century. These reforms outlined how the global development community would ensure achievement of the eight Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] arising from the Millennium Declaration agreed by the United Nations General Assembly [UNGA] in September 2000.⁶ There were two central issues which the HLFAE were intended to resolve: whether there was sufficient aid available to deliver the MDGs; and to ensure that aid-receiving countries, not donors, led the development agenda.

In the early 2000s, leading agencies in the global development community⁷ asserted that there was a money problem in development: put simply, they asserted that there simply were not enough resources to deliver the Millennium Development Goals, endorsed in the groundbreaking global agreement on development reached by 189 countries in the UNGA in September 2000.⁸ While diverse sources of investment were necessary, it was equally critical, according to the Monterrey Consensus [the Consensus] that aid was used effectively and efficiently.⁹ Fixing the problem of more effective and efficient use of aid, the Consensus declared, required a “new partnership” between donors and aid receiving countries based on national leadership and ownership. The Consensus summed up the strategy:

⁶ The United Nations Millennium Declaration was adopted at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, 6-8 September 2000 by UNGA Resolution 55/2. See also UNGA 18/9/2000 Resolution A/RES/55/2 adopting the Report of the Summit.

⁷ The United Nations convened the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development in 2002, but it was the World Bank which calculated the data which informed discussions on financing the MDGs. See Shanta Devarajan 2/3/2015. Shame on me Why it was wrong to cost the Millennium Development Goals, critiquing his earlier collaborative work for the World Bank: S. Devarajan, S., M. J. Miller, E. V. Swanson. March 2002. Goals for Development: History, Prospects, and Costs. Policy Research Working Paper.

⁸ UNGA. 6-8/9/2000. United Nations Millennium Declaration. UNGA Resolution 55/2. See also: UNGA Resolution A/RES/55/2 adopting the report of the Millennium Summit on 18/9/2000.

⁹ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). 2003. The Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002. The Monterrey Consensus represented the consensus of over 50 heads of state and government; and over 200 ministers of foreign affairs, trade, development and finance.

Effective partnerships among donors and recipients are based on the recognition of national leadership and ownership of development plans, and within that framework, sound policies, and governance... to ensure ODA effectiveness.¹⁰

In 2005, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] convened the 2nd High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, in Paris. The Paris forum aimed to confirm the consensus reached in Monterrey and its successor, the first High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Rome in 2003.¹¹ The Rome forum, acknowledging the burden of administration which the multiplicity of aid agencies placed on the small government administrations that characterised most aid-receiving countries, asked donors to harmonise their practices and procedures.¹²

In Paris, the OECD looked to the aid-receiving countries to change their behaviours. While the need for sufficient and diverse resources identified in Monterrey remained a key concern, the OECD and its fellow multilateral institutions were also troubled by a second issue: the question of who led the development agenda. Too often, the OECD and others asserted, in the absence of country leadership, donors were compelled to drive the agenda.¹³ Countries lacked the requisite political will or capacity to coordinate aid to meet local priorities – to effectively and efficiently coordinate aid to invest in, and stimulate the private sector to generate the economic growth which brought development. This meant aid was ineffective: aid failed to respond to local needs; and aid failed to contribute to development.

¹⁰ UNDESA. 2003. The Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development.

¹¹ OECD. 2003. Rome Declaration on Harmonisation.

¹² OECD-DAC Task Force on Donor Practices. 2003. Harmonising Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery.

¹³ OECD-DAC. 1996. Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation; OECD. 2009. What the Reports Are Saying, in *Development Co-Operation Report 2009*, *OECD Journal on Development* #10:69-88; OECD. 2000. 2000: A Better World For All: Progress towards the International Development Goals.

Country Ownership, said the Paris Declaration, was the key which would unlock change in each country's local aid coordination to promote the better, more effective partnerships between countries and donors called for in Monterrey and Rome.¹⁴ Ownership would ensure the opportunity for the "sound policies and governance" called for in the Monterrey Consensus.¹⁵ And facilitate the harmonisation of donors agreed in Rome.¹⁶

Consensus on the ensuing Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was reached by over 100 aid-receiving countries and donors, international organisations and multilateral institutions present at the forum. The Paris Declaration laid out the "road map" to deliver the MDGs through more effective aid. The third HFLAE, the Accra Agenda for Action, three years later, sought to accelerate progress. It reaffirmed Ownership as key; and committed "all development actors" to "genuine... more effective and inclusive" partnerships.¹⁷

¹⁴ OECD. 2008. Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and Accra Agenda for Action (2008).

¹⁵ UNDESA. 2003. The Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development.

¹⁶ OECD. 2003. Rome Declaration on Harmonisation, HLF1: The first High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness Rome

¹⁷ OECD. 2008. Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and Accra Agenda for Action (2008).

1.2 “Putting Countries in the Driver’s Seat”¹⁸ – Ownership, According to the Paris Declaration

Ownership was one of five guiding principles at the heart of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.¹⁹ Ownership was the first step. It was the **essential precursor** to successful implementation of the other four guiding principles: harmonisation, alignment, managing for results and mutual accountability.²⁰

Ownership, the Paris and Accra agreements declared, meant countries taking responsibility for, and leadership of, their own development. In practice, this meant that countries committed to implement strategies to produce the following “proxy measures” of ownership:

- a) national development plans, based on consultation and coordination across government, civil society and the private sector; and
- b) aligned to annual budgets, authorised by parliament; and
- c) with results monitored and evaluated by performance frameworks.

The production of these measures would, in turn, encourage donor confidence in country capacity [and integrity]. The production of these outputs would, donors assured the aid receiving countries, trigger the release of aid. Institutionalising these practices would establish

¹⁸ See Wolfensohn, J., President of the World Bank 1995-2005, who said: “It is also clear to us that ownership is essential. Countries must be in the driver’s seat and set the course.” Wolfensohn, J. 21/1/1999. A Proposal for a Comprehensive Development Framework, Excerpts from a memorandum to the Board of Executive Directors and staff of the World Bank, Washington DC January 21, 1999:133, in World Bank (ed). 1995-2005. *Voices for the Poor: Selected Speeches and Writings of the World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn*.

¹⁹ The final evaluation of the Paris Declaration identified three core evaluation questions: 1) the context in which the Declaration was implemented: the factors which shaped and limited implementation; 2) improvements in aid effectiveness encompassing the efficiency of aid delivery; the management and use of aid, [i.e. aid coordination]; and better partnerships; and 3) the contribution of improvements in aid effectiveness to sustainable development results. Wood, B. and J.Betts, F. Etta, J.Gayfer, D.Kabell, N. Ngwira, F.Sagasti and M.Samaranayake. May 2011. *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, Final Report Phase 2*; and Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC). June 2011. Summary Presentation of the Synthesis Report for the Busan HLFAE.

²⁰ OECD. 2005. Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness; OECD. 2008. Accra Agenda for Action.

better, more effective development partnerships, where a country's determination of local needs and priorities led development.

Country ownership would mean donors no longer drove the development agenda. Instead, donors would support country leadership through effective partnerships for development. Together, the partnerships would ensure the sound policies and institutions which would facilitate economic growth – and more effective development.

In the words of James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank when the Paris Declaration was agreed, Ownership, meant “putting countries in the driver’s seat” of their development.²¹ In effect, as the OECD reported, citing Jan Cedergrén, Chair of the OECD’s Working Party on Aid Effectiveness, the agreement in Paris sought “a change in the power relationship between donors and recipients.”²²

²¹ Wolfensohn, J. 21/1/1999. A Proposal for a Comprehensive Development Framework.

²² OECD. 2009. Development Cooperation Report:70

1.3 “Localising” Paris in the Pacific: Global Agreements and Local Practices

Although the Pacific was represented in Paris by the Pacific Islands Forum’s Secretariat, along with four Pacific countries [see Chapter 4]²³ it was several years before their silent endorsement²⁴ in Paris became official policy in the Pacific.²⁵

The Pacific region’s government senior policy advisors formally endorsed the Paris Declaration and its guiding principles, including Ownership, when they agreed on the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles in 2007 in Koror, Palau.²⁶ The Secretariat and Pacific countries who were joined the forum in Paris also attended the next global forum, in Accra in 2008. Again, the Pacific’s silence was assumed to indicate endorsement.

²³ The OECD advises that adherents to the Paris Declaration at the time included: the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat; and representatives from four Pacific countries: Fiji, Papua New Guinea; Solomon Islands and Vanuatu; as well as Australia; and that the Cook islands, Tonga and Samoa adhered later. Samoa’s policy advisors reported during interviews that they were represented at Accra. See OECD Legal Instruments 2/3/2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness List of Adherents and OECD 2008 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Accra Agenda for Action Countries Adhering; and Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

²⁴ The convention of such global fora is that endorsement is presumed in the absence of vocal objection. This convention compares with several studies from the Pacific region which indicate that silence represents diverse meanings for Pacific cultures. See for example, Lee Hang, D., and O Uiga ‘Ese’ Ma O’ooga o le le-Tautala. 7/2011. The Multiple Meanings of Silence in the Samoan Classroom: Implications for Teachers of Samoan Students, Paper presented at the Samoa Conference II: Tracing Footprints of Tomorrow: Past Lessons, Present Stories, future Lives, 4-8 July 2011, National University of Samoa, Apia, Samoa; and Boon-Nanai, J. M., T. Manuel, W. Lagolago, T. Lefono, V. Zaveri, S. Sauniuni & V. Ponton. 2022. Re-Examining the ‘Culture Of Silence’ through Peer-Based Pasifika Pedagogies in a New Zealand Tertiary Environment. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 44(2):185-207

²⁵ The Forum Leaders endorsed the general principle of aid effectiveness at its annual meeting in Nadi, Fiji, in 2006. However, while representatives of the Secretariat attended the fora in Paris and Accra, the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders did not endorse the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda formally until they endorsed the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination at Cairns in 2009. The Compact subsequently became known as the Forum Compact. As Chapter 6: From Paris to the Pacific illustrates in more depth, prior to 2009, the global aid effectiveness agenda was under discussion in the region, although largely amongst senior government fora, such as the meetings of the Forum Officials. Donors had invited senior government representatives of some countries to join the Rome forum; while those from other countries had participated in one or other of the several monitoring and evaluation processes that accompanied the Paris Declaration. The Forum Officials endorsed the Paris Declaration in 2007 in Koror, where they recalibrated the five Paris principles as the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles. Australia and New Zealand, the region’s key donors, were represented at the Paris and Accra fora in 2005 and 2008 respectively.

²⁶ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2007. Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles (July 2007 Koror). Fiji: PIFS.

A year later, Australia commissioned a report on the potential impact of the Global Financial Crisis across the Pacific, while the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Stephen Smith, consulted several countries for advice.²⁷ There was concern about the impact of the GFC on donors' capacity to honour previous aid commitments; and that, in the absence of resources, countries would not achieve the MDGs. In consequence, Australia's Prime Minister Kevin Rudd instigated the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination [the Compact] at the Pacific Forum Leaders meeting in Cairns, in August 2009. The Compact identified the "best practices" laid out by the Paris Declaration, including the principle of Ownership and its associated strategies and measures, as its foundation. All 13 Pacific Forum Leaders present in Cairns, and the region's major donors, endorsed the Compact.²⁸ The Compact asserted its key purpose was to ensure that both donors and countries honoured their respective commitments on aid flows and delivering the MDGs, despite the impact of the Global Financial Crisis [GFC].²⁹

This meant that the Pacific region's key policy actors - its political leaders, and its senior government officials - had re-affirmed the consensus reached in Paris and Accra and endorsed the HLFAE's guiding principles, including recognition of Ownership as the essential precursor to effective partnerships for development.

²⁷ AusAID. 2009. Surviving the Global Recession: Strengthening Economic Growth and Resilience in the Pacific; *ABC News*. 2/6/2009. Smith Makes Maiden Trip to Tonga, Samoa; *RNZ News Pacific*. 3/6/2009. Australia Foreign Minister Visits Tonga and Samoa.

²⁸ Fiji was suspended from the Forum at the time and did not send a representative to the meeting in Cairns. The region's major donors and multilaterals included the UN agencies, the World Bank and ADB as well as Australia and New Zealand, who were also members of the Forum. China, although present at the meeting declined on the grounds that it engaged in south-south cooperation, rather than development cooperation under the OECD arrangements.

²⁹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. Forum Communique: 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12.

1.4 The Puzzle: Global Rhetoric and Local Practice

The Paris idea of Ownership seemed a long way from the challenges, and the burdens, faced by government officials engaging with the terms and conditions for effective aid set by aid donors – and more often implemented by consultants, managing contractors or NGOs - in many of the Pacific countries where I worked as a development practitioner across the decade preceding my research.

My area of expertise was program development and delivery. And I became an avid subscriber to the tools and aspirations of the Paris Declaration: promoting Ownership through participatory approaches for program planning, implementation and evaluation was my ‘bread and butter’ approach to development, my default for “doing” development. Funded by the Australian aid program, our programs worked with the people on the ground across multiple Pacific countries: government officials and policy advisors, programme deliverers and civil society advocates from across the Pacific. Our tasks: to consult, engage and facilitate; to create the strategic frameworks, develop the plans, monitor the outputs and evaluate for change over time. We mediated “the deliverables” between the funder and the aid recipient governments. We consulted; we implemented; and we delivered. We revised logframes, assessed capacity and transferred money. We collected data and we evaluated. We submitted reports to the funder. Our key tools: the incessant work of small-group discussions and workshops, with observations and ideas captured in coloured texta and bold print, on post-it notes, butcher’s paper and sometimes, on electronic whiteboards; and recorded, always recorded, on reams of A4 paper for submission to the donor – and the higher government echelons of the relevant country, naturally! And of course, always, the energisers: “What kind

of bananas [or other kind of fruit] are we today?” became a catch-phrase that I, as a usually quiet observer of life, learnt to endure with a pale smile!³⁰ But we kept doing it, every year, across numerous countries. Because Ownership had to work, right? If we could build the skills, get the resources, Ownership was the answer: we could work in partnership and deliver “Development”!

But that was not the way it always went, if I was honest. One time, I recall, after several delayed attempts, I finally met with a group to talk about developing their national strategic plan, a five-year strategy which would scope the policy and programmes to address the key issues, identify responsibilities for tasks, and [if we had time], identify the hoped-for sources of funds to deliver the desired programs. As I entered the meeting room, I noticed an older woman, a key leader in a local women’s organisation. She paused, hesitant, as she stood on the steps about to join our meeting. I engaged with her to reassure her about the purpose of the meeting. She would join the meeting, she said, but added: “it doesn’t matter what we do in these workshops, how often we make these plans, we fail; [our country] always fails.” Similarly, in another country, after several months of delay, the program manager and I were struggling to find a mutually satisfactory time in our schedules for a proposed evaluation workshop. I proposed one more date. And he responded: “I have to get reports to the [other] funders that week, it’s the end of the quarter.” “Can you re-schedule the reports?” I suggested. “I can’t, we will lose the money”, he said. “And I can’t let that happen, I am responsible, for my country. We need that money.”

³⁰ Energisers were activities often used in participatory methodologies to refresh and re-engage participants to avoid fatigue: the “fruit” exercise required participants to re-configure the different parts of the body into the shape of said fruit on command! See for example, the handbook collated by the International HIV AIDS Alliance. 2002. 100 Ways to Energise Groups: Games to use in Workshops Meetings and the Community.

When I began my research, there was doubt, even cynicism, amongst the global development community - and parts of the Pacific - about whether the agreements reached in Paris and Accra could shift the imbalance in power relations, and “put countries in the driver’s seat”.³¹ And reluctantly, I feared that cynicism might be valid.

The agreements reached in Paris and Accra were global agreements; agreements reached by people in places far away from the local practices of the peoples of the large ocean states of the Pacific.³² Sometimes, I wondered, whether the words agreed in the corridors and board rooms of Paris or New York seemed simply too far away to appreciate the local knowledge, values and beliefs, the local and entangled webs of significance, that both constituted and shaped the everyday lives of the oceanic peoples living in Tarawa, Suva or Apia.³³

Although the OECD’s monitoring and evaluation of the Paris Declaration claimed evidence of progress “towards Ownership”, very few Pacific countries participated in the global and regional monitoring and evaluation processes.³⁴ Of those that did participate, few engaged in either process consistently, over time. Together with the findings of several evaluations of development interventions by the Australian aid program, this generated questions about the

³¹ Wolfensohn, J., 1999. A Proposal for a Comprehensive Development Framework.

³² Tong, A. 26/9/2014. Statement by H.E. President of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA, 69th Session, New York.

³³ Hau’ofa E. 1994. Our Sea of Islands. *The Contemporary Pacific*; Waddell E. V Naidu and E.Hau’ofa. 1996. *A New Oceania: Rediscovering Our Sea of Islands*; Malielegaoi, T.L.S. 5/6/2017. Remarks by the Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa on Our Values and Identity as Stewards of the World Largest Oceanic Continent, the Blue Pacific, at the High-Level Pacific Regional Side Event by PIFS, UN Headquarters New York. United Nations.

³⁴ Only five Pacific countries engaged in the OECD-auspiced monitoring and evaluation of the Paris Declaration between 2005 and 2011. These included the Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. But most of these Pacific countries engaged only once in the various monitoring or evaluation activities, which limited the available data – and the capacity of to compare progress over time. See: OECD. 2006a. Aid Effectiveness: 2006 Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration Overview of the Results; OECD. 2008d. Better Aid 2008: Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration: Making Aid More Effective by 2010; Wood, B. and D.Kabell, F.Sagasti, N.Muwanga. July 2008. *Synthesis Report on the First Phase of the Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration*, Copenhagen; Wood, B. et al., May 2011: *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration: Main Report Phase 2 – Country Evaluations: Annex 1.8 Cook Islands; and Annex 1.16: Samoa; and OECD. 2012. Aid Effectiveness 2011: Progress in Implementing the Paris Declaration (2011 Monitoring Survey):Vol 2 Country reports: Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.*

consistency, as well as the breadth and rigor of the global claims of progress on Ownership across the Pacific region.³⁵

At the regional consultations on the post-2015 development agenda in Dili [2013], Pacific voices continued to challenge the claims made on behalf of Ownership.³⁶ Ownership, the Pacific representatives at the Dili forum declared, was critical to effective development outcomes - but it was not always exercised: questions remained about who defined development challenges and how these voices influenced the choice of solution. Importantly, the forum also questioned whether global agreements helped or hindered:

...Ownership was ... key...We need to own our problems and understand their root causes in order to develop effective culturally sensitive solutions to our development challenges...[but] we must deconstruct colonial thinking and start truly conducting ourselves as independent states.....our donor partners need to more closely align their activities with our nationally defined priorities...Our countries struggle to deal with the multitude of international agreements, policy commitments and related implementation and reporting requirements...³⁷

Despite the uncertainty over whether global agreements helped or hindered, the MDGs were replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] under the 2030 Agenda in 2015,³⁸ and the HLFAE was succeeded by the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

³⁵ All the evaluation reports undertaken by AusAID indicated that Ownership in accord with the Paris Declaration was lagging in each country's aid relationship. While the evaluation of the Solomons program was more optimistic, even it indicated more could be done to progress ownership. This evaluation was completed after the Final Report on the evaluation of the Paris Declaration. See the following evaluations: AusAID. 2008. *A Balancing Act: Implementation of the Paris Declaration in Timor-Leste*, Background Paper for the 3rd HLFAE; AusAID. 2010. Annex 14: Good Practice Relation to Development Assistance Effectiveness for National Aids Responses in *Evaluation of the Australia Aid Program's Contribution to the National HIV Response in Papua New Guinea 2006-2010*. Carlson C., P. Bazeley, R.David, and T. Kabutaulaka. March 2013. *Final Report: Solomons Islands-Australia Partnership for Development Independent Performance Assessment Panel*, Assessment for 2012.

³⁶ Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. 26/2/2013. Key Conclusions from the Round Table Consultation on Pacific Issues, International Conference on the Post-2015, Development Agenda: Development for All: Stop Conflict, Build States and Eradicate Poverty, 26 February 2013, Palacio do Governo, Dili, Timor-Leste.

³⁷ Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. 26/2/2013. Key conclusions from the Round Table Consultation on Pacific issues, at the International Conference on the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Development for All: Stop Conflict, Build States and Eradicate Poverty, 26 February 2013, Palacio do Governo, Dili, Timor-Leste.

³⁸ UNGA. 21/10/2015. Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25th September 2015: 70/1.

[GPEDC] after the 4th High Level Forum in Busan in 2011³⁹ - and the concepts of Ownership and Partnership continued to be central to the aid and development discourse. Both were nominated as key elements in the global development agenda represented by the SDGs. The UNGA Resolution on the 2030 Agenda [the SDGs resolution] re-asserted the significance of Ownership in the supporting text explaining the purpose of Goal 17, which promotes the global partnership for sustainable development: “nationally owned sustainable development strategies...will be at the heart of our efforts.”⁴⁰ Similarly, the principles of “Country Ownership” and “Inclusive Partnerships” were re-affirmed as two of the four development effectiveness principles for “more equal...empowered...and sustainable development outcomes” in the GPEDC.⁴¹

And so, this was my starting point, the puzzle where my research began: the mismatch between rhetoric and practice. What, I asked, could we learn from the influence of Ownership on development partnerships under the Forum Compact, the regional iteration of the Paris Declaration, in the Pacific?

1.4.1 Scoping the Puzzle

The politics of aid and development is a complex landscape.⁴² Context and scale were key to my puzzle. Essentially, the Declaration argued that an idea agreed in the cosmopolitan metropolises of Paris or New York could influence policy change in the vulnerable and aid reliant

³⁹ OECD. 2011. Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, Outcome of the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Busan, Republic of Korea, 29 November - 1 December 2011.

⁴⁰ UNGA. 21/10/2015. Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25th September 2015: 70/1.

⁴¹ GPEDC. 2016. The Four Effectiveness Principles.

⁴² Ramalingam, B. 2015. Aid on the Edge of Chaos: Rethinking International Cooperation in a Complex World.

islands of the Pacific.⁴³ Yet, often, as the very conventions of the global fora demonstrate, the negotiation of consensus across such diverse policy actors can be characterised by silence as much as debate. And silence, as noted earlier, is a response which can be misapprehended across the diverse worldviews and asymmetrical relations which characterise negotiations in aid and development.⁴⁴ How, I wondered, did context, scale and power matter in the translation of the claims of global consensus on Ownership from the board rooms and corridors of Paris and New York, into local practice alongside the blue lagoons of Tarawa or the busy markets of Apia? How could an idea generate change through policy, when context varied so much? This led me to examine several literatures to scope my research approach and understand the complexity of meaning, power and context across scale: the literature on the politics of aid and development – especially the sub-fields of aid effectiveness and small island states [including related discussions on asymmetrical power and vulnerability]; the literatures on policy change and power, including the sub-fields of ideational change, policy diffusion, learning, transfer and translation; norm contestation and institutional change, particularly the institutional and development framework literature articulated by Ostrom and her team [This literature is expanded upon in Chapter 2 in particular].⁴⁵

⁴³ As the final evaluation of the Paris Declaration asserted, context was critical to effective implementation. See Wood, B. et al. May 2011. *The Final Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, Main Report Phase 2*.

⁴⁴ See the discussion on silence see literature cited earlier, this chapter, Lee Hang, D., et al. 7/2011.; and Boon-Nanai, J. M. et al, 2022. For a discussion on the asymmetry in negotiations between small and other powers, see Pfetsch, F.R. 2011. Power in International Negotiations: Symmetry of Asymmetry, *Negotiations* 2(16):39-56.

⁴⁵ Elinor Ostrom and her team established the Institutional Analysis and Development framework – the IAD framework – in their Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at the Indiana University, USA. SIDA, the Swedish International Development Agency, commissioned Ostrom and her team to examine the relationship between aid, incentives and sustainable development. The idea of Ownership emerged as a key influence on effective aid for sustainable development. As Chapter 2 reveals, Ostrom's analytical work, drawing on the economic concepts attributed to the notion of the Samaritan's Dilemma, was critical to understanding – and deconstructing - the policy logic for the global idea of Ownership adopted by the Paris Declaration. See Ostrom, E. and C. Gibson, S. Shivakumar, K. Andersson. 2002. *Aid Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report by the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University, *SIDA Studies in Evaluation 0201*; Gibson, C.C., K. Andersson, E. Ostrom, S. Shivakumar. 2005. *The Samaritan's Dilemma: The Political Economy of Development Aid*.

The literature revealed three key issues which defined the parameters of my puzzle, the mismatch between the rhetoric of Ownership and its practice:

- 1) Despite the OECD's claims of consensus in Paris, there was not consistent agreement between donors and aid-receiving countries – nor the consultants or NGOs who often acted as intermediaries - on what Ownership meant in practice.
- 2) The implementation of the strategies of Ownership was deemed by some to illustrate compliance or coercion, rather than leadership and responsibility; with some arguing that implementation often reflected, in the words of Pritchett and his colleagues, isomorphic mimicry - the adoption of form over substance - rather than the opportunity for the assertion of a country's national leadership and responsibility, the claimed intent of the Paris Declaration.⁴⁶
- 3) Even when the strategies of Ownership were pursued with integrity and skill, it was not evident that implementation of these strategies could generate the shift in power that “put countries in the driver's seat”, as the World Bank⁴⁷ and OECD⁴⁸ claimed would happen. Could “Ownership” really counteract the ‘natural’ dominance of the powerful, wealthy donors over the small, often vulnerable, aid-receiving countries?

⁴⁶ Pritchett, L. and M. Woolcock and M. Andrews. 2010. Capability Traps? The Mechanisms of Persistent Implementation Failure – *Working Paper 234* Center for Global Development. Andrews, M., L.Pritchett and M.Woolcock June 2012. Escaping Capability Traps through Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA) *Working Paper #299* Center for Global Development.

⁴⁷ See Wolfensohn J., 21/1/1999. A Proposal for a Comprehensive Development Framework. Also see other lectures and addresses by Wolfensohn, J. including: *Our Working Together...is a Matter of Necessity*, Remarks at the World Bank-NGO Conference on Participatory Development, Washington DC November 19th, 1998; *The Right Wheel: An Agenda For Comprehensive Development*, Remarks at the International Conference on Democracy market Economy and Development, 26 February 1999, Seoul.

⁴⁸ OECD-DAC. 1996. Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation, including Annex: Development Partnerships in the New Global Context.

1.4.2 The Research Question

I pulled the puzzle this way and that. After several iterations, my broad research question emerged:

- a) How did the idea of Ownership influence development partnerships in the Pacific:
Did Ownership put Pacific countries “in the driver’s seat” of their development, as promised by the World Bank and OECD?
- b) And if not, why not...?

1.4.3 My Research Design and Methodology

My aim in this research is to test the policy logic at the heart of the Paris Declaration and accompanying HLFAE nominated as the foundational ‘best practice’ of the Compact. To do this, I examine the relationship between the idea of Ownership and expected change in two key areas nominated under the Paris Declaration:⁴⁹

- 1) local practices in aid coordination
- 2) the consequences for development partnerships between donors and the aid-receiving small island developing states in the Pacific.

Locating my position in the research as an interpretivist grounded in social constructivism,⁵⁰ my research design and methodology entails a case study of how an idea shapes policy

⁴⁹ The Evaluation nominated three major yardsticks of change in aid effectiveness: the efficiency of aid delivery; the management and use of aid; and better partnerships. See Wood, B. et al. May 2011. *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, Final Report Phase 2*(xiv).

⁵⁰ See for example, Yanow and Schwartz-Shea who write: “Researchers in interpretive modes more commonly begin their work in an abductive logic of inquiry, with puzzles or a sense of tension between expectations and prior observations, grounded in the research literature and not atypically, some prior knowledge of the study setting... Understanding and concepts are allowed, (indeed expected) to emerge from the data as the research progresses.” Yanow, D., and P.Schwartz-Shea (eds) 2014. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn* (xviii-xix).

change. Drawing on interpretive policy analysis approaches, I examine the influence of the idea of Ownership on development partnerships under the Forum Compact in two national “policy” sites in the Pacific: Samoa and Kiribati. Each was considered an “outlier” in their development trajectory. Samoa was designated a “shining star” and regional leader in its governance practices. Samoa’s Prime Minister was an acknowledge leader in the region, holding the reputation of one of the longest serving leaders in the world. While Kiribati’s governance practices had often been designated by as weak. Yet, its President, Anote Tong, was rapidly gaining a reputation as a “global champion” and leader on climate change. Each, I forecast, would offer unique insights into understanding the significance of Ownership of development.

Following the policy trail from global to regional to national, my inquiries ranged broadly across three interlinked “policy communities”, scoped according to geography, function and scale. I wanted to understand how each “policy community” interpreted the idea of Ownership; and how their understanding of Ownership influenced change under the policy. I identified the following “policy communities”:

- a) the political leaders, policy and program advisors in the central government agencies in the countries of Kiribati and Samoa, two small island developing states⁵¹, each considered as “outliers” in their development trajectory – and where feasible, their representatives and counterparts in Fiji and New York;

⁵¹ The OECD defines SIDS as “some of the world’s smallest and more remote states...they share challenges and vulnerability: high exposure to natural disasters, climate change and global economic shocks. As well as small or unstable domestic revenues and limited borrowing opportunities. These prevent them from investing in resilient development and seriously hinder their growth prospects.” See: OECD: Small Island Developing States. In comparison, the UN describes SIDS as a distinct group of 39 states and 18 Associate members of the UN regional commissions that face unique social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities. They are located in the Caribbean, the Pacific, the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea. See:

- b) the political leaders, policy and program advisors representing, or contracted to, the Australian aid program, the region's leading donor program, and located within Australia and across the Pacific region, in the high commissions and related programs across Suva, Apia and Tarawa; and at headquarters in Canberra;
- c) the strategy, policy and program advisors in the Secretariat of the Pacific Forum, the region's premier political organisation, charged by the Forum leaders with responsibility for oversight of the implementation of the Forum Compact.

Given the complexity of the interface of policy and practice in aid and development,⁵² the policy "communities" often included members who operated at multiple levels, across local [that is, national], regional and global domains.

My research utilises the ethnographic tools of participant observation, semi-structured interviews and text analysis; and historical inquiry through interviews and archival investigation, to generate data. I conducted over 100 interviews, formal and informal, across the "policy communities" in the key policy sites of Apia, Suva, Tarawa and Canberra; observed the interactions of these policy communities across multiple workshops and meetings at national, regional and global levels [meeting with the OECD evaluation unit in Paris and observing the intergovernmental negotiations on the SDGs in New York]; and collected or analysed archival and contemporary materials related to the policy's origins, design and implementation across each site. At the desk, in between fieldwork, I transcribed and analysed the data generated through interviews. Following my initial analysis of the data, I realised I needed to understand the context in each national site better. I recognised that insight into

⁵² See Ramalingam, B. 2015. *Aid on the Edge of Chaos: Rethinking International Cooperation in a Complex World*.

the history of aid relations was key to understanding contemporary development partnerships. I undertook archival analysis of historical data on aid coordination and development planning and policy relevant to each policy community and site; I trawled the online archives of the UN, OECD and World Bank; as well as documentary texts of development plans and reports located in university, national and parliamentary archives across various sites.⁵³

I analysed the data, first against a matrix constituted by the criteria for a transition to Ownership proposed by the Nobel Laureate economist, Elinor Ostrom and her team,⁵⁴ and the proxy measures for Ownership established by Paris Declaration.⁵⁵ While this first level of analysis offered findings on what happened and how, it lacked the power to explain why change happened [or not]. I then re-analysed the data in accord with an analytical model for understanding policy change, which I constructed from the literatures on ideational power, policy translation and norm contestation. The matrix and the model are outlined further in Chapter 2.

I set parameters on my research to align with the Compact's duration. The Compact was endorsed by Pacific leaders in August 2009 and integrated into the Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development in 2017,⁵⁶ following an independent evaluation in July that same

⁵³ Moses, J.W., and T.L. Knutsen. 2007. From Story-Telling to Telling Histories, 197-222, in *Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research*.

⁵⁴ See Appendix 3.1 Best Practice in Ownership.

⁵⁵ That is, as noted earlier, the presence of a national development strategy accompanied by an annual budget, authorised by the national parliament; monitored through a performance framework; and each supported by coordination and or consultation mechanisms for engagement with civil society. See Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking the Policy Logic for more detail.

⁵⁶ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2017. The Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development. The RoadMap was endorsed by Forum Leaders in the 2017 Forum Communique.

year.⁵⁷ Consequently, I focus primarily on examining the influence of Ownership on development partnerships over the decade encompassing the corresponding financial years of the Compact's operations, between 2008 and 2018.

The research has been an iterative process of scoping the parameters of the puzzle, data generation and analysis, and writing, between desk and field, over several years. Following a scoping visit to Fiji towards the end of 2014, I conducted interviews and participant observation across the various "policy communities", including several extended series of Pacific fieldwork in Suva, Apia and Tarawa, between 2015-2017. In between fieldwork in the Pacific, I engaged with the "policy community" in the Australian aid program in Canberra.

Between the fieldwork and "deskwork",⁵⁸ I presented papers highlighting my preliminary and ongoing analysis at several international public policy conferences, and various politics and development conferences in the Pacific and Canberra.⁵⁹ These papers reflected the course of my research processes and analysis over time: research methods and practice, policy transfer and translation, the significance of ideas as representations of values and beliefs, and the politics of aid and development in the Pacific. The analysis underlying these papers formed the foundation of several chapters in my thesis, although my initial analysis shifted

⁵⁷ See Brien, D., R. Jauncey, J. Winter, 30/11/2017. Findings of the Independent Review of the Forum (Cairns) Compact and Annexes: Forum Compact Review Background Note 1: Overview of Activities and Results Under the Forum (Cairns) Compact 26 July 2017, Prepared by the Forum Compact Review Team; and Forum Compact Review Background Note 2: Development Outcomes and Financing in the Pacific 2009 to 2017, prepared by the Forum Compact Review Team 26 July 2017.

⁵⁸ A phrase coined by interpretivist scholars to describe the interactive nature of analytical work at the desk and field. See for example, Yanow, D. 2012. *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*.

⁵⁹ These included: the International Conference on Interpretive Policy Approaches in Lillie in 2015; and in Hull in 2016; the Pacific Political Studies Conference in Niue in 2016; the SPIR Conference on Interpretive methods and the Australian Aid Conference, both in Canberra 2017; the International Conference on Public Policy in Montreal 2019; the Pacific Update Fiji 2019. I withdrew from a prospective Conference on Public Policy Transfer and Diffusion in Sao Paulo due to the COVID pandemic.

significantly as the research progressed and understanding evolved. In between fieldwork and conferences, I transcribed and analysed interview data; and undertook analysis of archival and other policy text, intermittently, over several years. There were several periods away from the research with several unforeseen interruptions due to the circumstances of life. I finally returned to dedicated thesis-writing in early 2021 to complete the task. Despite a further unexpected interruption in late 2022, this thesis is the result.

1.5 The Significance of the Research

My interest in this research began with the simple reflection on my own development practice, questioning whether, in the face of disillusionment on the ground and in the literature, the claims of Ownership asserted under the Paris Declaration and its sister global agreements mattered anymore. But as I examined the literature and undertook fieldwork, I realised that the significance of the research extended beyond its pertinence to my own values or professional interests.

A simple proposition informs my research: that the way we see the world varies according to our sense of identity, place and connection. This proposition, I argue, underpins the exercise of power in the social relations that matter when two parties negotiate aid. Our sense of identity, place and connection is the source of our capacity, and desire, to influence others' and our own, place within the world.⁶⁰ My research explores this proposition in relation to

⁶⁰ Haugaard, M. 2012. Editorial: reflections upon power over, power to, power with, and the four dimensions of power, *Journal of Political Power*, 5(3):353-358

how a policy is designed, implemented and its success evaluated, particularly in the asymmetrical relations that characterise aid and development policy and practice.

Understanding how each development partner's sense of identity, place and connection influences the success of a policy designed [purportedly] to establish more effective development partnerships - and development outcomes - matters for Australia's relations in the Pacific and in the broader international development community. It matters for three reasons: Australia's support for multilateralism and the rules-based order; Australia's proximity in the Pacific, its shared history and geography; and Australia's aspirations to be a good international citizen, a decent member of the Pacific "family".

As one of the wealthier countries in the region, Australia is a major donor and prominent geo-political and geo-economic actor.⁶¹ It also wants to be identified, I argue, as a prominent geo-social actor: Australia seeks to be a "good international citizen", to operate with "decency" on the global stage.⁶² This includes our relations with the Pacific, with whom we share geographical, historical and political proximity.⁶³ Australia's political leaders claim our place, without irony, as "family" in the Pacific region.⁶⁴

As in most families, there are rules. Australia undertakes its engagement in the region as a vocal proponent of the multilateral rules-based order promoted by the multilateral

⁶¹ Wallis, J., H. McNeill, A.C. Tidwell, C. Tubilewicz, 19/1/2023, Weaving Webs of Statecraft in the Pacific Islands, The Interpreter, The Lowy Institute.

⁶² Evans, G. 2022. Good international Citizenship: The Case for Decency.

⁶³ Bishop, Hon. Julie, MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 12 August 2017, Australia in the Pacific, Suva, Fiji, Speech following the Pacific Islands Forums Foreign Ministers Meeting

⁶⁴ Wallis, J. 9/7/2021. Contradictions in Australia's Pacific Islands Discourse, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*.

institutions.⁶⁵ This is our historical legacy, as a founding member of the UN.⁶⁶ It is also our contemporary approach, even if sometimes the interpretation of what the rules-based order means for our place in the world might lean one way rather than another.⁶⁷ There is agreement however, that a multilateral rules-based order is “vital to Australia’s security, interests, values and prosperity”.⁶⁸

Australia’s unique and prominent place in the Pacific regional order draws from several bases. It includes our historical legacy in the region, as a former colonial power in several Pacific countries;⁶⁹ a former dominion of one of the largest colonial powers formerly in the region, Britain; and hence, our engagement in the founding of several of the region’s prominent political and technical organisations, including the Pacific Islands Forum and its Secretariat, and the Pacific Community, amongst others.⁷⁰ It also extends to our contemporary status as one of the region’s largest economies and wealthiest countries.⁷¹ This is, in large part, a legacy of historical engagement in resource extraction and agriculture across the region, as well as

⁶⁵ Government of Australia (DFAT). 2017. *Foreign Policy White Paper*.

⁶⁶ Australia has endorsed the rules-based order which underpins the multilateral system initiated in the post-WW2 era, through the creation of the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions, and others entities since. Australia is a member of the OECD, World Bank, ADB, IMF and the UN.

⁶⁷ The RBO has been endorsed by both the Coalition and Labour in recent Australia foreign policy statements over the last decade, although with some variation in its intentions according to the global context. In Prime Minister Morrison’s 2019 Lowy Lecture, the proposition for a “negative globalism” emerged; a proposition which the government subsequently reversed in June 2020, with the PM’s Foreign Minister Payne reporting that an audit of multilateral institutions had reaffirmed the importance of the rules-based order. See: Scott, B., M.Nyst and S.Roggeveen (with expert contributions from J.Bishop, R.Maude, H.Charlesworth and R.Medcalf). 8/2/2023. *Australia’s Security and the Rule-Based Order, Tracking A Decade of Policy Evolution*, n.d. *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute.

⁶⁸ Government of Australia (DFAT). 2017. *Foreign Policy White Paper*.

⁶⁹ Australia held a specific relationship on behalf of Britain, and later, under the UN Trustee Arrangements, as the administrator in PNG and Nauru until independence was granted in each country in the 1975 and 1968.

⁷⁰ Fry, G. 2019. *Framing the Islands: Power and Diplomatic Agency in Pacific Regionalism*.

⁷¹ Despite the political and economic setbacks of recent years, Australia continues to be one of the wealthiest countries in the world by most measures. CEDA, the Committee for Economic Development of Australia, claims that Australia ranked first in global median wealth per adult in 2018, according to Credit Suisse research institute’s 2018 Global wealth report. Median and average wealth per adult is one of the highest in the world. CEDA Australia Global Wealth Ranking According to Black reports the 2021 Credit Suisse Report confirmed Australia remains one of the wealthiest, less unequal, countries in the world. Black, E. 24/6/2021. *Australians are the Richest People in the World*, says Suisse Credit. *The New Daily*.

to our contemporary trade relations.⁷² It also entails a shared history of relations built through common forms of governance, trade and commercial enterprise, as well as aid.⁷³ And lastly, Australia is uniquely, if sometimes ambiguously, placed, as both an ally and major trading partner between the USA and China, the global power-rivals whose contest for influence dominates the region, and, some would say, our relations with the Pacific region.⁷⁴

Australia's wealth places it in a clear position of influence in the region. There is no "power index" compiled for the Pacific region. But in the Asia region, Australia currently rates sixth for "comprehensive power", according to the Lowy Institute's Asia Power Index.⁷⁵ While the US News Global Power index [whose ranking is differently constituted] places Australia 16th in its power index and 5th in the "best country overall" ratings.⁷⁶ Australia ranked 9th in "soft power" influence in the world in 2019.⁷⁷ In contrast, apart from the inclusion of PNG in the Lowy

⁷² Historically, Australia's national economy benefited from the blackbirding during the 19th/early 20th century, which brought Pacific islanders as "indentured" labor to the agricultural sector particularly in QLD but also further south along the eastern coast until 1904 when the White Australia Policy was formally introduced through the BPC, Australia benefited from the Pacific phosphate mined in Banaba and Nauru (see for example, Teaiwa, K.M. 2014. *Consuming Ocean Island: Stories of People and Phosphate from Banaba*). While in contemporary relations, Australia is heavily invested in natural resources across the region, such as in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and elsewhere. See The Guardian series: Pacific Plunder, which documents who benefits from the extraction of minerals fish and timber from the Pacific island nations: the series finds that China and Japan dominates by volume of resources extracted in oil minerals and wood products; while China [\$3.3b in 2019] Australia [2.8b in 2019] and Japan dominate by value of resources extracted, particularly in oil metal and mineral products [but also, for China, in wood products]. The Guardian series: Pacific Plunder, published 2019-2024.

⁷³ Bishop, J. 12/8/2017. *Australia in the Pacific*, Speech by Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs following the Pacific Islands Forum Foreign Ministers Meeting Suva, Fiji.

⁷⁴ Wallis, J., H. McNeill, A. Tidwell, and C. Tubilewicz. 2022. *Statecraftiness: Weaving Webs of Statecraft in the Pacific Islands*, Adelaide Papers on Pacific Security: 01/2022, *Security in the Pacific Islands Program* Stretton Institute, December 2022.

⁷⁵ The Lowy Institute's Asia Power Index describes "comprehensive power" according to 8 measures under two categories: resources, which encompasses economic capability, military capability, resilience and future resources; and influence, which encompasses economic relationships, defence networks, diplomatic influence and cultural influence. The Lowy Institute. 2024. The Asia Power Index

⁷⁶ The US News Index compiles several indices, including "Best Countries". Power is one measure of the Best Countries index. It describes power as: The world's most powerful countries also are the ones that consistently dominate news headlines, preoccupy policymakers and shape global economic patterns. Their foreign policies and military budgets are tracked religiously. When they make a pledge, at least some in the international community trust they will keep it. These countries project their influence on the world stage. US News Index

⁷⁷ The Soft Power index is compiled by Jonathan McClory, on behalf of a partnership between Portland, a strategic communications consultancy, and the USC Center on Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California. The index asserts that soft power, the ability to achieve objectives through attraction and persuasion, is crucial to the effective conduct of foreign policy. Soft Power Index

Institute's Asian Power Index, most Pacific countries are not rated by the various global power indices.⁷⁸ To the contrary, the countries of the Pacific are ranked by the OECD and UN as amongst the most vulnerable and aid reliant in the world.⁷⁹ When the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was agreed in 2005, four Pacific countries were rated amongst the least developed in the world.⁸⁰ Three remained on the list when the Forum Compact was folded into the Pacific Road Map on Sustainable Development in 2017.

While Australia may have become an increasingly less generous donor over the last decade,⁸¹ Australia remains one of the most significant donors in the Pacific region.⁸² Australia is currently the region's largest grant-aid donor.⁸³ Our aid represents relations that date to the arrival of political independence in most countries in the region.⁸⁴ For many of those countries once colonised by Britain, or Australia or New Zealand on Britain's behalf, we are their largest and most consistent donor, even though overall, Australian aid is now at historically low levels of "generosity".⁸⁵

Despite the low levels of "generosity", as Wood *et al* succinctly observed, "aid matters to the Pacific".⁸⁶ Nearly two decades after the HLFAE were initiated in Rome, Wood *et al* report that

⁷⁸ Although the Lowy Institute added PNG to its ranking in 2020 – and consequently, has indexed PNG around 3-point mark, with a ranking of 26 of 26 countries ranked in every year since. Australia has indexed around the 30-point mark, a ranking of 7th in 2018, and 6th in each comparative year that PNG has been measured. The Asia Power Index

⁷⁹ OECD. 2018. *Making Development Cooperation work for Small Island Developing States*; Dornan M., and J. Pryke. 2017. *Foreign Aid to the Pacific: Trends and Developments in the Twenty-First Century, Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*, 4(3).

⁸⁰ The four were Samoa, Vanuatu, Kiribati and Solomon Islands; since then, Samoa graduated in 2014 followed by Vanuatu in 2020; Kiribati [recommended for graduation but deferred to 2024], Solomon Islands [scheduled to graduate 2024] and Tuvalu [recommended for graduation but no date set] remain on the list. UNDESA LDCs

⁸¹ Australian aid generosity is now ranked one of the lowest in the world. See Wood, T., M.Dornan and S.Muller. 11/1/2021. *Change and Continuity in Australian Aid: What the Aid Flows Show*. A blog of the Development Policy Centre.

⁸² The Lowy Institute Pacific Aid Map.

⁸³ Lowy Institute Pacific Aid Map.

⁸⁴ See Chapter 6 From Paris to the Pacific for an outline of the relationship between the colonial powers and political independence in the Pacific region in relation to aid.

⁸⁵ Wood, T., M.Dornan and S.Muller. 11/1/2021. *Change and Continuity in Australian Aid: What the Aid Flows Show*. Development Policy Centre Blog.

⁸⁶ Wood, T., S.Otor and M.Dornan. 2022. Why Are Aid Projects Less Effective in the Pacific? *Development Policy Review*, 40(3):2.

aid projects in the Pacific region are amongst the least effective, on average, in the world.⁸⁷ They attributed this to factors they deemed outside the Pacific island nations' control - specifically the countries' small population size and isolation from global markets - rather than to poor governance, as is often suggested in the literature.⁸⁸ This, Wood and his colleagues argue, firmly places responsibility on the donors to understand context and adapt their practices in aid project design and delivery.⁸⁹

Context matters for effective aid design and delivery. It is also, I argue, critical for the “genuine and durable” partnerships sought by the Pacific countries. Yet, too often, Australia has framed relations with the Pacific countries as transactional, assuming geo-strategic influence in return for aid.⁹⁰ But, as the Chair of the Pacific Forum pointedly observed in a speech at the Lowy Institute in 2018, there is a sense amongst the Pacific “family”, that Australia has failed the Pacific.⁹¹ As Prime Minister Tuilaepa observed:

...our partners have fallen short of acknowledging the integrity of Pacific leadership and the responsibility they carry for every decision made in order to garner support for the sustainable development of their nations. Some might say that there is a ‘patronising’ nuance in believing that Pacific nations did not know what they were doing or were incapable of reaping the benefits of close relations with countries that are and will be in the region for some time to come. In cases where emerging partners have engaged with Pacific countries without conditionality, the relationships are perceived to be associated with corruption or unprecedented environmental degradation. One has the tendency to be bemused by the fact that the reaction is an attempt to hide what we see as strategic neglect...⁹²

⁸⁷ Wood, T., S.Otor and M.Dornan. 2022. Why Are Aid Projects Less Effective in the Pacific? *Development Policy Review*, 40(3):2.

⁸⁸ Such as is implied, for example, by Pritchett et al's argument around isomorphic mimicry: Pritchett L. et al. 2010. Capability Traps? The Mechanisms of Persistent Implementation Failure; and Andrews, M. et al. 2012. Escaping Capability Traps through Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA).

⁸⁹ Wood, T., S.Otor and M.Dornan. 2022. Why Are Aid Projects Less Effective in the Pacific? *Development Policy Review*, 40(3):21.

⁹⁰ This was demonstrated recently by the claims of the newly-elected Australian Prime Minister, who declared in relation to claims that China had negotiated a security deal with the Solomon Islands: “Australia has lost influence in the Pacific by failing to act on climate and cutting foreign aid.” D Hurst, D. & P. Karp, 28/3/2022. Australia's lost influence in Pacific on display in Solomon Islands-China deal, Anthony Albanese says. *The Guardian*.

⁹¹ Taylor, M. 8/9/2018. Keynote Address by Secretary-General, Pacific Islands Forum, to the 2018 State of the Pacific Conference. Australia National University, Canberra, Australia.

⁹² Malielegaoi, T.S. 30/8/2018. Pacific Perspectives on the New Strategic Landscape – Address by Hon Prime Minister of Samoa and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum. The Lowy Institute, Sydney, Australia.

As adherents to the plethora of global agreements on aid and development, Australia has a responsibility as a good international citizen to ensure its aid adheres to these commitments. But being a good international citizen also carries the moral responsibilities of decency: one of which is to ensure that Australia's leadership treats its sovereign partners with respect and dignity as equals.⁹³ Australia instigated the Forum Compact as a guide for establishing more effective partnerships in the region, between Australia and the sovereign states of the Pacific. Australia claimed adherence to the standards of accountability inherent in the Paris Declaration. As a good and decent international citizen and adherent to the rules-based order, it is a sign of maturity and accountability to reflect on our own engagement to understand why a policy is considered to have fallen short of its aspirations.

My research challenges the assumptions which underpinned the claims of the global idea of Ownership for more effective partnerships laid out in the Paris Declaration to find out why the Chair of the Pacific Forum called out Australia for its failure to treat its partners with dignity and respect, for the failure to acknowledge "the integrity of Pacific leadership and responsibility for sustainable development" under a policy established specifically to achieve more effective partnerships. My research draws from several disciplines – the politics of aid and development, anthropology, international relations and public policy, with its sub-fields of ideational change and policy translation – to envisage how an idea influences policy change in the asymmetrical relations which characterise aid and development. It does this by

⁹³ Tuila'epa advised that if Australia wishes to engage in the region, their approach must be "...genuine and durable and premised on understanding, friendship, mutual benefit and a collective ambition to achieve sustainable results." Malielegaoi, T. S. 30/8/2018. Pacific Perspectives on the New Strategic Landscape— Address by Hon Prime Minister of Samoa and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum. The Lowy Institute, Sydney, Australia.

examining how values and beliefs shape which norms matter and to whom; and how institutions are re-shaped through reflexivity, bargaining and innovation, in accord with local Pacific aspirations, to create the renegotiation of power demanded for the successful translation of policy from global consensus to local practice.

Ownership and partnership remain core global principles for effective development. The overarching argument that I present in this thesis is that Australia is obliged to learn from its recent past to understand better how to ensure that the apparent consensus of global and regional agreements can become successful, local, policy practice, if Australia is to ensure its aid to the Pacific - and ensuing development partnerships - are effective. This means acknowledging the dynamic of power in aid relations – and how that power shapes and reflects the assumptions, the values and beliefs, which inform policy negotiation and implementation. The story of Ownership which unfolds in this thesis shows that global consensus on policy can be threaded with compromise. A compromise which influences the success of local policy implementation unless those assumptions are made explicit – and the values and beliefs which shaped apparent consensus are made salient and re-integrated into policy through shared, respected, local practice.

1.6 The Thesis Framework

The thesis is structured in four parts: following this Introduction, Chapters 2, 3 and 4 frame the idea of Ownership by examining the key literatures and outlining a conceptual framework, design and methodology for the research. Then I turn, in Chapters 5 and 6, to the construction of the idea of Ownership. First, I explore how the idea of Ownership became global policy in Paris by tracing the origins of the idea of ownership through the hallways and meeting rooms of the World Bank, the OECD and the UN to distinguish the global idea of Ownership. Then, in Chapter 6, I examine the subsequent arrival of the global idea of Ownership in the Pacific. In the subsequent Chapters, I turn to the question of implementation, the negotiation of the idea of Ownership in local practice. In Chapters 7 through to 11, I examine how the global idea of Ownership became local policy practice in Samoa and Kiribati, respectively, by examining first, implementation of the strategies of Ownership under the Compact [and in accord with the measures outlined by the Paris Declaration]. Then, identifying a twist in the puzzle in each site, I turn to examine the local significance of Ownership and its practice in relation to the aspirations and strategies identified by policy actors in each site. From these findings, I draw conclusions for the relationship between the exercise of Ownership in accord with local understandings in Samoa and Kiribati and the consequences for their respective development partnership with their most significant donor and development partner, Australia. In Chapter 12, I conclude by reviewing the findings to answer the overall question of whether the influence of the global idea of Ownership on development partnerships in the Pacific reflected policy failure or development success, in aid relations between Samoa and Kiribati, and their long-standing donor, Australia.

Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking the Policy Logic

2.1 Introduction

The starting point for my ‘puzzle’ is the mismatch between the rhetoric of the idea of Ownership and the experience of local practice.¹ As Ramalingam has observed, the field of aid and development is a complex landscape which operates on the edge of chaos.² Policymaking is an inherently political process.³ What is said, by whom, when and where, matters. My purpose in Chapter 2 is to clarify the complex policy landscape in which the idea of Ownership emerged to reveal the underlying politics and define the parameters of the puzzle in order to define my research approach. I do this in four steps over Chapters 2 and 3.

In this Chapter, my first step is to clarify the rhetoric of Ownership as reflected by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness [the Paris Declaration]. I examine the expectations ascribed to Ownership in leading “change in the power relationship between donors and recipients”,⁴

¹ A brief note on definitions: Ownership was identified as a key principle by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness 2005. Ownership was first among equals: the other four principles included harmonisation, alignment, managing for results and mutual accountability. Ownership was the necessary precursor to the successful implementation of the other four principles. Given the essential character attributed to Ownership, I treat the principle of Ownership as an idea for the purpose of examining its influence in leading policy change –following the ideational change scholarship which examines how an idea carries power to create change through the policy vehicle, the Paris Declaration – and its regional Pacific counterpart, the Forum Compact. I conceive of the travel of Ownership through the respective policy vehicles, the Paris Declaration and its companion, the Forum Compact, from sites of global and regional consensus to sites of local practice, in accord with Dolowitz and Marsh’s seminal discussion of lesson-drawing, policy convergence diffusion and transfer as a “process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political setting”. [Dolowitz, D.P. and D. Marsh. 2000. Learning from Abroad: The Role of Policy Transfer in Contemporary Policy Making. *Governance* 13(1):5–24] As a guiding principle leading policy change, Ownership brought a suite of policy tools and instruments in its wake. These included national development plans or strategies and national budgets (and other finance instruments); performance frameworks; and coordination and consultation mechanisms.

² Ramalingam, B. 2015. Aid on the Edge of Chaos: Re-thinking International Cooperation in a Complex World: 224 -235. The edge of chaos is, Ramalingam explains, that place where the complex systems of order and chaos meet – and, crucially, the place where human innovation might emerge to resolve the resultant challenges of that complexity.

³ As Stone declared, “Policy is politics writ hard.” Stone, D. 1997. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*.

⁴ The OECD’s annual Development Cooperation Report in 2009 advised: “Adopted in 2005, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness seeks to help reshape the way international development aid is delivered and managed. Among its priorities is a call for a new emphasis on the role of developing countries in deciding how aid should be used – in short, “a change in the power relationship between donors and recipients”, according to Jan Cedergren, Chair of the OECD-DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness. The Declaration sets down five overarching principles to help shape this new relationship, with the

when the global development community reached consensus on the Paris Declaration by unpacking the policy logic and assumptions for change reflected by the policy and related text.⁵ This led to the related work by Elinor Ostrom and her colleagues [Ostrom] on the relationship between aid, institutions and sustainable development.⁶ Ostrom characterised aid and development as an environment beset by perverse incentives. Her resolution, a transition in Ownership of aid intervention from donors to aid beneficiaries, became the foundation of the change theory⁷ underlying the Paris Declaration.⁸

Having clarified the rhetoric of Ownership, I turned to the literature critiquing Ownership to compare the assumptions which underpinned the idea of Ownership with its practice. This critique raised more questions than answers. The critique of Ownership's practice raised

ultimate aim of making aid work better at improving the lives of some of the poorest people on the planet." OECD 2009. *Development Cooperation Report 2009*:69

⁵ Programme or policy logic – also known as the programme or policy's theory of change – has become a familiar tool for analysis in international development practice over the last decade. Initiated by the Kellogg Foundation, it is commonly used by agencies such as Australia's Aid Programme managed by DFAT. A project, programme or policy logic makes the underlying rationale for an intervention explicit. It is a causal model which links an intervention with its intended or observed impacts. It is used to support the articulation of planning, implementation and evaluation activities for a specific intervention. As the Kellogg foundation explains: "A programme [policy] logic model is a picture of how your program [or policy] works – the theory and assumptions underlying the program [or policy]... this model provides a road map of your program, highlights how it is expected to work, what activities need to come before the other, and how desired outcomes are achieved.", W.K. Kellogg Foundation. 2004. Using Logic Models to Bring Together Planning Evaluation and Action, Logic Model Development Guide:1; for DFAT's approach to logic models, see Funnell, S.C. and P.J. Rogers. 2011. *Purposeful Program Theory: Effective use of Theories of Change and Logic Models*.

⁶ Ostrom, a political scientist and political economist, led the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University in the USA. Ostrom, her partner Vincent and their team were considered leading experts in new institutionalism, grounded in rational choice and its subset public choice theory. Ostrom shared the Nobel prize for economic sciences in 2009 [with Oliver Williamson] for her analysis of economic governance on the commons – her work revisited the claims of 'the tragedy of the commons' to assert that rational choice is deployed by individuals to collectively manage a limited common resources – "the commons". Ostrom is considered, primarily, as a rational choice institutionalist [RCI]: RCI argues that actors use institutions – the rules of the game - to maximise their utility – and institutions affect rational individual behaviour: largely drawn from neoclassic institutionalism: contrasted with sociological and historical institutionalism.

⁷ In contrast to programme or policy logic, a change theory is more generalised. As Reinholz and Andrews explain change theory "represent[s] theoretical and empirically grounded knowledge about how change occurs that goes beyond any one project." The benefits of grounding an intervention in change theory, Reinholz and Andrews assert, is that it allows the intervention designers [and others] to draw from existing knowledge to contribute to our collective knowledge of how to achieve change in the specific field. Reinholz, D.L. and T.C. Andrews. 2020. Change Theory and Theory of Change: What's the Difference Anyway, *International Journal of STEM Education*, 7(2):1.

⁸ Ostrom, E. et al 2002. *Aid Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report.

questions around meaning, context and power in aid relations.⁹ The mismatch between the intent claimed by the policy logic and the pragmatics of practice led me to investigate alternative literature on policy change, which is the focus on Chapter 3 where I construct a conceptual framework and confirm the research proposition.

2.2 Ownership: Scoping the Policy Logic

2.2.1 *The Rhetoric: Unpacking the Policy Logic of 'Ownership' in the Paris Declaration:*

The centrality of Ownership

The global meetings at Monterrey and Rome¹⁰ which preceded the gathering in Paris, argued for the adoption of Ownership as the guiding principle for pursuing global aid effectiveness. But it was the Paris Declaration¹¹ which brought Ownership to the fore as the leading principle in the “road map” for creating “a change in the power relations” between donors and aid-receiving countries.¹²

When the governments of aid-receiving countries take responsibility for their development, the Paris Declaration asserted, they demonstrate Ownership, evidenced by three outcomes:

⁹ The critique of the dominance of donors in aid relations is threaded through the aid's effectiveness literature at the time of the HFLAE: see, for example, de Renzio, P., and Sarah Mulley, April 2006, Promoting Mutual Accountability in Aid Relationships: “Addressing the power imbalance between donors and recipient is necessary to promote real partnerships”, ODI Briefing Paper; and the Deutscher E., and Sara Fyson September 2008, vol 45, No.3: Improving the Effectiveness of Aid IMF, Finance and Development: “Donor-driven aid does not lead to sustainable results. Moreover, asymmetries in the aid relationship, whereby donors respond to their own constituencies rather than to citizens' needs in developing countries, have distorted the accountability of domestic institutions in recipient countries.”

¹⁰ UNDESA. 2003. The Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development. OECD, 2003, Rome Declaration on Harmonisation, HLF1: The First High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness Rome, 24-25 February 2003.

¹¹ OECD. 2005. Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

¹² As the OECD's annual Report on Development Cooperation advised: “Adopted in 2005, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness seeks to help reshape the way international development aid is delivered and managed. Among its priorities is a call for a new emphasis on the role of developing countries in deciding how aid should be used – in short, ‘a change in the power relationship between donors and recipients,’ according to Jan Cedergren, Chair of the OECD-DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness.¹ The Declaration sets down five overarching principles to help shape this new relationship, with the ultimate aim of making aid work better at improving the lives of some of the poorest people on the planet.” OECD. 2009:69.

- a. Stronger, more effective and efficient, coordination practices in the national government [primarily in the central agencies];
- b. More effective partnerships between donor and national governments;
- c. More effective development outcomes for aid-receiving countries.¹³

The Paris Declaration identified strategies for implementing and measuring a country's Ownership of its development agenda.¹⁴ These involved the production of national development plans, based on consultation across government; aligned to national budgets and authorised by parliaments; with the plan's implementation monitored and evaluated in accord with performance assessment frameworks.¹⁵ The Accra Agenda in 2008¹⁶ extended the Paris Declaration to ensure a more inclusive approach including consultation across civil society and the private sector to ensure strategic plans met local development needs. This generated a further output, or proxy measure, under the Ownership strategies: the inclusion of coordination mechanisms for policy dialogue and negotiation.

The policy logic

The policy logic underlying Ownership promoted national development plans as a key tool to ensure that governments consulted with their citizens particularly civil society and the private sector; and to reassure donors that development priorities met local needs. The alignment of annual budgets to national plans, authorised by the national parliament, not only indicated political commitment, but it also meant that governments would more efficiently and

¹³ OECD. 2005. *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*.

¹⁴ OECD. 2005. *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*; OECD. 2008. *The Accra Agenda for Action*.

¹⁵ OECD. 2005. *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*.

¹⁶ OECD. 2008. *The Accra Agenda for Action*.

effectively assess, allocate and account for resources, domestic and foreign. This would not only ensure national plans offered opportunities for private sector investment [domestic and foreign] but promote accountability and reduce opportunities for corruption. Performance assessment frameworks would encourage monitoring and evaluation, keeping both donors and governments accountable for results.

As a result of stronger aid coordination by national governments [indicated by production of these proxy measures], donors would be more confident of national government capacity – and trust the government’s political will and commitment to use aid effectively and efficiently. With more trust in the aid relations, stronger partnerships – as well as aid – would flow.

In consequence, better coordination and more effective partnerships would ensure more effective development outcomes.¹⁷ The implementation of national strategic plans which reflected local development needs, targeted to available resources, and monitored for performance, would ensure the aid-receiving government established an enabling environment for economic growth through promoting “sound policies” and building “strong institutions”.¹⁸ Policies and institutions would facilitate opportunities in the domestic private sector for foreign investment and economic growth ensuring that foreign aid stimulated economic growth.

Building capacity

¹⁷ OECD. 2005. *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*; Wood, B. et al. May 2011. *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, Final Report*.

¹⁸ Burnside C., and D. Dollar. 1997. *Aid Spurs Growth*, *World Bank Working Paper*, NO. 1777. Washington.

The strategies of Ownership reflected the “new public management” approach to public sector administration encouraged by the World Bank and others since the early 1990s as key to “good governance”.¹⁹

Practically, donors extended technical and financial assistance to aid-receiving governments to strengthen the capacity of their central agencies. It entailed an expectation that national governments would adopt or reform their administration systems and individual practices to build capacity of governments to implement the strategies of Ownership.

But while the Paris Declaration articulated the “road map” for how Ownership would generate change in aid relations – and more effective development – it did not explain the problem Ownership was intended to fix - or why Ownership would generate change.²⁰ I turned to the preceding decade of policy debate within the multilateral agencies to ascertain the problem which Ownership was intended to fix.

2.2.2 The Policy Problem: the Landscape of the New Aid Paradigm – and Ownership

The Paris Declaration and its sister policies under the HLFAE represented the culmination of a decades-long debate within key multilateral institutions, the OECD, UN and World Bank, over whether the answer to delivering better development lay in more aid or better institutions.²¹

¹⁹ Stern, Elliot D., with contributions from L.Altinger, O.Feinstein, M.Marañón, N.S.Schultz and N.S.Nielsen. 2008. *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness*; Hood, C. 1995. The New Public Management in the 1980s: Variations on a Theme, *Accountability, Organisations and Society*, 20(2/3):93-109.

²⁰ Stern, Elliot D. et al. 2008. *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness*.

²¹ OECD. 2006b. The DAC in Dates: The History of the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee; OECD. 2006e. The History of 0.7%; OECD-DAC. 1996. Shaping the 21st Century; Burnside C. and D. Dollar. 1997. Aid Spurs Growth; Burnside, C. and D. Dollar. 2000. Aid, Policies, and Growth, *The American Economic Review*, 90(4):847-68.

As the 1990s unfolded, the landscape of aid and development was changing: by the end of the decade, the number of people deemed to be living in poverty was at an historical high; and Official Development Assistance [ODA] was at an all-time low.²² The multilateral institutions were increasingly obliged to share “their” turf – and the diminishing ODA.²³ There was a plethora of new players, bilateral donors and civil society; while the role and influence of national governments in development was increasingly acknowledged – and lamented.²⁴ The nature of what constituted “development” - not merely how aid was best delivered - was increasingly debated within and beyond multilateral institutions. There was advocacy for a broader interpretation of development beyond economic growth: for a more sustainable development, which encompassed broader human and social dimensions through greater participation of civil society.²⁵ By the late 1990s, the multilateral institutions acknowledged a common position:²⁶ not just a new way to deliver aid, but a new way to imagine development. Rather than choosing between more aid or better institutions, they combined the two options: the answer, they agreed, lay in more effective and efficient aid through ensuring “sound policies and institutions” in the aid-receiving countries for more effective aid delivery and thus development. Partnerships were necessary to achieve this: Ownership was the first step in creating the partnerships.²⁷

²² While ODA was deemed at low levels globally – an issue of particular concern for the multilaterals who were seeking ongoing funding for their programming - reports from the UN indicate that ODA remained around the same levels as previously for East Asia and the Pacific; however, the UN data did not distinguish the two regions, so it is unclear what the precise situation was in the Pacific. See OECD. 2000. *2000: A Better Future for All* and OECD. 1999. *On Common Ground: Converging Views on Development and Development Coordination at the Turn of the Century*.

²³ Wolfensohn, J.D., 23/2/2000. Remarks on the Comprehensive Development Framework, Hanoi, Vietnam.

²⁴ World Bank. 1992. *Governance and Development*.

²⁵ Sen, A. 1999. *Development as Freedom*.

²⁶ OECD. 2000. *2000: A Better World For All*; OECD. 1999. *On Common Ground: Converging Views on Development and Development Coordination at the Turn of the Century*.

²⁷ Dollar D. and L.Pritchett. 1998. *Assessing Aid: What Works, What Doesn't and Why?*; Burnside, C. and D. Dollar. 2000. *Aid, policies, and growth*. OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*; OECD 1999. *On Common Ground Converging Views on Development and Development Coordination at the Turn of the Century*; OECD. 2005 *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*; Stern, E.D. et al. 2008. *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness*.

Aid, advised the UN and its counterparts, “must be used wisely.”²⁸ But, they lamented, aid was not targeted effectively or efficiently towards the right kind of development interventions with donors and aid-receiving countries sharing responsibility for this failure. Not only were there more donors, but their procedures were increasingly complex – consequently increasing the burden on small administrations of national governments and the transaction costs of “delivering” aid.²⁹ But equally, national governments in the aid receiving countries did not demonstrate the political leadership or commitment to determine the right kinds of interventions to meet development needs effectively and efficiently - due to either incapacity or corruption.³⁰ They were not taking responsibility for the way aid was allocated and programs implemented. They didn’t “own” their development.³¹ In the resultant vacuum, donors “naturally” dominated decisions on aid at the negotiation table contributing to ineffective development: decisions lacked the kind of local knowledge which targeted local needs; and, in the decision-making void, national governments unsuccessfully administered programs for which they did not take responsibility.³² Even when they had capacity and integrity, they lacked the political commitment necessary to ensure implementation.

²⁸ OECD. 2000. 2000: A Better World For All [25]

²⁹ OECD. 2000. 2000: A Better World For All [23]; Stern, E.D., et al. 2008. *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness* [19].

³⁰ “Many of the problems in aid were perceived as being due in large part to donors – and not developing countries – deciding where and how aid should be used. The reasons why donors have often insisted on such a dominant role are not hard to understand: some of the least-developed countries have lacked the political or administrative institutions to support aid projects, or have suffered from such high levels of corruption that donor countries have not felt confident about channelling funding through official channels.” OECD. 2009:70.

³¹ The 2008 Thematic Study under the Paris Declaration Evaluation later asserted that the Comprehensive Development Framework [CDF] principles were “deeply embedded” in the Paris Declaration, claiming that “to implement one is to implement the other.” The Thematic Study cited the World Bank on the CDF: “Recipient countries should lead aid management and coordination through stakeholder partnerships. Donor-recipient relationships should be actively managed by the recipient country as a partnership and not dominated by donor preferences. Partnerships built on mutual trust and consultation can improve aid coordination and reduce the inefficiencies, asymmetrical power relationships, and tensions of donor-led aid initiatives.” Stern, E. D. et al. 2008. *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness*:8.

³² OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*, 18

Effective, and more aid, the multilateral institutions asserted, required a re-alignment of the relationship between donors and aid-receiving governments to ensure the aid-receiving countries took responsibility for their development priorities and bilateral donors contributed more aid.³³

The multilaterals saw the Paris Declaration as the mechanism to implement this shift in relations.³⁴ Crucially, the meetings in Monterrey and Rome, culminating in the gathering in Paris, moved the debate from the internal conversations and policy papers amongst the corridors and meeting rooms of the multilateral institutions, to the aid-receiving countries and other representative bodies of the broader international development community. The meeting in Paris was a crucial step for gaining the aid-receiving countries' agreement on the multilaterals' common policy position, adopted in the lead up to the agreement on the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] in New York. Consensus in Paris gave credence to the translation of the common policy position into local practice in the aid-receiving countries.³⁵

³³ The 2008 Thematic Study observed that, as the Cold War came to an end, there was a recognition that relationships between donors and the recipients of aid (the aid relationship) needed to be reformed given several factors: the failure of "structural adjustment policies" and policy conditionalities; pressure from developing countries for greater democracy and accountability; and questions about the effectiveness of aid – whether monies spent led to development results. New policy directions were reinforced by new ideas including: a broader notion of 'human' development, no longer confined to economic growth; recognition of the pivotal role of the state and of policymaking in development decisions; and the accountability of donors, as well as the recipients of aid, for development results. Stern, Elliot D. et al 2008. *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness*.

³⁴ The OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation: 13*, observed: "The contribution of Development Cooperation acknowledges that the number and diversity of donor strategies creates a burden on local institutions which impairs local ownership and participation. Hence a mechanism – the partnership model – is useful." In contrast, the Report of the 2nd UN Conference on the LDCs, just five years earlier, in 1990, reveals that while the Conference acknowledged the need for "a new partnership" between donors and countries, and a multiplicity of mechanisms for more effective aid modalities and flows, it did not specifically talk about the dominance of donors. Rather, the SIDS-countries present were very specific about how to improve the aid relationship: Vanuatu asked for clear commitments on ODA, with more ODA to LDCs, untied, and aligned to countries priorities rather than donors' priorities and better aid coordination. While Kiribati asked for increased resources, improved aid modalities and effective aid. In conclusion, the Conference agreed on basic principles of development: partnership; comprehensive treatment of structural adjustment resource flows and debt; and the inclusion of broad range of actors beyond government. UNCTAD.1990. Report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Paris 3-14 September 1990, A/CONF/.147/18 [18-19; 123;132;157].

³⁵ This was a critical shift: at the 1990 Conference on LDCs, where the voices of the countries was strong, repeated calls for effective aid; acknowledged countries wanted to lead their development – but insisted that the 1970 agreement on ODA at

The evidence for Ownership

The driver for a common policy position was a focus by the multilaterals on aid's contribution to economic growth and development³⁶ but little evidence was produced for the assertion that Ownership was the panacea. The common policy position promoting Ownership as the precursor to Partnership drew on the "common-sense" of the significance and influence of local Ownership and participation in decision-making. It presumed a shared understanding, a common worldview, between donors and aid receiving countries on the meaning and merits of "Ownership". It asserted change would emerge from implementing Ownership.

But there was a small flaw in the analysis. The proposition was not grounded in an empirical basis which offered evidence for why Ownership would lead change in relations.³⁷

There was little evidence that the debates which produced the Paris Declaration recognised the values and beliefs which inform the social, cultural and political context of aid relations.³⁸ My experience as a development practitioner [and the growing literature on aid effectiveness³⁹] told me that dialogue on the practical implications of the power relations between donors, as the givers of aid, and those countries who received aid, was necessary for

0.7* of donor GNP be honoured; structural changes to global trade and financing rules – and opportunities to become self-reliant economically.

³⁶ Burnside, C. and D. Dollar. 2000. Aid, policies, and growth.

³⁷ Johnson, J. H., and S. Wasty. 1993. Borrower Ownership of Adjustment Programs and the Political Economy of Reform. *World Bank Discussion Papers* 199. World Bank Operations Evaluation Department. 1995. *Evaluation and Development: Proceedings of the 1994 World Bank Conference*. World Bank (ed). 1992. *Governance and Development*.

³⁸ Stone, D. 1997. *The Paradox of Policy: The Art of Political Decision-Making*.

³⁹ Teskey, G. 2022. Thinking and Working Politically, What Have We Learned Since 2013?

transformative change.⁴⁰ If policy is politics,⁴¹ integrating the outcome of such dialogue would strengthen the potential success of a policy seeking to change relations between two parties “embedded” in asymmetrical relations of power.⁴²

The common policy position agreed by the multilateral agencies, evidenced by the Paris Declaration, focused on **how** Ownership would lead to a resolution rather than **why** Ownership would do so. As one OECD report observed, when formalising the policy logic for the evaluation of the Paris Declaration, there was little empirical evidence of a causal link between governance, institutions and development.⁴³ ⁴⁴ The expectations of Ownership reflected a common “policy interest”,⁴⁵ a sign of “faith”⁴⁶ in the importance of potential links

⁴⁰ Green, D. 31/3/2021. From Poverty to Power: Where have we got to in Understanding Power as the Basis for Activism?; Gaventa, J. 2020. Beyond the Prepositions: Using Power Analysis to Inform Strategies for Social Action', *Journal of Political Power* [Preprint: 11 December 2020] IDS: Open Docs.

⁴¹ Stone, D. 1997. *The Paradox of Policy: The art of Political Decision-Making*.

⁴² Ostrom, E. et al 2002. *Aid. Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report.

⁴³ See the 2008 Thematic Study which explained these included four key literatures: evaluations of the policy initiatives related to the Paris Declaration; aid effectiveness; governance institutions and policy; and lastly, the literature on fragile states, state-building and development. All assumed the validity of the classical, neoclassic, and institutional theories of economic growth leads to development – and poverty reduction, if a certain degree of social inclusion and redistribution to the poor is promoted - rather than the broader understanding of development as human and social empowerment. Stern, E. D. et al., 2008. *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness*: 27.

⁴⁴ The 2008 Thematic Study identified the key hypothesis in the Paris Declaration and proposed a policy logic to explain how and why change would happen. It set out two conditions for the assumptions which shaped its policy logic: “The aid-relationship is to be understood as a partnership with both Donors and Partner Countries jointly committed to achieving development results and alleviating poverty. In this partnership framework, aid when transferred to the governments of partner countries through national budgets provided these governments have made plans to address poverty and basic needs in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, is more likely to be used efficiently and effectively. The extent to which this will happen is subject to two main sets of conditions: First, Partner Countries need sound institutions (capable bureaucracies, budgetary systems, analytic capacity and data availability); institutions that set equitable rules of the game); good policies (those that are likely to promote development); and good governance (governments that are supported by their own citizens, avoid corruption, and maintain the rule of law and human rights). Second, donors must be willing to follow Partner Countries priorities (rather than their own) and do so jointly without ‘flag-waving’ or pursuing national strategic objectives or commercial interests; and ensure that the administrative burdens and accountability demands are harmonised and aligned so as not to create high transaction costs for Partner Countries or otherwise divert government efforts disproportionately. In the absence of the first set of conditions implementation of the Paris Declaration will need to be accompanied by capacity building and the adaptation of policies and plans to match existing capacities and governance arrangements whilst they are being improved. In the absence of the second set of conditions donors need to coordinate aid planning and delivery better among themselves whilst also adapting their priorities and systems to those of the Partner Country concerned.” Stern, E.D. et al. 2008 *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness*: 14-15.

⁴⁵ Stern, E. D. et al. 2008 *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness*: 31.

⁴⁶ As Stern et al declared: “there continues to be faith in the importance of these links.” Stern, E. D. et al. 2008 *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness*: 31.

between governance, institutions and development, rather than being grounded in empirical research.⁴⁷ In search of a foundation for a policy position which seemed to have been adopted ‘on faith’, I turned to Ostrom’s work, undertaken at the behest of the Swedish International Development Agency, SIDA in 1999.⁴⁸ This research was one of the few studies which identified a theoretical grounding for **why** Ownership would effect change.⁴⁹ It was also a signal which demonstrated the absence of evidence to support the claims of Ownership’s efficacy in contributing to more effective development: just as Ownership had already been adopted by the multilateral agencies, it was already official SIDA policy also.⁵⁰ SIDA wanted to validate its existing policy choice.

⁴⁷ Rather, the 2008 Thematic Study observed, the “policy interest” in Ownership reflected “faith” in the importance of links between governance, institutions and state-building which followed from “...asking what can be done to enhance developing countries governments’ capacity to deliver.” The Thematic study team observed that while there was little empirical evidence of a causal link between governance institutions and development, “there continues to be faith in the importance of these links.” They attributed the policymakers’ reliance on this literature to the existing “policy interest” in state-building “which itself followed from a focus on country ownership...asking what can be done to enhance developing countries governments capacity to deliver.” Stern, E. D. et al. *2008 Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness: 19-31.*

⁴⁸ The Swedish International Development Agency [SIDA] engaged Ostrom and her team in 1999 to clarify “donor-imposed constraints to development” by undertaking an institutional analysis of development and development cooperation. The study offered an analysis of the relationship between aid, incentives and sustainability. The study made three central arguments for more sustainable development through: 1) a more systematic understanding of incentive problems and their institutional causes in local development contexts and the system of development cooperation; 2) the creation of incentives within SIDA to encourage individual and organisation learning about sustainable; and 3) the devolution of ownership of aid to the “target” population of aid beneficiaries. Ostrom, E. et al 2002. *Aid Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report. A summary report was submitted to SIDA in November 2001. The main, final report was submitted in December 2001. An abridged and public version of the report was edited by Gibson, together with the others of the original team, as *The Samaritan’s Dilemma: The Political Economy of Aid*, in 2005. This version became known as the seminal text in development circles.

⁴⁹ In addition to the circulation of the report’s findings through a subsequent publication, Ostrom’s work was shared with the international development community - and the OECD in particular, in other influential ways: a workshop was convened within the OECD in 1999 to discuss the role of Ownership, see OECD. 2000. *Development Cooperation Report 1999*; and in addition, two SIDA Executive Staff were also Chairs of the Aid Effectiveness Working Group during the crafting of the Paris Declaration and other HLFAE. [see journal article by H*armer.](#)

⁵⁰ SIDA defined Ownership as: “a project owner is defined as the party which request support and which is responsible for the planning and implementation of the project...[and] finances part, of the costs...[and] vests its partner in development cooperation with full rights to use the resources provided with the framework [of] the agreement.” Ostrom, E. et al 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: 48.

2.3 Assuming Ownership: Ostrom and the Samaritan's Dilemma

SIDA invited Elinor Ostrom and her team to undertake an institutional analysis of the relationship between aid, incentives and sustainability in their development cooperation programmes. Ostrom examined the Ownership's contribution to more sustainable development.

Drawing on the Institutional Analysis and Development [IAD] framework, which has its roots in new institutionalism and public choice theory, Ostrom determined that the aid and development environment faced a collective action problem. The environment was characterised by perverse incentives which undermined the common good that all sought. As *de facto* owners, Ostrom asserted, donors had to relinquish control - while continuing to honour their obligations, to their citizens, to account for the use of public funds and deliver results. Meanwhile, aid beneficiaries were hampered by unfavourable conditions owing to poor and weak institutions, inherent corruption [particularly among the governing elites], untrustworthy relationships, and weak cultural norms.⁵¹

The way to balance these competing pressures, Ostrom asserted, was to effect a transition in Ownership, through beneficiary participation in the provision, production, consumption and alienation of aid interventions. Donors would support beneficiaries and build capacity to strengthen cultural norms and participation skills.

⁵¹ Ostrom, E. et al 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report.

2.4 Ostrom's Proposition: a Transition in Ownership through Participation:

Development, Ostrom declared, was a collective action problem.⁵² The common good intended by aid was to achieve sustainable development which required institutional conditions that shaped incentives for collective action. But, Ostrom asserted, in many developing contexts, “problems are caused by weak or so called perverse incentives for local actors to engage in collective action for their common good... these perverse incentives are...rooted in unfavorable institutional circumstances”.⁵³ These incentives, Ostrom asserted, undermined the common good of sustainable development that aid was intended to achieve. The “developing countries” Ostrom declared, relied on informal networks, largely of friends, kin and family with limited capacity to address the motivational and information asymmetries – the perverse incentives - which characterised the aid and development environment.⁵⁴

⁵² Ostrom describes: “A collective action situation ...occurs whenever the input of several individuals is required to achieve a desirable joint outcome. ...[they] become problems when actors in the situation choose actions that produce outcomes that are evaluated to be less desirable than others available to them...unless participant share clear and efficiency-enhancing rules and norms, some may shirk (free-ride) on the efforts of others or try to deflect joint returns primarily to themselves...[and] the level of productive outcomes achieved by their joint efforts starts to deteriorate...[leading to] perverse incentives tend to be self-reinforcing...most institutional analyst recognise that individuals are capable of crafting solutions to their own diverse problems of collective action...this requires a rich set of general and special institutional arrangements at local region and national levels at private and public spheres.” See Ostrom, E. et al 2002. *Aid Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: 46.

⁵³ Ostrom, E. et al 2002. *Aid Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: Foreword.

⁵⁴ Ostrom identifies two levels of issues which represent or generate perverse incentives in aid: the first level encompasses motivational and information issues which reflect in three consequences: 1) public good problems, when an individual's consumption of a good is not affected by his/her contribution to producing the good: in such situations, an individual has an incentive to free ride, to enjoy without contribution; 2) common pool resources, where, in the absence of effective institutions, users overharvest – and so goods become unnecessarily scarce; and 3) the Samaritan's Dilemma: where an individual's consumption of/reliance on another's charity or generosity increases the recipient's likelihood of becoming dependent on the giver; both the recipient and the giver can suffer moral injury in the absence of independence. The second level refers to missing or asymmetric information: this means actors do not know the complete situation they face, such as when local information is not included in design or performance: it leads to three issues: 1) principal-agent problems, where subordinates know more than their superiors, giving rise to inefficient outcomes at odds with management expectations; 2) moral hazard problem: where individuals or institutions are guaranteed a benefit against loss or non-performance, regardless of their subsequent actions [i.e. not held accountable]; 3) adverse selection: where gaps in information mean the worst project/performer is selected – bad projects replace good returns. Effective governance [and institutions], Ostrom argued, *can counteract such kinds of motivational and informational asymmetries beyond the [limited] capacity of informal systems of family and kin and networks found in developing countries*. In Ostrom, E. et al 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: xvii-xviii.

Ostrom highlighted the influence of two perverse incentives implicit in aid relations: the Samaritan's Dilemma and asymmetry in power.⁵⁵

The Samaritan's Dilemma has its origins in the Christian faith, in the parable of the Good Samaritan.⁵⁶ The moral of the parable is that, in response to the question: "Who is my neighbour?", it is the designated "outsider", the Samaritan, who answers the question by his actions.⁵⁷ Your neighbour, the one you must help, the parable admonishes, is anyone in need, even your enemy. In the 1970s, an American Nobel prize winning economist, Buchanan, put a twist in the tale of the Good Samaritan.⁵⁸

Buchanan, according to Ostrom, argues that the parable of the Good Samaritan generates a more significant dilemma than the question of whom one is obliged to help.⁵⁹ The dilemma that can arise is whether the victim takes the help of the Good Samaritan for granted and is unwilling to take responsibility for helping themselves. If, Buchanan's argument ran, the victim becomes dependent on the goodwill of the Samaritan has the Samaritan done more harm

⁵⁵ Ostrom refers separately to the Samaritans Dilemma and asymmetry in power – she doesn't subsume the first within the latter. Ostrom, E. et al 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report.

⁵⁶ Luke 10:25-37. 2011. The Parable of the Good Samaritan. In the Holy Bible, New International Version, by Biblica Inc [also Matthew 25:31-46]

⁵⁷ It was the Samaritan who stopped to help his [purported] enemy, a Jewish traveller on his way to Jericho, who had been robbed and left for dead at the side of the road: not the learned priest, nor the morally upright Levite, who both chose to pass on the other side of the road to avoid the risk of being asked to help. "and thus, whom must one love as if yourself in order to follow the law and to inherit eternal life." Luke 10:25-37. 2011. The Parable of the Good Samaritan.

⁵⁸ Buchanan, J. 1975. The Samaritan's Dilemma, in E.S. Phelps [ed]. *Altruism, Morality and Economic Theory*: 71-86

⁵⁹ An alternative interpretation of Buchan's dilemma, by Marciano, argues that the dilemma is not ONLY about the detrimental effects that assistance [or aid] might have on beneficiaries, but rather, argues that Buchanan then proceeds to make the case for illustrating how ethical courage by the 'Samaritan' matters for the promotion of equality between both donor and beneficiary: ie *that when the beneficiary becomes dependent the Samaritan suffers harm as well because the Samaritan's altruism is not reciprocated or satisfied*. To avoid this harm, the "unpleasant asymmetrical and unequal situation" of the intended beneficiary not actually benefiting from the Samaritan's goodwill, the Samaritan may decide NOT to behave with generosity [or charity] and instead, a Samaritan should be "able to display strategic courage and individual responsibility and appropriate institutions should be devised". In choosing NOT to behave with generosity, the Samaritan incites the beneficiary to change their behaviour – and so, *symmetry and equality is restored*. See Marciano, A. 26/9/2021. Buchanan's Samaritan's Dilemma. In Promarket: Insights Shaping the Future of Capitalism.

than good? The dilemma, Buchanan proposed, is how to help the victim help themselves? This, Ostrom explains, generated the first perverse incentive of aid: the risk that aid undermines self-reliance and encourages dependency.

The second perverse incentive, Ostrom observed, related to the asymmetry in power relations between donors and aid-receiving countries. Most collective action problems are embedded within a pre-existing distribution of economic and political power. If that distribution is highly unequal, it is likely that the elite have ensured that past decisions have distributed assets disproportionately in their favour. In the asymmetrical situations characteristic between donors and aid-receiving states, Ostrom explains, the elite may resist efforts to change the distribution of outcomes: “They prefer a less productive status quo... to a more equitable and productive change.”⁶⁰

The operation of these two perverse incentives Ostrom feared, would undermine the common good of sustainable development given aid relations were already embedded in an unequal distribution of economic and political power between donors and the aid receiving states. Donors’ superior access to resources and technology and the absence of rigorous indigenous institutions to offer protection from internal elites through existing norms and rules, left aid beneficiaries at risk of dependency on the altruism of the donor. The moral injury generated was two-fold: the donor has caused harm to the aid beneficiary who becomes less

⁶⁰ Ostrom, E. et al 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report.

willing to take responsibility for helping themselves; and the donors have harmed themselves because their actions undermine their charitable intent.⁶¹

The remedy for these perverse incentives, Ostrom declared, was a transfer of Ownership.⁶² Transferring Ownership of aid interventions from donors to the intended beneficiaries would counteract the perverse incentives represented by the asymmetry in power relations between donors and aid beneficiaries, and in particular, by the Samaritan's Dilemma.⁶³

Participation was the key to unlocking this transition. The way to counteract aid's perverse incentives was by engaging "locally-situated knowledge" through the participation of the intended beneficiaries in decisions affecting them.⁶⁴ Ostrom asserted that aid beneficiaries must satisfy four conditions to effect a transition in Ownership of aid interventions. Beneficiaries needed to:

- a. enunciate a demand for aid [provision];
- b. exercise some control over the resources made available to support the intervention [production];
- c. allocate some of their own assets to the intervention so that they have a

⁶¹ Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report; Buchanan, J. 1975. The Samaritan's Dilemma, in E.S Phelps [ed.]. *Altruism, Morality and Economic Theory*.

⁶² Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: 242.

⁶³ Note: Ostrom is proposing a shift in the way "grass roots" beneficiaries engage in the design operation resourcing and conclusion of aid interventions: she effectively argued that donors go around the "corrupt" elite and deal directly with the "on the ground" or "grass roots" beneficiaries, "the real poor". This mirrored much of the participatory ideologies of the 90s, promoted by participatory development experts such as Robert Chambers at IDS and others across INGO groups. See also the critiques of participatory development: Cooke, B. and U. Kothari. 2002. *Participation the New Tyranny*; and Hickey S., and G. Mohan. 2004. *Participation: From Tyranny to Transformation: Exploring New Approaches to Participation in Development*.

⁶⁴ Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report.

“real stake” in how their own and other actors’ assets are used [consumption]; and

- d. clearly assign responsibility and be able to participate in decisions regarding continuance or non-continuance of a project [alienation].⁶⁵

The satisfaction of all four conditions would align the incentives of both the donor and recipient by making better use of local knowledge and customs – thereby counteracting the perverse incentives generated by motivational and informational asymmetries between donors and aid beneficiaries.⁶⁶ While donors would cede some control, participation by aid beneficiaries in decisions concerning the “provision production consumption and alienation” of aid interventions, would move these beneficiaries towards establishing the “sound” institutions and policies that were the basis of effective governance.^{67 68}

⁶⁵ The description of the four conditions varied across the report. See also earlier description of Ownership of a development assistance project or program as having four dimensions for sustainable development outcomes: 1) enunciating demand; 2) making a tangible contribution; 3) obtaining benefits; and 4) sharing responsibility for long term continuation or non-continuation of a project. Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: xx-xiv.

⁶⁶ Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: xix.

⁶⁷ Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: 3

⁶⁸ Ostrom et al. advise: “If recipient agencies and targeted beneficiaries are included in this activities, perverse incentives may be ameliorated...allowing the recipients to participate in the provision process may help align the incentives of donor and recipients as well as make better use of local knowledge and institutions. Participation in the production process may help prevent recipients from free riding on the aid. Participation in the consumption of benefits and costs may motivate greater concern for appropriate outcomes. Finally, participation in the alienation of aid may generate information likely to reduce the probabilities of continuing unsuccessful projects or programs. Thus, including recipient in true ownership can help solve some of the severe incentive effects in relation to information and motivational problems in development cooperation.” Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: 242-243.

2.4.1 Ostrom's Assumptions

Ostrom's analysis made universal claims about aid receiving countries that were inconsistent with my experience in the Pacific. Her claims rested on several assumptions about aid relations – and the people responsible for expediting those relations.

The meaning of development

First, Ostrom approached the research with a narrow understanding of development as “improved material well-being”.⁶⁹ This understanding ignored the alternative understanding of development as a human and social endeavour including the attainment of freedom and empowerment.⁷⁰

The moral framework for development: Institutions and incentives:

Second, Ostrom engaged a **moral framework for development** which equated the experience of receiving aid with an absence of moral integrity and capacity; and, correspondingly, the attribution of virtue to donors' actions in giving aid. Drawing on the Samaritan's Dilemma as a foundational metaphor for aid relations, she assumed:

- a. A correlation between the absence of strong indigenous institutions with the trustworthiness of relationships. Ostrom asserted that individuals in developing countries, where the informal systems of family kin and networks are “weak”, should build “stronger cultural norms” to ensure more reliable and

⁶⁹ Ostrom et al. state that development and development cooperation refers to “improving the material conditions” of recipient individuals, “through processes of deliberate intervention”. Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report:1.

⁷⁰ Sen, A. 1999. Development as freedom.

trustworthy conduct.⁷¹

- b. Aid recipients were characterised as more likely to be dependent ‘free-riders’, bereft of strong cultural norms, out to take advantage of the charity extended by the generous donor. If the beneficiary was worthy, rather than dependent and free-riding, then they were as likely to suffer from the avarice of their own governing elite and required protection from their government - hence, Ostrom promoted beneficiary rather than government ownership.⁷²
- c. In contrast, donors were motivated by generosity and altruism - despite the growing literature on donor motivations encompassing geopolitics, commercial interests and domestic politics.⁷³
- d. Similarly, donor staff were motivated by “good intentions”, even if occasionally the hapless harbingers of injury. They were “individuals trying to do good” but who unwittingly found themselves “hampered ...by the incentives they face”.⁷⁴

Third, Ostrom’s proposition for Ownership reinforced a moral framework for development premised on the values and beliefs - and corresponding social norms - of responsibility and leadership, efficiency and effectiveness, accountability and self-reliance, through

⁷¹ Ostrom et al, claimed: “when individuals trying to do good find themselves hampered ...by the incentives they face, it is quite important...to examine what these incentives are and how they can induce behaviour that slows down development rather than enhancing it...” Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: 8; and 71.

⁷² This is an argument laid out by the advocates of ownership as an instrument of “democracy aid”. For example, see Carothers, T. 2015. The Deeper Struggle Over Country Ownership, in OECD. *A Governance Practitioner’s Notebook Alternative Ideas and Approaches*, 249-250. The prospect of a donor by-passing the sovereign government of another country to deliver aid to its citizens raises questions about sovereignty which one imagines that Ostrom should have canvassed in the interests of rigour.

⁷³ Lancaster, C. 2007. *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*; Van Der Veen, A.M. 2011. *Ideas, Interests and Foreign Aid*.

⁷⁴ Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: 8.

participation and contribution.⁷⁵ Despite the claims made for locally-situated knowledge, there was little evidence that the values, beliefs and norms implicit in the conditions for a transition to Ownership reflected discussions with the “beneficiaries” of aid. Their validity as universally-subscribed values, beliefs and norms which shape the donor-aid recipient relationship was assumed.⁷⁶

Fourth, Ostrom’s critique of sustainable development argued two related positions, both firmly located in western frames for institutionalism:

- a. That institutional systems in “developing” countries were “less robust” because they lacked a system of enforceable property rights which were subject to the scrutiny through a fair and accessible judicial system;⁷⁷
- b. That individuals in these countries instead, relied on informal systems of family, neighbours and other such networks which were unable to address perverse incentives inherent in aid.

⁷⁵ These norms were subsequently enshrined in the practices encompassed by the idea and strategies of Ownership in the Paris Declaration, and measured by specific outputs: the national strategic plans and national budgets – authorised by national parliaments; the performance assessment frameworks; and consultation and coordination mechanisms engagement with civil society and others, such as the private sector.

⁷⁶ Nor was there evidence that these values, beliefs and corresponding norms were tested with the beneficiaries in any of the research sites. Most of the interviews for the study were conducted with SIDA staff and or SIDA consultants; and a limited number of aid-receiving government representatives. Ostrom states that development and development cooperation refers to “improving the material conditions” of recipient individuals, “through processes of deliberate intervention”. Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report.

⁷⁷ Ostrom explains that her starting point is that “many development problems in countries where foreign donors operate are caused by weak or so-called perverse incentives for local actors to engage in collective action for their common good...perverse incentives that are to a large extent rooted in unfavourable institutional circumstances”. She asserts that the institutional environment in developing countries is “less robust” and thus, less able to cohere through shared motivation/information resolution: “when embedded in a open public realm with an effective property -rights system and an available fair court system, individuals can build trusting relationships that enable them to increase the benefits that they can jointly obtain. When trustworthy behaviour and a reputation for being fair and honest can make a difference in long-run opportunities for individuals, strong cultural norms reinforcing these behaviours are likely to grow and develop over time.” Ostrom states that development and development cooperation refers to “improving the material conditions” of recipient individuals, “through processes of deliberate intervention”. Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: 48.

- c. Yet, Ostrom acknowledged her own ignorance of the status of indigenous institutions, norms and local knowledge systems, asserting the need for “more research” into this area.⁷⁸ Ownership, it seemed, was a test case - for the beneficiaries.

Lastly, while Ostrom acknowledged that many indigenous institutions had been severely affected by colonisation and its aftermath, it was unclear how she reconciled this with a moral framing of developing countries as “weak” and deficient:

- a. Ostrom largely viewed the presence of politics and power through the prospect of internal or domestic tension between domestic elites and “beneficiaries”. There was little discussion of the politics - and power - implicit in the shadow cast by colonisation on contemporary relations between donors and developing countries.
- b. Ostrom emphasised the inclusion of locally-situated knowledge as the mechanism through which beneficiaries influenced a shift in [asymmetrical] relations with donors. However, the focus of the proposition for Ownership lay in changes in the beneficiaries’ behaviours and practices. While she acknowledged donor-staff should be educated on the context of aid and its inherent capacity to generate “perverse incentives,” there was no strategy outlining how donors would “learn” to relinquish control and retreat from dominating the negotiation of aid interventions.⁷⁹ It was the beneficiaries

⁷⁸ Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report: 1.

⁷⁹ Ostrom, E. et al. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation*, Main Report.

who had the heavier responsibility for changing their behaviours and contributing to more effective partnerships.

The seeming flaws in several of Ostrom's assumptions about aid relations – and inherent incentives and context - led me to question the political worldview which influenced her analysis and conclusions. Implicit in the analysis were the tired, binary tropes of well-intentioned donors; and untrustworthy, unmoderated, aid-recipients, ready to take advantage of another's generosity.⁸⁰ It raised the question of whether the flaws in the underlying assumptions invalidated the logic of Ownership.

Ostrom's assumptions – and her criteria - underwrote the idea of Ownership which, it was claimed, would change power relations between donors and aid-receiving countries under the Paris Declaration. That was the intention underlying the rhetoric of Ownership. I turned next, to the critiques in the literature, to examine how the rhetoric – and its underlying assumptions – played out in practice.

⁸⁰ The tired and stereotyped trope of the "Good Samaritan" donor, wanting to be generous, but trying to avoid being taken advantage of by dependent, and irresponsible, victim - and aid recipient - at the side of the road resonates with the deficit model of development, loudly declaimed by James C Scott in *Seeing Like a State* – and which continues to be called out by those for whom "Development" claims to benefit, yet without a shift in power, serves to maintain the status quo rather than create change. See for example, Scott Gorringer, for Indigenous X who observes: "Deficit discourse describes a mode of thinking that frames and represents Aboriginal identity in a narrative of negativity, deficiency and disempowerment. When all the thinking, all the conversations and all the approaches are framed in a discourse that sees Aboriginality as a problem, very little positive movement is possible." Gorringer, S. 15/5/2015. Aboriginal culture is not a problem. The way we talk about it is. *The Guardian*; Scott, J.C. 1999. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*.

2.5 Implementing Ownership: the Challenges of Practice

When I began my research, the Australian government and the Pacific Island Forum leaders had endorsed the principle of Ownership. The Australian government, through the Australian Aid Program, had integrated the principles enshrined by the Paris Declaration into their programming.⁸¹ While several Pacific countries, and the Pacific Forum Secretariat were represented in Paris,⁸² it was not until 2007 that the Pacific Forum officials, the region's senior aid and development policymakers, endorsed the principles through the adoption of the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles [PAEPs].⁸³ The PAEPs endorsed the principle of Ownership, making several modifications to reflect the Pacific context.⁸⁴ At the instigation of Australia as Chair, the Paris Principles became the foundation of a new policy, the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination, agreed by the Pacific Islands Forum leaders in Cairns in 2009.⁸⁵

At the time that the Compact was endorsed in Cairns, Australia had commissioned several 'grey' evaluations of the implementation of the Paris Declaration in the Pacific.⁸⁶ These included an

⁸¹ AusAID. 2008. *Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration, Case Study of Australia*. Consultants report prepared for AusAID; Australian Update for the Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration Phase 2, Annex included in Woods B., et al. May 2011. *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration Final Report Phase 2*

⁸² See Chapter 5 The Global Idea of Ownership; and Chapter 6 From Paris to the Pacific.

⁸³ The PAEP emerged from discussions at the 2006 PICS Partners meeting. With Australian aid support, PIFS subsequently led several workshops to "adapt" the Paris Principles for the Pacific context. The PAEPs were the result; they were endorsed by the PICS- Partners and adjacent FEMM meetings in Koror in Palau in 2007. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2007. Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles (July Koror). See Chapter 6 From Paris to the Pacific for more detail.

⁸⁴ See Chapter 6 from Paris to the Pacific for more detail.

⁸⁵ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. Forum Communique: 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12.

⁸⁶ When I began my research, there were limited studies in the Pacific on the impact of Ownership on aid effectiveness under the Paris Declaration, and few undertaken during the Compact's lifespan. Most of the grey literature was commissioned by one or other donor: for example, New Zealand [with support from the UNDP and Australia] undertook studies on harmonisation following the Rome HLFAE; and the AusAID commissioned several program evaluations between 2005 and 2012. See AusAID. 2008. *A Balancing Act: Implementation of the Paris Declaration in Timor-Leste*, Background Paper for the 3rd HLFAE; AusAID. Annex 14: Good Practice Relation to Development Assistance Effectiveness for National Aids Responses in *Evaluation of the Australia Aid Program's Contribution to the National HIV Response in Papua New Guinea 2006-2010*, and Carlson, C., and P. Bazeley and R. David, T. Kabutaulaka. 2013. Final Report: Solomons Islands-

examination of the influence and significance of Ownership on program implementation – and the influence on the partnership with Australia. The lack or absence of Ownership was often put forward in these evaluations as the reason for policy and program failure, with calls for stronger political will and commitment. Often, depending on the [often implicit] political stance, these evaluations were called for less corruption and stronger technical capacity within countries’ policymaking communities – or more respectful negotiations, or less dominating attitudes and behaviours from donors.

Next, I turned to the scholarly literature, drawing first from the global literature on the influence of Ownership on aid effectiveness in countries outside the Pacific to highlight the issues which emerged in the decade after Paris. I then compare issues identified in the global literature to the reports of the Pacific’s experience of implementing Ownership documented across the scholarly literature.

My review of the literature revealed three key issues that illustrate the mismatch articulated by my puzzle: the ambiguity around the meaning or significance of Ownership, with questions around its scope, authority and purpose; the capacity of the governments’ implementing Ownership – and the pertinent conditions and incentives which motivated “implementation”; and the question of whether participation reflected power. Context was relevant to each issue.

The Meaning of Ownership:

When the OECD acclaimed the consensus reached in Paris, it described Ownership as national aid-receiving governments accepting responsibility and demonstrating leadership of their development agenda.⁸⁷ But, despite the OECD's claims of consensus in Paris, there was little common agreement – nor amongst the consultants or NGOs who often acted as policy “brokers”⁸⁸ - on the meaning of Ownership in practice.⁸⁹ The idea of Ownership generated unease, even before the claim of consensus in Paris;⁹⁰ and this unease escalated afterwards. The meaning of Ownership, Buiters and others argued, was ambiguous, leaving the authority and scope of the idea unclear. “Expert development practitioners” met to raise concerns about the challenge of implementing Ownership, given there was not a clear consensus on its meaning.⁹¹ A decade on, the debate continued.⁹² Ownership continued to carry different meanings across different contexts for different audiences, pending their purpose.⁹³

When the international development community reconvened in Accra, they agreed to extend the scope and authority to encompass national parliaments, civil society and the domestic private sector.⁹⁴ But this didn't resolve the issue. The debated terminology around Ownership included variations on “governmental ownership,” “country ownership” and “democratic

⁸⁷ OECD. 2005. Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

⁸⁸ Lewis, D., and D. Mosse (eds). 2006. *Development brokers and translators: The ethnography of aid and agencies*. Stone, D. 2017. Understanding the Transfer of Policy Failure: Bricolage, Experimentalism and Translation. *Policy & Politics* 45(1):55–70.

⁸⁹ Buiters, W.H. 2007. Country Ownership: A Term Whose Time Has Gone. *Development in Practice* 17(4–5): 647–652*Published in 2007, but the paper was first delivered at a conference in 2004.

⁹⁰ Buiters, W.H. 2007. Country Ownership: A Term Whose Time Has Gone. *Development in Practice* 17(4–5): 647–652

⁹¹ Buiters, W.H. 2007. Country Ownership: A Term Whose Time Has Gone. *Development in Practice* 17(4–5): 647–652; Pirnia, P. 2016. Cultivating Ownership of Development Aid: The role of Civil Society in the Pacific; Carothers, T. 2015. The Deeper Struggle Over Country Ownership, In OECD. 2015. *A Governance Practitioner's Notebook Alternative Ideas and Approaches*, 249-250

⁹² Carothers, T. 2015. The Deeper Struggle Over Country Ownership. In OECD. 2015. *A Governance Practitioner's Notebook Alternative Ideas and Approaches*, 249-250

⁹³ Buiters, W.H. 2007. Country Ownership: A Term Whose Time has Gone. *Development in Practice*, 17, (4/5):647-652; Pirnia, P. 2016. Cultivating Ownership of Development Aid: The Role of Civil Society in the Pacific.

⁹⁴ OECD. 2005. Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness; OECD. 2008. The Accra Agenda for Action.

ownership”.⁹⁵ The debate on terminology, Carothers later argued, “masks deep divisions” in the imperatives which should shape development cooperation.⁹⁶ The division, Carothers argued a decade after the agreement in Paris, represented those favouring an alignment of aid for better effectiveness through partnerships with country *governments* on one hand; or with the broader country *societies*, to promote human rights through democracy, on the other.

The debate remained ongoing, as Pirnia demonstrated, in the Pacific.⁹⁷ The scope and authority of Ownership’s mandate remained vexed, carrying different meanings depending on context.⁹⁸ From a Pacific perspective, Pirnia argued, it was necessary to redefine Ownership to reflect Pacific civil society’s understanding of its significance.⁹⁹ But Pirnia’s proposition for an alternative meaning risked undermining his own critique. His proposed resolution could be seen as simply replacing one paradigm with that of an alternative constituency’s preferred paradigm.¹⁰⁰ It didn’t necessarily represent a consensus on Ownership which would promote stronger partnerships between all parties.

⁹⁵ Carothers, T. 2015. The Deeper Struggle Over Country Ownership. In OECD (ed) 2015. *A Governance Practitioner’s Notebook Alternative Ideas and Approaches*, 249-250.

⁹⁶ As Carothers observed: “The concept of ownership is in fact at the heart of a deep-reaching struggle between two conflicting imperatives shaping the contemporary domain of international assistance: the push to make ownership the basic feature of international aid, and movement toward viewing developing country *societies* rather than just developing country *governments* as the true partners of international assistance.” Carothers, a global development expert from the USA, argues that Ownership, as an instrument of international aid, was caught in a tussle between two competing imperatives: that Ownership was integral to ensuring better governments – or that it was essential in the campaign for building better societies. Each carried implications for where aid was targeted: towards government, or towards those who sought to hold governments to account i.e. aid was directed towards various entities outside government. In the resultant tension between aid-receiving governments and aid providers, Carothers argues, became an argument over democracy and political sovereignty – and brought risks for the scope and authority of Ownership as an instrument of change in aid. Carothers, T. 2015. The Deeper Struggle Over Country Ownership. In OECD (ed) 2015. *A Governance Practitioner’s Notebook Alternative Ideas and Approaches*, 249-250.

⁹⁷ Pirnia, P. 2016. Cultivating Ownership of Development Aid: The role of Civil Society in the Pacific.

⁹⁸ Pirnia, P. 2016. Cultivating Ownership of Development Aid: The role of Civil Society in the Pacific.

⁹⁹ Pirnia, P. 2016. Cultivating Ownership of Development Aid: The role of Civil Society in the Pacific.

¹⁰⁰ Pirnia, P. 2016. Cultivating Ownership of Development Aid: The role of Civil Society in the Pacific.

As a consequence of the absence of a consistent and shared agreement on the meaning of Ownership, it was also difficult to reach agreement on measuring change. Some alleged that the evaluation of the Paris Declaration pursued by the OECD reflected a donor-centric understanding of Ownership, with a consequent reinforcement of the power imbalance in relations between donors and countries.

Countries' Capacity: Conditions and Incentives

The second debate related to the question of capacity and motivation. As noted earlier, the Paris “road map” identified four key outputs intended to signify the presence of Ownership: national strategic plans; budgets; performance frameworks and coordination mechanisms.¹⁰¹ Donors undertook responsibility for providing technical and financial assistance to aid-receiving countries to strengthen their capacity to undertake the tasks required to deliver these outputs. The underlying policy logic argued that the engagement of local knowledge in decision-making on development through participation, together with the promise of more aid, would act as incentives to encourage acceptance of policy reform, such as financial management or public administration reforms.

But there were key concerns: first, questions were raised about the capacity of countries to establish the right conditions necessary for Ownership to emerge; and second, concerns were raised about the validity of the role played by incentives.

¹⁰¹ The final evaluation measured Ownership by one composite indicator: the presence of operational frameworks. Wood, B. et al., May 2011. *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, Final Report Phase 2*.

Drawing on their experience of Africa, Whitfield and Booth claimed that Ownership was too much to expect of “developing” countries. In the vacuum generated by the absence of political will and commitment - whether the result of local incapacity or corruption - some countries were unable to establish the right conditions for Ownership. Whitfield argued for earlier negotiations in the aid relationship to establish more conducive conditions for the exercise of Ownership through mutual agreement and understanding between donors and aid-receiving governments.¹⁰² Booth, in agreement with Whitfield on most points, claimed that the development task for the donors was one of constructing the conditions for Ownership, rather than assuming its presence.¹⁰³

Other criticisms more directly addressed the question of the effectiveness of the “new conditionality” ascribed to the Paris Declaration.¹⁰⁴ These criticisms questioned whether the conditions attached to the implementation of the strategies of Ownership – with promises of more aid in return for performance – were a coercive influence, rather than a positive incentive.¹⁰⁵ Hence, the implementation of “agreed” policy reform was considered by some to indicate compliance or coercion, rather than the voluntary exercise of appropriate leadership

¹⁰² Whitfield, L.[ed.] 2008. *The Politics of Aid: African Strategies for Dealing with Donors*.

¹⁰³ Booth observed: “...the experimentation with aid approaches that better support ‘country ownership’ has been valuable even if it has largely failed... [and calls] ...for more politically informed, more context-sensitive and less supply-driven aid.” ...to abandon formulaic ‘best practice’ interventions and think more actively about how to build on what exists...[and for researchers to] deliver more finely tuned ideas about... ..facilitating more appropriate and feasible institutional innovations.” See Booth, D. January 2011. Aid, Institutions and Governance: What Have We Learned? *Development Policy Review* 29(S1):S23 ; and also Booth, D. August 2011. *Aid Effectiveness: Bringing Country Ownership (and Politics) Back In*.

¹⁰⁴ Dornan, M. 2017. How New Is the ‘New’ Conditionality? Recipient Perspectives on Aid, Country Ownership and Policy Reform. *Development Policy Review* 35(1):46-63.

¹⁰⁵ Buiter, W.H. 2007. Country Ownership: A Term Whose Time Has Gone. *Development in Practice* 17(4–5): 647–52

and responsibility.¹⁰⁶ Burnside and Dollar argued that this ambiguity could be redressed through selectivity rather than conditionality.¹⁰⁷

Ownership, Buiters asserted, established “process conditionality” as its core measure of performance: donors offered aid as an incentive for performance, in return for the performance of the policy tools and instruments which signified Ownership. In consequence, this triggered the pre-conditions for effecting partnerships between aid-receiving countries and donors. In the face of perceived incapacity or means to craft the policy tools, donors extended aid and technical expertise to countries to build [government] capacity to implement the designated tools of Ownership.

Yet, the risk that the promise of aid acted as a coercive influence, rather than an incentive, was high. Invariably, consultants, funded by the donors, worked late into the night to counteract concerns about local incapacity and to craft these policy tools.¹⁰⁸ Most cautiously ignored the possibility that crafting these tools “on behalf of countries” - which ensured the conditions to trigger the release of aid were established - would also, unintentionally, ensure the ongoing absence of Ownership. It led to a circular argument which undermined conditionality’s credibility as an impartial, rigorous or fair mechanism for authentic change. Dornan’s work in the Pacific, over a decade later, suggests that the circularity of incentives and conditions remained unresolved. It was merely re-dressed as the “new conditionality.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Dornan, M. 2017. How New Is the ‘New’ Conditionality? Recipient Perspectives on Aid, Country Ownership and Policy Reform. *Development Policy Review* 35(1):46-63.

¹⁰⁷ Burnside, C. and D. Dollar. 2000. Aid, policies, and growth. *The American Economic Review*, 90(4):847-68.

¹⁰⁸ Personal experience.

¹⁰⁹ Dornan, M. 2017. How New Is the ‘New’ Conditionality? Recipient Perspectives on Aid, Country Ownership and Policy Reform. *Development Policy Review* 35(1):46-63.

Accepting the parameters of the Paris Declaration, Dornan argued for a more nuanced consideration of the complexity [and context] of competing priorities in aid-receiving countries in order to manage claims of internal inconsistencies between Ownership and other aspects of the Declaration.

Dornan asserts that the concept of Ownership was central to donor efforts to improve aid effectiveness. But, he says, at the same time, conditionality, defined as policy reform on budget support, also remained a donor priority. The result he argued, was that the exercise of Ownership by local political actors competed with efforts to promote policy reform – leaving donors’ interests frustrated. But it was “simplistic” he argued, to claim that such conditionality undermined efforts to exercise Ownership “even in cases where political leaders have opposed reform”.¹¹⁰ Rather, he says, conditionality was used by domestic actors to support their own agendas. This led to mixed results: in some cases, Ownership was more frequently exercised, as domestic actors sought to broaden support for policy reform, either with other donors or domestically. Or, alternatively, the exercise of Ownership declined as domestic actors exclude others from the debate. Overall, he argued, critics needed to understand context if they are to understand the influence of “the new conditionality” and its relationship to Ownership.

Participation and power

The next category of critique turned on questions of the strength of the relationship between participation and power. The policy logic asserted that the exercise of Ownership would lead

¹¹⁰ Dornan, M. 2017. How New Is the ‘New’ Conditionality? Recipient Perspectives on Aid, Country Ownership and Policy Reform. *Development Policy Review* 35(1):46-63.

to more effective partnerships. Ownership would signal a shift in power relations between donors and aid-receiving countries. Participation in design and production, consumption and alienation of aid interventions, Ostrom had posited, would promote an alignment of interests between donors and aid receiving countries and ensure better use of local knowledge and prevent “free-riders”. Beneficiaries would be more concerned about achieving effective outcomes with the available resources.

But, some critics argued, even when the strategies of Ownership were pursued with integrity and skill, it was not evident that their implementation could generate the shift in power that “put countries in the driver’s seat”, as the World Bank and OECD had assured would happen.¹¹¹ For these critics, the central issue was whether “participation” could achieve the structural change required to recalibrate relations which were so heavily embedded in asymmetries of social, economic, and political power.

Wrighton’s research in Tuvalu confirmed the conclusions drawn by Whitfield earlier, on the need to establish the right conditions for Ownership to emerge.¹¹² Wrighton convincingly argues that authentic Ownership is impossible in an environment where donors’ interests are dominant in the face of the invariably small and overwhelmed local bureaucracies found in small island states. The donors’ continued dominance was demonstrated in multiple ways: technical expertise; the volume of demands for local “input”; the anxiety generated in

¹¹¹As Wolfensohn observed on more than one occasion: “It is also clear to us that ownership is essential. Countries must be in the driver’s seat and set the course.” p Wolfensohn, J. 1999. A proposal for a Comprehensive Development Framework, 133.

¹¹²Wrighton, N. 2010. Participation, Power and Practice in Development, A Case Study of Theoretical Doctrines and International Agency Practice in Tuvalu.

individuals and governments, faced with balancing the promise of aid alongside potentially coercive influences on local decision-making, especially considering donors' imperatives for performance in ways based on donor accountability measures and performance targets.¹¹³ Despite the claims made by Paris, donors, Wrighton asserted, continued to set the agenda by defining the conditions and the parameters of aid and development – and precluding meaningful participation in decision-making on aid and development by locals in small island states such as Tuvalu.¹¹⁴

In contrast, drawing on his experience with the Australian aid program during the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands [RAMSI] intervention, Barbara argued for greater participation, even intervention, by the donor as a recognised “co-owner” of development problems. Barbara builds from Booth's conclusion that, when ownership is absent, it should be considered “an outcome to be constructed, requiring a different role for development assistance.”¹¹⁵ Barbara argued that an effective partnership [in accord with the Paris principles] between donors and the Government of Solomon Islands, faced significant obstacles.¹¹⁶ Ownership was undermined, he claimed, by state fragility, political instability and aid

¹¹³ AusAID. 2008. *A Balancing Act: Implementation of the Paris Declaration in Timor-Leste*, Background Paper for the 3rd HLFAE; AusAID. Annex 14: Good Practice Relation to Development Assistance Effectiveness for National Aids Responses in *Evaluation of the Australia Aid Program's Contribution to the National HIV Response in Papua New Guinea 2006-2010*, and Carlson, C., and P. Bazeley and R.David, T.Kabutaulaka. 2013. Final Report: Solomons Islands-Australia Partnership for Development Independent Performance Assessment Panel, Assessment for 2012; Wrighton, N. 2010. Participation, Power and Practice in Development, A Case Study of Theoretical Doctrines and International Agency Practice in Tuvalu

¹¹⁴ Wrighton, N. 2010. Participation, Power and Practice in Development, A Case Study of Theoretical Doctrines and International Agency Practice in Tuvalu.

¹¹⁵ Barbara, J. 2014. From Intervention to Partnership – Prospects for Development Partnership in Solomon Islands after the RAMSI. *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*, 1(2):395-408. See also: AusAID. 2008. *A Balancing Act: Implementation of the Paris Declaration in Timor-Leste*, Background Paper for the 3rd HLFAE; AusAID. Annex 14: Good Practice Relation to Development Assistance Effectiveness for National Aids Responses in *Evaluation of the Australia Aid Program's Contribution to the National HIV Response in Papua New Guinea 2006-2010*, and Carlson, C., and P. Bazeley and R.David, T.Kabutaulaka. 2013. Final Report: Solomons Islands-Australia Partnership for Development Independent Performance Assessment Panel, Assessment for 2012.

¹¹⁶ Barbara, J. 2014. From Intervention to Partnership – Prospects for Development Partnership in Solomon Islands after the RAMSI. *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*, 1(2): 395-408

dependence.¹¹⁷ Given the donor's ongoing interventionary role in the country's stability and governance, the attempt to move to a partnership with the government as if on an equal footing, denied the complex role which donors already performed. He extended Booth's argument to suggest that Australia's responsibility, given its long-term investment in the country's national development through aid and technical expertise, was to assume greater responsibility for the "co-production of sovereignty" and "by implication, Australia's 'ownership' of development problems" in the Solomon Islands.¹¹⁸ If Australia were to recognise its hybrid role as "co-owner" of development problems, it may open a path to more effective aid, "while providing space for the emergence of new national leaders".¹¹⁹

Drawing on their research into sovereignty in several countries across the Pacific, Overton *et al* took an alternative view.¹²⁰ Overton *et al* pursued an examination of Oceanic "development sovereignty", exploring "the way Pacific people and agencies exercise effective control over the development and well-being of their citizens and communities."¹²¹ They located Ownership, as a key principle of the Paris Declaration, within a "neostructural aid regime."¹²² While the neo-structural aid regime was marked by a high degree of internal consensus,¹²³ it

¹¹⁷ Barbara, J. 2014. From Intervention to Partnership – Prospects for Development Partnership in Solomon Islands after the RAMSI. *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*, 1(2): 395-408

¹¹⁸ Barbara, J. 2014. From Intervention to Partnership – Prospects for Development Partnership in Solomon Islands after the RAMSI. *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*, 1(2): 395-408

¹¹⁹ Barbara, J. 2014. From Intervention to Partnership – Prospects for Development Partnership in Solomon Islands after the RAMSI. *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*, 1(2):406

¹²⁰ Overton J., W.E. Murray, G. Prinsen, Tagaloa A.J. Ulu, and N.Wrighton. 2018. *Aid Ownership and Development: The Inverse Sovereignty Effect in the Pacific Islands*.

¹²¹ Overton, J. *et al*. 2018. *Aid Ownership and Development, the Inverse Sovereignty Effect in the Pacific Islands*, 283.

¹²² Overton, J. *et al*. 2018. *Aid Ownership and Development, the Inverse Sovereignty Effect in the Pacific Islands*, 283.

¹²³ In contrast to its successor period, which Overton *et al* label "retro-liberalism" encompassing the period following the GFC – and the duration of the Compact. Retro-liberalism, Overton *et al*. assert, is characterised by the promotion of the private sector, the pursuit of economic growth and a more explicit statement of donor self-interest and the absence of explicit global consensus on principles and modalities. In parallel, the poverty agenda, state building and budget support are less prominent – and ownership is not respected. Overton, J. *et al*. 2018. *Aid Ownership and Development, the Inverse Sovereignty Effect in the Pacific Islands*.

also generated a high burden of compliance and consultation which, they argued, had the potential to reduce the independence of countries' policy making in development producing an "inverse sovereignty" effect.¹²⁴ Overton et al argued that the reality of aid delivery meant that the Ownership principle was often compromised in practice in the Pacific. The terms and conditions attached to aid created "an inverse sovereignty" effect: not only were small, stretched bureaucracies compelled to deal with the burden of onerous reporting, consultation and management practices, but these bureaucracies often also held differing strategic priorities to those of the donors. This led to a diminished sovereignty. Despite this, Overton et al argue, countries continued to assert their own priorities and ways of operating.

Overton et al argue that development sovereignty is expressed in three ways: in the interface between global regional and state negotiations; through the interaction between state-convened policies and institutions and [domestic] civil society; and through the interaction of individual attitudes and practices. Even the smaller Pacific states, they assert, are capable of exercising influence in aid negotiations with donors, operating across all three levels of development sovereignty. They extended a plea for recognition of the influence - and strength - of local agency, arguing that Pacific actors' capacity to challenge donors and hold them to account was a demonstration of Ownership – and Pacific claims to sovereignty.

In contrast, Overton et al warn, the neo-structural aid regime was followed, in the wake of the Global Financial Crisis [GFC], by a period they label "retro-liberalism".¹²⁵ Retro-liberalism, Overton et al assert, was characterised by "the promotion of the private sector, the pursuit of

¹²⁴ Overton, J. et al. 2018. *Aid Ownership and Development, the Inverse Sovereignty Effect in the Pacific Islands*.

¹²⁵ Overton, J. et al. 2018. *Aid Ownership and Development, the Inverse Sovereignty Effect in the Pacific Islands*, 288

economic growth and a... more explicit statement of donor self-interest.”¹²⁶ It also reflected the absence of explicit global consensus on principles and modalities in aid. In parallel, the poverty agenda, state building and budget support were less prominent – and ownership was not respected. Retro-liberalism, they argued, “hands control explicitly back to the donors”.¹²⁷ This same period encompassed the duration of the Forum Compact – and in Australia, aligned with the transition from the Rudd/Gillard governments to the Abbott/Bishop regime of aid as “economic diplomacy”.¹²⁸

Overton et al concluded that Ownership continued to represent both opportunity and threat for Pacific countries’ independence. Donors and aid-receiving countries needed each other: the donor, to represent and extend their reputation as a good global citizen, whether the offer of aid was aligned to development, commercial or geo-politic and strategic motivations; and countries, to secure much-needed resources and expertise to facilitate local development aspirations in the face of ongoing vulnerability.¹²⁹ Therefore, Overton and his colleagues concluded, global agreements such as the Paris Declaration and [potentially] the Sustainable Development Goals continued to provide a means for Pacific agencies to hold donors to account and in doing so, to exercise sovereignty – despite their equivalent potential to undermine Pacific agency. Despite their seeming marginality, Overton et al concluded, the Pacific states still pursued “astute and complex strategies” to secure aid and a relatively high material standard of living.¹³⁰

¹²⁶ Overton, J. et al. 2018. *Aid Ownership and Development, the Inverse Sovereignty Effect in the Pacific Islands*, 288

¹²⁷ Overton, J. et al. 2018. *Aid Ownership and Development, the Inverse Sovereignty Effect in the Pacific Islands*, 288

¹²⁸ Bishop, J, and Andrew Robb, 18/8/2014. *Launch of the Australian Government’s Economic Diplomacy Agenda*, by Australia’s Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Lowy Institute. Sydney.

¹²⁹ Overton, J. et al. 2018. *Aid Ownership and Development, the Inverse Sovereignty Effect in the Pacific Islands*.

¹³⁰ Overton J. et al. 2018. *Aid Ownership and Development, the Inverse Sovereignty Effect in the Pacific Islands*, 284.

Not all shared Overton et al's optimism. As the UN led negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda global commentators continued to question the relevance of Ownership.¹³¹ The Pacific representatives attending the g7+ roundtable in Dili, though troubled, were clear: Ownership, although problematic, was an essential part of the answer to their experience of marginalization in global fora, and by global agreements.¹³²

Ownership, the Dili roundtable argued, could be a platform for building a cohesive regional voice in global fora and ensuring culturally and contextually relevant development. But global agreements did not always reflect the Pacific's priorities nor, as illustrated by climate change emissions, did global agreements entail obligations for which the Pacific carried equal responsibility for creating in the first place. The Pacific's contribution to global emissions was minimal even while their impact on the Pacific was existential. Failure to achieve such global goals, even when they didn't reflect Pacific priorities or responsibilities, diminished the confidence and voice of Pacific countries as they experienced the label of failure writ on a global scale. Two things needed to happen for the idea of Ownership to fulfil its promise: the exercise of Ownership required the de-construction of colonial legacies that had undermined authentic Pacific identity. Only through an authentic national identity could Pacific peoples project a cohesive regional approach which asserted their voice and culturally appropriate

¹³¹ Riddell, R. 2014, *Does Foreign Aid Really Work?* Background Paper to keynote address to the Australasian Aid and International Development Workshop. Carothers, T. 2015. The Deeper Struggle Over Country Ownership. In OECD (eds). 2015. *A Governance Practitioner's Notebook Alternative Ideas and Approaches*.

¹³² Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. 2013. Key Conclusions from the Round Table Consultation on Pacific Issues, Summary of meeting held at the International Conference on the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Development for All: Stop Conflict, Build States and Eradicate Poverty. Dili Timor-Leste, 26 February 2013.

development strategies in global fora. They issued a challenge to donors, however, who must be willing to listen.¹³³

This was the puzzle: the mismatch between the rhetoric and practice of Ownership. More than a decade on from the apparent consensus in Paris, the promise of Ownership remained a contested idea in practice.

2.6 The Evolving Puzzle:

Despite the ongoing endorsement of Ownership as a principle informing development [no longer just aid] effectiveness discourse and practice, the debate on Ownership's efficacy as "international best-practice" in accord with these global - and regional - agreements remained unresolved, particularly in relation to its influence and relevance in the Pacific.

As the research by Whitfield, Wrighton and Overton acknowledged, there was a dynamic of power threaded through the debated that was unresolved: a dynamic which underpinned how donors and aid receiving countries negotiated their relationships; and the way an idea [or worldview] carries or evinces power. Despite the inference cast by the "road map" outlined by the Paris Declaration, the idea of Ownership was not a mere matter of technical expertise or capability that the policy logic asserted. Rather, the policy tools and instruments of Ownership - the national development strategies, the budgets, the performance frameworks

¹³³ This consultation formed part of a series of consultations under the auspice of the g7+ and led to A New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, a commitment to dialogue between members of the g7+, 19 other fragile and conflict affected states, donors, and international organisations. It sought to complement the MDGs and global aid effectiveness agenda through building mutual trust through more effective management of aid and alignment of resources for results; and emphasising inclusive country led and country-owned transitions out of fragility. Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. 2013. Key Conclusions from the Round Table Consultation on Pacific Issues.

- were symbols of a worldview premised on values and beliefs of individual responsibility, incentives and performance management. These tools and policy instruments were points of negotiation and influence, a means to establish the capacity and authority of one actor to influence another to achieve desired [but not always explicit] goals. These tools and instruments represented points in the process of relations where power was negotiated between aid receiving countries and donors.

Ostrom – and the Paris Declaration which ensued – underestimated the relevance of what motivates change. Both assumed the aid-receiving countries’ implicit gratitude for - if not agreement with - the donors’ proposition for Ownership. Each assumed the primacy of the donors’ “voice” rather than understanding “voice” as potential “sites of struggle” over meaning and consensus.¹³⁴ They overlooked the significance of the diversity of values and beliefs which can shape the capacity of ideas to motivate change in relations characterised by asymmetrical power.¹³⁵

Ownership was a point of contestation between aid-receiving countries and donors. I wanted to understand how power and influence operated beneath, or through, the idea of Ownership; to understand the way the idea of Ownership shaped, or was shaped by, policy - and policymakers’ values, beliefs and behaviours - as they sought to negotiate and build the promised partnerships all agreed were essential for effective development. At its core, I realised, as my research evolved, my primary task was to test the policy logic, to understand the “performance” of Ownership and account for its complexity in practice. Despite the claims

¹³⁴ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*.

¹³⁵ Cairney, P. 2019. The Role of Ideas. In *Understanding Public Policy: Theories and Issues*.

that Ownership represented standards of “best practice” and its continued presence in the official rhetoric of global development, did, I wondered, the contestation generated by Ownership in practice signify policy failure – or development success? And for whom? Having reflected on the empirical literature of policy experience in the field, I turned to the literatures which discussed the intersection between policy, ideas and power, to map a conceptual framework for my research.

In light of Ostrom’s assertion that locally-situated knowledges can overcome power asymmetry and risk of dependency asserted by the Samaritan’s dilemma, I needed a conceptual framework to help me identify how local norms might operate to influence policy institutions and signify the presence [or salience] of ‘local’ norms rather than the ‘global’ norms inherent in the idea of Ownership. I needed a research design and methodology which allowed for the nuance of meaning and interpretation attributed to the idea of Ownership across policy communities and settings. How could local knowledge assert power in the interface between vulnerability and dominance? Could an idea be powerful enough to generate change? If so, how? And for how long? How could I “see” the power of an idea?

First, I clarified my key research question. The issues underlying the puzzle reflected a complex interaction between ideas, meaning, values and beliefs, and power and context, across scale. The counterpoint to this framing of the puzzle was to ask whether an idea could generate change, across scale and in diverse contexts: could the idea of Ownership engage with locally-situated knowledge to transform relations of power through changes in local policy practice

creating more effective partnerships between powerful donors and vulnerable aid-receiving countries?

I settled on the following core research question[s]:

- a) How did the idea of Ownership at the heart of the Paris Declaration - and by extension, the foundation of the Forum Compact - influence development partnerships in the Pacific: Did the idea of Ownership “put Pacific countries in the driver’s seat” of their development, as promised by the World Bank and OECD?¹³⁶
- b) And if not, why not...?¹³⁷

To pursue an explanation in response to my research question, I needed to understand stories of policy change that could engage with my puzzle. My next step was to develop a conceptual framework for how a policy idea, such as Ownership, could generate change in development partnerships with inherent asymmetries in power relations. My interest was to draw on the policy change literature to find a way to test the policy logic of Ownership and examine the claimed causal link between how a policy idea could influence change in behaviours and in turn, influence change in partnerships where there is asymmetrical power. I decided to focus on the relationships between the idea of Ownership, the shift in behaviour represented by aid coordination practices and their consequent influence on more effective partnerships. I left the claims of a consequent relationship to development outcomes for further research. The

¹³⁶ Wolfensohn, J. 1999. A proposal for a Comprehensive Development Framework; OECD-DAC 1996, Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation.

¹³⁷ See Appendix 3.3 Research Questions. The research questions and the sub-questions evolved as the data generation and analysis evolved.

construction of a conceptual framework for policy change and confirmation of my research proposition is the subject of Chapter 3.

Chapter 3 A Conceptual Framework: Understanding Policy Change

3.1 Introduction

In the previous Chapter, the revelation of the nature of the mismatch between the intent claimed by the policy logic and the pragmatics of practice led me to investigate alternative literature on policy change, which is the focus on Chapter 3. In this Chapter, I draw from the literature on policy change to propose an alternative conceptual framework for testing the policy logic of Ownership – for clarifying how an idea, agreed as the lynchpin of a global policy, could lead change for “the poorest people” across the Pacific.¹ This allows me to confirm my research proposition, before moving, in Chapter 4, to outline the research design and methodology.

The means by which a policy generates change is a central concern of policy research and practice, but Cairney and Weible suggest no single definition captures its depth and breadth.² The term “policy change” is used by some to explain what policy does; and by others, myself included, to describe what a policy is intended to achieve – and, critically, why it achieves change.³ The definition of what constitutes a policy is the first step.

¹ The OECD’s annual development cooperation report in 2009 advised: “Adopted in 2005, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness seeks to help reshape the way international development aid is delivered and managed. Among its priorities is a call for a new emphasis on the role of developing countries in deciding how aid should be used – in short, “a change in the power relationship between donors and recipients”, according to Jan Cedergren, Chair of the OECD-DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness. The Declaration sets down five overarching principles to help shape this new relationship, with the ultimate aim of making aid work better at improving the lives of some of the poorest people on the planet.” OECD. 2009. *Development Cooperation Report*, 69.

² Cerna distinguishes policy change from policy reform: drawing from Bennett and Howlett (1992) Cerna describes policy change as incremental shifts in existing structures OR new and innovative policies; whereas policy reform refers to the process of improving existing systems and assuring their efficient and equitable response to future changes [Berman 1995]. Cerna, L. 2013. The Nature of Policy Change and Implementation: A Review of Different Theoretical Approaches.

³ Cairney and Weible. 19/6/2020. Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: Policy Change, In Paul Cairney: Politics and Public Policy weblog.

3.2 Scoping the Policy Change Approach

Stone defines a policy as politics written in hard copy.⁴ Cairney takes a softer approach: a policy, he says, can be described as a set of decisions made by policymakers, or in authorised policymaking venues, such as legislatures, courts or governments. Whichever view one holds, policy is the outcome of the values and beliefs of those who make the decisions at each point: those who design, endorse – and implement. Values and beliefs which give structure and meaning – and reflect the operation of power.⁵ This was the politics threaded through the idea of Ownership in the Paris Declaration - and reaffirmed by the Pacific Forum leaders when they agreed on the Forum Compact four years later.

As one of the Pacific's elder statesmen, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara had eloquently elaborated when Fiji was admitted to the UN, the Pacific region had experienced the imposition of policy shaped by others' concepts, values and patterns of behaviour before. The colonising powers had often ignored the presence – or relevance - of existing values, beliefs and practices when they had arrived:

...quality should not take second place to quantity when we are estimating a society, its life and accepted values. Quality is measured by standards, and these standards must be observed by larger nations as well as by smaller. The broad concepts we look for are effective government, education and social justice. But it is for the United Nations to set the standards...Otherwise false standards and wrong estimates of people and actions can so easily gain currency and become accepted generally...but the setting of standards must not assume that there are universal solutions to problems in all parts of the world....we have had to work out our own particular solutions and political framework. We have done this...with give and take and good will with [other] colonial powers...(their) policy has been based on their concepts, their values and their patterns of behaviour...they have not always shown due regard for the feelings, customs and way of life of the people. There has been superiority and there has been arrogance. There has been too much direction and too little opportunity for participation...⁶

⁴ Stone, D. 1997. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*.

⁵ Stone, D. 1997. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*.

⁶ Mara, K. 26/10/1970. Address by the Prime Minister of Fiji on the 25th Anniversary Commemorative Session, General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. In K.Mara, *The Pacific Way: A Memoir*, University of Hawai'i. 237-242.

I had scoped the policy logic and identified the critiques of the policy in practice. There were clear points of contestation between the assumptions of the policy's logic – and the values and beliefs which shaped aid relations in practice. Given these points of contestation, my interest lay in determining how the idea of Ownership agreed in Paris could “travel” to the Pacific,⁷ where it was reconfigured, with the authority of the Pacific Forum leaders as the Forum Compact, to influence local policy practice and development partnerships, given the asymmetrical relations of power. I wanted to understand how a policy crafted in one setting “functions” to create change in another. I wanted to understand why an idea might carry power across different contexts. I wanted to understand how a policy convened in the global and cosmopolitan meeting rooms of Paris could embrace the locally situated knowledge of contemporary stories of identity, place and history, given the shadow of colonisation in the Pacific.

There were three key elements I was interested to explore:

- 1) how a policy “moves” between setting A to setting B to facilitate change;
- 2) whether, and if so, how, an idea carries the power to generate change;
- 3) how we can identify whether a shift in power is in play – and what contributes to this shift in power – especially in settings of asymmetrical power.

⁷ Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy. *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499; Freeman, R. 2009. What is translation? *Evidence and Policy: A journal of research, debate and practice*, 5(4):429-447(19); Lendvai N. and P.Stubbs. 2007. Policies as Translation: Situating Transnational Social Policies. In S. Hodgson and Z. Irving (eds.) *Policy Reconsidered: Meanings, Politics and Practices*, 173-190; Pal L. and D. Ireland. 2009. The Public Sector Reform Movement: Mapping the Global Policy Network, *International Journal of Public Administration*, 32:621-657; Prince R. 2009. Policy Transfer as Policy Assemblage: Making Policy for the Creative Industries in New Zealand, *Environment and Planning A*, 42:169-186; Mukhtarov, F. 2014. Rethinking the Travel Of Ideas: Policy Translation in the Water Sector, *Policy and Politics*, 42(1):71-88; Stone D., O. P. de Oliveira, and L.A. Pal. 2020. Transnational Policy Transfer: The Circulation Of Ideas, Power and Development Models, *Policy and Society*, 39:1, 1-18; Clarke, J. and D.Bainton, N. Lendvai and P. Stubbs. 2015. *Making Policy Move: Towards a Politics of Translation and Assemblage*.

The literature on policy change encompasses a spectrum of sub-fields.⁸ Given the intersection of contestation on meaning, power and context that emerged from my review of the literature, my interest lay in the continuum offered across policy learning, diffusion, transfer and translation.⁹ While these sub-fields of policy change offer points of differentiation and agreement, I was interested in how they account for the role and influence of power.

3.2.1 How a Policy Moves: Learning, Diffusion, Transfer and Translation

Dolowitz and Marsh crafted the seminal definition of “learning from abroad” through policy transfer, which entails a process whereby:

...knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangement, institutions and ideas in another political setting....¹⁰

They argue that policy transfer encompasses both voluntary and coercive forms of practice. The latter occurs when one government or supranational institution pushes or forces another to adopt a set of policy innovation.¹¹

Dolowitz and Marsh focused largely on policy transfer between symmetrical economies and polities with comparable diverse and well-resourced industries and sophisticated technologies, workforces and cultures. They asserted that the transfer of a policy entailed the

⁸ Cerna explains several theories of policy change: path dependence; advocacy coalition frameworks; policy learning; policy diffusion; punctuated equilibrium; institutional change; multi-level governance policy networks; and disruptive innovation; she also distinguishes top-down from bottom-up policy change and examines the influence of rational choice theory. Cerna, L. 2013. The Nature of Policy Change and Implementation: A Review of Different Theoretical Approaches.

⁹ Benson D., and A. Jordan. 2011. What Have We Learned From Policy Transfer Research? Dolowitz and Marsh Revisited, *Political Studies Review*, 9:366-378

¹⁰ Dolowitz, D. P. and D. Marsh. 2000. Learning from Abroad: The Role of Policy Transfer in Contemporary Policy Making, *Governance*, 13 (1):5–24

¹¹ Dolowitz D.P. and D. Marsh (1996:344) cited in Benson D., and A. Jordan. 2011. What have we learned from policy transfer research? Dolowitz and Marsh revisited. *Political Studies Review*, 9:366-378.

movement of ideas, knowledge and administrative practices - from setting A to setting B. It was a linear proposition, assuming a policy designed in setting A was suitable for setting B – if the recipients held the right mix of knowledge, skills and capacity.¹² It did not consider transfers between wealthy industrial economies with skilled workforces – and small, vulnerable and aid-dependent economies with narrow resource bases and unspecialised workforces.¹³

Benson and Jordan note that, despite the growth in policy transfer studies, few studies since Dolowitz and Marsh had addressed three key critiques of policy transfer:

- a. Deeper research which grapples with “how and why” policy transfer happens;
- b. A stronger accounting for the role of structural factors in policy transfer;
- c. opportunities for studies which account for the way problems – and their policy resolution - are socially constructed.¹⁴

These critiques aligned with Larmour’s conclusions in his studies of “institutional transfer” in the Pacific. One of the few scholars in the Pacific who has drawn on the policy transfer model, Larmour argued that policy analysts must appreciate the significance of the Pacific’s experience when considering the transfer of institutions:

...institutions from one country may not suit another but the Pacific Islands have also suffered from the partial application of idealised and standard models with no particular national origins....colonisation, decolonisation, fiscal crises and membership in international organisations have made the islands open to prevailing ideas of “best practice” ...¹⁵

¹² Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy. *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499; Freeman, R. 2009. What is translation *Evidence and Policy: A journal of research, debate and practice*, 5(4):429-447(19).

¹³ Benson D., and A. Jordan. 2011. What Have We Learned From Policy Transfer Research? Dolowitz and Marsh Revisited, *Political Studies Review*, 9:374.

¹⁴ Benson D., and A. Jordan. 2011. What Have We Learned From Policy Transfer Research? Dolowitz and Marsh Revisited, *Political Studies Review*, 9:374

¹⁵ Larmour, P. 2005. *Foreign Flowers Institutional transfer and Good governance in the Pacific Islands*: 1.

Larmour argued that theories of institutional transfer have ignored the nuance of local context to impose “institutional monocultures” shaped, largely, by western political, social and economic worldviews.¹⁶ Agencies such as the World Bank, Larmour claimed, have repeatedly produced technical solutions with ideological conditions which ignored the lessons of experience: that solutions must be country specific, recognise Pacific sovereignty - and the integrity and strength of local political and social processes for decision-making.

Drawing on Dolowitz and Marsh’s policy transfer model, Larmour explored the “fit” between “learning from abroad” and drawing ideas in.¹⁷ He examined the relationship between introduced and indigenous institutions to explore how power shapes the transfer of policy and ideas concluding that several factors, including social conditions, sympathy with local values, and misunderstanding, can influence whether transfer occurs. He concluded that most small island states were disappointed with the results of transfer: their dependence on aid made them more open to the influence of conditions set by external agencies. He suggested that the symbolism of apparently simple technical processes underpinning policy transfer was challenged by differences in interpretation, meaning and valuing. Critically, although an apparent transfer might seem to occur, behaviour did not change, because there was no alignment with local norms.¹⁸

Larmour argued that policy transfer was capable of mapping differences between policy-making communities’ interpretations, meaning and valuing of policy processes. But the

¹⁶ Larmour, P. 2005. *Foreign Flowers Institutional transfer and Good governance in the Pacific Islands* 1

¹⁷ Larmour, P. 2005. *Foreign Flowers Institutional transfer and Good governance in the Pacific Islands* 190-93

¹⁸ Larmour, P. 2005. *Foreign Flowers Institutional transfer and Good governance in the Pacific Islands* 190-93

subtleties of power asymmetries were not appreciated by the model in contextually and culturally different settings. While ideas, knowledge or institutions may transfer from one setting to another, in reality, behaviours did not change because there were different understandings and values in play. Policy transfer, as a mechanism for change, could not account for differences between policy and local norms.

I decided that the policy transfer model risked misunderstanding the significance of power and context in the Pacific small island states. It risked overlooking the nuance that differences in social, cultural, political and economic worldviews might mean for policy implementation and the capacity of the Pacific islanders to influence their social world. It assumed a passive reception of policy, rather than engagement and contestation.

Pritchett and his colleagues identified similar issues to those identified by Larmour in their ascription of “capability traps” in development. The conclusions they drew, however, differed from Larmour’s. “Capability traps” were situations where “big development” imported “blueprints” to “fix” pre-determined problems. Such “blueprint” responses, Pritchett et al argued, encouraged “isomorphic mimicry” as a “technique of failure”; that is, the adoption by a state of the forms of other functional states and organisations which “camouflage[d] a persistent lack of function in the adopting state or organisation.”¹⁹

¹⁹ Pritchett’s second point is that a mismatch between expectations and actual capacity due to an inadequate theory of developmental change means that the system is stressed - and sabotaged - by unrealistic expectations. Pritchett, L. and M. Woolcock and M. Andrews. 2010. Capability Traps? The Mechanisms of Persistent Implementation Failure.

I agreed with Pritchett *et al* on the risk posed by “standard blueprint responses” to fix local development problems.²⁰ However, my experience of development programming across multiple Pacific small island states led me to challenge the universality of Pritchett’s claims. Pritchett *et al*’s claims of “techniques of failure” left little room for the kind of conversation Larmour had sought to stimulate: for discussion of the subtleties of power asymmetries in different social and political settings, where different interpretations, values and norms might be in play.

My unease with Pritchett’s diagnosis of “the problem” was reinforced by the emerging literature on the “new” Pacific diplomacy, which argues for the recognition of the revitalised strength and diversity of Pacific agency.²¹ Fry and Tarte, and their colleagues, argue that a new Pacific diplomacy has rewritten the rules for how the region engages with the global community on issues such as trade, climate change, fisheries, decolonisation and sustainable development.²² The new Pacific diplomacy, Fry and Tarte assert “is creating opportunities and avenues for island countries to influence the regional order in line with their own interests and aspirations.”²³ At its heart is, in the words of President Tong, a plea for the Pacific “to chart its own course” through regional solidarity and global leadership as large ocean states, rather than “small and vulnerable” island developing states.²⁴ This is not quite the kind of passivity reflected in Pritchett *et al*’s claims of “isomorphic mimicry”.

²⁰ Pritchett, L. *et al*. 2010. Capability Traps? The Mechanisms of Persistent Implementation Failure.

²¹ Fry G. and S. Tarte (eds). 2015. *The New Pacific Diplomacy*.

²² Fry G. and S. Tarte (eds). 2015. *The New Pacific Diplomacy*, 7-11.

²³ Fry G. and S. Tarte (eds). 2015. *The New Pacific Diplomacy*, 16.

²⁴ Tong, H.E. President Anote, ‘Charting its Own Course’ A Paradigm Shift in Pacific Diplomacy, in Fry G. and S. Tarte (eds). 2015. *The New Pacific Diplomacy*, 21-24.

To label the adoption of a blueprint response as “isomorphic mimicry” could, in fact, misunderstand the integrity and capacity represented by apparent compliance. It could as readily cloak a refusal to explicitly confront the irrelevance of the blueprint by instead, finding a compromise until the opportunity to demonstrate persistence, function and capacity in more relevant or significant circumstances arose. The seeming acceptance could equally be a means of biding time until the opportunity for the assertion of locally-situated knowledge, expertise and desires could be legitimated and validated.²⁵

Although Pritchett et al did acknowledge that explaining why countries remain in capability traps requires a country-specific analysis of historical, political and social contexts.²⁶ This was precisely the analysis - of power, meaning, motivation and context, across scale – that I was interested in. It also, I posited, required consideration of the dynamic in power relations. I concluded that neither policy transfer – nor the universality of Pritchett’s explanation of capability traps – offered satisfactory opportunities for exploring the operation of power and the significance of context. But I also needed more information on how power is conceived to operate in asymmetrical relations in order to understand its contribution to the policy change process.

²⁵ I was reminded of my experience in an indigenous community in remote Australia. There was a public meeting, at which community leaders welcomed the government’s offer to build a childcare centre. The government officers left for Canberra, very happy to have been of service. Afterwards, in conversation with a community member, I expressed my puzzlement: in my experience, people usually wanted their children close – and there were no jobs for those [usually the women in the community] who would be leaving the children in the child care centre – what purpose would the centre meet? I asked. He shrugged: “We need a new building to replace the old one that is falling down. It doesn’t matter if the toilets are child-size. The government will never know what we use it for. They won’t be here again.”

²⁶ Pritchett, L. et al. 2010, *Capability Traps? The Mechanisms of Persistent Implementation Failure*, Center for Global Development Working Paper 234.

Power in asymmetrical relations

The claim of an asymmetry or imbalance in power relations between donors and aid receiving countries is undisputed in much of the mainstream development literature.²⁷ However, the assertion that donors are always inherently more powerful than aid recipients implies agreement on what constitutes and represents power; how and when power is exercised; and for what purpose.

I have drawn from Haugaard, who references Russell's oft-cited definition, to define power: at its most general level, power is the ability to produce effects, a capacity for action and influence, which is fundamental to agency.²⁸ When an agent makes a difference in their social world, they have power.

Haugaard observes that the propositions represented by the debate on the "four faces of power" entail a conceptualisation of power as domination.²⁹ In contrast, Haugaard posits an alternative of power as an emancipatory possibility: the concept of power with; or power to;

²⁷ Girvan argues that asymmetrical power is reflected in the spheres of military, economic and knowledge resources, pitting wealthy donor-countries against geographic and economically vulnerable and aid dependent SIDS. Girvan, N., September 2007, *Power Imbalances and Development Knowledge*, Theme Paper prepared for the project *South Perspectives on Reform of the International Development Architecture*.

²⁸ Haugaard, M. The four dimensions of power: conflict and democracy, *Journal of Political Power*, Vol 14, 2021, Issue 1: *The Changing faces of Power 1979-2019*, 153-175. Haugaard defines the four faces as the agency-energy aspect of interaction; the structural components; the epistemic element of interaction; and the social ontological elements of social subjects; Haugaard, M., 2017 *Power and Meaning*, *Journal of Political Power*, 10:1, 1-5; Haugaard, M., 2012, *Rethinking the four dimensions of power: domination and empowerment*, *Journal of Political Power*, 5:1, 33-54; Haugaard, M., 2012 *Editorial: reflections upon power over, power to, power with, and the four dimensions of power*, *Journal of Political Power*, 5:3, 353-358; Pansardi, P., & Bindi M., 2021. *The new concepts of power? Power-over, power-to and power-with*. *Journal of Political Power* 14(1):51-71.; Mark Haugaard, M., 2021, *The four dimensions of power: conflict and democracy*, *Journal of Political Power*, 14:1, 153-175

²⁹ Haugaard defines the four faces as: the agency-energy aspect of interaction; the structural components; the epistemic elements of interaction; and the social ontological elements of social subjects. Haugaard, M., *The four dimensions of power: conflict and democracy*, *Journal of Political Power*, Vol 14, 2021, Issue 1: *The Changing faces of Power 1979-2019* 153-175.

rather than [only] power over.³⁰ Conceptualising power as an emancipatory choice, rather than a reaction against domination, offered a way to understand some of the issues emerging during my fieldwork: the seeming irrelevance of policy, or the decision to delegate policy implementation to a consultant, could be viewed as an act of power to, rather than as the absence of political commitment or capacity.

The second aspect in conceptualising power relations is to distinguish between the exercise of power and the potential capacity to have, or exercise, power. This distinction brings in consideration of power relations between states [as distinct from power in social relations between individuals or groups]. The orthodox view of power in relations between states more often refers to a situation of power over, or dominance, by one or more states in relation to subordinate others, based on material, economic or social dominance.³¹ In contrast, Barnett and Duval argue for a more nuanced approach to power between states, more akin to Haugaard's positioning. Like Haugaard, they argue that power is the "the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacity of actors to determine their circumstance and fate."³² This means we pay attention to both the kinds of social relations through which power works [whether interactive or constitutive] and to the specificity of relations through which effects are produced [specific and direct or diffuse and indirect]. Thus, Barnett and Duval argue, power can be seen as compulsory, institutional, structural and

³⁰ Haugaard describes an agent may exercise power in one of several ways: power-to: the capacity for action, or the situation of being able to do something [emancipation]; power-over: the situation where A makes B do something B would otherwise not do [domination, a subset of power to]; and power-with: a situation of wider collaboration between actors that facilitates joint power-to. Haugaard, M. 2012. Editorial: Reflections Upon Power Over, Power To, Power With, And The Four Dimensions Of Power. *Journal of Political Power*. 5(3):353-358.

³¹ Clegg, S. R. and Mark Haugaard (eds). 2009. *The SAGE Handbook of Power*.

³² Barnett, M. and R. Duval. Winter 2005. Power in International Politics. *International Organization* 59(1):39-75.

productive. Finnemore sums this up simply, by asserting that power in relations between states is both social and material or structural.³³

Hattori builds from this position, arguing that aid is a symbol of social relations between the donor and the aid-receiving countries. Aid practice, claims Hattori, “transforms material dominance and subordination into gestures of generosity and gratitude.”³⁴ This transformation softens the dominance in relations, enabling the status quo to continue – and the ascription of virtue to the donor. Aid recipients, he argues are “complicit in the existing order”.³⁵ The act of receiving, when one is unable to reciprocate in kind, reaffirms the moral virtue of the dominant material hierarchy.³⁶ Aid carries moral force as a symbol of the virtue of the power relations between states; and is exercised through the social relations performed by individuals and between groups representing those negotiating states. Aid legitimises existing power relations.³⁷

Viewing aid as a symbol of social relations generates the question of how the imbalance in power – whether through its actual or potential exercise – influences agreements on aid between wealthy donor countries and the vulnerable, aid-dependent recipient countries:

³³ Finnemore, M. January 2009. Legitimacy, Hypocrisy and the Social Structure of Unipolarity: Why being a Unipole Isn't All It's Cracked up to Be, *World Politics*, Vol 61(1) International Relations Theory and the Consequences of Unipolarity (Jan 2009)58-95; Finnemore, M. and K. Sikkink. 2001. Taking Stock: Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, (4):391-416.

³⁴ Hattori, T. 2001. Reconceptualising Foreign Aid. *Review of International Political Economy* 8(4)(Winter):633.

³⁵ Hattori, T. 2001. Reconceptualising Foreign Aid. *Review of International Political Economy* 8(4)(Winter):633.

³⁶ Hattori, T. 2003. The Moral Politics of Foreign Aid. *Review of International Studies* 29(2)(Apr):229-247.

³⁷ Hattori argues that “the bulk of what can be called foreign aid falls into this sociological category of an unreciprocated gift: it is a direct extension of a gift from one country to the next that indefinitely suspends the obligation to reciprocate.”[p233] Suggesting, therefore, Hattori, says, that the substantive aim of aid is to reinforce that status quo in relations, rather than to deliver projects and programmes. Hattori, T. 2003. The Moral Politics of Foreign Aid. *Review of International Studies* 29(2)(Apr):229-247. Mawdsley, E. 2012. The Changing Geographies of Foreign Aid and Development Cooperation: Contributions from Gift Theory. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* NS(37):256-272.

Whether agreements are negotiated equitably; or through the exercise, or prospect, of coercion, as the subordinate party [the aid recipient] seeks to please or appease, in order to achieve a mutually agreed, even if compromised, outcome.³⁸

The OECD is constituted by the most powerful states in the world. At the time the OECD joined with the UN and World Bank to convene the Paris HLFAE, the OECD claimed, through its Development Assistance Committee [DAC], to be the “the venue and voice of the world’s major bilateral donors”.³⁹ The 22 members of the DAC represented the western world’s most influential economic powers - and Japan.⁴⁰ There were no DAC members from the regions of Africa, South America or the Pacific. Many of the major powers who were members of the DAC in 2005 were also former colonial powers.⁴¹

The OECD DAC described its goal as support to “countries in need” to help them achieve sustainable development. Certain countries were considered more vulnerable based on their “economic, political, geographic and societal hurdles.”⁴² The small island developing countries

³⁸ Pfetsch, F. R. 2011. Power in International Negotiations: Symmetry of Asymmetry, *Negotiations* 2(16):39-56

³⁹ OECD. 2006b. *The DAC in Dates: A History of the OECDs Development Assistance Committee*, foreword. Although it did not define what constitutes a donor, it did define what constitutes ODA: currently, Official development assistance (ODA) is defined as government aid that promotes and specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries. The DAC adopted ODA as the “gold standard” of foreign aid in 1969 and it remains the main source of financing for development aid. ODA data is collected, verified and made publicly available by the OECD.

⁴⁰ This includes: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan Luxembourg, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, United Kingdom, United States, and the EC

⁴¹ See Chapter 5 The Global Idea of Ownership for details of the OECD formation.

⁴² OECD Webpage: Countries and Territories most in need.

were in this category.⁴³ The OECD views the SIDS as “increasingly vulnerable” to natural disasters and external economic shocks, particularly as the impact of climate change grows.⁴⁴ In the alternative, Baldacchino challenges the discourse of small island states as inherently vulnerable and weak. He argues that the small states are clever, opportunistic and resilient, rather than vulnerable and weak.⁴⁵ They are simply not mainstream in their economic development. The small island states, he argues, are looking for something other than the kinds of economies that the OECD predicts as the norm. Similarly, Corbett and Connell suggest an argument for acknowledging how small Pacific states draw on their vulnerability as a strength.⁴⁶ They cite evidence of the benefits accrued to small Pacific states through building an international profile through migration and access to climate funds through advocacy by the Pacific SIDS [P-SIDS] at the UN. In putting forward these propositions, these authors reframe perceptions of small states’ capacity to influence others. Their reframe resonates with the argument made by Pfetsch on the fluidity of power across negotiation cycles between states.

⁴³ The OECD categorises countries according to a scale: least developing countries [LDCs], landlocked developing countries [LLDCs], Small island developing states, [SIDS], and Fragile contexts, [FCs]. While some states are located within more than one category, the SIDS category [currently] includes 13 Pacific states. In 2005, 13 Pacific countries [11 states and three territories] were included on the OECD list of ODA recipients.

⁴⁴ OECD, 2018, Making Development Cooperation work for Small Island Developing States. The OECD explains how they see the vulnerability of SIDS. SIDS, they argue, are locked in a cycle [or spiral] of vulnerability because of a unique combination of geographic and economic factors. These small island developing states are economically vulnerable because of the risk of natural disasters presented by their geographical locations, with consequent likelihood of natural phenomena such as cyclones or tsunamis. These risks are expected to increase in severity and likelihood as the climate continues to change. Most SIDS have small populations, are spatially dispersed and remote. These states’ economies are characterised as: Small, undiversified domestic economies, with limited or no foreign exchange, income or tax receipts; Subject to a greater perceived risk of crises, and consequently, unattractive to foreign investment; Subject to large recurrent costs, large debt, with a narrow domestic fiscal space for investment; economically vulnerable despite increases in incomes; increasingly vulnerable to external and global economic shocks and natural disasters/climate change.

⁴⁵ Godfrey Baldacchino, Small Island States: Vulnerable Resilient Doggedly Perseverant or Cleverly Opportunistic? Études caribéennes [En ligne], 27-28 | Avril-Août 2014, mis en ligne le 14 août 2014, consulté le 02 avril 2023.

⁴⁶ Corbett J., and John Connell, Small States in the Pacific, Chapter 21, p357, in Baldacchino, G., and Anders Wivel, 2020, *Handbook on the Politics of Small States*

Pfetsch acknowledges an inherent paradox in how we consider the power of states: while states are equal before the law, carrying the same rights and obligations, states can also be “profoundly unequal with regard to the power they wield and their influence in world affairs.”⁴⁷ However, he argues, relations can assume different forms across different modes of negotiations.⁴⁸ At the heart of this is power.⁴⁹ In negotiations, Pfetsch argues, structural power does not always prevail.⁵⁰ Rather, Pfetsch argues that symmetry and asymmetry in relations assumes different forms during a negotiation process. Thus, the result of the negotiations depends on the shifts in the relationship between the negotiating parties. It is not a case of better or worse outcomes, but rather, whether the parties in each circumstance are satisfied with the negotiated outcomes.

This led me to several propositions: a definition of power as the capacity to influence which can be emancipatory rather than dominant – an illustration of power to and with, not only over. The concept of aid as a symbol of power relations between the wealthy donors and aid-receiving countries which is demonstrated through the social relations of representatives of

⁴⁷ Pfetsch explains: “states are profoundly unequal with regard to the power they wield and their influence in world affairs, but they are equal before the law and in terms of their rights and obligations.” But, he continues, taking the UN as an example, the power relations assume different forms across the different modes of negotiations. Pfetsch draws on Weber’s definition of power as “the capacity to influence another’s behaviour in a desired direction”. Pfetsch, P., Power in International negotiations: Symmetry and Asymmetry, in *Négociations* 2011,/2 (no.16) pp39-56

⁴⁸ Pfetsch says, “the framework of the United Nations must be understood as a continuous process with preparatory conferences in various regions of the world, with pre-, main-, and post-negotiations as well as with follow-up conferences. In all these fora power relations can assume different forms. Analytically the whole negotiation process can be subdivided into five aspects. On the one hand there is the perceived structural relationship between the negotiators on each side, evaluated as strong or weak, rich or poor etc. There is, secondly, the process of negotiation itself that shows the behavior of the negotiators in their dealings with one another. A third category relates means and ends and asks about the adequacy of instruments used in order to achieve a desired end. A fourth aspect can be identified when a third party intervenes. Fifthly, there is the outcome of the negotiation process. The perspective of symmetry or asymmetry can be found in different forms and at all stages of negotiation development (see Figure 3). Pfetsch, P., Power in International negotiations: Symmetry and Asymmetry, in *Négociations* 2011,/2 (no.16) pp39-56

⁴⁹ Pfetsch, P, Power in International negotiations: Symmetry and Asymmetry, in *Négociations* 2011,/2 (no.16) pp39-56 citing Weber 1922, 1964; Dahl 1957, Habeeb 1988, Pfetsch 1995, Zartman 1999]

⁵⁰ Pfetsch, in Power in International negotiations: Symmetry and Asymmetry, in *Négociations* 2011,/2 (no.16) pp39-56 citing Morgan 1994]

each party. And the possibility that, despite the [usual and not unlikely] expectations of the dominance of donors, even small island states can influence outcomes at certain points in negotiations on aid. With the benefit of this clarity, I returned to the exploration of the policy change literature.

Having determined that policy transfer – and the universality of Pritchett’s explanation of capability traps – posed insufficient explanations for the operation of power and the significance of context, I turned to the policy translation literature in search of a model which could engage with a country specific analysis of historical, political and social contexts of Ownership – and “listening for” the influence of power in the re-negotiation of global consensus as local policy practice.

3.2.2 Policy Translation: Making Power Salient:

Stone, Freeman and others build from the work of Dolowitz and Marsh [and others] to argue that successful transfer of policy entails the translation of policy.⁵¹ Citing Lendvai and Stubbs, Stone explains that the process of translation is:

...a series of interesting...even surprising, disturbances [which] can occur in the spaces between the “creation”, the “transmission” and the “interpretation” or “reception” of policy meaning...⁵²

⁵¹ Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy. *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499; Freeman, R. 2009. What is translation *Evidence and Policy: A journal of research, debate and practice*, 5(4), 429-447(19); Lendvai N. and P. Stubbs. Policies as Translation: Situating Transnational Social Policies, in S Hodgson and Z., Irving. Eds. 2007. *Policy Reconsidered: Meanings, Politics and Practices*, 173-190; Pal L., and D. Ireland. 2009. The Public Sector Reform Movement: Mapping The Global Policy Network, *International Journal of Public Administration*, 32, 621-657; Prince R. 2009. Policy Transfer as Policy Assemblage: Making Policy for the Creative Industries in New Zealand, *Environment and Planning A*, 42:169-186; Mukhtarov, F. 2014. Rethinking the Travel Of Ideas: Policy Translation in The Water Sector, *Policy and Politics*, 42(1):71-88; Stone, D. et al, 2020. Transnational Policy Transfer: The Circulation of Ideas, Power And Development Models. *Policy and Society*, 39(1):1-18; Clarke, J. et al. 2015. *Making Policy Move Towards A Politics of Translation and Assemblage*.

⁵² Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy. *Policy Studies*, 33(6):487.

Translation, Stone asserts “occurs in a complex web” in which translation and meaning-making “become the very workings of power”.⁵³ Policy translation advocates argue three inter-related elements are necessary for the successful assertion of policy translation to effect change.

Policy translation assert that the dynamic interaction of power, across political settings and between policymakers, is critical to how the ‘soft stuff’ of ideas, knowledge, and norms are negotiated and enacted to shape and constitute the ‘hard stuff’ of policy tools, systems and practices, or institutions.⁵⁴ Policy moves from setting A to B; but crucially, Freeman asserts, the “successful” translation of policy depends on the re-negotiation of power between the policy communities.⁵⁵

The learning that constitutes translation, Stone says, can be signified through several kinds of learning behaviours and practices.⁵⁶ Two, in particular, are conducive to translation: reflexivity, being the capacity of policy actors in setting B to take new knowledge from elsewhere and incorporate into their own learning and practice; while bargaining and social interaction reflects the capacity of policy actors in setting B to acquire new knowledge through external

⁵³ Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy. *Policy Studies*, 33(6):491.

⁵⁴ Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy, *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499;

⁵⁵ Freeman, R. 2009. What is translation? *Evidence and Policy: A journal of research, debate and practice*, 5(4):429-447(19); Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy, *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499.

⁵⁶ Stone, citing Dupont and Radaelli explains: Translation relies on different kinds of learning occurring in the policy-receiving setting: Reflexive learning: where new knowledge from elsewhere is accepted; epistemic communities, or networks of experts bring knowledge in and guide learning; bargaining and social interaction, where recipients learn the benefits of new knowledge via transnational networks. In the shadow of hierarchy, when reflexivity and bargaining is limited by strong hierarchical mechanisms, institutions exert pressure to accept the rules of the game [institutionalism] and the appropriateness of new codes and identities and norms [sociological institutionalism] But note: as Dunlop explains, policy learning can reflect a kind of mutation or a decision not to adopt a policy [p488]. Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy, *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499.

[or transnational] networks and negotiate to assert their interests. These practices can signify the acceptance of policy norms and institutions as legitimate.

Norms and institutions are the formal and informal values and beliefs that establish the rules or standards for individual and collective behaviours and practices.⁵⁷ Finnemore and Sikkink argue that ideas and norms offer reasons for action: political action “must be based on a coordination of morality and power.”⁵⁸ Norms are generally agreed as “a standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity.”⁵⁹ But as Finnemore and Sikkink observe, the challenge is to identify a norm.⁶⁰ Not all rules about conduct are norms - unless they carry a shared moral assessment. Norms inhere a quality of “ought-ness” rather than a quality of must; and are desirable and fluid, rather than obligatory and unchanging.⁶¹ Thus, a norm may be ambiguous: if a norm is to be based on a shared moral assessment, it requires clarity of what standard is agreed - and the values and beliefs on which the standard is premised.

The concept of aggregation brings norms and institutions together. Institutions, March and Olsen assert, are more formally agreed collections of norms in certain settings. Institutions

⁵⁷ I draw on Finnemore and Sikkink who define norms as formal/ informal practices or standards at individual levels; and, from March and Olsen, who describe institutions as collective practices or standards; see also Amitav Acharya who argues for local norms and contestation/presumptions of displacement. Finnemore M., and K. Sikkink. 1998. International Norms Dynamics and Political Change. In *International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics, International Organization*, 52(4)(Autumn):887-917.

⁵⁸ Finnemore M., and K. Sikkink. 1998. International Norms Dynamics and Political Change. In *International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics, International Organization*, 52(4)(Autumn):887-917.

⁵⁹ Finnemore M., and K. Sikkink. 1998. International Norms Dynamics and Political Change. In *International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics, International Organization*, 52(4)(Autumn):887-917

⁶⁰ As Finnemore and Sikkink famously ask: how do you know a norm when you see one? Finnemore M., and K. Sikkink. 1998. International Norms Dynamics and Political Change. In *International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics, International Organization*, 52(4)(Autumn):892.

⁶¹ Finnemore M., and K. Sikkink. 1998. International Norms Dynamics and Political Change. In *International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics, International Organization*, 52(4)(Autumn):887-917.

encompass a “relatively stable set of practices and rules defining appropriate behaviour for specific groups of actors in specific situations.”⁶² The acceptance and promulgation of norms and institutions is situated in and contingent upon local reasoning and context.

As observed earlier, the policy logic underpinning Ownership was grounded in Ostrom’s policy change theory of institutionalism. The idea of Ownership carried a presumed moral framework: it identifies the norms and institutions which beneficiaries “ought” pursue to take responsibility and demonstrate leadership. The policy logic of Ownership articulates the proposition to replace weak and ineffective domestic norms and institutions with those proposed by the Paris Declaration under the rubric of capacity strengthening and participation through the implementation of the strategies of Ownership.^{63 64} Ostrom’s assumptions, or rules for participation, I argue, became the basis of the implicit and explicit “norms” which underpinned the “best practices” of Ownership, as defined and measured by the policy tools and instruments described in the Paris Declaration. And by proxy, these also became the basis of the Forum Compact. Drawing from Stone’s description of these norms and institutions as

⁶² March, J.G., and Johan P Olsen, 1998, The institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders, *International Organization*, Autumn, Vol 52, No 4, International Organization at Fifty, Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics (Autumn 1998) pp943-969

⁶³ Overall, the Declaration campaign has made several significant differences to aid effectiveness by clarifying and strengthening norms of good practice, contributing to movement toward the 11 outcomes set in 2005, improving the quality of aid partnerships, and supporting rising aid volumes. ...The Declaration’s core principles and commitments have built on, reinforced and disseminated the earlier good practices of different countries and donors and become widely accepted norms for good practice in development cooperation. They have also provided a common vision and a common language for change.” Wood, B et al, May 2011, The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, Final Report, Copenhagen, p.53

⁶⁴ “The Declaration has raised expectations for rapid change, perhaps unrealistically, but also strengthened agreed norms and standards of better practice and partnership. There is ample evidence here that these standards have been used to reinforce or legitimise demands – especially from partner countries – that good practice be observed.... [But] For most donors...the commitment, capacities and incentives to apply these good practices have not been strong enough to entrench them as more than broad norms and not enough to make the necessary changes.” Wood, B. et al. May 2011. *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, Final Report Phase 2*, 57.

the “soft stuff”, the values, beliefs and ideas and “hard stuff”, the tools and instruments, of policymaking,⁶⁵ I brought this analysis together for comparison in the table below.

Table 1: “Best Practice” in Ownership

Attributes of Ownership [Ostrom et al ⁶⁶]	‘Best Practice’ for Ownership of development [Paris Declaration ⁶⁷]	“The soft stuff” implicit /explicit norms⁶⁸	‘The hard stuff’ policy tools and instruments⁶⁹
identification of the need[provision]	Countries’ leadership of development agenda through inclusive consultation	Leadership Political will and commitment Prioritisation Rational logic Inclusion and participation	National development strategies Budgets and resource frameworks Policy dialogue
contributing resources to the solution [production]	Translation of national development strategies into results-oriented programs supported by medium term expenditure frameworks and annual budgets authorised by parliament Coordination of domestic and foreign resources in dialogue w donors	Effectiveness Efficiency in use of Resources Rational logic	Budgets and resource frameworks National development strategies Policy dialogue
enjoying, or consuming the benefits [consumption]	Inclusive participation, of government, civil society and private sector	Accountability through Participation	Programme delivery
deciding when the need has been met, when it’s over [alienation]	Establish results frameworks to report and assess progress	Accountability through Performance and Assessment	Results frameworks Evaluations

⁶⁵ Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy, *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499; Stone, D., 2017, Understanding the transfer of policy failure: bricolage, experimentalism and translation, *Policy and Politics*, Vol 45, No.1, 55-70

⁶⁶ Draws from Ostrom et al’s, 2005, The Samaritan’s Dilemma; OECD, 2005, Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness; OECD, 2008, Accra Agenda for Action; and OECD, Paris Monitoring Survey 2008/2011;

⁶⁷ Taken from Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, from definition and measures of Ownership para 14; and Results para 43 and 44.

⁶⁸ Drawing from Finnemore and Sikkink’s definition of a norm as individual rules or standards of behaviours, practices, ‘what one ought do’, which build from the beliefs and values – the judgements based on aspirations, aims and experiences – and which coalesce into (March and Olsen’s) institutions: the collective formal or informal rules and practices or systems of behaviours. Finnemore M., and K. Sikkink. 1998. International Norms Dynamics and Political Change. In *International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics*, *International Organization*, 52(4)(Autumn):887-917; Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy, *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499.

⁶⁹ See footnote 68 above.

When the OECD led agreement across donors, aid-receiving countries and international development organisations in Paris, and again in Accra, it presumed a shared global understanding of the assumptions and standards underpinning the idea of Ownership. These became foundation of the Forum Compact agreed in Cairns in August 2009. As Ratu Sir Kamasese Mara identified well before the Pacific leaders met in Cairns, “the setting of standards must not assume that there are universal solutions to problems in all parts of the world.”⁷⁰ My research examines just how shared the presumptions were – and the claim of consensus that flowed from them.

It is not only what is transferred and how and why it is offered for transfer, but why it is accepted that matters: “norm brokers” require “norm takers”.⁷¹ The next factor to consider in relation to proposing a model was the concept of brokerage: the role of an interlocutor, an entrepreneur or “broker” who builds bridges and facilitated the transfer of knowledge, ideas and instruments.⁷² The role of entities such as think tanks, regional organisations, or other ‘neutral’ mediators, in the negotiation of the ‘soft stuff’, Stone argued, was crucial to how actors exercised power to influence their desired intent. I was looking for a broker in the space

⁷⁰ Mara, Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamasese, 1970, Address to the 25th Anniversary Commemorative Session General Assembly of the United Nations in New York, 26th October 1970, In Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 241 (Annex 5).

⁷¹ Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy, *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499, citing Acharya 2004.

⁷² Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy, *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499; Freeman, R. 2009. What is translation? *Evidence and Policy: A journal of research, debate and practice*, 5(4), 429-447(19); Lendvai N. and P. Stubbs. Policies as Translation: Situating Transnational Social Policies. In S Hodgson and Z., Irving (eds). *Policy Reconsidered: Meanings, Politics and Practices*, 173-190; Pal L. and D. Ireland. 2009. The Public Sector Reform Movement: Mapping the Global Policy Network, *International Journal of Public Administration*, 32, 621-657; Prince R. 2009. Policy Transfer As Policy Assemblage: Making Policy for the Creative Industries In New Zealand. *Environment and Planning A*, 42, 169-186; Mukhtarov, F., Rethinking the travel of ideas: policy translation in the water sector, *Policy and Politics*, 42(1):71-88; Stone D., O. P. de Oliveira and L.A. Pal. 2020. Transnational Policy Transfer: The Circulation of Ideas, Power and Development Models, *Policy and Society*, 39:1, 1-18; Clarke, J. et al. 2015. *Making Policy Move Towards A Politics Of Translation And Assemblage*.

between the global and regional consensus and local policy change, particularly in the complex and unpredictable spaces of policymaking in international development.

The final factor related to what signifies or triggers the re-negotiation of power. This was left ambiguous by the policy translation advocates. Stone recommended that the behaviours of reflexivity and bargaining might be indicative of a renegotiation of power – but not always. At some point, Stone observed, “transfer ends and endogenous forces of mutation take over. Local ownership becomes pronounced.”⁷³ But when – and how does one recognise this point? Policy transfer analysis in isolation, Stone asserts, cannot provide a general explanatory theory of change: but when combined with other “empirically grounded” approaches, can offer an account for policy change.⁷⁴ This was the next step.

I was seeking a “trigger” or signal that responded to or explained the gap between Pritchett et al’s “capability trap” and the successful examples of Pacific capability, such as those identified by the new Pacific diplomacy. How do you “see” power at work? In the iterative process of developing my conceptual framework and data generation, I [re-]turned to the literature on ideational power, norm contestation, and policy innovation to explore options for enhancing the policy translation model that fitted the gap.

3.2.3 The Power of an Idea

There were two key ways of understanding the influence of an idea: an instrumental view of an idea as a means to explain, predict and organise the world; or the subjective and relational

⁷³ Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy, *Policy Studies*, 33(6):489

⁷⁴ Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy, *Policy Studies*, 33(6):490

stance, which argues that ideational power is shaped by and reflected in our values and beliefs, as we construct and give meaning through our social relations.

Ideas as organisational logic: the road map

Goldstein and Keohane argue that ideas can signify or generate power through a policy's organisational logic, or "road map" which lays out the steps by which change is enacted.⁷⁵

Goldstein and Keohane argued that the power of an idea lay in its capacity to offer an organisational structure or "road-map" for how change should happen.

Goldstein and Keohane equate ideas with beliefs.^{76 77} Ideas, they claim, help to order the world shaping agendas which may influence outcomes.⁷⁸ They assert that an idea must be shared by individuals to motivate action performing the function of helping to "...clarify principles and conceptions of causal relationships and coordinate individual behaviour".⁷⁹ Ideas focus policy actors operating within available options, reducing the potential to consider alternative policy pathways. They imply strategies for the attainment of goals, which are themselves valued because of shared, principled, beliefs, which are understandable only within the context of broader world views.⁸⁰

Goldstein and Keohane argued that although ideas may exist in a policy, but not necessarily have an effect on policy or explain change arising from a policy. Ideas, to have causal power,

⁷⁵ Goldstein, J. and R.O.Keohane (eds). 1995. *Ideas & Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*.

⁷⁶ Goldstein, J. and R.O.Keohane (eds). 1995. *Ideas & Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*.

⁷⁷ Goldstein, J. and R.O.Keohane (eds). 1995. *Ideas & Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*, 3.

⁷⁸ Goldstein, J. and R.O.Keohane (eds). 1995. *Ideas & Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*, 12.

⁷⁹ Goldstein, J. and R.O.Keohane (eds). 1995. *Ideas & Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*, 8-11.

⁸⁰ Goldstein, J. and R.O.Keohane (eds). 1995. *Ideas & Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*, 8-11.

must operate through one or more of three pathways:⁸¹ they may serve as road-maps, which limit choice to the selected course of action because it thereby excludes alternative policy solutions or strategies; they may serve to maintain the status quo, defining a focal point for collective action that facilitates cohesion, or coalitions, amongst policy actors; finally once an idea is embedded within institutions through the adoption of rules and norms, it not only acts to serve the interests of its supporters but also as a reinforcing mechanism within an organisation. Once embedded an idea can discourage policy entrepreneurs and constrain innovation. Thus, Goldstein and Keohane argue, policy outcomes can be understood only by examining the relationship between interests, power and human beliefs - or ideas. The first step in determining whether there is a causal pathway between an idea and policy change, is to describe the idea and the policy outcome or institutional change expected in the policy.⁸²

Ideas as meaning and motivation.

An alternative view of the power of an idea draws from the literature on ideational power.⁸³ This literature argues that power is inherent in an idea: acting more as a motivational device or framing construct which can influence change – enacted by individuals and groups [policy actors] in pursuit of what the idea represents to and for them. Rather than lay out an

⁸¹ Goldstein, J. and R.O.Keohane (eds). 1995. *Ideas & Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*, 11.

⁸² Goldstein, J. and R.O.Keohane (eds). 1995. *Ideas & Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*.

⁸³ Parsons, C. 2016. Ideas and Power: Four Intersections and How to Show Them. *Journal of European Public Policy*. 23(3):446-463; Raymond L. and J.E. Oliver. 2009. Ideas, Discourse and Rhetoric in Political Choice, *Polity* 41(2):182-210; Blyth, M. and V. Schmidt. Some reflections on ideas, ontology and where we go next, Chapter 8, Part III, Responses, in Gofas A., and Colin Hay, (eds), 2010, *The Role of Ideas in Political Analysis, A Portrait of Contemporary Debates*; Beland, D., M. B Carstensen, and L. Seabrooke. 2016. Ideas, Political Power and Public Policy. *Journal of European Public Policy* 23(3):315-317

organising logic which ordains a sequence of steps and strategies, in this literature, an idea motivates, illuminates and guides.⁸⁴

Carstensen and Schmidt define ideational power as “...the capacity of actors [individual or collective] to influence other actors’ normative and cognitive beliefs through the use of ideational elements...”.⁸⁵ They argue for three different types of ideational power: power through ideas, understood as the capacity of actors to persuade other actors to accept and adopt their views through the use of ideational elements; power over ideas, meaning the imposition of ideas and the power to resist the inclusion of alternative ideas into the policymaking arena; and power in ideas, which occurs through establishing a hegemony, through institutions imposing constraints on what ideas are considered acceptable.

Blyth and Schmidt extend both a pragmatic and fluid stance. They argue that an idea is a representation or construction of the values, desires and interests of those who engage with the idea.⁸⁶ Blyth and Schmidt explain, citing Tonder: “...the idea of cause and effect as temporarily discrete events and objects becomes difficult to sustain... as the idea engages the world, causing it to follow this or that policy path, the ideational itself becomes what which gives meaning to the outcome of this path.”⁸⁷ Thus, they claim, an idea can shape or influence,

⁸⁴ Beland argues that an idea influences policy change in three ways: by helping to construct the problems and issues on the policy agenda; by shaping the assumptions that affect the content of reform proposals; and as discursive weapons that participate in the construction of the reform agenda. Ideational processes both shape policy actors’ perception of interests and the environment in which they operate. But he argues, national institutions and repertoires also play a role. Beland, D. 2009. Ideas, Institutions and Policy Change. *Journal of European Public Policy*. 16(5):701-718; Beland, D., M. B. Carstensen, and L. Seabrooke. 2016. Ideas, Political Power and Public Policy. *Journal of European Public Policy* 23(3):315-317

⁸⁵ Carstensen, M.B. and V. A Schmidt. 2016. Power Through, Over And In Ideas: Conceptualising Ideational Power In Discursive Institutionalism, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 23(3):318-337.

⁸⁶ Blyth, M. and V. Schmidt. 2010. Some reflections on ideas, ontology and where we go next. In Gofas A. and C. Hay (eds). *The Role of Ideas in Political Analysis: A Portrait of Contemporary Debates*, 165-167

⁸⁷ Blyth, M. and V. Schmidt. 2010. Some reflections on ideas, ontology and where we go next. In Gofas and C. Hay (eds). *The Role of Ideas in Political Analysis: A Portrait of Contemporary Debates*, 165-167

even produce, concrete entities, such as the policies and practices of a government or a donor.

The important step, they assert, is to observe this fluidity in practice.⁸⁸

The power of an idea to generate change lies in the meaning it signifies for policymakers [and implementers]: its capacity to frame an issue and motivate action. How and why a policy should be implemented is reflective of the power of an idea.⁸⁹ It reveals the values and beliefs represented by an idea – and forecasts influence on behaviours and aspirations. Through this lens, an idea acts to illustrate a pathway and influence action – and create potential opportunities for change. An idea encompasses or draws from principles and values to inspire and guide potential action. But it does not ordain or proscribe the action.

Goldstein and Keohane's stance reflects an instrumentalist view of the way an idea can explain, predict and organise phenomena: a view which aligns with the function of Ownership in the Paris Declaration. The Declaration proposed an organising logic, a road map which identified how Ownership could be achieved and measured.⁹⁰ In contrast, the alternative view of the power of an idea proposed by the ideational scholars, suggests the influence of an idea lies in its capacity to motivate or frame change. These scholars bring subjectivity and

⁸⁸ Blyth and Schmidt say: ideas are actants in that they “...have the power to cause changes in policy because of their agentive capacities to express, in more or less adequate ways, the circumstances from which they arise....ideas are always ideas “of something” material, such that the capacity to act upon the material is engendered by the interaction of the ideal with the material itself, making “an idea a repository for future action”... where the ideal and the material are mutually expressive in action via the ability of ideas to be an actant in the world. Thus, some ideas “win out” based upon their adequacy – “the measure of the ability of an idea to engage with and persist in the world that an idea is inter-involved with”... enabling, Blyth and Schmidt explain, [drawing on Tonder] ideational scholars to move beyond the cause-constitution dualism .. to talk systematically about the non-linear and recursive causal property of ideas.... that is, ideas can grow because of their symbolism and engagement with policy makers. Blyth, M. and V. Schmidt. 2010. Some reflections on ideas, ontology and where we go next. In Gofas A. and C. Hay (eds). *The Role of Ideas in Political Analysis: A Portrait of Contemporary Debates*, 165-167.

⁸⁹ Parsons demonstrates how ideas intersect with other conditions to become powerful and gain influence: because believers obtain power for unrelated reasons; because ideas somehow empower actors to achieve power; because they make possible new coalitions of actors; or because they inform the crafting or retooling of institutions that matter. Parsons, C. 2016. Ideas and Power: Four Intersections and How to Show Them. *Journal of European Public Policy*. 23(3):446-463.

⁹⁰ Wood, B. et al. 2011. *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, Final Report Phase 2*.

relationality into the dynamic. An idea reflects and draws on values and principles which inform and shape a policy actor's decision to exercise power. This understanding of ideational power draws on the interpretive traditions and reflects how meaning reveals and is shaped by our values and beliefs, constructing our social relations - and our realities. While the former concept of an idea's power, offered by Goldstein and Keohane, reflected the Paris Declaration's policy logic, my analysis of the mismatch between rhetoric and practice indicated the validity of examining how the idea of Ownership was understood by local policymakers. The ideational scholars' understanding of how an idea functions offered an alternative frame for exploring how local policy makers understood the idea of Ownership.

I turned next to the alternative literature on norm contestation.

3.2.4 *Norm Contestation*

As observed earlier, the policy logic of Ownership builds from Ostrom's proposition for participation - the inclusion of locally situated knowledge which would replace "weak" and "ineffective" local norms and institutions with those promoted by a transition to Ownership. The Paris Declaration laid out both a strategy for capacity strengthening and participation through the strategies of Ownership. However, the claims of weak and ineffective local norms and institutions sat uneasily alongside the claims made by the literature, such as the new Pacific diplomacy – and my own experience in development in the Pacific. As fieldwork unfolded, these claims also sat uneasily with my encounters with local policy advisors in the Pacific.

I found a pathway in Acharya's work on norm contestation: the policy transfer literature, I realised, presumed the superiority of global policy norms – or perhaps a norm vacuum - in the “policy-receiving” location. The policy transfer model risked neglecting how norms and institutions could vary according to context. Potentially, this meant that the policy-crafters had overlooked the significance or strength of local adherence to local values and beliefs, the foundations of locally-situated knowledge – and corresponding norms and institutions. The model implied a static delivery of policy to - rather than a dynamic of local engagement and contestation with local norms and institutions. Significantly, this meant the policy model neglected the possibilities of local creativity and innovation: the potential for local policy actors to craft different but functionally equivalent institutions drawn from locally-situated norms, values and beliefs that mattered to them.

Stone also sought to account for this linearity. She acknowledged evidence of alternative and creative processes of hybridisation, localisation and adaptation.⁹¹ Drawing from Acharya, she argued that we recognise that local policy actors

...do not remain passive targets and learners as transnational gents, acting out of a universal moral script ...[instead] local agents also promote norm diffusion by actively borrowing and modifying transnational norms in accordance with their preconstructed normative beliefs and practices...⁹²

But, in my reading, Acharya's focus remained on the local adoption and adaptation of global norms by local policy actors. In light of my experience in the field, this continued to assume

⁹¹ Stone, D. 2017. Understanding the Transfer of Policy Failure: Bricolage, Experimentalism and Translation. *Policy & Politics* 45(1):55–70.

⁹² Stone, D. 2017. Understanding the Transfer of Policy Failure: Bricolage, Experimentalism and Translation. *Policy & Politics* 45(1):65 [citing Acharya 2004:269].

the [superior] relevance of transnational or global norms. I was encountering something different in fieldwork.

Acharya argues that global norms encounter local norms and through contestation, those global norms re-emerge, enhanced, to create salient local institutions even if they “looked like” those institutions sought by global policy.⁹³ As with Engle Merry’s “vernacularisation”,⁹⁴ Acharya argues that global norms are “made” local, implying local norms become subordinate to “global” norms.⁹⁵ But in my fieldwork in Samoa, it wasn’t so much global norms being re-constituted as local – but local norms asserted as equivalent, taking precedence over global norms.

In Samoa, I observed global norms not so much overwhelming or integrating local norms to become locally meaningful, but rather, local norms being drawn on as relevant to create and shape more meaningful institutions relevant to the policy context according to Samoa’s policy actors’ social and cultural worldview and their aspirations. It was a process of negotiation and assertion, based on mutuality and equality rather than imposition, de-construction and re-integration. And new institutions renegotiated, or crafted, accordingly, to meet the expectations of global policy.

⁹³ The process of norm localisation, according to Stone, D. 2012. Transfer and Translation of Policy. *Policy Studies*, 33(6):483-499.

⁹⁴ Sally Engle Merry’s work on vernacularisation refers to the transnational circulation of global human rights and the role of local knowledge brokers with local sociocultural awareness who understand both worlds of transnational human rights and local cultural practices, who can look both ways. Merry, S.E. 2006. Transnational Human Rights and local Activism: Mapping the Middle, *American Anthropologist*, 108(1) March: 38-51.

⁹⁵ Acharya, A. 2004. How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism. *International Organization* 58(02):239-275.

Policy acceptance [and legitimacy], I determined, might be signified by observations of reflexivity or bargaining by the recipient policy community. But renegotiation of power, as deemed essential by Freeman was best signified by innovation in the re-crafting of a policy's institutions, or collective practices.⁹⁶ The process of norm contestation was best revealed in those moments when norms became collective practices, or institutions, demonstrated through innovation. Innovation was where power was revealed. I examined this further.

3.2.5 Policy Innovation

The literature defines innovation as the construction of a new instrument, or tool, or practice, which reflected a new way of looking at an old problem; seen as new by its adoptees resulting in a discontinuity with past practices.⁹⁷ In Samoa, I learnt that innovation brought nuance to policy translation: it signified the crafting of new practices and institutions to align local norms with the “needs” of global policy while reconstituting the nature of aid relations. Innovation brought policy, practices and relations into new territory.

There were examples of innovation emerging during fieldwork that represented an adaptation or reconfiguration of institutions [or practices] that asserted the equivalence of local norms with global policy norms – in pursuit of what the idea of Ownership represented for local policy

⁹⁶ Freeman, R., 2009, What is translation? Evidence and Policy: A journal of research, debate and practice, 5(4), 429-447(19)

⁹⁷ There was limited literature on the role of innovation in policy. The literature offers several definitions: Rogers 2003 defines innovation as “the adoption of an idea, practice or object which is seen as new by its adoptees, either individuals or organisation” even if the idea, practice or object has existed previously elsewhere] Brown and Osborne’s 2012 definition distinguishes innovation from improvement by defining innovation as “a completely new product or new way of looking at an old problem, which constitutes a radical discontinuity with the past.” See Brown and Osborne (2012) cited in Bekkers V. and L. Tummers. 2018. Innovation In The Public Sector: Towards An Open And Collaborative Approach. *International Review of Administrative Sciences* 84(2):209-213.

actors. Potentially, I realised, innovation was indicative of a re-negotiation of power in the policy translation process.

Norm contestation at those points of policy innovation revealed the space where global policy norms and institutions met local norms to adapt or side-step, 'old' practices of aid and development to produce locally meaningful institutions. This aligns with Ostrom's proposition for locally-situated knowledge to counteract the perverse incentives of aid to effect a transition in Ownership. It offered the opportunity to recalibrate the relations of power and reframe donor-aid receiving country relations.

This coalesced as a conceptual framework for policy change which drew from the policy translation and ideational change literature, mediated by a nuanced interpretation of norm contestation and policy innovation to reveal power in operation. It sought to recognise that the dynamic influence of power is critical to how ideas, norms and practices are negotiated and enacted, across political settings and between policymakers across global and "local" national domains in relations of asymmetrical power.

3.3 The Research Proposition

3.3.1 The Research Proposition:

I developed an analytical model which could guide how the idea of Ownership shaped policy implementation under the Compact - and its influence on changes in local aid coordination practices, as a precondition for effective partnerships which, according to Paris, would flow through to more effective development.

I constructed the model as a framework to explain how – and why - the idea of Ownership could influence change in “local” aid coordination practices of national governments; and consequently, influence development partnerships between donor and aid-receiving governments in asymmetrical power relations. I proposed three levels of analysis:

- 1) Testing the policy logic proposed by Paris Declaration;
- 2) Assessing the meaning of Ownership as understood locally;
- 3) Looking for a shift in power according to local understandings to determine whether Ownership is exercised – and its influence on development partnerships.

The analytical model proposed that the meaning attributed to an idea is reflected in the rhetoric and metaphors of language used to describe that idea; and so the rhetoric and metaphors reveal the values and beliefs which underpin the idea. The choice in rhetoric and metaphor thus reflect how the norms - the individually held ‘rules or standards’ that are hard to “know” because they are often hidden and invisible - are constituted, negotiated and accepted. Taken together, these norms replicate, or shape and create - through the behaviours of reflexive learning, bargaining and innovation - the ‘hard stuff’ of collective behaviours and practices [and may be represented by new or familiar policy tools and instruments] the institutions of the successful policy translation.

But while the behaviours of reflexive learning and bargaining indicated acceptance of global policy norms, it was in innovation that local and global norms are in contest. That contestation, or friction – when it represents the salience of local norms – indicates the opportunity for the shift in power which translates policy into local practice and indicates change: when global

norms are salient, it represents the replication of global policy as local practice; it can seem like isomorphic mimicry. But when the friction indicates local norms gaining salience and innovation results, it represents an integration and re-interpretation of global policy as local practice: and the exercise of Ownership.

My objective was to analyse the language [the rhetoric and metaphors] and behaviours [reflexivity, bargaining and innovation] associated with the idea of Ownership and deployed by local policy advisors. I sought to identify the values and beliefs which influenced norms and practices, and shaped which aid practices and institutions were deemed acceptable or were re-negotiated and adapted; and in turn, demonstrated the innovation which signified the exercise of Ownership.⁹⁸

I was testing Ostrom's claim that participation – through locally-situated knowledge, engaged according to her four nominated criteria and the nominated strategies and measures of Ownership under the Paris Declaration - would effect change in aid coordination; and transition in the Ownership of development by engaging a renegotiation of power between donors and aid-receiving governments.

⁹⁸ As I moved between fieldwork and deskwork, I began my data generation and analysis in each national case-study site by determining first, whether the government had implemented the strategies of Ownership in accord with Ostrom's prescribed criteria for a transition in Ownership and the proxy measures identified by the Paris Declaration. This is outlined by the matrix at Table 2.1. [See Appendix 3-Table 3.1: Implementing "Best Practice" in Ownership]. In light of my preliminary findings on implementation, I then tested the policy's logic in each site, as discussed above; and outlined by the analytical framework depicted in Table 3.2. [See Appendix 3.2: Analytical Model for Understanding Policy Change]

Then, having determined whether the aid-receiving government exercised Ownership, I proposed further data analysis to assess the consequences of the exercise of Ownership for the development partnership.⁹⁹

Reflecting the iterative nature of the research process, I reviewed the research question as fieldwork progressed and established additional sub-questions to explain apparent policy failure or unexpected change.¹⁰⁰ As noted earlier, the original research question was:

- a. How did the idea of Ownership at the heart of the Paris Declaration - and the foundation of the Forum Compact - influence development partnerships in the Pacific: Did the idea of Ownership “put countries in the driver’s seat” of their development, as promised by the World Bank and OECD?
- b. And if not, why not...? Reflections on Field Work Data and Theory

As I interrogated the data to understand how change happened [or not], I generated a further set of three sub-questions to guide data generation and analysis:¹⁰¹

- 1) Did aid coordination practices change?
 - i. *Was this change attributed to the global idea of Ownership?*
 - ii. *If not, what was the local significance attributed to the idea of Ownership?*
 - iii. *How did the local significance attributed to Ownership influence change?*
- 2) Did this change represent the exercise of Ownership?

⁹⁹ In addition to drawing on field interviews and observations, I drew on the annual partnership performance reports compiled by the major donor, AusAID, as a key data source. See especially Chapter 9 Samoa: Well... Game Over; and Chapter 11 Kiribati: Sovereign ...Over the Fish.

¹⁰⁰ Wilkinson, C. 2014. On not just finding what you (thought you) were looking for. In Yanow, D. and P.Schwartz-Shea. 2014. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the interpretive Turn*.

¹⁰¹ See Appendix 3.3 Research Questions.

- 3) Did the exercise of ownership lead to more effective development partnerships with Australia, as their largest donor?

Next, I turned to the research design. The research design evolved as an iterative process of engagement, reflexivity and immersion between the people, the places, the data and the literature. I begin, in Chapter 4, by explaining my position as an interpretivist, grounded in constructivism.

Chapter 4 The Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Introduction

As an interpretivist grounded in social constructivism, I have adopted a research design and methodology that entails a multi-sited case study of how an idea influences policy change. My research design drew on interpretive policy analysis approaches [IPA] to undertake a multi-sited case study of how and why the idea of Ownership influenced change in development partnerships under the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination across five policy communities located across four policy-sites in the Pacific and Australia.

In Chapter 4, I reflect on my location as a researcher in the interpretive traditions, grounded in constructivism.¹ I outline the rationale for my research design and methodology. I identify the methods and tools I deployed to generate data through field and archival work; and the process for data analysis. I identify the opportunities and limitations of the research approach. I conclude by outlining the subsequent empirical chapters of my thesis, which reflect the application of my research design and methodology in practice.

4.2 Ontology and Epistemology

My worldview, the choices I make about the substance and meaning of my world, is constructed and shaped by my experience of where I am situated, as much as by the stories, historical and contemporary, of self, family and community that I carry within me, that

¹ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*; Yanow, D. 1996. *How Does A Policy Mean?*; Yanow, D. 2000. *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*; Yanow, D. and P. Schwartz-Shea (eds). 2014. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*; Crotty, M. 2020. *Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*.

constitute who I am and what I might become. I grew up in an aspirational, Catholic, farming family in country Victoria of Anglo-Irish-Welsh and colonial-settler heritage. I chose an education and a profession as a community development practitioner which reflected our family's aspirational values for a good life – alongside a commitment to social justice and equity. This meant I often worked in environments shaped by different social, political and economic circumstances from those of my early years. I learnt to appreciate that there are many ways of seeing the world. I learnt that one needs to know not only where to look, but how to see. I always remember the time, in a remote part of the Northern Territory, when I learnt this nuance. I was hunting for shell-fish with my *yolngu* family. Gathering shell-fish is a difficult job, requiring a persistent and discerning eye. The shell-fish sit, hidden, just below the surface of the sticky, grey, mangrove mud. As a novice, I ended the day's hunting with a dismal scattering of 10 or 11 shellfish in the bottom of my huge hessian flour-sack; a woeful collection, not enough to feed me, let alone a family. I simply could not see the tell-tale signs of shell-fish beneath the mud. While my *dhuway*, the grandmother of the family, a hardy, wiry woman of indeterminate years, with the biggest of smiles, produced a bag simply full of shell-fish when we sat down at the fire. Her haul from the day's hunting and gathering could easily feed the family.

Constructivists, Crotty advises, do not create meaning but construct meaning socially.² Meaning is co-constructed through the interplay between subject and object, making each partners in the generation of meaning. Each individual's sense-making happens in context. Knowledge is contingent on human practices; it is constructed in, and out, of the interaction

² Crotty, M. 2020. *Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*

between humans and their world, and is developed and transmitted within a social context. But, while I agree that we are partners in the generation of meaning, my experience in indigenous and Pacific spaces has shown me that we are not always equal partners in that co-construction: that knowledge is both subjective and political. Our values and beliefs frame our understanding and interpretation as we engage with our world. But the operation of power mediates whose voice is heard, the significance attributed to some voices over others, and how meaning is assigned. As a development practitioner, I continually negotiate the spaces between my sense of my personal capacity to influence and the 'invisible' structures of the broader political, economic and social world[s] in which I engage: observing and part of, the interplay between meaning, actions, practices and institutions.

Bevir and Rhodes argue that interpretivism in political science focuses on the meanings that shape actions and institutions and the ways in which they do so.³ Drawing from the practices of phenomenology, hermeneutics and ethnography, interpretive approaches argue that to understand actions, practices and institutions, we need to "evoke the intentionality of actors," to understand the beliefs and desires which explain the cause of their actions.⁴ Intentions are illustrative of beliefs and desire – and result in action.⁵ Beliefs form holistic webs of meaning – and these meanings are constitutive of actions and practices. To understand intention, we can observe, and interrogate, actions. Thus,

....to grasp the reasons for which someone acted is not just to understand their action but also to give a proper explanation of their action...⁶

³ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 3.

⁴ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 3.

⁵ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 3.

⁶ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 3.

Interpretive political science, Bevir and Rhodes explain, argues that people construct understandings; and that outcomes are contingent on what we construct and how. Such constructions (for example, the idea or category of social class) are not objective, or 'pure' variables or experiences, but are imbued by the meaning we give them. Thus, in our construction of the world, we may explain actions and practices through reasons, beliefs and desires. But we cannot assume that reasons for actions are always conscious and rational: therefore, interpretive political science also talks of meanings, discourse, and language, as well as beliefs, desires and reasons.⁷

This implies that we have choice in our decision-making, rather than are subject to pre-determined outcomes; that our actions are both contingent and situated. Interpretive political science therefore argues for the holistic analysis of meaning, rather than the vindication or refutation of logic or "facts," because it sees learning as contingent on prior knowledge, on beliefs and desires drawn from experience.⁸

Thus, for interpretive political scientists, research is not about privileging one voice, but rather, it is about revealing "the sites of struggle," constituted by different beliefs and traditions; and demonstrating the sites of resistance, through local knowledge and local reasoning.⁹ Interpretive political science's intent is to challenge and deconstruct mainstream approaches to political science by shifting the focus of inquiry to insider perspectives, local meanings and local knowledge through the "recovery" of beliefs and practices; rather than to

⁷ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 3.

⁸ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 10.

⁹ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 23.

propose claims of “objective” social facts or categories which can explain actions, and beliefs, as variables from which one posits general “laws” of causality, as positivism does. Interpretive policy science sees the task of research as one which posits:

...plausible conjectures rooted in local knowledge... where the aim of research is complex specificity in context, the analysis of situated agency...¹⁰

The conceptual tools interpretive researchers offer for this task are the ontological concepts (as historicists rather than institutionalists¹¹) of situated agency, local reasoning and practices; and the explanatory concepts of historicism: of traditions, dilemmas and narrative. The task then, for the interpretive researcher, is to recover, recount and review the multiple stories of contestation - of struggle and resistance - through tracing the web of beliefs and practices in which a policy is located, over time, and in multiple sites, to derive practical lessons from lived experience.¹²

Given the recursive and reflexive nature of the interpretive approach,¹³ as diverse meanings and connections are traced through beliefs and practices, over time and across multiple sites, some critics argue that the approach lacks rigour and objectivity.¹⁴ In response, the interpretivists argue, objectivity and rigour in analysis and argumentation arise from presenting “agreed facts” as the basis on which to compare and contrast rival stories, or

¹⁰ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 24.

¹¹ Bevir and Rhodes distinguish the contingent local reasoning of the historicists, who locate themselves in context of the wider web of beliefs which the actors reach, against an historical background; compared with the institutionalists, who rely on, or reify, rational choice theory, or rationalism, to explain behaviours and actions. Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 15.

¹² Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 23.

¹³ See for example, Marcus, who argues that position and reflexivity are significant parts of the ethnographic process, asserting that as the researcher moves across sites, identity is continually re-negotiated as the researcher’s perspective moves and merges between sites. Marcus, G.E. 1995. Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24:95-117.

¹⁴ Yanow, D. 1996. *How Does A Policy Mean?*; Yanow, D. 2000. *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*; Yanow, D. and P. Schwartz-Shea (eds). 2014. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*.

interpretations.¹⁵ These facts are “recovered” or generated, through observation, description, and categorisation; and argued through narratives - explanations of shared facts which postulate significant relationships, connections or similarities. Objectivity and rigour derive from demonstrating the intellectual honesty to take others’ critique seriously; to argue from the basis of established - and transparent or explicit - standards of evidence and reason; and to present one’s interpretation in ways that produce new and exciting “stories”.¹⁶

I brought this ontological and epistemological stance to the research design and its application.

4.2.1 *The Interpretive Traditions and the Research Design*

The purpose of my research was to understand how the idea of Ownership influenced development partnerships in the Pacific. Did, as the donors had claimed, the idea of Ownership put the Pacific SIDS in “the driver’s seat” of their development? As I examined the literature in Chapter 2, it became clear that my aim was to test the policy logic for Ownership at the heart of the Paris Declaration – a policy implemented in the Pacific through the auspice of the regional policy, the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination (2009). The policy logic underpinning the idea – and strategies – of Ownership argued that “locally-situated knowledge,” through “beneficiary participation,” was the response capable of addressing the perverse incentives inherent in aid and development and arising from the

¹⁵ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 10.

¹⁶ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 10.

power asymmetry between donors and aid receiving countries.¹⁷ In effect, I needed to unpack the Declaration's claim that the idea of Ownership and its accompanying strategies could counteract the undisputed dominance of the donors - and create the shift in power relations that led to better partnerships – and better development. I needed to test the claims for the pivotal significance of the idea of Ownership in the process of policy change.

My aim, to understand and test the validity of the proposition for Ownership, locates my research precisely in the interpretive traditions. Bevir and Rhodes argue persuasively that the interpretive traditions in the political sciences are not about privileging one voice. Rather, these traditions are about revealing the “sites of struggle” or resistance, constituted by different beliefs, desires and traditions, through generating an understanding of local knowledge and local reasoning. It was in these “sites of struggle,” the ‘local’ sites where global policy is re-negotiated as local practice, that I wanted to focus my attention: those sites where policy communities negotiated the implementation of the idea of Ownership under the policy, in their policy setting, according to their mandated responsibilities and in accord with local values and beliefs – their “locally situated knowledge.”

4.2.2 From Conceptual Framework to Research Design:

My analysis of the policy logic - in light of the critiques raised by implementation - and the policy change literature, confirmed that the research design and methodology needed to offer

¹⁷ In effect, the idea of Ownership argued that an idea, translated by the Paris Declaration into a suite of strategies of aid practice, i.e. participation - albeit grounded in capacity strengthening to build personal competence in specific skills of planning and performance management - could act to shift structural power inequalities.

methods and tools which could unpack the layers of assumptions which underpinned the policy logic of Ownership.

The conceptual framework offered an alternative analytical lens through which to examine the intersection of meaning, context and power amidst the complexity of the “translation” of claimed global consensus into local practice. I proposed three key steps in the analysis. These steps were finessed as the fieldwork and deskwork unfolded and became:

- a. A comparison of the criteria for participation which Ostrom proposed as the necessary conditions for a transition to Ownership with the measures proposed by the Paris Declaration to identify whether the performance of the strategies of Ownership indicated the exercise of Ownership. The analytical tool which I devised to guide this process is the matrix at Appendix 3.1. Best Practice in Ownership.
- b. A comparison of the local significance or meaning attributed to Ownership - to identify local values and beliefs and associated norms and practices around Ownership - with that prescribed by the policy logic; and, if needed in consequence, to re-interrogate the data to identify links between the claims [or observations] of change in the practices of Ownership inherent the policy logic [as per the matrix] with the observed or reported behaviours and practices of local policy advisors. I sought signs of reflexivity, bargaining and innovation – the last-named behaviour identified as a “trigger” or signal, of a shift in power indicative of the exercise of Ownership. I devised an analytical,

framework which reflected this process, outlined at Appendix 3.2. Analytical Model for Policy Change.

- c. The final step, having determined whether, and how, Ownership was exercised, was to assess the influence of the exercise of Ownership on the development partnership in each setting by analysing the performance of the partnership. I sourced data for this analysis from the annual partnership performance reports, media and interviews.

Having determined the purpose of my research and the kind of analytical framework I would need to undertake to address my research questions, I needed a design and methodology which could generate the kind of data that could support this analysis.

4.2.3 Approach to the Research Design

I designed the research project in a way which allowed me to engage persuasively with the questions of scale and complexity that inhered in the policy spaces of international development¹⁸ and across the policy pathways that linked and connected [political] leaders and policymakers from the bilateral donors and multilateral agencies, the aid-receiving countries and regional organisations, across global, regional and national policy domains. I chose my research design and methodology to engage the questions of the dynamic interaction between meaning, ideas, power and context, across diverse policy-actors situated in different policy “communities” and also moving between policy “sites”. These policy

¹⁸ Ramalingam, B. 2015. Aid on the Edge of Chaos: Re-thinking International Cooperation in a Complex World.

“communities” included actors who held different policy functions or roles related to implementation of the idea of Ownership: as leaders, responsible for authorising decisions on the policy; as advisors, responsible for either [or both] negotiating with donors on facets of policy design or implementation, or guiding implementation of the policy strategies, tools and instruments associated with Ownership encompassed by the suite of policies encompassed by the HLFAE.¹⁹ This included finding a way to grapple with the digital, as well as physical, pathways which linked these policy spaces, over time.

But first, I wanted to ascertain whether policy actors in the region were interested in the research.

4.2.4 Scoping the Research Approach:

The Compact’s mandate as the policy vehicle for Ownership

During my scoping visit to Fiji in 2014, I consulted regional and national policymakers to identity the policy mandate for the idea of Ownership in the Pacific. Initial consultations in Suva, and my own past experience in the field, sourced the origins of the idea of Ownership in the agreements in Paris and Accra - as indicated in the Compact text. Although various Pacific governments and the Forum Secretariat had endorsed the Paris Declaration by virtue of their individual attendance at the HLFAE, the Forum Leaders endorsed only the aid effectiveness agenda in 2006 [not the Declaration itself].²⁰ This was followed by the

¹⁹ This includes the commitments made under all four High-Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness: The Rome Declaration on Harmonisation in 2003, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, the Accra Agenda for Action in 2008 and the Busan Outcomes in 2011.

²⁰: The Forum Leaders “Agreed that aid effectiveness be made an integral part of the Pacific Plan and of the necessary national planning requirements under it...” Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat 2006. *Thirty-Seventh Pacific Islands Forum Communique*, 24-25 October 2006, Nadi Fiji. PIFS (06)12: 9.

endorsement of the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles in 2007 by the region's senior government policy advisors on aid and development.²¹ It was not until the Forum Leaders endorsed the Forum Compact in 2009 that the principles at the heart of the Paris Declaration gained the authority of the Pacific political leadership's endorsement. It was the Forum Compact which carried policy-weight in the region: the Compact was cited in Forum Communiqués and related policy text and informal conversations as the policy instrument which guided donor-aid receiving country relationships across the region. It was the pivotal policy which carried the idea of Ownership, through the global aid effectiveness agenda, from Paris to the Pacific. The Compact was complemented at national levels by bilateral aid agreements between Australia and individual countries, the Pacific Partnerships for Development under the Rudd/Gillard governments, and their successors, the Aid Program Agreements under the Abbott/Turnbull governments. These bilateral agreements re-affirmed the strategies of Ownership.

Next, I assessed the literature to define the parameters of my research design and methodology to examine the influence of an idea across multiple sites and with multiple policy communities under the scope of the Forum Compact's policy and programs.

²¹ See Chapter 6 From Paris to the Pacific: The Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles were endorsed at the PICS Partners Meeting in Koror in 2007. The Forum Secretariat developed the Principles through consultation across the region, on the recommendation of the 2005 study on aid effectiveness and capacity, commissioned by the Secretariat. The PICS-Partners meeting was an annual regional meeting led by the Secretariat and consisting of senior representatives from national governments, regional agencies (usually from the Secretariat but also others) and development partner officials. The national government officials were usually from the ministries of Foreign Affairs, and sometimes from ministries of Finance or National Planning, but could include others for specific events.

4.3 Research Design and Methodology

I selected three core methodologies drawn from the interpretive traditions: the case study, multi-sited ethnography and interpretive policy analysis approaches. Within the framework offered by these as a unified methodology, I drew on ethnographic methods, including semi-structured interviews; field-observation of policy “communities” in their “local” policy-settings; and text-analysis of interview transcripts and policy-related documents, from contemporary and archival sources from across the policy communities and in each policy site, to generate and analyse data. As the research evolved, the significance of historical relations in understanding the contemporary context of the idea of Ownership became evident. As a result, I also undertook historical inquiries to generate, frame and analyse data.

My first step was to determine the appropriate “vehicle” through which to examine the relationship between idea of Ownership and policy implementation across the three scales, from global consensus to regional endorsement and national implementation.

The scope of my research operated in the policy-spaces of global, multilateral, and transnational policymaking, amidst the chaos and complexity of aid and development practices.²² I needed to find a way to grapple with the scale and complexity of a policymaking process which moved between global, regional and national levels - while retaining the focus on the experience and intimacy of situated knowledges and local reasoning. Given the policy’s “architecture” revealed by mapping the Compact-text itself, I realised I wanted to be able to

²² Ramalingam, B. 2015. *Aid on the edge of Chaos: Re-thinking International Cooperation in a Complex World*. Honig, D. 2018. Navigation By Judgement: Why And When Top Down Management Of Foreign Aid Doesn’t Work.

follow the idea of Ownership as it moved through and within the policy and across multiple scales, via different policy communities, to “sit” in multiple policy-sites: from global consensus through regional authorisation, to national [or ‘local’] implementation; and through different kinds of organisations and agencies. This led me to the literature on case studies and multi-sited ethnographies, key methodologies in the interpretive traditions.²³

4.3.1 The Case Study

Mapping the scope of the case study was the first step. First, I looked at what constitutes a case study, then I moved to the potential sites of investigation. Thomas proposes that a case study can be defined as:

...analyses of persons, events, decision, periods, projects, policy, institutions of other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods. That case that is the subject of the inquiry will be an instance of a class of phenomenon that provides an analytical frame – an object – within which the study is conducted and which the case illuminates and explicates....²⁴

A case study, Thomas argues, is most usefully seen as a design frame which incorporates several methods, rather than a method in itself.²⁵ It is both “...a choice of what is to be studied..”²⁶ and it must also be a study OF something, “and that OF would constitute the study’s analytical frame...”²⁷ It is comprised of two elements:

- a. A practical and historical unity, which is the subject of the study – the case itself;

²³ Bevir, M. and R.A.W. Rhodes (eds). 2016. *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*.

²⁴ Thomas, G. 2011. A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse, and Structure. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6)(July):513

²⁵ Thomas, G. 2011. A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse, and Structure. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6)(July):512.

²⁶ Thomas, G. 2011. A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse, and Structure. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6)(July):512 [citing Stake 2005:443].

²⁷ Thomas, G. 2011. A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse, and Structure. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6)(July):512

- b. An analytical or theoretical frame, which is the object of the study – the frame through which the subject is viewed and which the subject explicates.

The subject, Thomas explains, is an instance or class of some phenomenon, and the object comprises the analytical frame within which the subject is viewed, and which the case exemplifies.²⁸ Thus, I decided, my research project was to be a case study of how an idea, Ownership, influenced change in development partnerships through implementation of a policy, the Forum Compact. The subject is an examination of policy change in aid and development in the Pacific. The analytical frame draws on the literature on ideational change and policy translation, to explicate the story of policy change through the lens of the relationship between ideas and power.

Having clarified my purpose to utilise a case study of an idea through policy, I turned to the concept of multiple sited ethnography to help me bridge the questions of scale and the intimacy of locally-situated knowledge[s].

4.3.2 Multi-sited Ethnographies

A multi-sited ethnography [MSE] seeks to reveal the connections between the multiple “local sites” that constitute the global. It is about “examining transnational processes that do not map neatly onto global, national or local levels”.²⁹ As Marcus describes it,

...Multi-sited research is designed around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer established some form of literal, physical presence, with an

²⁸ Thomas, G. 2011. A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse, and Structure. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(6)(July):515.

²⁹ Henne, K. 2017. Multi-Sited Fieldwork in Regulatory Studies. In P. Drahos (ed) *Regulatory Theory: Foundations and Applications*, 97–114.

explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites that in fact define the argument of the ethnography...³⁰

MSE, Merry argues, accounts for context in critical ways that go beyond local geographically-bound (or territorial) sites. This is because MSE attends both to localised conditions and to the relationships between them.³¹ This means, as Merry says, that the focus on the localised and contextual dynamics enables us to re-think about how we see or understand the global³² - and, I would add, the regional. Importantly, because fieldwork can occur in different “local” sites, in different locales, or in strategically situated sites where a researcher may observe connections and relationships beyond a particular locale. It is, Henne argues, important to attend to transnational connections as well as site specific connections, across space and over time.³³

Constrained by time, finances and physical capacity, the challenge for me, as a researcher, was to reveal the relationship between idea of Ownership as it travelled across and through the policy “sites” from sites of global consensus to regional endorsement and on to “local” implementation. In the Pacific, this meant tracing the policy journey of Ownership from Paris, where “local” representatives of the Pacific’s Forum Secretariat, donor and aid-receiving countries reached consensus at a global forum, through to Cairns, where the Forum Compact was endorsed by the region’s Pacific leaders; and on to the “multi-layered” policy sites of Canberra and Suva – where the representatives of the donor policy community and the Forum

³⁰ George E Marcus, *Ethnography In/Of The World System: the Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography*, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 1995, 24:105.

³¹ Henne, K. 2017. *Multi-Sited Fieldwork in Regulatory Studies*. In P. Drahos (ed) *Regulatory Theory: Foundations and Applications*, 105.

³² Henne, K. 2017. *Multi-Sited Fieldwork in Regulatory Studies*. In P. Drahos (ed) *Regulatory Theory: Foundations and Applications*, 105.

³³ Henne, K. 2017. *Multi-Sited Fieldwork in Regulatory Studies*. In P. Drahos (ed) *Regulatory Theory: Foundations and Applications*, 97–114.

Secretariat were located, each carrying multi-layered responsibilities between the global, regional and national domains. The central headquarters of the Australian aid program was located in Canberra, with representatives across the region, in Suva, and in the national high commissions in each country, often with responsibilities across multiple domains. Similarly, the Forum Secretariat, although headquartered in Suva, carried a regional mandate to represent the region “up” to the global and “down”, to the “national” policy sites, where representatives of the government’s central agencies, responsible for implementation of the policy, were located.

The policy pathway of the idea of Ownership, it seemed, had travelled from the global consensus of the Paris Declaration to the regional authority of the Forum Leaders who endorsed the Compact in Cairns, and onwards, to the “locally-situated knowledge” of national implementation. My aim was to follow the “translation” of an idea within a policy and across sites in ways which revealed connection and relatedness – and yet remain grounded in and by local context. MSE offered a way for the local to reveal the global connections and relations. It encouraged the exploration of the local to reveal the points of connection that illuminate what might make a system global.³⁴

But I also saw two additional opportunities: first, while Marcus, operating in the pre-digital era, defined MSE as requiring a literal and physical presence, the advent of digital social media adds, I suggest, another dimension. The digital world enables a researcher to also follow the

³⁴ Kathryn Henne, Multi-sited Fieldwork in Regulatory Studies, Chapter 6, in Peter Drahos, [ed], 2017, *Regulatory Theory Foundations and Applications*

threads of associations and connections through, between and across the virtual social media sites such as webpages, twitter and facebook. Secondly, while the literature on MSE discusses how the local reveals the connections that constitute the global - my research project also sought - precisely because of my interest in context - to encompass the regional domain. I could, I thought, utilise the approach offered by MSE to illustrate the complexity of “translation” across the transnational, multi-layered development context across each domain: global, regional and local. [see Appendix 4.1 The Policy Pathway]

Consequently, I mapped the journey of the idea of Ownership through the “official” policy pathway by plotting the various policy-texts and fora by which the global aid effectiveness reforms - carrying the idea of Ownership at their heart - found their way from Paris to Cairns, where the HLFAE principles were reconstituted as the foundation of the Forum Compact and on to national implementation. The Compact, supported by bilateral aid arrangements under the Australian Aid Program, spread the idea of Ownership across the Pacific to the 13 Forum Island Countries [FICs] whose Leaders had endorsed the Compact in Cairns.

Next, I turned to selection of the key “policy-sites” and their related “policy-communities.”

As described earlier in the Introduction, my focus was on two key areas of change identified nominated by the Paris Declaration as a result of implementation of the strategies associated with Ownership:³⁵ more effective local coordination of aid; and better development

³⁵ The final evaluation of the Paris Declaration identified three core evaluation questions: 1) the context in which the Declaration was implemented: the factors which shaped and limited implementation; 2) improvements in aid effectiveness encompassing the efficiency of aid delivery; the management and use of aid, [i.e. aid coordination]; and better partnerships; and 3) the contribution of improvements in aid effectiveness to sustainable development results. See Wood,

partnerships. Discussion with officials in the Forum Secretariat and others within the bilateral donor community confirmed that the key policy-communities at national or country level who would be familiar with the Compact and response for implementation of the associated strategies of Ownership would be the central government agencies across the 13 Pacific Forum states which endorsed the Compact.³⁶ During the scoping visit to Fiji, the Forum Secretariat invited me to observe the regional consultations on the MDGs.³⁷ This was an opportunity to introduce myself and my research to representatives from the central government agencies of all 13 Forum Countries that had endorsed the Compact who were responsible for implementing its agreed strategies at national level.

As a result of these discussions, I identified four “policy-sites” and the corresponding “policy-communities” based on a mix of criteria: the organisation or agency’s mandate, function and role in deliberating on, and implementation of, the Forum Compact and related policy and programs – and especially in relation to the idea and strategies of Ownership;³⁸ the country or agency’s reputation across the region in relation to their approach to Ownership of development; and the expressed interest of the policy-community in the research subject and willingness to participate in the research project; and geographical location – particularly the relative ease and cost of access by air.

Bet al. May 2011. *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration: Main Report Phase 2.*; GPEDC. June 2011. Summary Presentation of the Synthesis Report for the Busan High level Forum on Aid Effectiveness.

³⁶ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. Forum Communique: 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12

³⁷ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2014. Pacific Regional MDGs Tracking Report: Consultations Workshop.

³⁸ The policy “communities” were defined as those policy actors responsible for endorsement or implementation of the idea of Ownership through the policy: they may have held different policy functions or roles: as leaders, responsible for authorising decisions on the policy; as advisors, responsible for either [or both] negotiating with donors on facets of policy design or implementation, or guiding implementation of the policy strategies, tools and instruments associated with Ownership encompassed by the suite of policies under the HFLAE.

First, I identified the country settings. I discussed my interest in undertaking research on Ownership with several senior policy advisors from several countries while attending the regional consultations on the MDGs in Suva in 2014, a workshop convened by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. Two countries, the Republic of Kiribati and the Independent State of Samoa, confirmed their interest in participating in the research. These two countries were considered “outliers”, in their development trajectory for different reasons.³⁹ Samoa was designated a “shining star” and regional leader in its governance practices. Samoa’s Prime Minister was an acknowledge leader in the region, holding the reputation of one of the longest serving leaders in the world. Kiribati’s governance practices had often been designated by as weak by the donors. Yet, its President, Anote Tong, was rapidly gaining a reputation as a “global champion” and leader on climate change.⁴⁰ Each, I forecast, would offer unique insights into understanding the significance of Ownership of development which would also help me to understand the significance of meaning, power and context in policy change. Both were considered Small Island Developing States, deemed vulnerable and dependent on aid. While Samoa was in the process of graduating from its status as a least developed country, Kiribati was arguing to remain registered on the list because, its government asserted, the existential threat posed by climate change continued to leave the country and its people vulnerable, despite meeting other criteria for graduation.

³⁹ Initially, I considered Fiji as a national policy-site due to the emergence of the Pacific Islands Development forum [PIDF]. PIDF offered an alternative regional organisation to the PIFS. However, as fieldwork unfolded, I realised that the “brokerage” function was more likely a national level function – this was where the “friction” which reflected the shift in power emerged - rather than a reflection of PIFS regional oversight role. The capacity to influence Ownership was grounded in a country’s response to the policy, rather than in the region.

⁴⁰ See Chapters 10 Kiribati “Pick the Low-Lying Fruit” and Chapter 11 Kiribati “Sovereign... Over the Fish”.

I then considered the donors. Given the significance of the Australian Aid Program in the region, this was a clear choice amongst the bilateral donor agencies to represent donor engagement. Australia's Aid Program reflected extensive and experienced history of aid and development relationships across the region. Australia was influential in instigating the Forum Compact in 2009 [and leading regional engagement on the Paris Declaration and related HLFAE] and the related bilateral arrangements, the Pacific Partnerships on Development in 2008. Australia's aid program was also the most significant in the region in terms of the volume of its aid flows for the duration of the Compact [although this status was challenged by the size of China's contributions at different points in some countries].⁴¹ While the Australian Aid Program was headquartered in Canberra, its regional offices were located in Suva, Fiji; and representatives of the aid program were also located in the respective High Commissions in Kiribati and Samoa. I approached several senior representatives across the agency who encouraged me to undertake the research.⁴²

The fourth policy site reflected the regional significance of the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat, the region's premier political organisation. Located in Fiji with a regional mandate, the Secretariat was responsible for oversight of the Forum Compact. This entailed administration, coordination and reporting on programs and policy on behalf of the Forum leaders. It was a key point of contact for both the countries and the donors. I approached senior representatives in this agency who encouraged me to undertake this research.

⁴¹ Australia has been the largest donor, measured by aid flows to the Pacific region [including PNG], for several decades. But in 2017, aid commitments by China - primarily explained by infrastructure support in PNG - were 4 times as much as those made by Australia. Actual aid spent saw Australia regain the leading position. Australia held the leading position again in 2018 in relation to aid committed and spent, the last year of reliable data. See The Lowy Institute Pacific Aid Map Pacific Region.

⁴² I did not, however, seek official endorsement from any agency in an effort to counter perceptions of allegiance to a specific organisation in my interviews across the various research communities.

My next step in the design was to consider how to generate and analyse the data. I turned to third core element of my methodology, Interpretive Policy Analysis.

4.3.3 *Interpretive Policy Analysis*

Interpretive Policy Analysis [IPA], the third element in my methodology, is concerned with what policies mean, how they mean, and through what processes policy meaning is communicated and who their intended audiences are.⁴³

IPA builds from the premise that “the promise” and the implications of a policy are not always transparent, but may be hidden, and can sometimes carry incompatible conclusions across, or between, the assumptions of policymakers and their constituencies. It gives prominence to local knowledges and local reasoning. For this reason, it focuses on the discussion of values, beliefs and feelings, reflecting a view of human behaviour that is expressive rather than (only) rational or instrumental.⁴⁴ As Yanow observes, IPA seeks to:

...advise on or uncover the architecture of meaning that is to be revealed through systematic investigation of policy categories and labels, metaphors and narrative, programs and institutional places.⁴⁵

To unwrap local knowledge and reasoning, Yanow advises, the researcher identifies groups of policy actors, or “interpretive communities” and their accompanying policy “artefacts” – the symbolic language, objects and actions - that determine how a policy, together with a policy process, is framed or understood.⁴⁶

⁴³ Yanow, D. 1996. *How Does A Policy Mean?*; Yanow, D. 2000. *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*; Yanow, D. and P. Schwartz-Shea (eds). 2014. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*.

⁴⁴ Yanow, D. 1996. *How Does A Policy Mean?*; Yanow, D. 2000. *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*; Yanow, D. and P. Schwartz-Shea (eds). 2014. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*.

⁴⁵ Yanow, D. 2000. *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*, 11.

⁴⁶ IPA examines policy through mapping a policy’s architecture in three ways. This entails: identifying the interpretive communities, or groups of people for whom the policy carries meaning – and how it does so; these are communities of

Identifying “Interpretive Communities” under the Compact

The Compact-text assigned responsibilities across several different policy-communities across the Pacific region: the Forum Leaders of each Pacific state, and in particular, the central agencies of their national governments; the bilateral donors and multi-lateral agencies, such as the UN agencies [described as development partners in the official documentation] and the International Financial Institutions [IFIs] – in the Pacific, this is primarily the World Bank and Asian Development Bank; the private sector; and the Forum Secretariat. From amongst these, I identified five “interpretive communities” for interview and observation, based on their relationship to the policy processes and responsibilities indicated under the Forum Compact and confirmed in related discussions with the bilateral donors and multilateral agencies, the Forum Secretariat and countries. These included:

- a. National representatives, including government public sector officials from the central agencies, such as finance and treasury, national planning and/or economic development agencies and the various offices of cabinet or the prime minister; the private sector and civil society;
- b. Development partners, particularly development officials from the Australian Aid Program, representing Australia as the lead donor in the region [by aid volume]⁴⁷ and, as Forum Chair, the instigator of the Forum Compact; and their

[presumed] shared values, beliefs and feelings (or desires); investigating how a policy is framed by these interpretive communities: what problem or issues are highlighted by a policy’s framing, which reflect what is valued, and which values contend for public recognition and validation; sometimes, it is the absence of values, or their recognition, that is noteworthy; and, examining the policy artefacts, or concrete symbols, the objects and programs, settings and fora, which represent meaning for the interpretive communities engaged in the policy. Yanow, D. 2000. *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*, 14.

⁴⁷ Since 2010 the Australian aid program is recorded as the making largest commitments of ODA, by volume, in the Pacific region: in 2017, China’s commitments overtook Australia’s [primarily funding for infrastructure in PNG]; In 2018 however, Australia reasserted itself as the leading bilateral aid donor to the region. See The Lowy Institute Pacific Aid Map.

donor colleagues from New Zealand, UNDP and the World Bank. Australian Aid Program representatives were located across the Pacific region, at the regional headquarters in Suva and various country offices, and at headquarters in Canberra Australia.

- c. Independent consultants: these individuals were contracted to provide technical assistance and expertise to countries and/or international development agencies, usually funded and contracted by donor or multilateral agencies;
- d. The Compact Peer Review teams, who were consulting teams formed, usually under the Secretariat's auspice, in consultation with the country under review, to assess national compliance with the Compact standards of "best practice". These teams usually included representatives from the Pacific island governments, the multilateral agencies and bilateral donors; and were led by a lead consultant; and
- e. Policy advisors employed by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the regional organisation charged with responsibility for oversight of the Compact's implementation across the region.

Next, I turned to identifying the policy "artefacts": the objects, programs and their settings through which the policy communities enacted the idea – and strategies – of Ownership.

Identifying Artefacts: Objects, Programs and Settings

Again, I began with the Compact as the primary source to identify potential “artefacts” and ascertain starting points for their examination. I expanded this to include related ‘grey’ literature compiled by the Forum Secretariat, Australian Aid Program and various Pacific countries. These included, in particular, the more formal policy documents and related materials listed by the Compact. They included specific “deliverables” intended to measure the performance of, amongst other elements, the strategies Of Ownership: the national development strategies and Plans, national budget papers, performance frameworks; and the suite of reports which reported on their implementation and quality. It also included the reports on progress in delivering the MDGs. [see Appendix 4.2 Scoping the Policy Sources]

I extended the list to include the minutes of national regional and global meetings and workshops, evaluation reports, media releases, speeches, and related policy documents produced by the various bilateral donors and multilateral agencies, the Forum Secretariat and other agencies. Following initial fieldwork, I also included historical archival materials, including historical national strategic plans, situation assessments, performance reports and evaluations, parliamentary and other archival records and related documents. [see Appendix 4.2 Scoping the Policy Documents]

As Yanow explains, these “interpretive communities” gather and meet to create these “artefacts”.⁴⁸ The next step was to identify relevant fora for observation.

⁴⁸ Yanow, D. 1996. *How Does A Policy Mean?*; Yanow, D. 2000. *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*; Yanow, D. and P. Schwartz-Shea (eds). 2014. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*.

Identifying fora

Again, I started with a review of the Compact text and expanded my search to include related literature about these fora. These indicated, through the designated implementation strategies, various “built spaces and settings” where policy “artefacts” were created or constructed. They included offices, workshops and meeting fora in national, regional and global settings - spaces where ‘dialogue’ took place; declarations and guidelines were drawn up; strategic plans, budgets and performance frameworks were developed; evaluation data was collected and synthesised; training delivered; and reports written. These artefacts were noted for reference as a checklist to locate interviewees and fora for observation during fieldwork.

I also wanted to build a picture of the national, regional and global settings in which national implementation, regional debate and global agreements might occur: I negotiated access to observe the various policy communities across several national, regional and global meetings. These included: the south-south training exchange for regional policy advisors in Samoa and the Education Sector’s Development Partners Dialogue in Kiribati, both in 2015; the regional review of progress on the Millennium Development Goals, auspiced by the Forum Secretariat, in late 2014; the Pacific Islands Development Forum, auspiced by the Government of Fiji in 2015; and the Intergovernmental negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals, auspiced by the UN, in New York in 2015.[See Appendix 4.1 The Policy Pathway]

I was unable to secure an invitation to observe at the Pacific Islands Forum leaders meeting; and although invited to observe the Forum Secretariat’s PICS-Partners Meeting scheduled for

2015, it was subsequently postponed, then later cancelled altogether. The PIC-Partners meeting had been conducted annually for over two decades.

4.4 Research protocols

On returning to Canberra from the scoping visit to Fiji, I gained ethics clearance to undertake the research through my own institution.⁴⁹

I then approached the local liaison point for the key policy community at each policy site to ascertain the appropriate national and/or organisational research protocols. I submitted the relevant protocols in Samoa and Fiji and was granted approval to enter the country to undertake my research. Where a country or organisation did not have readily accessible processes, I communicated with a local liaison person [identified through networks via for example, the Pacific Island Forum or one or other aid programs or personal networks] to introduce myself and explain my research. On their advice, I approached senior representatives in specific institutions or government agencies, usually by email, in the first instance, to introduce myself and my research and seek an opportunity to engage further. I scheduled my fieldwork to align with timeframes indicated as appropriate by the local representatives. As much as possible, given interviewees' workloads and schedules, I arranged the first meeting in each country or agency with my primary local contact and/or the senior government department and official responsible for the Compact's implementation (or, the most relevant alternative). My next step was data generation – and fieldwork.

⁴⁹ ANU Research Ethics Protocol 2014/592

4.5 Methods: Data Generation

Among the methods used, I drew on semi-structured interviews, observation of participants in the field and analysis of policy text and related documents, to generate data. In addition to transcribing interviews, and collecting documentary-materials, I recorded my observations and preliminary analysis in field-journals. As the research evolved, I also turned to the historical archives to identify and analyse primary sources related to the policy.

4.5.1 *Fieldwork*

Scoping visit

As indicated earlier, I undertook a scoping visit to Fiji in late 2014 to introduce myself and my research to policy advisors at the Forum Secretariat and attend the regional consultations on the MDGs. The regional consultations, led by the Secretariat, brought government representatives from every Forum country to Suva, alongside representatives of the major donors and civil society, to discuss the region's progress in achieving the MDGs. The regular report tracking progress on the MDGs across the region was a major deliverable for the Secretariat under the Forum Compact.⁵⁰ As such, the regional consultations were a key opportunity to scope the parameters of the research and identify potential policy

⁵⁰ The Pacific Island Forum Secretariat and or various donor agencies, including the ADB, UNDP, UNESCAP, as well as Australia and New Zealand, produced multiple reports tracking progress on the MDGs during the timeframe of the research. See the bibliography for details on the reports. The multiple, annual or biannual, regional reports were streamlined under the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development, produced by the Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Taskforce in 2017; updates on progress under the SDGs are now led by the Secretariat, working with Forum Countries and CROP and UN agencies, proposed for every four years although a biennial report was produced in 2020.

communities and policy sites. I also identified a local policy advisor in each potential field site who generously agreed to act as my liaison point for logistical arrangements.

Field visits: Samoa Kiribati and Fiji [Paris and New York]

Fieldwork was undertaken primarily between 2015-2017 in the Pacific and within Australia;⁵¹ complemented by brief visits to the United Nations headquarters in New York and the OECD headquarters in Paris in 2015 and 2016. I visited Samoa on two occasions in 2015, initially for five weeks and on the second occasion, for three weeks. I visited Kiribati late in 2015 for a period of six weeks; due to high costs associated with travel to Kiribati, I was unable to visit Kiribati a second time. Travel to Samoa and Kiribati required transiting via Fiji, so I was able to visit Fiji on five occasions: two visits of 3 weeks each in 2015 to meet with regional organisations; and an additional three one-week 'side' visits, undertaken while transiting through Fiji to Samoa and Kiribati; and on my return journeys to Australia. Following several months of email communications with an official in the UN, I travelled to New York to observe the final phase of the Inter-governmental Negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] at the United Nations [UN] headquarters over two weeks mid-2015. I took the opportunity, *enroute* to the International Interpretive Policy Analysis Conference in Hull in 2016, to visit the OECD offices in Paris to meet with members of their monitoring and evaluation team. In Canberra, I participated in multiple development conferences and seminars, as well as interviewing representatives from the Australian Aid Program with DFAT (and formerly, AusAID) at various points between 2013-2019.

⁵¹ Several follow-up interviews to clarify data were undertaken with several policy advisors on the Australian Aid Program during 2018-19.

I spent a further two weeks in Fiji in 2016, trawling through the records of the PICS-Partners' meetings and other materials in the Forum's library archives.

The interviews

The Compact had been in place for five years when I began my fieldwork. Potential interviewees across each of the four "policy-sites" were identified through review of the grey literature [trawling through the participant or consultation lists from minutes of meetings, workshops and reports] and on the recommendation of others, including interviewees as well as my own personal related networks. I sought out individuals from the various "policy communities" who were engaged in the design of the policy as well as those with responsibility for implementation, as my starting points.⁵² This list expanded to include those involved in evaluation of the policy and related practices.

Overall, 100 people were interviewed across the four policy sites. Key interviewees were interviewed several times, depending on their availability. Most potential interviewees responded positively to requests for interviews and access to documentation, where time and workload permitted. Several declined interviews and a number were unavailable. Only one prospective interviewee declined to proceed when the question of consent was raised. Some declined to be recorded and offered information as background; notes of these informal

⁵² Yanow, D. 1996. *How Does A Policy Mean?*; Yanow, D. 2000. *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis*; Yanow, D. and P. Schwartz-Shea (eds). 2014. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*.

conversations were made soon after interview. [See Appendix 4.3 Policy Communities: Interviews.]

Participant Observation: Spaces and Settings

Interviews were conducted on beaches, in bars, hotels and restaurants, as well as in diplomatic, government or NGO offices and UN or Forum meeting rooms and hallways. Meetings related to the scope of the Compact and related programs were observed during each country visit, with permission from participants and/or organisers.

The Policy Artefacts: Documents and related Objects

Again, I drew on the Compact-text to identify potential documents; and then sought the advice of interviewees on other materials. Many documents, official and otherwise, related to the Compact and Ownership were available on organisational websites including those of the Pacific Islands Forum, the OECD, the Australian Aid Program and other organisations listed as members of the various “policy communities”.

I collected or analysed materials as I went about fieldwork: policy texts, unpublished theses, media and government publications. I also trawled the internet websites of governments, regional organisations, bilateral and multilateral agencies, including the UN’s digital library. In addition to sourcing materials online and through the national and ANU libraries in Canberra, I also sourced data through the NUS library archives in Apia, the USP library archives at the Laucala campus in Suva, and the Parliamentary library in Tarawa during my field visits in 2015.

As the research evolved, I recognised the significance of historical data. I searched and analysed archival records for primary sources, in the field, online, at libraries and at my own university. The locations included: local or parliamentary and university libraries in each country; at the Forum Secretariat, and USP libraries in Suva; and at the ANU, University of Melbourne and the Australian National Library.

The archive materials in Samoa produced more data than I expected; but access to the parliamentary library was hampered by difficulties in locating the right staff in a timely manner to gain physical access. In Kiribati, there were limited contemporary policy or archival materials available through local sources, except for the parliamentary library which offered Hansard records in English and i-Kiribati. Fiji's USP library archives offered a wealth of historical materials as did the Suva library. And the Forum Secretariat archives were an excellent resource, despite the 10-year embargo precluding access to the more recent archives of the Forum leaders' meetings. The Menzies library at the ANU offered an ad hoc array of national strategic plans relevant to Kiribati and Samoa which proved far more illuminating as the research progressed.

4.5.2 Challenges in Data Generation

Access to interviewees and fora:

Most participants were willing to be interviewed, if time and workload permitted. There were occasional difficulties in access to either interviewees or regional or national meetings in the

Forum Secretariat which experienced major organisational restructure following the release of the Review of the Pacific Plan in 2013. The changes affected the morale of several potential interviewees, and/or their availability, at various points. Funding became uncertain in some program areas mandated under the Compact. As a result, several planned opportunities for participant observation were foregone. This included the annual PICS-Partners meetings, the last of which was first postponed in 2015 and then cancelled altogether, as the Pacific Framework for Regionalism and related governance and financing reviews also commissioned by the Secretariat re-routed the organisation's strategic direction. Other events were identified and observed instead, including the Pacific Islands Development Forum, led primarily by Fiji and considered an alternative to the PIF. The PIDF encompassed representation from 12 Pacific countries [including Timor-Leste], but not Australia and New Zealand.⁵³

Similarly, the Australian Aid Program underwent major organisational changes as AusAID merged with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade at the direction of the newly elected coalition Government in 2013. Again, the morale of prospective interviewees was affected in the wake of uncertainty about ongoing programs and positions. While interviewees were willing to discuss my research, most declined to go on record due to the uncertainty: some simply were uncertain what the current policy position was, given the changes in government, so preferred to remain off the record; others did not want to jeopardise current or future job prospects.

⁵³ PIDF membership during the research timeframe included the following countries: Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Nauru, Marshall Islands, Palau, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. In addition, the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation [PIPSO] and the Pacific Islands Association of Non-Government Organisations [PIANGO] are also listed as members.

As a result of these major organisational changes in two of the key organisations, or policy-sites, both organisations substantially altered their websites during the research period. As a result, both sites significantly changed the volume and kind of material available on their public interface. Significant [and potentially, historically significant] policy material was removed from each website. Fortuitously, I had downloaded much of the material from each site before the changes in organisational structure. In other instances, I identified alternative sources for the materials; sometimes this meant tracking the materials through other donor or multilateral organisations, such as the UN agencies or the UN's i-library and the Sustainable Development network; and in Australia, the national library's "Way-back Machine" allowed me to track historical web-captures. Other materials were more difficult to locate and where possible, were sourced through personal networks and dedicated web-trawling.

Multiple roles

Membership of each of the 'interpretive' or 'policy' communities identified at the beginning of my research was more fluid than I first envisaged: many interviewees had once played, or continued to play, multiple roles in relation to policy decisions, advice or implementation, under the Forum Compact. I factored this fluidity into my analysis of the data, monitoring nuances in individual or organisational responses for indications of shifts in meaning over time and across roles.

Consent and confidentiality

Consent was sought for each interview and before observing at various events. All prospective interviewees who proceeded to interview gave consent for our conversations, either verbally or in writing. Only one interviewee declined to proceed with an interview, once I explained its purpose. However, while many interviewees were willing to be cited, not everyone was comfortable with their views being publicly referenced. As noted above, some preferred to offer information as “background” rather than go “on record”. The consent form and other interviewee information material is attached at Appendix 4.4 Participant Information.

As the research - and my understanding of the issues and connections - evolved over time, I realised that, given the size and fluidity of the aid and development “policy community” across the Pacific, there was more risk that individuals who preferred anonymity might be revealed simply through the accurate reporting of their views reflected in their interview transcripts than I had first appreciated. Sometimes, also, the views of individuals changed. Other individuals subsequently moved into different roles and preferred, given their new role, that their past commentary now remained anonymous. As a result, I realised that it would be preferable to minimise any potential risk to personal and professional reputations. Consequently, after discussion with my panel, I coded all interviewee-identity information to offer the protection of anonymity. Where quotations or information are sourced from publicly available sources, such as media releases, parliamentary records and other public documents, I have identified the source.

4.6 Methods: Data Analysis

Data analysis entailed an iterative process of analysis and re-analysis of data generated in, and collected from, policy communities and settings across global, regional and national domains.

4.6.1 The Purpose of Analysis

Overall, I took three major moves in relation the data analysis. The first step involved analysis of the data to identify what happened and when, in relation to the strategies of Ownership. In each policy site, I analysed the data against two sets of criteria defined by the original policy and its related theoretical foundations. These were the four participation criteria proposed by Ostrom and the five output measures proposed by the Paris Declaration and related HLFAE.⁵⁴ This analysis offered information on what might change and how, under the scope of the policy, but it didn't offer insight into why change occurred or not.

Second, I re-analysed the first set of findings in light of the analytical model which I constructed from the literature on ideational power, policy translation and norms and institutions, as laid out earlier in Chapter 3. My purpose here was to look beyond what changed, or how change might have happened under the policy's scope, to identify and verify why: I was looking for a link between the values and beliefs associated with the local idea of Ownership [represented by the rhetoric and metaphors] to the innovation in practices [institutions] which signified the shift or renegotiation in power claimed necessary by Stone and Freeman to indicate a successful translation of policy from setting A to setting B. And

⁵⁴ See Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking the Policy Logic; and Chapter 3 A Conceptual Framework: Understanding Policy Change; and Appendix 3.1 Best Practice in Ownership; and Appendix 3.2 Analytical Model for Policy Change

which, I argued, could demonstrate what Ostrom called the transition – but I preferred the term ‘exercise’ of Ownership. This analysis identified practices or behaviours of reflexivity, bargaining or innovation; the first two, signifiers, I determined, of acceptance of the legitimacy of the norms and institutions offered by the global idea of Ownership; and the third, innovation, which constituted, I argued, signs of a shift in, or renegotiation of power in the relations between donor and the aid receiving country.

The third move, having determined whether a country had exercised Ownership, was to examine the consequences the exercise of ownership had on the development partnership between the country and the donor, Australia [and in what domains]. I turned, primarily, to the Australian-funded performance reports on the partnerships as my primary source of data for this analysis. I complemented these with data drawn from speeches, media, other evaluations, national reports and interviews. I analysed the partnerships for evidence of the influence of the exercise of Ownership on change over the duration of the Compact across three key domains: the rationale for the partnership; the reported performance against commitments made in the partnership; and the evidence quality in the relationship, measured by comparing whether the partners [and their practices] honoured the principles agreed in the partnership arrangement.

The series of research sub-questions which guided these three moves in the data analysis are attached at Appendix 3.3 Research Questions

4.6.2 The Process of Analysis:

While the purpose of analysis cohered into a unified whole as the research evolved, the process was far more iterative, in between field and desk, as ideas, skills, confidence and understanding evolved over time.

I first analysed my interview transcripts and documents: I transcribed and analysed key interviews for themes and connections through the liberal use of texta-highlighters on transcripts and key policy documents and creating mud-maps on butchers' paper, drawing connections and circling inconsistencies. After reconciling on several key themes [including the inconsistencies], I turned to related media speeches, policy text and or historical archival materials to verify possible explanations of themes, and connections, and to better understand inconsistencies or gaps. I prepared conference papers to test out key ideas and map "mini-puzzles" in the emerging explanatory narratives. [See Appendix 4.5 List of Conference Papers Delivered.]

When I first analysed the data, I assessed implementation against the output measures identified by the Paris Declaration in relation to Ostrom's four criteria for participation. [See Appendix 3.1 Best Practices in Ownership] But while these findings indicated how the idea and strategies of Ownership were implemented [or not], they were unable to explain why change had occurred [or not].

So, drawing on my analytical model, I re-examined the data: I examined the rhetoric and metaphors associated with Ownership to clarify the meaning attributed to Ownership by local policy communities. I compared these local attributions or representations of Ownership to

the global idea of Ownership in the Paris Declaration. Finding differences, I sought an explanation for the divergence in understanding. This entailed investigation of the historical archives in each country alongside the explanations offered by contemporary interviews, related policy, political and anthropological texts. It also entailed a side-step into the historical archives at the World Bank, UN and OECD [post-fieldwork in the national sites], to clarify the global origins and evolution of the idea of Ownership and its consequent arrival in the region. This work clarified the origins of the differences in the significance attributed to the global idea of Ownership endorsed in Paris – and the significance attributed to local ideas of ownership in each national setting.

I then examined the meaning represented by this use of language in light of behaviours and practices [self-reported, through interviews, or evaluations and other reports; and/or observed in participant observation] for evidence of policy acceptance and legitimacy. I examined this data for evidence of local policy communities [re-] negotiation of what Stone and Freeman calls “the soft and hard stuff” of policy, the norms and institutions, to locate and understand the shifts in power between the policy communities within central government agencies in each country and those within the Australian aid program. These were the shifts that might constitute a re-negotiation of power that indicated the exercise of Ownership in accord with local attributions or representations of what Ownership meant to local policy communities. Such shifts in power did not necessarily represent pursuit of the global idea of Ownership under the Paris Declaration.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Rather, such shifts indicated that policy communities had identified that the global idea of Ownership in the Paris Declaration offered an opportunity for leverage to achieve THEIR local idea of Ownership.

As I examined the data, I realised that practices of reflexivity and bargaining reflected an acceptance of the status quo offered by the policy; but when the reported or observed change in practices [or institutions, the collective systems of behaviours] were innovative, this was the place where norms were contested.

It was in the innovative practices, the points of tension or friction, where policy norms and institutions were re-interpreted in light of locally-situated knowledge, the locally-held values and beliefs that aligned with, and were motivated by, the local meaning and significance attributed to Ownership. Innovation in the behaviours and practices [the institutions], I realised, signified a shift in or renegotiation of power, effecting the exercise of Ownership – and the potential for a re-orientation in the balance of relations between the donor and country.⁵⁶ Innovation was the point where [ironically] Ostrom's locally-situated knowledge met power asymmetry. This was the point that signified a shift in power and the exercise of Ownership – or not. But the shift was not premised on the claims which Ostrom made for participation as the counterbalance to dependency but rather, on the respective policy communities' desire and capacity to influence.

⁵⁶ This did not necessarily reflect a transition in ownership but the assertion of Ownership. For example, in Samoa, whose government accepted the values and beliefs underpinning the global idea of Ownership [eg neoliberal policies of economic growth drive development – and so accepted the tools and practices of Ownership but wanted to asserted equality within that framework] accepted the global aid effectiveness paradigm; but Kiribati simply stepped outside the global aid effectiveness paradigm yet asserted Ownership of development within its pursuit of the fish and climate change: Kiribati sought change in the socio-economic structures which contained donor-country relations: it sought control of the fish and protection of its environment. Whereas Samoa sought change in the personal capacity to influence donor-country relations: Samoa's policy advisors sought to learn the tools and strategies of the existing paradigm to gain development: it wanted the skills to participate better in the neoliberal "free market".

Having ascertained whether local policy communities had exercised Ownership [or not], I turned again to archival materials [the Australia Aid program's annual reports on the performance of the partnership in accord with the bilateral aid arrangements] media, and the interview transcripts. I examined the consequences of the exercise of Ownership in Samoa and Kiribati, [although in different domains] on their respective partnerships with Australia, their long time "development partner". From this, I drew conclusions about the exercise of Ownership; and the influence of Ownership on development partnerships in the Pacific.

4.7 Reflexivity: Limitations and Opportunities

Reflexivity is at the heart of the interpretive traditions. Reflexivity means to create the time and space to reflect on and learn from disruptions or friction, between one's own assumptions and practices and the experiences and new information generated by the research. Reflexivity generates understanding. As I look back on my research, I realised how often the research, and my own learning, forced me to challenge my own assumptions: and this was the space where understanding [sometimes] occurred.

This research journey has been long. It has been interrupted by major life events. There have been times when the journey was very nearly abandoned. But through the journey, the research - and the opportunities for reflexivity created both through deliberation [such as my participation in several major international conferences on public policy and development] and through sheer chance, has generated major shifts in my understanding of aid and development – and power; and the mechanisms for creating and sustaining change through

policy. This learning influenced the parameters for the conceptual framing of my research in two key ways.

The first significant shift in my conceptual frame was a shift from assuming the primacy of the policy translation model to appreciating the significance of innovation as a sign of ideational power: innovation reflected a friction, indicating the assertion of the equivalence or primacy of local norms [and their constitutive values and beliefs] with global policy norms to create “new” institutions. When I began my research, I drew on the policy translation model – with its focus on a “broker” of norms – as my analytical frame. Because of the role assigned to the Forum Secretariat under the Compact, I worked from the assumption that the Secretariat would perform the “brokerage” role proposed by the policy translation model. But as the fieldwork evolved, I began to appreciate the significance of local policy communities – and their values and beliefs and norms – actions in giving strength, or otherwise, to the vigour and integrity of the regional agreements where implementation is the responsibility of national governments in their own policy settings. I began to suspect that the power that gave impetus to policy change in this policy setting derived more from the response or commitment of key ‘brokers’ in the local policy communities in each country, rather than in the regional domain. This recognition shifted my attention more to the national, or local, domain, as the first point in understanding the significance of Ownership in practice. It also contributed to the re-examination of the literature on ideational power and norm contestation [as outlined in Chapter 2]. This shift in my research approach significantly influenced data analysis in the national policy sites. It also opened up an understanding of the brokerage role as encompassing power-brokerage, as well as, or in addition to, knowledge-brokerage.

The second major shift was the addition of historical inquiry to my overall methodology: as I sifted through the interview transcripts and reflected on the quality of conversations with different interviewees, I began to appreciate the significance of the history in relation to explaining the different meanings attributed to Ownership – and the influence of historical aid relations on contemporary power asymmetries. The experience of colonisation – and the inequality and inequity of many of its practices and philosophies - remains a contemporary and ongoing consequence, rather than a past experience, or remnant, of relations between donors and Pacific SIDS. The impact of historical inequity and inequality continue to be significant in understanding contemporary expectations and desires. This led to a significant shift in my approach to understanding the significance of the global origins of the idea of Ownership which is reflected in Chapters 5 and 6. The findings in these Chapters encouraged a major re-assessment of the capacity of the policy translation model on its own as an explanatory analytical mode. This led, in turn, to the literature on ideational power and norms, from which I constructed a revised analytical model with the explanatory power to address the question of why the Pacific SIDS made the choices they did around the idea of Ownership.

4.8 Conclusion

In summing up, my aim, in simple terms, was to test the policy's logic at the heart of the Paris Declaration and related HLFAE: that Ownership would put countries in the driver's seat. The principles and practices of Ownership were nominated as international "best practice" and the foundation of the Forum Compact. The Paris Declaration asserted a relationship between the idea of Ownership and expected change in two key domains:

- a. local practices in aid coordination
- b. and in consequence, better development partnerships between donors and the aid-receiving small island developing states in the Pacific.

I located my research design and methodology in the interpretive traditions grounded in social constructivism. My research became a case study of how - and why - an idea influenced change through policy. I examined how and why the idea of Ownership influenced change in aid practices and the consequences for development partnerships under the Forum Compact across four policy-sites: in the multi-functional policy settings generated across national, regional and global domains inhabited by five 'policy communities' from, and moving between, the four 'policy sites' of Kiribati, Samoa, Fiji and Australia.⁵⁷

As observed throughout this discussion, the process of data generation and analysis was an iterative unfolding process, moving between field and desk work. The process settled over time, reflecting three parallel [if not always conclusive and sequential] areas of focus: First, a focus on what happened in local aid coordination practices i.e. national implementation of the global idea of Ownership. Second, a comparison of the significance attributed to the global idea of Ownership with that attributed by local policy advisors to the local idea of ownership; in both national settings, this led me to historical inquiries into the origins and evolution of the global idea of Ownership and into local aid relations, to account for the discrepancies between the different understandings attributed to ownership; and lastly, analysis of the

⁵⁷ I also undertook a field visit to the global sites of the UN and the OECD in Paris. These were not specific sites of inquiry but rather, I visited to build background information on the global context – as sources of the Paris Declaration and other agreements – for my examination of policy implementation in “local” national sites.

consequences of the exercise of Ownership, whether in accord with the policy logic laid out by the Paris Declaration or not, on development partnerships.

I examined how the idea of Ownership travelled from global and regional domains to national sites of implementation. Having mapped the forecast change in aid coordination practices amongst the central government agencies, I compared this with reports and observations of what happened in practice. Here, I drew largely from interview transcripts, policy and related text for evidence: first looking for evidence of implementation of the Paris output measures in light of Ostrom's four participation criteria in each national site. Second, I re-examined the data through the lens of the analytical model I constructed from my analysis of the policy change literature to identify signs of policy acceptance - and to determine whether any changes in aid coordination practices signalled the exercise of Ownership. I looked for an explanation of why change happened, and how.

Having determined whether Ownership was in fact exercised in each policy site, I reflected on the implications of each country's choice for their development partnership with Australia. As part of that explanation, I turned to historical inquiries to help build understanding: I examined archival materials, from the World Bank, OECD and the UN General Assembly and related agencies, to clarify the global origins of the idea of Ownership – and its journey to the Pacific region, exploring connections from the global to regional to national domains. The analysis of archival materials was complemented by participant observation at global and regional fora and analysis of interview transcripts. The outcome of this analysis is captured in

Chapters 5, where I distinguish the global idea of Ownership, and Chapter 6, where I trace the arrival of the global idea of Ownership in the Pacific.

Chapter 5 The Global Idea of Ownership

5.1 Introduction

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was acclaimed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] as a landmark agreement, an “unprecedented” global consensus which elaborated a shared pathway for development through partnership.¹ Ownership was at its heart. But, as my own experience in the field and the literature indicated, the idea of Ownership emerged, in practice, as a paradox. The rhetoric of consensus in Paris was not supported by the experience of implementation, which created unease and dissatisfaction.² This mismatch undermined the claims of consensus in Paris. As I reflected on this disparity between the rhetoric and the experience of practice, I was reminded of Merry’s elegant observation that global consensus more often reflects the absence of objection than a true meeting of minds.³ Was there, I wondered, a true meeting of minds between the international organisations, donors and aid-receiving countries in Paris – or did the acclaimed global consensus actually represent local compromise?

This Chapter examines the origins and evolution of the idea of Ownership in the international development discourse over several decades, as evidenced in the policy debates and outcomes of major meetings of the multilateral institutions active in development: the World Bank, the OECD and the UN. I demonstrate that the idea of Ownership has its origins long

¹ OECD. 2006c. Development Cooperation Report 2005: Efforts and Policies of the Members of the Development Assistance Committee. Summary in English. *OECD Journal on Development*, 7(1):3; Patton, M. Q. 2013. Meta-Evaluation: Evaluating the Evaluation of the Paris Declaration, *The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation* 27(3):147–171.

² See the literature critiquing the practice of Ownership discussed in Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking the Policy Logic.

³ Merry, S.E. 2006a. *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice*. Merry, S.E. 17/03/2015. Ethnography of the global, [podcast], in *Regulatory Institutions Network Key Thinkers Series*.

before its arrival in Paris as the centrepiece of global development policy under the High-Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness [HLFAE]. These three powerful multilateral development institutions drove the global idea of Ownership on its journey from its modest beginnings in the Pearson Commission's report on *Partners in Development* in 1969 through to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 and beyond.⁴

By running an historical lens over past global agreements and internal policy debates, the Chapter reveals two different conversations running in parallel, sometimes clashing, within these organisations and across global fora, over the decades leading up to the meeting in Paris. It reveals that competing policy logics for how to achieve development – drawn from competing claims of sovereign rights - underpinned the emergence of the idea of Ownership which found its way into the Paris Declaration.

On one side, the World Bank and OECD asserted their right to ensure that aid monies were used effectively and efficiently. Aid-receiving countries, the multilateral agencies asserted, must demonstrate commitment, responsibility and leadership - in sum, what eventually emerged as the idea of Ownership of their development - to establish the conditions for the effective partnerships necessary for development. On the other, in the global debates sponsored through the UN, the “developing” countries, including the Pacific's Small Island

⁴ Commission on International Development (The Pearson Commission). 1970. *Partners in Development: Report of the Commission on International Development to the World Bank*. The report investigated “the development situation in Latin America, Africa and across Asia; it did not consider the Pacific region.

Developing States [SIDS],⁵ asserted equity and equality as the starting point for the pathway to partnerships in development.

This Chapter lays out the story of this contestation over the pathway for development - and the resulting tension between donors and aid-receiving countries. It was a contestation that was continually re-negotiated in diverse global fora until agreement was declared in Paris in 2005. First, I examine the role and membership of the three key multilateral organisations to clarify who was invited to sit at which negotiating table, and for what purpose. This defines the primary global arenas for the debate on development. I then examine how the idea of Ownership evolved within the debates of each multilateral organisation to become policy. Finally, I review the Pacific SIDS' engagement in the debate on Ownership across several threads of global fora, leading to the "global consensus" in Paris.

5.2 The Global Organisations: Membership

5.1.1 *The World Bank*

The World Bank, on its own description, is "one of the world's largest sources of funding and knowledge for developing countries".⁶ Established in 1944, it has a current membership of 189

⁵ Note: the global conversation that laid the seed for the idea of Ownership began as the African countries and others gained independence in post-1950s onwards. The Pacific SIDS joined the global conversation in the UN from 1970 when Fiji was admitted to the UNGA. While Samoa, the first Pacific country to do so, gained independence in 1962, it did not join the UNGA until 1976. Fiji was the first Pacific country to join the UNGA on independence in October 1970. The other Pacific states which gained independence between 1970-80 progressively joined the UN thereafter, with Tuvalu – which gained independence in 1978 - the "last" to join the UN, as its 189th member, in 2000. See Appendix 5.1 Global Timeline of International Development Events; and Appendix 5.2 Pacific Membership of Regional and Global Entities.

⁶ The World Bank

countries.⁷ Membership of the International Monetary Fund [IMF] is a precondition for joining the Bank.⁸ This membership primarily represents borrowing rights and access to policy advice through the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development [IBRD] and or the International Development Association [IDA], rather than influence over decision-making and policy debates within the Bank. With representation delegated upwards from the 189 members through multiple committees, and the governing board dominated by five major stakeholders, membership is proportional [that is, proportional membership-shares are allocated across the whole in relation to capacity to pay] and does not automatically confer representative or equitable input or rights over decision-making at the Bank's governing table.⁹

Some Pacific SIDS have been members of the World Bank since the 1970s.¹⁰ In 2005, when the Paris Declaration was agreed, the Bank had 184 members including 10 Pacific island states.¹¹ Most Pacific island states are members of the IBRD, the primary lending arm of the Bank.

⁷ The Bank was established in 1944 following the Bretton Woods Conference, and consists of five related institutions: Foremost amongst these is the IBRD and IDA, its primary lending arms. See World Bank webpage: Who We Are: History.

⁸ Political independence and the capacity to pay an annual fee, proportional to Gross National Income [GNI], are the key criteria for joining. See The World Bank, Who We Are: History.

⁹ The Bank's member countries are represented by a board of Governors the "ultimate policy makers". Usually, the governors are member countries' ministers of finance or ministers for development who meet once a year at the annual meetings of the Bank and its counterpart, the IMF. In the interim, the Governors delegate decision-making to 25 Executive Directors who lead the IBRD, IDA and IFC. The five largest bank shareholders [USA, Germany, Japan, UK and France] each appoint an Executive Director [and alternate] while other countries jointly elect – one member one vote amongst the collective groups which are organised by region; because of historical antecedents, the Pacific states are split across two regional groups for voting purposes; the remaining 20 executive directors are decided between these regional groupings. Currently, the Pacific countries of Fiji and Tonga are part of one group of constituents, [whose representative Executive Director and alternate are currently from Thailand and Indonesia]; and Australia, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Nauru, Micronesia, Marshalls and Kiribati are part of another group [whose representative Executive Director and alternate are from South Korea and Australia]. The Executive Directors jointly select the President who leads the Banks management and day to day operations. See The World Bank.

¹⁰ These states are: Fiji (1971); Samoa (1974); Papua New Guinea (1975); Solomon Islands (1978).

¹¹ In 2005, when the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was agreed, the Bank had 184 members, including 10 Pacific Island states: Fiji joined in 1972, Samoa 1974, Papua New Guinea 1975, Solomon Islands 1978, Vanuatu 1981, Tonga 1985 and Kiribati 1986; the Marshall Islands 1992, FS Micronesia 1993, and Palau 1997; Tuvalu and Nauru joined in 2000 and 2016 respectively. New Zealand joined 1961; and Australia 1947. Most of the PICS are members only of the IBRD, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the primary lending arm of the bank.

The Bank first became engaged in policy debates which introduced the idea of Ownership through the Pearson Commission's report, *Partners in Development*, in 1969.¹² This report was commissioned by the Bank's then President, Robert McNamara.

5.1.2 *The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD]*

The OECD, a members-only organisation established in 1960,¹³ grew out of the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation formed in the wake of World War II to administer primarily US aid for European reconstruction under the Marshall Plan.¹⁴ It has grown to 38 members and states seeking membership must satisfy exacting criteria.¹⁵ It represents and advises bilateral donor members and associate countries. It describes itself as, "a global policy forum that promotes policies to improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world"¹⁶ and is a prominent policy commentator on international cooperation.¹⁷

¹² Pearson, L. P. February 1970. A New Strategy for Global Development. (The Pearson Report) In *The UNESCO Courier: A Window Open on the World XXIII 2* [1099].

¹³ OECD. 2006b. *The DAC in Dates: A History of the OECDs Development Assistance Committee*.

¹⁴ In 1947, George Marshall, USA Secretary of State, put forward a proposal to provide economic assistance to Europe to recover after world war 2; the subsequent legislation, the Economic Recovery Act was signed by President Truman in 1948 and became known as the Marshall Plan. See George C Marshall, The Marshall Plan Speech, Handout version, 4 June 1947, sourced from Website: The Marshall Foundation; President H Truman, Truman's Inaugural Address, 20 January 1949, Truman Library and Museum

¹⁵ OECD. 2017. Report of the Chair of the Working Group on the Future Size and Membership of the Organisation to Council: Framework for the Consideration of Prospective Members.

¹⁶ OECD Welcomes Colombia.

¹⁷ The OECD emerged in 1960 from its predecessor, the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation [OEEC], established to oversight the European recovery program [aka the Marshall Plan]. See the Convention on the OECD:

<https://www.oecd.org/general/conventionontheorganisationforeconomicco-operationanddevelopment.htm> In 2005, the OECD DAC represented 23 bilateral donors [including the EC as a bilateral donor] and claimed to be "the venue and the voice of the world's major bilateral donors... a brand name for many OECD products on development in particular its statistics on Official Development Assistance." OECD. 2006b. *The DAC in Dates: A History of the OECDs Development Assistance Committee*, 37. The OECD also encompasses a group called the Development Assistance Committee [DAC]: the Development Assistance Group [DAG], precursor to the DAC, was established in 1960 at the instigation of Eisenhower's Under-Secretary of State, C. Douglas Dillion. Initially, it focused on monitoring

Agreements made by the OECD are usually non-binding, although countries may endorse an agreement through a letter of adherence. It is an OECD convention that silence at its meetings indicates consent.

Australia and New Zealand are the only two countries from the Pacific region which are members of the OECD; they are also members of its Development Assistance Committee [DAC].¹⁸ By default, most Pacific countries are ineligible to join the OECD-DAC.¹⁹

The OECD's first major policy discussion which brought the idea of Ownership into the global aid and development discourse emerged in the 1996 policy document, *Shaping the 21st Century: the contribution of Development Cooperation*.²⁰ This policy also identified a role for development partnerships in "the new global context."²¹ Following the Millennium Summit in 2000, the OECD joined forces with the World Bank and the UN,²² to lead the High-Level Fora

financial flows to developing countries to enable comparative assessments of ODA assistance, represented by the Resolution on the Common Aid Effort, 1961. The DAC is a select committee of the OECD which focuses on development cooperation, describing its role as "...a standard setter and watchdog of development cooperation, the DAC remains relevant..." OECD DAC Joining the DAC. Although the OECD notes that it currently works with over 100 countries, not all are members. OECD members currently number 37, of whom 30 are members of the DAC also – some were once aid recipients. OECD Welcomes Colombia

¹⁸ One of the key criteria for members of the OECD DAC is "like-mindedness" - indicating a normative expectation that members share common values and policy settings. The OECD website indicate that countries seeking membership to the OECD must demonstrate a commitment to democracy and the free-trade, market economy – membership of the DAC [currently listed as 30 of the 37 OECD members] specifies that amongst other criteria, membership relies on a degree of like-mindedness and the capacity to deliver a development cooperation program; an accepted measure of "effort" [aid] and capacity to monitor performance. See: OECD 1960 Convention of the OECD, Article 1: and OECD DAC.

¹⁹ Countries seeking membership of the DAC must demonstrate that they have "appropriate strategies policy and institutional frameworks to ensure their capacity to deliver a development cooperation program; an accepted measure of effort [measured by their ODA/GNI ratio or ODA volume]; and a system of performance monitoring and evaluation. OECD DAC. See also the Report of the 2004 working group led by Ambassador Noburu, which noted four criteria for membership: like-mindedness, significant player, mutual benefit and global considerations. By default, most Pacific SIDS are not eligible for membership: very few are likely to satisfy current criteria, such as the capacity to offer development cooperation programs. OECD Working Group (Ambassador Noboru). 2004. A Strategy for Enlargement and Outreach. Report by the Chair of The Heads of Delegation Working Group on the Enlargement Strategy and Outreach.

²⁰ OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*.

²¹ Annex: Development Partnerships in the New Global Context, 3-4 May 1995. In OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*.

²² Particularly the offices of the UNDP and UNDESA – see the jointly issued policy: OECD. 2000. 2000: A Better World for All: Progress towards the International Development Goals. A Joint Report by the UN, the OECD, the World Bank and the IMF.

on Aid Effectiveness [HLFAE] which formulated the development compact between donors, multilateral organisations and countries of the early 21st century. The HLFAE was initiated by the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation in 2003, followed by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005 and Accra Agenda for Action in 2008; and morphed, after the Busan Outcome in 2011, into the Global Partnerships on Effective Development Cooperation.²³

5.1.3 The United Nations [UN]

Unlike the OECD, membership of the United Nations [UN] is open to all states which can meet the obligations laid out in the UN Charter.²⁴ Membership of the UN currently stands at 193 states.²⁵ The UN was established in 1945 to

...maintain international peace and security... develop friendly relations among nations based on the principle of equal rights and self-determination; ...[and] achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character...[by] promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms...[and] be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.²⁶

The UN General Assembly [UNGA] is the chief deliberative organ of the UN and the key forum for policymaking amongst the member states. It also claims a significant role in processes of standard-setting and codification of international law through the consensus of its members.²⁷

²³ The four High Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness [HLFAE] were: the 1st High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Rome, which led to the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation (2003); the 2nd High Level Forum on Joint Progress toward Enhanced Aid Effectiveness (Harmonisation, Alignment and Results) in Paris, which resulted in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005); the 3rd High Level Forum Accra, which produced the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) and the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, leading to the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011).

²⁴ Membership, according to the UN Charter, "is open to all peace-loving States that accept the obligations contained in the UN Charter and in the judgement of the organisation, are able to carry out these obligations. States are admitted to membership in the UN by a decision of the General Assembly on the recommendations of the Security Council. UN Membership.

²⁵ Australia and New Zealand both joined in 1945. The Pacific SIDS members are: Fiji 1970, Kiribati 1999, Marshall Islands 1991, Micronesia [FS] 1991, Nauru 1999, Palau 1994, Papua New Guinea 1975, Samoa 1976, Solomon Islands 1978, [Timor-Leste 2002] Tonga 1999, Tuvalu 2000, Vanuatu 1981 UN Membership.

²⁶ Since the UN Charter was established, two more elements have been added to its purpose: the UN has set the Sustainable Development Goals to achieve a more sustainable future for all; and agreed to climate action to limit global warming. .

²⁷ Functions and Powers of the General Assembly.

Pacific SIDS were eligible to join the UN as full members on gaining independence.²⁸ Although Samoa was the first Pacific country to gain independence,²⁹ Fiji was the first Pacific state to join the UN, being admitted within weeks of celebrating its independence from the United Kingdom in October 1970.³⁰ Another eleven Pacific SIDS had become members by the time the Millennium Declaration was endorsed in 2000.³¹

The UN emerged as the primary point for the Pacific SIDS' participation in the global debates which contributed to the idea of Ownership of development that eventually emerged in Paris in 2005. There were three key points of engagement for the Pacific SIDS:

- 1) The debates in the UN General Assembly which produced several resolutions announcing consecutive International Decades of Development between 1960 and 2017. The resolution on the first International Decade of Development³² was passed in 1961. It included, most notably, the Millennium Declaration, which led to the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] in 2000; and in 2016, the resolution on the 2030 Agenda, encapsulating the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs].³³
- 2) The UN-led Environment and Development Conferences, tagged the "Earth Summits".

²⁸ Several Pacific countries, including Samoa, Nauru, PNG and the Marshall, Mariana and Caroline Islands in the north, were UN Trust Territories prior to gaining political independence. See Tracey Banivanua Mar, *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, for discussion of the UN's approach to decolonisation during the crafting of the UN Charter at the San Francisco Conference. UN list of former trust and non-self-governing territories.

²⁹ Samoa officially gained independence from its colonial administrator, New Zealand, on 1 Jan 1962; Samoa joined the UN in 1976.

³⁰ As Sir Ratu Kamisese Mara's first speech at the UNGA acknowledged, his attendance at the UNGA to acknowledge Fiji's admission was delayed because he was attending the official farewell of Fiji from the Commonwealth by the Prince of Wales.

³¹ The United Nations Millennium Declaration was adopted at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, New York, 6-8 September 2000 by UNGA Resolution 55/2.

³² UNGA. 1961. United Nations Development Decade: A Programme for International Economic Cooperation (I), 1084th Plenary Meeting, 19 December 1961, Resolutions adopted by the Second Committee, 1710 (XVI).

³³ UNGA, 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, 70/1 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda> accessed 22 May 2021

Led by the UN Environment Program [UNEP], the first conference was held in Stockholm in 1972. Subsequent conferences, which gained global prominence, were held in Rio in 1992, and again, in 2012.

- 3) The International Conferences on SIDS were the third arena. An outcome of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, the first International Conference on SIDS was held in Barbados in 1994. There were several subsequent conferences, leading, most recently, to the 4th International Conference on SIDS in Samoa in 2014. The conference in Samoa resulted in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action, or S.A.M.O.A. Pathway, now a key counterpart policy to the SDGs.

Separate to these three arenas for engagement, and concurrent to the HLFAE led by the OECD, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs [DESA] initiated several Financing for Development [FfD] conferences. Most notable amongst the outcomes of these global conferences were the Monterrey Consensus in 2002; the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in 2015; and the High-Level Dialogue on FfD in New York in 2019.³⁴

5.1.4 The UN: Re-calibrating the Asymmetry in Power through Participation

As noted earlier, my interest in examining these three organisations was to clarify who was invited to sit at which negotiating table, and for what purpose. It was the UN which offered the Pacific SIDS the opportunity to meet with donors as peers and equals. The global meetings and committees of the UN emerged as the primary point of engagement for the Pacific SIDS in the global debates which preceded the emergence of the idea of Ownership in Paris in 2005.

³⁴ History of Finance for Development.

While participation through the UN might seem an obvious step for the SIDS, Samoa's story illustrates that joining the UN was not always straightforward for the Pacific SIDS.

Even if a state is eligible to join a multilateral body, there is both a benefit and a cost to participation. While there are the costs incurred by representation in global destinations, there is also the opportunity-cost at home. As Wrighton notes in her research on participation in development in the Pacific, for the small bureaucracies of the Pacific, participation in global fora often directly undermined their capacity to administer government and deliver services at home.³⁵ Given air schedules and distance, officials could be absent for weeks, without anyone assuming their responsibilities in their stead.

Participation also required the confidence and skills to "sound the Pacific voice" amongst the larger, wealthier and powerful nations of the world; not always easy, particularly for a solitary representative from, in comparison, a "small and vulnerable", island state which is also reliant on aid from those same wealthy and powerful countries.³⁶ As one of the interviewees reported, she learnt to develop her own confidence and skills as she represented her country at global fora. Later, she also coached her more junior staff who accompanied her to ensure they spoke for their country at the global meetings they attended. "I told them" she said, "I'm going to be down the other end of the table and I want to be able to hear your voice!"³⁷

³⁵ Wrighton, N. 2010. Participation, Power and Practice in Development, A Case Study of Theoretical Doctrines and International Agency Practice in Tuvalu.

³⁶ Note the discussion in Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking the Policy Logic, and Chapter 3 A Conceptual Framework: Understanding Policy Change, particularly that citing Baldacchino, Corbett and Connell, Fry and Tarte, which challenges the proposition of the inherent vulnerability of the small island states.

³⁷ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015

But the scars of colonialism were traumatic for some in the Pacific, even those who gained independence first. They hesitated to venture into the global arenas, even though it offered the smaller nations the opportunity of the support of “new friends”. The new Independent State of Samoa considered the merits of joining the UN for more than a decade before it decided that membership was to its advantage.³⁸ As Samoa’s Deputy Head of State acknowledged in his speech on Samoa’s admission to the UN:

A Pacific island is a fragile thing. We had been touched by an alien world. That touch left its mark. We needed time to recover, to look at the world, to decide for ourselves how close to it we could afford to come and still retain our way of life and things that are important to us. Now we believe we know where we are going ...We know that our country is small and will not greatly change the course of history. Yet we wish to speak with our own voice. ...our special interest will be to make them [the UN] aware of how lightly and thoughtfully and carefully they must step in a small island nation if they are to do the good they seek and not to do harm instead.....we know that in today’s world we need friends. Our old friends have stood by us over the years... In tomorrow’s world we will need new friends. We understand well the concept of the interdependent world. We know that just over the horizon, there are challenges which we will not be able to meet alone. For those reasons we have joined the United Nations. ³⁹

Eventually, those eligible Pacific SIDS determined that the potential benefits of joining the UN outweighed both the trauma and the costs. It was the core principle of the UN which persuaded the Pacific SIDS to join the table: every state held the right to vote. A voice at the UN offered the opportunity for equality with the larger nations of the world; the opportunity to balance the asymmetry between the more and less powerful states.⁴⁰ As Fiji’s first Prime Minister and later, elder Pacific statesman, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara observed of UN membership:

³⁸ Samoa was designated as Western Samoa to distinguish it from its “neighbour”, American Samoa [a territory of the USA, after the archipelago was divided under an agreement between Germany, the USA and UK in the tripartite convention of 1899 which culminated in the Treaty of Berlin], until 1997 when its Parliament/Fono changed its Constitution to adopt the name of the Independent State of Samoa. It has been known in the UN as Samoa since it joined in 1976.

³⁹ Lealofi IV, T. T. 15/12/1976. Address by the Deputy Head of State of Western Samoa to the UN General Assembly, 31st Session, 100th Plenary meeting, A/PV.100, 1491: 19-20.

⁴⁰ Pfetsch, F. R. 2011. Power in International Negotiations: Symmetry of Asymmetry, *Negotiations* 2(16):39-56

...The great point is that the small nations, at least theoretically, speak on terms of equality with the larger nations and there can be an opportunity to play a moderating role...⁴¹

It was important to Pacific SIDS to “sound a Pacific voice”⁴² on the global stage for two reasons: they believed that they could contribute to the global community, despite their size and vulnerabilities; and they hoped that they could benefit from access to support, particularly to build the friends necessary to participate in the global economy. Despite their size and vulnerabilities, the Pacific SIDS sought participation with other states on an equal footing - and beyond aid. Pacific SIDS came to the UN seeking systemic change. The examples of Fiji, Samoa and Tuvalu, illustrate the common rationales for joining.

Global cooperation and contribution: economic independence and consensus

Under Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, Fiji’s foreign policy at independence took two deliberate pathways: cooperation within the region; and a global contribution through both Commonwealth and United Nations fora. Mara, drawing from his experience and familiarity with global negotiations under the Commonwealth, particularly on sugar agreements,⁴³ saw joining the UN as a natural and sensible choice for an independent Fiji. Independence represented an opportunity to frame policy and to make decisions “for ourselves”.⁴⁴ As Mara observed, “...political independence was meaningless without economic independence...”.⁴⁵ While most colonial administrations continued to offer financial support to their former colonial territories,⁴⁶ their aid was regarded with ambivalence by the new states. As Mara

⁴¹ Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 117.

⁴² Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 113 -117.

⁴³ Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 117.

⁴⁴ Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 117.

⁴⁵ Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 171.

⁴⁶ Mara indicates that when Fiji became independent it was receiving aid from Britain under its Development Plan VI. Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 117.

observed, “Although we were glad to receive aid, I did not feel we should simply accept it because it was on offer.”⁴⁷ Global engagement, through entities such as the UN, offered the opportunity to promote and secure the newly-independent state’s policy choices.⁴⁸ It allowed Fiji opportunities to secure the economic independence which gave meaning to its new political status.⁴⁹ Global cooperation represented an opportunity to establish relations with other states and build the opportunities for economic independence that they desired.

But Fiji sought participation in the global arena as equals. It was important to show their fellow members at the UN that they could contribute as well. Mara claimed that Fiji’s experience in achieving a peaceful transition to independence offered the UN the opportunity to learn from Fiji’s skills, capacity and leadership. Their peaceful and respectful transition to independence was, Mara said, a demonstration of Fiji’s respect for the “Pacific way” of “continuing dialogue as a means of resolving differences on a basis of mutual understanding.”⁵⁰ Fiji offered its fellow UN-member states, large and small, the example set by its respect for consensus across its diverse domestic population. Fiji offered their capacity to build a common path across differences, with respect, as their contribution to the UN:

...it is our success in achieving a large measure of those standards of tolerance, harmony and justice that has enabled us to proceed to independence without competition for power, and without rancour ...though we have clearly far more to gain than to give in this Assembly, we ...believe that our small country of Fiji has a contribution to make at the UN....⁵¹

⁴⁷ Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 117.

⁴⁸ Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 113-117.

⁴⁹ See Appendix 5.2: Pacific Membership of Regional and Global entities

⁵⁰ Mara observed this particularly in relation to “racialism”, a constant topic in the UN when FIJI joined: it was Mara’s belief that dogmatism – which he found prevalent in the UN Committee for Decolonisation - did not promote understanding, and rather, each country must approach independence and decolonisation with an understanding of its own individual and specific problems and that the pace of constitutional change must be in accord with that wish of the people. This was Fiji’s experience, he asserted. Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 117-118.

⁵¹ UNGA. 21/10/1970. Address by Sir Ratu Kamisese Mara Prime Minister of Fiji on the Celebrations of the 25th Anniversary of the UN. 25th Session, Agenda Item 21, 1876th Plenary Meeting, A/PV.1876: 21.

Although it took some time to decide to join the UN, Samoa endorsed Fiji's views. Samoa wanted the opportunity to make an equal contribution to the UN, as well as the opportunity to participate as equals in the global economy. As Samoa's Deputy Head of State had acknowledged, the world's increasing interdependence required new as well as old friends – and this need demanded contribution in order to secure a fair exchange.⁵² Samoa believed it had a contribution to make: as Fiji had, Samoa offered its capacity for building consensus through respect and dialogue, necessary qualities, the Deputy Head of State asserted, for the challenging times. Similarly, on his first appearance at the UNGA in 1977, Samoa's Prime Minister Tupuola Efi observed that, despite differences in the size, resources and perspective of countries,

...All have a role to play. The art lies in allowing each to make his contribution, in the pooling of complementary resources...each Member country, no matter how large or small, must be able to contribute to the common good. That is why Samoa feels that a small nation, like the man in the canoe, can make an essential contribution to the United Nations, the United Nations needs...as many perspectives as are available to it...the whole idea of the United Nations Charter is to gather the nations together to seek a consensus, to solve by discussion rather than by conflict....we should all have a voice....⁵³

In exchange, Samoa also sought the opportunity to participate in the global economy – fairly. Samoa put specific economic issues on the table. Prime Minister Tupuola Efi supported the G-77's calls for a new international economic order. He argued for "fundamental changes in the structures of economic dominance and inequality."⁵⁴ He nominated negotiations on the law of the sea as an integral part of that new world order, and an essential means to ensure Pacific

⁵² Lealofi IV, T. T. 15/12/1976. Address by the Deputy Head of State of Western Samoa to the UN General Assembly, 31st Session, 100th Plenary meeting, A/PV.100, 1491: 19-20.

⁵³ Efi, T. 28/9/77. Address by the Prime Minister of Samoa to the United Nations General Assembly 11th Plenary Meeting 32nd Session New York. Official records: A/32/PV.11: 155-156.

⁵⁴ Efi, T. 28/9/77. Address by the Prime Minister of Samoa to the United Nations General Assembly 11th Plenary Meeting 32nd Session New York. Official records: A/32/PV.11: 155-156.

SIDS [as well as others] a “just and equitable basis” on which to share major global resources.⁵⁵

As other Pacific states joined the UN over the decades, they re-affirmed the stances taken by Fiji and Samoa. The independent state of Tuvalu was the most recent Pacific state to join the UN, in September 2000, just days before the Millennium Summit. Like Samoa, Tuvalu had waited some time before joining the UN, despite gaining independence in 1978.⁵⁶ On joining the UN in 2000, Tuvalu’s Prime Minister Ionatana Ionatana, reaffirmed the significance of building consensus while also seeking opportunities for greater economic resilience. He re-affirmed the desire to move from a reliance on aid, voicing Tuvalu’s concerns for the threat posed by climate change and the potential for the global economic system to cause harm. And, as both Fiji and Samoa had, he asserted common ground with the UN in their shared respect for consensus, which was a guiding principle for Tuvaluans:

...Ultimately, our goal is to eliminate foreign aid⁵⁷...the culture of Tuvalu is guided by the principles of courtesy and the search for consensus, rather than confrontation and divisiveness. We are careful to balance the assertion of individual rights with the needs of the community. This is our tradition. We believe that these basic principles also rest at the heart of the United Nations. The principles of courtesy, consensus and respect for others will be the foundation of our presence here in the General Assembly....we are concerned about liberalized trade and increased globalisation... we recognise the long-term benefits of free trade, especially on a global scale..[but]...economic globalisation has enormous force, over which we have little control or influence. We would be alarmed if a side effect of globalisation eroded our customs and undermined our culture. ..the risk we face is great, but Tuvalu owes its survival to itself and for that we owe our ancestors an un-repayable debt....we are also concerned about climate change and the consequences of atmospheric warming, in particular rising sea levels...in times of political instability, what the [Pacific] region needs most is international support aimed at conciliation and economic recovery... we all share a common interest in community stability and security...⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Efi, T. 28/9/77. Address by the Prime Minister of Samoa to the United Nations General Assembly 11th Plenary Meeting 32nd Session New York. Official records: A/32/PV.11: 155-156.

⁵⁶ UNGA. 5/9/2000. Admission of Tuvalu to Membership in the United Nations, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly. A/RES/55/1.

⁵⁷ The Prime Minister explained: “...by any measure the 20th century was a remarkable journey for the people of Tuvalu. In the span of just a few generations, we emerged from eight tiny islands in the Pacific ocean, little known to the outside world. Traditionally, we are fishermen, planters and traders. We lead simple lives that meet our basic needs. As we have progressed, we have taken on occupations in fields new to us...adopted new sources of energy, new forms of communication, a new legal system and the Westminster model of democratic government....” atana, I. 5/9/2000. Admission Speech by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu to the United Nations General Assembly, 55th session, 1st Plenary meetings, New York. A/55/PV.1: 8-10.

⁵⁸ Ionatana, I. 5/9/2000. Admission Speech by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu to the United Nations General Assembly, 55th session, 1st Plenary meetings, New York. A/55/PV.1:8-10

The Pacific SIDS decided that the benefits of participation in the global arena outweighed the [potential] costs. Since Fiji joined in 1970, Pacific membership at the UN has grown to twelve.⁵⁹ The Pacific SIDS have found new ways to “sound” their Pacific voice at the UN. Initially, the small number of Pacific SIDS meant that countries formed alliances and joined negotiating blocs across the UN, such as with the G77+China and the Alliance of Small Island States [AOSIS]. The South Pacific Forum was assigned Observer status to the UN in New York in 1994.⁶⁰ More recently, the Pacific countries have formed their own grouping, the Pacific Small Island Developing States [P-SIDS].⁶¹ The P-SIDS formation, initially, raised questions about the authority of the Pacific Islands Forum and its Secretariat [PIFS] in the UN.⁶² The P-SIDS differs from the PIF in that it does not include Australia and New Zealand. Representatives of Pacific SIDS have increasingly assumed prominent leadership roles on various UN bodies and committees over the last decade in particular.⁶³

Having clarified who sat at which negotiating table across the three multilateral organisations, and their purpose in doing so, I move next, to examine how the idea of Ownership evolved

⁵⁹ See Appendix 5.2 Pacific Membership of Regional and Global Entities. Note: several Pacific countries remain on the UN’s list of non-self-governing territories, including American Samoa, Guam, French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Tokelau; and the claims of the “Indonesian province” of West Papua remain ongoing.

⁶⁰ UNGA. 17/10/1994. Observer Status for the South Pacific Forum in the General Assembly, Resolution 49/1 Adopted by the General Assembly, 34th Plenary meeting, 49th session, Agenda item 151. A/RES/49/1. The PIF recently gained permanent observer status with the UNDG in Geneva. Ambassador Mere Falemake, the Permanent Representative in the Permanent Delegation of PIFS to the WTO presented her letter of appointment as observer to the UNDG in Geneva in May 2018. PIF Observer Geneva.

⁶¹ Manoa, F. 2015. The New Pacific Diplomacy at the United Nations: The Rise of the PSIDS. In Fry G. and S. Tarte (eds). 2015. *The New Pacific Diplomacy*, 89-98.

⁶² Manoa, F. 2015. The New Pacific Diplomacy at the United Nations: The Rise of the PSIDS. Fry G. and S. Tarte (eds). 2015. *The New Pacific Diplomacy*, 89-98.

⁶³ For example, Fiji’s Permanent Representative to the UN, Peter Thomson, was elected President of the 71st session of the UNGA in June 2016; Fiji’s Prime Minister Bainimarama served as President of COP23 in 2017-2018; and Fiji’s PM Bainimarama was co-Chair of the first UN Conference on Oceans; the High Ambition coalition at COP21 in 2015 was led by several Pacific SIDS, particularly the Marshall Islands’ then Foreign Minister Tony de Brun; P-SIDS engagement in the CLOS Law of the Sea and other UN negotiations, for example on climate change, is ongoing; similarly, Samoa hosted the International Conference of SIDS in 2014, the first time a Pacific SIDS has hosted a UN global conference – the outcome, the SAMOA Pathway is leading the UN’s approach to engaging with SIDS, particularly on developing partnerships. See Fry G. and S. Tarte (eds). 2015. *The New Pacific Diplomacy*.

within the policy debates of each organisation to arrive at the “global consensus” reached in Paris. First, I turn to the research and policy debates led by the key proponents of the idea of Ownership, the World Bank and OECD.

5.2 The Global Pathway: The Origins of Ownership as Policy

5.2.1 *Competing Rights*

When George Marshall, then-Secretary of State of the United States of America [USA], the most powerful and affluent country in the post-war world, proposed a program of economic assistance for war-ravaged Europe to a packed audience at Harvard University in June 1947, he didn't talk about ownership. Instead, he discussed the rationale for constructing an economic relationship between the USA and post-war Europe built on aid.⁶⁴ As Europe struggled to rebuild, Marshall argued, the USA should give economic assistance to Europe because it was in their mutual economic self-interest. Further, he asserted, the program of economic assistance should be defined by those who received the aid, not those who gave it. Each country had a right, Marshall assured the audience, to determine its own development. But the proposition also carried an explicit geo-political expectation: aid, and a resurgent economy, would act as a defence against the spread of communism by encouraging political and social conditions in which the ‘free institutions’ of democracy could exist.

The promise of aid and free trade became key tools in America’s foreign policy. It was a strategy that expanded to include new friends as well as old allies. In January 1949, incoming

⁶⁴ In 1947, George Marshall, USA Secretary of State, put forward a proposal to provide economic assistance to Europe to recover after World War 2; the Economic Recovery Act was signed by President Truman in 1948 and became known as the Marshall Plan. Marshall, G. 4/6/1947. The Marshall Plan Speech; Truman, H.S. 20/1/1949. Inaugural Address.

President Truman⁶⁵ expanded on the Marshall Plan through his 4-Point Program. Acknowledging the emerging movement for decolonisation, Truman's 4-Point Program extended aid to include "developing" countries, the new states emerging from the old Empires of Britain, Germany and France.⁶⁶

After the optimism generated by the success of the Marshall Plan in re-constructing post-war Europe, by the end of the 1960s both donors and aid-receiving countries regarded aid with ambivalence, if not outright cynicism.⁶⁷ In 1969, the Pearson Commission, an inquiry into aid and development established by the World Bank, asserted a core claim which shaped aid and

⁶⁵ There were three key speeches: in 1947 the Truman doctrine outlining foreign policy based on mutual self-interest; the speech by George Marshall outlining Europe's recovery plan; and then 1949, the four-point program, which formalised aid's inclusion in American foreign policy. Truman's inauguration speech in January 1949 built on two earlier speeches: the first, which became known as the Truman Doctrine, delivered on 12 March 1947, before Congress in which he pledged USA economic and military support for Greece and Turkey to prevent Soviet domination – and which set the precedent for supporting 'free' countries at risk of totalitarian regimes, [the basis of the Economic Recovery Act signed by President Truman in 1948 which became known as the Marshall Plan]. The second speech, delivered by Secretary of State George C Marshall in June 1947 which launched the Marshall Plan, (the program passed Congress in March 1948) – where Marshall argued that USA should help Europe to rebuild its economy because Europe's well-being was also in USA's best interests "the revival of a working economy in the world... to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist". Economic health, political stability and peace went together – and contributed to development of 'free' institutions. But he cautioned, such assistance should 'provide a cure rather than a mere palliative' ... but to develop such a program, "is the business of the Europeans, the initiative must come from Europe" and USA's role "should consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European program and ...support... as far as ...practical...to do...so." Marshall, G.C. 4/6/1947. *The Marshall Plan Speech*. Truman, H.S. 20/1/1949. Inaugural Address; The Truman Doctrine, 1947. Office of the Historian.

⁶⁶ The movement for decolonisation began in the wake of World War 2 as various colonies across Latin America, Asia and Africa progressively gained independence from their British, French, German or other colonising power. Curiously, despite the tide moving against colonisation, the USA annexed Hawai'i in 1959. It wasn't until 1960 that the UNGA adopted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People (1960) in Resolution 1514(VX), adopted at the 947th Plenary meeting, 14 December 1960 A/RES/1514(XV). The first Pacific colony to gain independence was [Western] Samoa, in 1962. The New Zealand Western Samoa Act of 1961, passed 24 November 1961, terminated the trusteeship agreement and granted Samoa independence as the independent state of Western Samoa, effective 1 January 1962. [UNGA. 18/10/1961. The future of Western Samoa. Resolution 1626(XVI), 16th Session 1039th Plenary Meeting.] Western Samoa signed a Treaty of Friendship with New Zealand in August 1962 [No. 6515 New Zealand and Western Samoa, Treaty of Friendship between the Government of New Zealand and the Government of Western Samoa, signed at Apia, on 1 August 1962, registered at the UN by New Zealand on 1st February 1963.] In December 1976, Samoa was admitted to the UN as the Independent State of Western Samoa as 147th UN Member State [UNGA. 15/12/1976. General Assembly Admits Western Samoa]; Samoa's legislature [the Fono] changed its name to the Independent State of Samoa under Constitution Amendment Act (No.2) of 1997, No.15.

⁶⁷ Truman also identified a role for the newly-created post-war international institutions: the United Nations, formally established by Charter in 1945; and the international fiscal and monetary regulatory and economic development agencies of the IMF and World Bank established through the Bretton-Woods Conference, or the UN Monetary and Financial Conference in 1944: 44 nations gathered between 1-22 July 1944 to agree upon the new rules for the post-WW2 international monetary system. The meeting created the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, later a key arm of the World Bank.

development policy and research into the 21st century.⁶⁸ The Pearson Commission framed the contest in aid for development between two competing rights: the right of a state to determine its own development trajectory versus the right of a donor-state to “be heard and informed” about how aid-receiving states decided to use their aid resources. Pearson’s argument, culminated, I argue, in the idea of Ownership which emerged as central to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness agreed in 2005.

Acknowledging that both donors and aid receiving countries were growing wary of aid, the Pearson Commission sought to reframe the debate. First, Pearson asserted the moral duty of rich nations to help the poor and, correspondingly, the right of the poor to share in wealth generated by the rich.⁶⁹ Secondly, Pearson asserted the validity of aid’s effectiveness within developing countries - and introduced as its corollary, “genuine partnerships” between donor and aid receiving countries.⁷⁰ Such partnerships, he argued, would ensure that donors did not breach the sovereignty of those countries which received aid – but permit donors the opportunity, with countries’ consent, to “be heard and informed” about their aid.⁷¹

In effect, Pearson asserted the right of a donor to intervene in another country’s policies and

⁶⁸ Commission on International Development (The Pearson Commission). 1970. *Partners in Development*, Report of the Commission on International Development to the World Bank.

⁶⁹ The Pearson Report attributed the growing “disparity” and “inequity” between rich and poor countries to, on one hand, “...centuries of neglect and stagnation” and on the other, “...the acceleration of the industrial revolution”. The Pearson Report emphasised the moral argument for giving aid: asserting that ‘we’, the rich, have a moral duty to help the poor. This, the Report argued, was the “common rule” of individual and national behaviour for “our continued existence.” Pearson, L. P. February 1970. A New Strategy for Global Development. (The Pearson Report). In *The UNESCO Courier: A Window Open on the World XXIII 2 [1099]*:6-9-back cover.

⁷⁰ Pearson called for not only more aid, but also better aid: “It must also be better aid, more effectively organised and administered...[and based on] soundly conceived development plans....[and] untied, so that the administrative and economic evils of tying are no longer visited upon the recipients...[and] accompanied more and more with integrated technical assistance which provides the knowledge and skills necessary to make use of the funds provided.....we have tried to balance the goal of self-sustained development in the low income world by the end of this century with cooperative policy and action for aid based on a genuine partnership”. Pearson, L. P. February 1970. A New Strategy for Global Development. (The Pearson Report) In *The UNESCO Courier: A Window Open on the World XXIII 2 [1099]*:13.

⁷¹ Pearson, L. P. February 1970. A New Strategy for Global Development. (The Pearson Report) In *The UNESCO Courier: A Window Open on the World XXIII 2 [1099]*.

programs.⁷² The consent of the aid-receiving country would be critical, Pearson noted, to avoid charges that donors were breaching another state's sovereignty. The concept of Partnership, demonstrating the aid-receiving country's consent, would give credence to donor "intervention". Partnership would provide the opportunity for joint analysis to adequately understand a country's context and determine the appropriate kinds of policies and institutions that would generate economic growth – and development. Further, Pearson asserted, donors must commit 0.7% of their GNI in aid to developing countries. This commitment was adopted by the UNGA in October 1970 in its resolution on the Second UN Development Decade.⁷³

5.2.2 The Strategy: Absolute Poverty vs Capacity to Plan

Four years later, Robert McNamara, the President of the World Bank who commissioned the Pearson Report, addressed the Bank's Board of Governors in Nairobi and laid out the rationale for turning the Pearson Commission's findings into the Bank's global operational strategy.

Lamenting the failure of aid to achieve development, McNamara acknowledged the ongoing extent of "absolute poverty" in developing countries. But the responsibility for creating change, McNamara advanced, did not lie with the donors and international agencies but with national governments. They were responsible for determining their own development - but corruption and incapacity meant these governments did not always have the requisite political

⁷² Pearson, L. P. February 1970. A New Strategy for Global Development. (The Pearson Report) In *The UNESCO Courier: A Window Open on the World XXIII 2* [1099].

⁷³ UNGA. 24/10/1970. International Development Strategy for the 2nd UN Development Decade (1971-1980) Resolution No. 2626 (XXV) Adopted on the Reports of the Second Committee, 25th Session 1883rd Plenary meeting A/RES/2626(XXV) (A./8124 & Add.1)

will or technical skills. Equity between rich and poor within countries, he argued, required the redistribution of national resources from corrupt or incompetent elites to the rural poor. The problem of aid - and equity - lay within the developing countries.

Achieving rural re-orientation, McNamara declared, would require World Bank staff to redefine their role in assisting developing countries to better understand their context and the development choices available to them – and to measure the achievement of these decisions. In effect, McNamara asserted, the Bank's staff should participate in the aid receiving country's planning and performance processes. The assertion of a rationale for Ownership, for an explanation or logic for how change should happen - and the relations between donors and developing countries - had begun.⁷⁴

The Bank expanded on "the how" over the next three decades. World Bank staff sought to re-orient their role in several ways: the task, they determined, was to undertake more rigorous [and joint] analysis of each country's context to develop long term goals and objectives: in effect, to work with countries to draft their country development strategies. This, in turn, demanded rigorous evaluation of what was achieved through those strategies - so performance assessments were required. Each of these tasks demanded technical skills: which donors would have, - but not necessarily the aid-receiving government. This demanded a program of capacity building of government officials in-country to ensure their capability to

⁷⁴ McNamara, R.S. 24/9/1973. "The Nairobi Speech," Address by the President of the World Bank to the Board of Governors, Kenya. Washington DC: World Bank Group.

plan and assess performance in accord with the frameworks outlined by their technical advisors from the Bank and other donors.

It seems that the Bank's staff took guidance from Rostow's view of development as a series of linear, sequenced, stages of growth.⁷⁵ They interpreted McNamara's instructions to understand and analyse a country's context as instructions to assemble evidence to prove the causal relationship between aid, economic growth and development, rather than to understand the unique circumstances or context of a country in order to form partnerships of influence over how effectively aid is used. As a result, McNamara's emphasis on equity and re-distribution in context became secondary to the search for evidence of aid's contribution to economic growth. A search for a blueprint resulted.

In the process, the Bank's staff determined that a country's level of commitment to ensuring aid was used to generate economic growth was critical.⁷⁶ But no one knew how to assess a country's "commitment". Heaver and Israel produced an informal discussion paper in 1986, the first to canvass what commitment entailed and how to identify it. The paper began from the premise that "the commitment of the Borrower to implementation was widely recognised as a key factor in project performance."⁷⁷ But, as economists rather than political scientists, the Bank staff lamented, no one knew how to recognise commitment.⁷⁸ The answer, Heaver

⁷⁵ Rostow, W.W. 1959. The Stages of Economic Growth. *The Economic History Review New Series* 12(1):1-16; Rostow, W.W. 1990. The Five Stages of Growth: A Summary, in *Stages of Economic Growth A non-Communist Manifesto*, 4-16.

⁷⁶ The Bank's staff became intent on demonstrating that aid contributed to economic growth [and thus development] and the conditions [which policies and what institutions] under which it did so.

⁷⁷ Heaver, R. and A. Israel. 1986. Country Commitment to Development Projects, 1. This was an informal paper and claimed to be the first to examine country "commitment" to development. It was intended to stimulate discussion and comment amongst Bank staff in an effort to understand a problem.

⁷⁸ Heaver, R. and A. Israel. 1986. Country Commitment to Development Projects.

& Israel argued [repeating both Pearson and McNamara over a decade earlier], lay in establishing “genuine dialogue and partnership”, through which the Bank could exert influence over domestic actors “...through its resource contributions and conditionality”.⁷⁹

Nearly a decade later, Wasty and Johnson proposed the concept of “borrower ownership” as the end, and desired, result of commitment.⁸⁰ In recognition that “the notion of ownership remains conceptually elusive and insufficiently explored” in the Bank’s policy and practice, Wasty and Johnson undertook a systematic review of the Bank’s evaluations. The result, they claimed, demonstrated a “symbiotic relationship” between “program outcome and borrower ownership”.⁸¹ They argued that ownership could be measured.⁸² They proposed several variables against which to measure the significance of the relationship – and “how much” ownership was present.⁸³ They defined several antecedents necessary for ownership to emerge.⁸⁴ Their typology for classifying ownership derived - rather curiously, I think - from the literature, rather than “the owners” under investigation.⁸⁵

⁷⁹ Heaver, R. and A. Israel. 1986. Country Commitment to Development Projects, 2; Heaver and Arturo proposed several criteria for measuring ownership, which Wasty and Johnson expanded.

⁸⁰ Johnson, J. H. and S. Wasty. 1993. Borrower Ownership of Adjustment Programs and the Political Economy of Reform.

⁸¹ Johnson, J. H. and S. Wasty. 1993. Borrower Ownership of Adjustment Programs and the Political Economy of Reform.

⁸² Despite arguing that ownership COULD be measured, Wasty and Johnson also observed the obvious circularity of their argument that there was a relationship between program success and ownership, ie, “if the program succeeds there was ownership and if it falters then ownership was absent.” Johnson, J. H. and S. Wasty. 1993. Borrower Ownership of Adjustment Programs and the Political Economy of Reform, 2.

⁸³ These variables included: the locus of the initiative; the level of intellectual conviction among key policymakers; the expression of political will be the top leadership; efforts towards consensus among various constituencies. There were several more criteria listed under each variable. Johnson, Johnson, J. H. and S. Wasty. 1993. Borrower Ownership of Adjustment Programs and the Political Economy of Reform, 4.

⁸⁴ These antecedents included: political stability influenced by the electoral cycle/change in government; the political influence of pressure groups and vested interests, as well as the nature of public sector private sector interface; historical traditions and ideological underpinnings; the nature of the political regime; the intensity of external /exogenous shocks; initial conditions in the economy; and the nature of the government-Bank interaction. Johnson, J. H. and S. Wasty. 1993. Borrower Ownership of Adjustment Programs and the Political Economy of Reform, 7-11.

⁸⁵ Johnson, J. H. and S. Wasty. 1993. Borrower Ownership of Adjustment Programs and the Political Economy of Reform, footnote 9.

Through the 1990s, multiple - but mostly internal - Bank reviews continued to grapple with “the evidence” for the claims around Ownership, using the terms ‘commitment’ and ‘ownership’ interchangeably.⁸⁶ Repeatedly the Bank’s reports asserted the necessity of ownership for ensuring effective aid, largely based on research from their programmes in Africa. These claims were essentially more sophisticated statements of the same assertions of commitment and ownership rather than a logic for explaining *how* and *why* Ownership would influence or effect change.⁸⁷

In 1995, James Wolfensohn was appointed President of the World Bank. In the following decade, the Bank continued to search for a framework through which to operationalise its engagement with developing countries [as instructed by McNamara two decades earlier], while continuing efforts to prove aid’s contribution to economic growth, poverty alleviation and development.⁸⁸ In 1999, Wolfensohn announced the Comprehensive Development Framework [CDF]⁸⁹ an initiative which argued for the interdependence of four guiding principles in development: a long term and holistic vision for development; country ownership of the development strategy; development assistance as a country-led partnership; and a

⁸⁶ A key research article in 1998 claimed: “...‘ownership’ or strong domestic support of reforms is essential for [adjustment lending] to succeed...the lack of **borrower ownership or commitment** was a key factor in the failures (of a third of adjustment loans prior to 1990).” Dollar and Pritchett, 1998, Assessing Aid, World Bank Policy Research Report, 52.

⁸⁷ Dollar D. and L. Pritchett. 1998. Assessing Aid: What Works, What Doesn’t and Why? World Bank Policy Research Report

⁸⁸ Burnside and Dollar assembled some of the stronger arguments on behalf of the Bank and their work still forms the heart of this debate in the literature. They argued that 1) aid is generally ineffective in promoting growth and 2) impact on growth is positive in good policy environments – affirming Pearson and McNamara’s “intuitive” claims – i.e. affirming “conditional” effectiveness which appeals, Quibria suggests, because of its reductive simplicity [p76]. Hence, selectivity is endorsed – and given additional impetus by apparent ‘empirical grounding’. Burnside and Dollar were debunked by subsequent research: yet donors continue to pursue policy based on its findings (2014). This debate is relevant to understanding Ownership policy because Ownership as a pre-condition for effective partnerships, became a catchphrase for the “sound policies and institutions” which Burnside and Dollar claimed led to economic growth in ‘selected’ environments. Quibria, M.G., 2014. Aid Effectiveness: Research, Policy and Unresolved Issues. *Development Studies Research*, 1(1):75-87

⁸⁹ As Wolfensohn observed: “It is also clear to us that ownership is essential. Countries must be in the driver’s seat and set the course.” Wolfensohn, J.D. 21/1/1999. A Proposal for A Comprehensive Development Framework, Excerpts from A Memorandum to the Board Of Executive Directors and Staff of the World Bank, 133.

focus on results.⁹⁰ Participation, Wolfensohn asserted, repeatedly, was critical to ownership and partnership.⁹¹ With the addition of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers [PRSPs] a year later, the World Bank brought this framework to the negotiating table in preparation for the Financing for Development Conference in Monterrey in 2002 and the HLFAE in Rome in 2003.

5.2.3 The OECD: On Common Ground

In parallel to the Bank's efforts, the OECD was also grappling with the issue of more effective and efficient use of aid. The OECD's engagement emphasised the second element of McNamara's proposition: it sought to define a framework for strategic plans – the goals and measures – through which to monitor progress and build partnerships between donors and aid receiving countries. The OECD sought a framework which explained how change would happen.

In 1992 the OECD's DAC outlined its *Principles on Aid Effectiveness* as guidance for practice.⁹² The Principles asserted the significance of partnership to the relationship between donors, multilaterals and aid receiving countries.⁹³ In 1995, the Principles were incorporated into the OECD DAC's new policy statement, *Development Partnerships in the New Global Context*,

⁹⁰ Wolfensohn, J.D. 21/1/1999. A Proposal for A Comprehensive Development Framework, Excerpts from A Memorandum to the Board Of Executive Directors and Staff of the World Bank; Wolfensohn, J.D. 9/2/2000. The Comprehensive Development Framework, Letter and Attachment: A Proposal for a Comprehensive Development framework.

⁹¹ See for example: "This means a much greater focus on country ownership and participation, a better appreciation of local conditions, and more attention to the role of culture." Wolfensohn, J.D. 6/10/1998. Changes Bearing Fruit, Message from the President and Chairman, from the World Bank Annual Report 1998, 121; and "local ownership and participation are central" in Wolfensohn, J.D. 24/2/2003. Remarks at the High-Level Forum on Harmonisation in Rome: Cooperation and Partnership Harmonising the Activities of Development Agencies for Poverty Reduction, 382.

⁹² OECD-DAC. 1992. Development Assistance Manual DAC Principles for Effective Aid. The report makes brief mention, for the first time, of the Pacific, observing that regional meetings were held in the South Pacific to examine donor approaches. Australia and New Zealand were only members of the DAC and OECD in 1992.

⁹³ OECD DAC. 1996. Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation, May 1996, plus Annex: Development Partnerships in the New Global Context, 3-4 May 1995.

agreed in 1995 and released officially in 1996 as part of the report, *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*.⁹⁴ The OECD DAC asserted that the new policy emphasised people-centred development, local ownership, global integration and international partnerships.⁹⁵ This was the first time the OECD-DAC's policy settings had formally referred to "local ownership" as a guiding principle.

Through the new policy, the OECD-DAC asserted three key points in aid relations. First, in agreement with the World Bank, it re-affirmed the significance of aid to economic growth and development: "...development cooperation has helped and must continue".⁹⁶ But, it noted, countries needed to help themselves.⁹⁷ Second, the policy re-affirmed the importance of donors understanding country context. Their role as partners, the OECD-DAC claimed, should be that of strengthening local capacity, "guided by the conditions and commitments in each country".⁹⁸ Asserting that donors committed more than 90 percent of total Official Development Assistance [ODA] through their development cooperation programs, the DAC argued that effective use of aid meant that ODA needed to be targeted to local priorities. This meant, the OECD-DAC explained, that donors needed to understand the conditions in each country. They needed to understand local context. In response, development cooperation - aid - must be "effective and efficient", with countries "rigorously following agreed principles

⁹⁴ OECD. May 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*, Paris.

⁹⁵ OECD. 2006b. *The DAC in Dates: A History of the OECDs Development Assistance Committee*, 26

⁹⁶ Development Partnerships in the New Global Context, May 1995, DAC Committee Statement, Annex to OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*.

⁹⁷ OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*

⁹⁸ Development Partnerships in the new Global Context, May 1995, DAC Committee Statement, Annex to OECD DAC. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*.

and “best practice”.⁹⁹ Evaluation, based on indicators of achievement, was essential. Development was viewed in the ‘broad context of societal transformation’. Lastly, the policy proposed a “global partnership”, to achieve the [new] International Development Goals, which were based on economic well-being, social development and environmental sustainability.¹⁰⁰

But, as the OECD-DAC observed, the policy position on Ownership was a donor-driven initiative. The “Shaping the 21st century” policy – and the discourse which generated it - was framed without consultation with the developing countries.¹⁰¹ Claiming participation as one of its primary principles, the policy acknowledged the need for further consultation, admitting that, “...*donor-driven initiatives rarely take root...the ideas...[in this policy]...will require broader discussion, especially with our developing partner countries*”.¹⁰² Developing countries, although claimed as partners, were yet to be consulted on the policy. This OECD DAC’s first step was to establish a common policy position with its multilateral colleagues, the UN and the World Bank.

The DAC invited the UN, multilateral agencies and others to work under the common framework, “to engage local leadership...[and] so that the Strategy is not perceived as donor-driven.”¹⁰³ In 1997, the OECD-DAC convened the first joint DAC, UN, World Bank and IMF

⁹⁹These goals became the foundation of the goals later agreed in the UN’s Millennium Declaration in 2000. See Annex Development Partnership in the new Global Context, May 1995, DAC Committee Statement, Annexed to OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*.

¹⁰⁰These goals became the foundation of the goals later agreed in the UN’s Millennium Declaration in 2000. Annex Development Partnership in the new Global Context, May 1995, DAC Committee Statement, Annexed to OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*.

¹⁰¹ OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*, 15. The Bank’s research primarily focused on the Bank’s experiences of aid – primarily of structural adjustment programs and lending – in Africa.

¹⁰² OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*, 15.

¹⁰³ My emphasis, OECD. 2006b. *The DAC in Dates: A History of the OECDs Development Assistance Committee*, 28.

seminar to discuss indicators of global progress towards the International Development Goals and initiated the first Development Partnership Forum on implementing its “Partnership Concept”.¹⁰⁴ In 1998 the DAC inaugurated a first draft of indicators to measure the policy goals [the International Development Goals], based on recommendations of a broad range of ‘partners’ – “donors, partner countries, multilateral development organisations and international experts.”¹⁰⁵ As the century drew to a close, the collaboration between the OECD, World Bank, IMF and the United Nations [primarily the UNDP] became official. In September 1999, a common approach between the multilaterals, donors and UN agencies was agreed.¹⁰⁶ The OECD-DAC’s policy paper, *On Common Ground* reflected agreement across all the multilateral agencies on the relationship between ownership, partnership and effective aid.¹⁰⁷ The international community, it said, had “built strong consensus on what constitutes sustainable development, and how it can be achieved.”¹⁰⁸

5.2.4 Ownership: “It’s Obvious”

By the turn of the 20th century, the World Bank, the OECD and the UN were in agreement on the significance of the idea of Ownership for effective aid and partnerships for development.¹⁰⁹ Ownership had emerged as a metaphor for the way the multilateral and bilateral donors could - or would – assert their “right to know” how aid was to be used effectively and efficiently: the right, with the consent derived through partnership, to intervene in another country’s

¹⁰⁴ OECD. 2006b. *The DAC in Dates: A History of the OECDs Development Assistance Committee*, 28

¹⁰⁵ OECD. 2006b. *The DAC in Dates: A History of the OECDs Development Assistance Committee*, 29

¹⁰⁶ OECD. 2006b. *The DAC in Dates: A History of the OECDs Development Assistance Committee*, 3-30.

¹⁰⁷ As Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank reported, for example, *On Common Ground* demonstrated “the consensus reached in the international development community on the CDF’s main tenets.” James Wolfensohn, 9 February 2000, *The Comprehensive Development Framework*, World Bank, p1

¹⁰⁸ OECD DAC, *On Common Ground, Converging views on Development and Development Cooperation at the Turn of the Century*, p1, in *Report on Development Cooperation*, February 2000, Chapter 5: Partnership and Coordination, Annex

¹⁰⁹ OECD. 2000. 2000: A Better World for All: Progress towards the International Development Goals. A Joint Report by the UN, the OECD, the World Bank and the IMF.

planning processes to ensure that aid supported the right kinds of “sound” social and economic policies and institutions deemed necessary to achieve economic growth and development.

While the Americans may have been the first to define the relationship between donors and aid-receiving countries in their post-war foreign policy, it was the conversations in the board rooms of the World Bank that laid the seeds for the idea of Ownership as the key to unlocking effective development.¹¹⁰ The Bank’s extensive research and programming resources rose to meet the challenge – but in the process, the research moved quickly to assume Ownership as a given: the relationship between Ownership, partnership and effective aid and development was “obvious” declared the Bank’s President, James Wolfensohn.¹¹¹

While the Bank had sought to identify criteria and antecedents which could account for the presence or likelihood of greater or less ownership, however, neither the Bank nor OECD had offered an intellectually rigorous explanation – or change theory - for how Ownership functioned to demonstrate government commitment and political will, and reduce corruption. This work was undertaken by Elinor Ostrom and her team, drawing on the IAD Framework [as discussed in Chapter 2].¹¹² Instead, the multilaterals, particularly the World

¹¹⁰ As McNamara observed, in the margins of one such occasion, “In these conversations, speculation and opinion were given impetus through the backing of powerful men’s political imprimatur and resolve.” McNamara, R.S. 24/9/1973. “The Nairobi Speech,” Address by the President of the World Bank to the Board of Governors, Kenya. Washington DC: World Bank Group.

¹¹¹ As Wolfensohn later observed of the CDF, which put ownership partnership and effective aid squarely at the heart of the World Bank’s approach to development: “I can truthfully say that I invented the CDF sitting in my place in Jackson Hole...[it was]...not a brilliant insight. It sounds obvious but it was bloody hard to get through.” World Bank Archives (oral history) James D Wolfensohn Personal History, The World Bank, 9th President of the World Bank Group 1995-2005.

¹¹² This task was taken up, instead, by SIDA in collaboration with Elinor Ostrom and her team from the Political workshop group at Indiana University. SIDA commissioned Ostrom et al in 1999 to examine aid, incentives and sustainable development. They drew on the IAD framework, drawing from theories on rational choice institutionalism, to propose a change theory for Ownership in aid and development. Aid, Ostrom and her team declared, represented a Samaritan’s dilemma. Arguing that development faced collective action problems which demanded more and better institutions, not

Bank, focussed their attention on the justification for aid: on demonstrating aid's contribution to economic growth.¹¹³ While the OECD focused on building consensus on the policy framework for Ownership – and Partnership. After a resolution to strengthen international economic cooperation through partnerships, the UN reform programme established the UNDAF, a common assessment tool to facilitate a coherent assessment of development needs in countries.¹¹⁴

Once a common policy position was agreed, the multilateral agencies took the policy to the aid-receiving countries in several stages. The first major step was to agree on “the what”: the Millennium Summit, convened in September 2000, transformed the International Development Goals into the eight Millennium Development Goals with the agreement of all the UN member states. The second step was to agree on “the how”. This took place in two parts: first, identifying arrangements for financing development, initiated by the UN through the Monterrey Conference; and second, agreement on more effective use of aid, starting with the first High Level Forum in Rome.

I turn next, to examine the policy debates which emerged amongst the “developing”

more money, Ostrom and her colleagues asserted that there was an incentive problem in development – and the answer, they said, was Ownership. If you are a participant, they argued, you take responsibility for your contribution, you put in – and you exercise ownership rather than take ‘a free ride’ or seek gains for your own interests. They outlined four ‘rules’ or norms for engagement in “the game” of Ownership. See Ostrom, E., C. Gibson, S. Shivakumar and K. Andersson. 2002. *Aid, Incentives and Sustainability: An Institutional Analysis of Development Cooperation - Main Report December 2001 [Final]*. The change theory underlying the idea of Ownership proposed by Ostrom *et al* is elaborated further in Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership Unpacking the Policy Logic.

¹¹³ Burnside, C. and D. Dollar. 2000. Aid, Policies and Growth. *The American Economic Review* 90(4):847-68; Dollar D. and L. Pritchett. 1998. Assessing Aid: What Works, What Doesn't and Why? World Bank Policy Research Report

¹¹⁴ See the UNGA Resolution on the Renewal of the Dialogue on Strengthening International Economic Cooperation for Development through Partnership, in January 1999. In April 1999, the UN reform programme established the guidelines for the UN Development Assistance Framework [UNDAF] as a means for a coherent approach to common assessments of development needs in countries. OECD-DAC. February 2000. Cited in *On Common Ground: Converging Views on Development and Development Cooperation at the Turn of the Century*.

countries, including the Pacific SIDS, the subjects [or objects?] of the multilateral agencies common policy position.¹¹⁵ I turned to the UN conferences which specifically addressed these countries: the global meetings led by the UN on development, trade, small island states and environment.

5.3 Sounding a Pacific Voice: The Global Arena

As indicated at the beginning of this Chapter, there were several strands of discourse contributing to the conversation on the idea of Ownership which were occurring in parallel across global fora between 1960 and the turn of the century. The UNGA's debates on development were the space where these discourses converged, and my examination of the resulting resolutions indicate contestation as donor and recipient countries sought to negotiate consensus on the rationale for development and its implications for their relations. In contrast, the smaller island states and countries experienced the Earth summits and International conferences on SIDS as more receptive to their positions: in these fora, the Pacific-SIDS were far more vocal. As the SAMOA Pathway indicates, the Pacific's SIDS have become increasingly dominant in the discourse.

5.3.1 *The UN Development Decades*

When the representatives of the Pacific and other "developing" states arrived at the UNGA, they entered a contested space. Here, where every member vote carries equal weight

¹¹⁵ The SIDS entail 38 member countries of the UN – including 12 Pacific member countries - together with another 20 non-UN, or associate members of regional commissions, including seven island countries located in the Pacific. See List of Small Islands Developing States, UN Webpage: Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform.

irrespective of the size of the country, the donors and aid receiving countries were compelled to exercise diplomacy - but it was a diplomacy which advocated differing rationales for effective development.

Participants didn't contest sovereignty or the right of a country to determine its own development. They agreed that partnerships between donors and aid receiving countries were necessary. But they argued from different starting points in the debate. For the developing countries - including the Pacific SIDS which shared histories of colonial exploitation and the contemporary experience of disadvantage and vulnerability - the starting point for effective development lay with acknowledgement of equity and equality in relations between donors and aid receiving countries, not in questions of Ownership. It was a narrative that was more forthright in demanding equity and equality as the starting point for effective development through partnership as equals based on respect, trust, fairness and participation. While this narrative acknowledged that aid and technical expertise were necessary in the short term, its proponents asserted their greater interest in ensuring opportunities for equal participation in a fair and equitable global economy to achieve a better quality of life for all. Between 1960 and 2000, the UNGA passed a resolution on Development every decade, assigned consecutively as the 1st, 2nd 3rd and 4th International Decade of Development, culminating in the Millennium Summit in 2000.¹¹⁶ There was no Pacific island presence when the resolution on the 1st international decade of development was passed in 1960, although Australia and New Zealand were present. Fiji was the solitary Pacific SIDS

¹¹⁶ The United Nations Millennium Declaration was agreed at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, New York, 6-8 September 2000. UNGA. 6-8/9/2000. The United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Summit, Resolution 55/2 New York: UN.

participating in the 1970 resolution. By 2000, a total of twelve Pacific states had joined the UN.¹¹⁷ While the UN resolutions do not record which states were present during the debates over the various resolutions on each Development Decade, Australia, New Zealand and eleven Pacific states endorsed the Millennium Declaration.¹¹⁸

Each UN resolution supporting the consecutive Decades for International Development asserted that all countries were responsible for their own development. Each affirmed the need for more effective systems of international cooperation, whereby “prevailing disparities may be banished and prosperity secured for all.”¹¹⁹

The 1961 Declaration, reaffirming Marshall’s earlier rationale for development, emphasised mutual benefits of economic interdependence for all nations. The Declaration asked all countries to “intensify their efforts” to increase “self-sustaining” economic growth by pursuing policies which removed unfair barriers to trade: to open up markets for less developed countries at fairer, stable prices; and to enable a more “equitable share of earnings” for developing countries from the exploitation of their own natural resources.¹²⁰

To deliver these commitments, the resolution asked the UN agencies to provide technical assistance to aid receiving countries with drafting “well-conceived and integrated country plans”; training in public administration; support to access the international institutions and

¹¹⁷ See Appendix 5.2 Pacific Membership of Regional and Global Entities.

¹¹⁸ Fiji was not present at the meeting.

¹¹⁹ UNGA. 24/10/1970. International Development Strategy for the 2nd UN Development Decade (1971-1980) Resolution No. 2626 (XXV) Adopted on the Reports of the Second Committee, 25th Session 1883rd Plenary meeting A/RES/2626(XXV) (A./8124 & Add.1) para 6-7.

¹²⁰ UNGA. 19/12/1961. United Nations Development Decade: A Programme for International Economic Cooperation (I), 16th Session 1084th Plenary Meeting, 19 December 1961, Resolutions adopted on the Reports by the Second Committee, Resolution 1710(XVI).

their “instrumentalities”; research to “exploit scientific and technological advances”; and collection of “statistical and other information” to measure progress.¹²¹

A companion resolution expressed hope “that the flow of international assistance and capital should be increased substantially so as to reach as soon as possible approximately 1% of the combined national incomes of the economically advanced countries”.¹²²

By 1980, four newly-independent Pacific SIDS had joined the UN.¹²³ In 1970 and 1980, the resolutions on development were robust: each framed the relationship between donor-countries and the newly-independent developing countries within the historical legacy of colonisation, racism and interdependence, demanding equity, the recognition of sovereignty and an end to apartheid.¹²⁴ The G77 had emerged as a significant negotiating bloc and developing countries were asserting their position.¹²⁵ The tone of negotiations shifted, with a stronger assertion of inequity experienced by developing countries: international cooperation was affirmed as the means through which to address “prevailing disparities” and secure global prosperity; but the “ultimate objective of development” was to remove “undue privileges,

¹²¹ UNGA. 19/12/1961. United Nations Development Decade: A Programme for International Economic Cooperation (I), 16th Session 1084th Plenary Meeting, 19 December 1961, Resolutions adopted on the Reports by the Second Committee, Resolution 1710(XVI).

¹²² UNGA Resolution 1522 [XV] 15 December 1960, cited in the OECD-DAC History of the Churches 1%, DCD/DAC (99)28; UNGA. 1961. Reaffirmation of the General Assembly Resolution 1522 (XV) on the accelerated flow of capital and technical assistance to the developing countries, 16th Session, 1084th Plenary Meeting, Resolutions adopted on the reports of the Second Committee, Resolution 1711 (XVI).

¹²³ See Appendix 5.2 Pacific Membership of Regional and Global Entities.

¹²⁴ The ideas which framed the conversation began with aims for self-sustaining growth for economically less developed countries [1961]; a more just and rational world economic and social order, and promotion of equal political economic social and cultural rights for all [1970] acknowledgement of widening inequities and imbalances in relations, calls for a more equitable distribution of wealth and income [1980] full respect for independence and sovereignty, non-interference in affairs of another [1980] featured and self-determination in the Millennium Declaration.

¹²⁵ As shown by the Charter of Algiers, produced by the 1st Ministerial meeting of the G77 at Algiers in 1967. UNCTAD. 1968 Proceedings of the UN Conference on Trade and Development, 2nd Session 1st Feb-29 March 1968, Vol 1 Report and Annexes: 431.

extremes of wealth and social injustices.”¹²⁶

The answer proposed was two-fold, requiring concessions from both donor and developing countries. The resolution demanded more effort from developing countries to enact ‘appropriate’ domestic policies and institutions – defined by their national plans, priorities and targets - to ensure the fair distribution of resources within countries. In return, it sought more effort from international agencies and donor-countries to address systemic issues in the global economy: the removal of unfair trade practices; equitable participation in the institutions of the global economy and their related decision-making; access to science and technology; and predictable and reliable aid flows, including honouring the commitment to meet the 0.7% GNI target in Official Development Assistance [ODA].¹²⁷ For the first time, the Declaration acknowledged the “special cases” of the SIDS.

The 1990 Declaration on the International Decade of Development reflected another shift in tone. The UNGA reiterated the disappointments expressed a decade earlier, expressing even more frustration at the slow pace of change experienced during the ‘lost’ decade of the 1980s, and proposed an “acceleration” in development as the answer. The resolution was more ambivalent about shared responsibilities. Unlike previous resolutions, the 1990 Declaration did not acknowledge the impact of past exploitation, colonization and racism, or of unfair trade practices and access to decision-making in the global economy, on development

¹²⁶ UNGA. 24/10/1970. International Development Strategy for the 2nd UN Development Decade (1971-1980) Resolution No. 2626 (XXV) Adopted on the Reports of the Second Committee, 25th Session 1883rd Plenary meeting A/RES/2626(XXV) (A./8124 & Add.1) (6-7).

¹²⁷ UNGA. 24/10/1970. International Development Strategy for the 2nd UN Development Decade (1971-1980) Resolution No. 2626 (XXV) Adopted on the Reports of the Second Committee, 25th Session 1883rd Plenary meeting A/RES/2626(XXV) (A./8124 & Add.1).

progress. While it asserted the “great obligations” which lay with industrialised countries and international organisations to provide technical and financial assistance as “partners in international cooperation”,¹²⁸ it also observed that the “essence of the development problem” was that “developing countries” consumed more than they saved and they therefore required external resources to raise investment to generate economic growth.¹²⁹ Yet, it emphasised partnerships and called on “all countries” to acknowledge the principles of shared responsibility and strengthened partnership agreed at the 1990 Conference of Least Development Countries [LDC].¹³⁰

The Declaration asserted the need to balance accelerated economic growth with equitable distribution of the benefits of development while protecting the environment.¹³¹ There were [again] calls from developing countries for better access to science and technology and the removal of discriminatory trade practices - and corresponding calls for developing countries to improve access to services, emphasizing the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable. For the first time, there were calls to improve the quality of aid. Significantly [for the High Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness to emerge later], the Declaration raised concerns about the conditions attached to aid: “...the conditionality associated with the use of resources should be realistic and in accordance with the need to ensure effective utilization by recipient countries.”¹³² Again, “special attention” was called for in relation to the least developed and

¹²⁸ UNGA. 21/12/1990. International Development Strategy for the 4th UN Development Decade, Resolution 45/199 adopted on the Reports of the Second Committee. 45th Session, 71st Plenary meeting Annex: 126 para 16.

¹²⁹ UNGA. 21/12/1990. International Development Strategy for the 4th UN Development Decade, Resolution 45/199 adopted on the Reports of the Second Committee. 45th Session, 71st Plenary meeting Annex: 126 para 34.

¹³⁰ UNGA. 21/12/1990. International Development Strategy for the 4th UN Development Decade, Resolution 45/199 adopted on the Reports of the Second Committee. 45th Session, 71st Plenary meeting, Annex: 128, para 44.

¹³¹ Pre-empting the Rio Conference on the Environment two years later, in 1992.

¹³² UNGA. 21/12/1990. International Development Strategy for the 4th UN Development Decade, Resolution 45/199 adopted on the Reports of the Second Committee. 45th Session, 71st Plenary meeting Annex: 128 para. 44.

island countries.¹³³

In contrast, the Millennium Declaration signalled a transition: it was a very different kind of text. It suggested a shift in the conversation. Built on the International Development Goals proposed by the OECD in 1996¹³⁴ and supported by a stronger alliance between the global institutions, the Millennium Declaration brought the argument for equity and assertions of interconnectedness in a globalized world back into the conversation. Declaring the inequitable sharing of the benefits and costs of globalization as the world's "central challenge," the Declaration asserted the "collective responsibility" to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at a global level. The Millennium Declaration defined five core values which framed international relations: freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility. Good governance at international and national levels was declared essential to achieving the objectives of the Declaration. It relied on transparent financial, monetary and trading systems: "We are committed to an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable, and non-discriminatory, multilateral trading and financial system" the Declaration asserted.¹³⁵ The Declaration reaffirmed the outcomes of the 1st international conference on SIDS, and resolved to address the special needs of SIDS through the Programme of Action agreed in Barbados in 1994¹³⁶ and its review in 1999.¹³⁷ As in previous Declarations,

¹³³ In 1990s the list of LDCs included several Pacific countries: Samoa [1971-2014], Kiribati [1986], Vanuatu [1985-2020] and Tuvalu [1986] Solomon Islands [1991-2024*] UN List of LDCs

¹³⁴ OECD's first articulated the international development goals in its shaping the 21st century policy: OECD. 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*.

¹³⁵ UNGA. 18/9/2000. Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly: Report of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, UN Millennium Summit. 55th Session Agenda Item 60(b). A/RES/55/2.

¹³⁶ The Programme of Action for the LDCs for 2001-2010 adopted by 3rd UN Conference on LDCs, Brussels, May 2001; and Global Program of Action for Sustainable Development of SIDS, Bridgetown Barbados, 1994.

¹³⁷ UNGA. 1994. Global Program of Action for Sustainable Development of SIDS, Bridgetown Barbados, 25 April -6 May 1994. Report: A/CONF.167/9.; UNGA. 2005. Report of the International meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005., United Nations New York, 2005, A/CONF.207/11.

resource mobilisation was a key challenge and the Declaration called for more generous ODA. Again, the UNGA called for debt relief and the removal of unfair trade practices and barriers.¹³⁸

5.3.2 *The Earth Summits*

While the UNGA was a contested space, the Earth Summits and the international conferences of SIDS responded to the Pacific SIDS concerns: their experience of vulnerability related to their environment and, particularly, to the risks posed by climate change; and their experience of economic disadvantage. In these fora, the developing countries – and Pacific SIDS – articulated their rationale for development openly: equity and equality were the crucial starting points for the effective partnerships necessary for development.

There were three key Conferences on Environment and Development between 1972 and 2012.¹³⁹ Fiji was the only Pacific SIDS to attend all three; but participation from the Pacific SIDS grew across the decades. Australia and New Zealand participated in all three. The second conference, in Rio in 1992, initiated the International Conferences of SIDS, the first held in Barbados two years later.¹⁴⁰

The Environment conferences, or Earth Summits as they were familiarly known, arose from growing concerns about the risks posed by environmental degradation and the related vulnerability to natural disasters, including through climate change. The summits focused on

¹³⁸ UNGA. 18/9/2000. Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly: Report of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, UN Millennium Summit. 55th Session Agenda Item 60(b). A/RES/55/2. Paras 11-20.

¹³⁹ The three conferences on the environment and development took place, in Stockholm in 1972 and Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and again in 2012.

¹⁴⁰ UNGA. October 1994. Global Conference on Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown Barbados, 25 April -6 May 1994, A/CONF.167/9 En.

the sustainability of development rather than development as economic growth. Initially, there was hesitation in straddling a balance between economic growth and sustainable development: the question was how to achieve sustainability while retaining [or, for the SIDS and developing countries, achieving] a quality standard of living. The answer, the 1972 Stockholm Conference asserted, lay in a “new attitude” in developed countries, which must be less wasteful of natural resources, change discriminatory trade practices, and ensure that developing countries did not bear the cost of remediation of the environmental damage caused by developed countries.¹⁴¹

Twenty years later, as the OECD-DAC agreed on the Principles for Aid Effectiveness, countries again gathered, this time in Rio, to reaffirm the commitments made in Stockholm. The first Rio Conference in 1992 asserted equity and equality as the premise for effective partnerships between donors and countries. Agenda 21, the political commitment underwriting the Rio Declaration, acknowledged the vulnerability of small islands to global warming and sea level rise, including the “threat of the loss of their entire national territories” as well as the prospect of increased frequency and severity of natural disasters, constituting “major set-backs to socio-economic development.”¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ See para. 44, Chap VIII Brief Summary of the General Debate, in United Nations (UN). 1973. Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment Stockholm, 5-16 June 1972, A/Conf.48/14/Rev. 1.

¹⁴² UNEP. 1993. Proceedings of the Conference on Environment and Development: Agenda 21: The Plan of Action. Resolutions Adopted by the Conference on Environment and Development, Rio De Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol.2).

The Conference sought to establish a “new and equitable global partnership through the creation of new levels of cooperation” between states and within society.¹⁴³ This global partnership demanded

...a new sense of real partnership. Traditional notions of foreign aid and of the donor-recipient syndrome are no longer an appropriate basis for north-south relations. The world community must move towards a more objective and consistent system of effective resource transfers ... to redress imbalance and ensure equity ...perhaps the most important common ground we must arrive at in Rio is the understanding that we are all in this together. No place on the planet can remain an island of affluence in a sea of misery.¹⁴⁴

The Conference released several agreements.¹⁴⁵ Amongst these, the participating countries agreed on principles to guide changes in behaviours. Significantly, indicating a shift in outlook after the hesitation 20 years earlier, observers at the Conference claimed that developing countries were insistent that environmental and development principles were equally balanced as priorities.¹⁴⁶

The Rio outcomes also noted that the, now-commonplace, policy tools and instruments - the national plans, policies and processes - were crucial to implement the agreed global consensus and political commitment. Implementation of these plans and policies was the primary responsibility of national governments; but it required international cooperation –new and

¹⁴³ UNEP. 1993. The Rio Declaration. Resolutions Adopted by the Conference on Environment and Development, Rio De Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992: A/CONF.151/26 (Vol1).

¹⁴⁴ Opening Statement by Maurice F Strong, Sec Gen UNCED, In UNEP. 1993. Proceedings of the Conference on Environment and Development: Agenda 21: The Plan of Action. Resolutions Adopted by the Conference on Environment and Development, Rio De Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol.2).

¹⁴⁵ The other agreements reached in Rio included: The Convention on Climate Change; the Convention on Biodiversity; The Forest Principles; and Agenda 21: The Plan of Action.

¹⁴⁶ Parson, E. A., P. M. Hass and M. A Levey. 1992. A Summary of Major Documents Signed at the Earth Summit and the Global Forum. *Environment* 34(4):12-15 and 34-36. The principles included: affirmation of a state's sovereign right to exploit its own resources in accordance with its own policies, without harming the environment elsewhere (principle 2); the right to development (principle 3); environmental protection as an integral part of development (principle 4) recognition of common but differentiated responsibilities (principle 7); sustainable development required reducing “unsustainable patterns of production and consumption”, and promotes “appropriate democratic polices” (principle 8); access to information and citizen participation (principle 10); the precautionary principle (principle 15); and the “polluter pays” principle, including the internationalisation of costs and the use of economic instruments (principle 16)

additional financial resources - for developing countries to support and supplement national efforts.¹⁴⁷

The second Rio Conference on Environment and Development in 2012, known colloquially as Rio+20, reaffirmed earlier commitments and led discussion on two key themes: building a green pathway to achieve sustainable development and lift people out of poverty; and improving international coordination [especially institutional frameworks] to enable sustainable development.

Rio+20 launched the push for the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs]; advocated a green economy; tentatively flagged the concept of the blue economy for those reliant on the oceans;¹⁴⁸ and established an intergovernmental process on sustainable development financing. The outcomes called for a stronger UN system, particularly the UNEP; and established a High-Level Political Forum to promote Sustainable Development. It asserted the importance of partnerships, although it did not elaborate on the discussion.

Rio+20's outcome statement re-affirmed the core principle of development: countries are responsible for their own development. It asked for stronger international cooperation, including more financial resources, capacity building and technology-transfer to developing countries. It again asked developed countries to avoid "unwarranted conditionalities" on ODA

¹⁴⁷ See Preamble, para 1.3 and para 1.4, Agenda 21, UNEP. 1993. Proceedings of the Conference on Environment and Development: Agenda 21: The Plan of Action. Resolutions Adopted by the Conference on Environment and Development, Rio De Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol.2).

¹⁴⁸ The "Blue economy" was discussed "on the floor" but did not get up in the final outcome document.

and finance.¹⁴⁹ Noting “the importance of government taking a leadership role in developing policies and strategies through an inclusive and transparent process”;¹⁵⁰ the Declaration invited the UN and multilaterals to assist “on request” through useful ‘green’ policies,¹⁵¹ technical advice and technology.¹⁵² SIDS were again acknowledged as a special case, with unique and particular vulnerabilities which increased the threat to their survival and viability.¹⁵³ They were characterised by:

...small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base and exposure to global environmental challenges and external economic shocks, including... climate change and more frequent and intense natural disasters...¹⁵⁴

The Rio+20 outcome observed that the situation for SIDS had regressed, especially in relation to debt and poverty reduction.¹⁵⁵ It recommended the 3rd International conference of SIDS in 2014 to, again, review progress on the commitments made at the previous conferences in Barbados and Mauritius.

5.3.3 The International Conferences on SIDS

Three key International Conferences on SIDS were held between 1994 and 2014. These Conferences affirmed the “special case” for the small island developing states, including the Pacific SIDS, based on their economic and environmental vulnerability.¹⁵⁶ The Barbados

¹⁴⁹ UNGA. 2012. The Future We Want: Outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Resolution 66/288 adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012, A/RES/66/288. Section 3 Green economy para. 58

¹⁵⁰ UNGA. 2012. The Future We Want: Outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Resolution 66/288 adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012, A/RES/66/288. para. 67

¹⁵¹ UNGA. 2012. The Future We Want: Outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Resolution 66/288 adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012, A/RES/66/288. para. 68

¹⁵² UNGA. 2012. The Future We Want: Outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Resolution 66/288 adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012, A/RES/66/288. para. 74

¹⁵³ UNGA. 2012. The Future We Want: Outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Resolution 66/288 adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012, A/RES/66/288. para. 178

¹⁵⁴ UNGA. 2012. The Future We Want: Outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Resolution 66/288 adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012, A/RES/66/288. para. 178

¹⁵⁵ UNGA. 2012. The Future We Want: Outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Resolution 66/288 adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012, A/RES/66/288. para. 178

¹⁵⁶ UN DESA recognises 57 SIDS across three groupings: Caribbean, Pacific, Africa Indian Ocean; in comparison, the OHRCLLS and UNESCO recognise 39 SIDS from the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans and the Caribbean Seas.

Programme of Action, the outcome of the 1st International Conference of SIDS in 1994,¹⁵⁷ laid a framework for the ensuing decades. This framework was reviewed in 1999 prior to the Millennium Summit; and again at the Mauritius SIDS Conference in 2005. It was reconfigured under the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway in 2014, the outcome of the 4th SIDS Conference and the first time such a global UN Conference was hosted by a Pacific SIDS.¹⁵⁸

The Pacific SIDS were substantively engaged in the International Conferences on SIDS. The first Conference in 1994 attracted over 52 SIDS. There were two subsequent Conferences of note, in Mauritius in 2005¹⁵⁹ and Samoa, in 2014. Nearly all states and territories from the Pacific participated - and actively engaged - at every Conference from Barbados in 1994. Pacific SIDS' participation culminated in Samoa hosting the 4th international Conference on SIDS in 2014. Similarly, the Pacific SIDS are an increasingly visible - and vocal - presence at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change [UNFCCC] meetings,¹⁶⁰ also an initiative of the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio.

At the opening Conference in 1994, the Prime Minister of Barbados laid out a moral framework for sustainable development – and genuine partnerships in relations between the

¹⁵⁷ 52 SIDS convened in Barbados in 1994, UNGA. October 1994. Global Program of Action for Sustainable Development of SIDS, Bridgetown Barbados, 25 April -6 May 1994. Report: A/CONF.167/9.

¹⁵⁸ UNGA. 14/11/2014. SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway, Resolution 69/15 Adopted by the General Assembly A/RES/69/15.

¹⁵⁹ Representation at Mauritius in 2005 from Pacific included: Australia and New Zealand, and another 14 Pacific islands states and territories: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, FS Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau and Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu; three associate members of regional commissions: French Polynesia, Guam, New Caledonia; UN agencies and intergovernmental organisations: ESCAP; OHRLS and the World Bank and ADB; the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and other regional bodies; and civil society organisations including the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre, the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific.

¹⁶⁰ For example, the High Ambition Coalition is led by the Republic of Marshall Islands; the UNFCCC was also initiated by the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, alongside the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification see UNFCCC webpage: Timeline.

industrialised global north and the developing global south that laid the ground for the ensuing Program [the Barbados Program of Action, BPoA] over the next several decades:

...sustainable development connotes change....[in] the way in which we abuse our renewable and non-renewable resources, but above all change in our value systems and in our attitudes to people who must be at the centre of our concerns...how can a caring world permit the wide disparities among states that would not be permitted within states?...it is a worrying fact that the gap between rich and poor countries is growing, but should rather be closing...a need for a new partnership and new efforts at genuine cooperation between small developing states and industrialised countries to effective sustainable development... a more morally uplifting [encounter] between north and south should be seriously embarked upon....our best hope for achieving sustainable development is through the creation of partnerships.”¹⁶¹

The Conference asserted the sovereign rights of SIDS over their natural resources and sought international cooperation and partnerships to conserve protect and restore their ecosystems.¹⁶² It affirmed that, for SIDS, the integration of protection of the environment and development was an existential necessity. It reaffirmed the “special case” of SIDS,¹⁶³ given their vulnerability to natural and environmental disasters; their limited size; and their vulnerable economies, dependent on narrow resource bases and international trade, “without the means of influencing that trade.”¹⁶⁴

The Conference affirmed the right to development¹⁶⁵ and sought cooperation to strengthen national capacity and self-reliance through supportive partnerships.¹⁶⁶ National Governments,

¹⁶¹ UNGA. October 1994. Global Conference on Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown Barbados, 25 April -6 May 1994, A/CONF. 167/9 Annex 2.

¹⁶² UNGA. October 1994. Global Conference on Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown Barbados, 25 April -6 May 1994, A/CONF. 167/9 Part 1-II.

¹⁶³ See principle 6 and chapter 17, Section G, Agenda 21, in Rio “ecologically fragile, and vulnerable and their small size limited resources geographic dispersion and isolation frame markets all place them at a disadvantage economically and prevent economies of scale.” UNEP. 1993. Proceedings of the Conference on Environment and Development: Agenda 21: The Plan of Action. Resolutions Adopted by the Conference on Environment and Development, Rio De Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol.2).

¹⁶⁴ United Nations, General Assembly October 1994 Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown Barbados, 25 April -6 May 1994, A/CONF.167/9, En.,[Part 1-IV]

¹⁶⁵ The Declaration on the Right to Development was agreed by the UNGA in 1986

¹⁶⁶ UNGA. October 1994. Global Conference on Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown Barbados, 25 April -6 May 1994, A/CONF. 167/9, Part 1-V.

the BPOA asserted, carried the primary responsibility for planning to achieve sustainable development.¹⁶⁷ But, the SIDS acknowledged, international assistance was required from the UN and others at regional and international levels to develop national plans and strategies policies and processes.¹⁶⁸

A month before the 2nd High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Paris, the SIDS reconvened in Mauritius to review progress.¹⁶⁹ Their review found that progress on implementation of the BPOA was mixed. Much of what had been achieved by the SIDS occurred in the absence of resources from the international community.¹⁷⁰ The Conference reaffirmed the vision behind the BPOA. It reiterated the “acknowledged vulnerability” and “special case” for the sustainable development of SIDS. They adopted the Mauritius Strategy for Further implementation of the Programme of Action [PoA].¹⁷¹

While the Mauritius Strategy acknowledged the sustainable development was primarily a national responsibility, it argued that, given the SIDS vulnerabilities, the Rio Principles

¹⁶⁷ UNGA. October 1994. Global Conference on Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown Barbados, 25 April -6 May 1994, A/CONF. 167/9, Annex 2, Chapter XV para 73.

¹⁶⁸ UNGA. October 1994. Global Conference on Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown Barbados, 25 April -6 May 1994, A/CONF. 167/9, Annex 2, Chapter XV para 68.

¹⁶⁹ UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11. The Mauritius Strategy recommended the introduction of multiple tools and instruments to support planning and coordination: national assessment reports, “best practice” standards, regional development banks; regulatory frameworks; knowledge; capacity; technologies; national sustainable development strategies; nationally owned poverty reduction strategies; guiding principles; national targets and indicators including against the MDGs and other international goals; policies and plans; legislative administrative and institutional structures; task forces and advisory bodies; surveillance; data collection; sharing of experience among SIDS – networks; and a SIDS unit in UN DESA.

¹⁷⁰ Opening Speech, Prime Minister of Mauritius, Paul Raymond Bereger, in UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11. Annex 2:69.

¹⁷¹ In the process, the Strategy acknowledged the Rio Principles and Agenda 21, the World Summit, and the Monterrey Consensus, and the Millennium Goals; the Paris HLFAE was yet to convene., see UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11, Annex 1 para 1-5.

[especially principle 7 on common but differentiated responsibilities] should be given a different expression for SIDS. There was, they agreed,

...a need for strengthened cooperation and partnership in support of sustainable development of small island developing States at the national, regional and international levels. Such partnership should be broad-based and ensure the involvement and participation of relevant stakeholders...¹⁷²

SIDS had used their resources while seeking to meet increasing international obligations; they were increasingly being asked to do more with less ODA, and with greater fragmentation – and correspondingly, higher administrative burdens - through more standalone projects.

In addition to concerns about the management and level of ODA, the SIDS again repeated calls to address the unfair operation of the global economy: they sought redress of unfair trade practices so they could fully participate in the global economy, arguing that “external factors [in the global economy] become critical in determining the success or failure of developing countries in their national efforts.¹⁷³ The gap between developed and developing countries “points to the need for an enabling environment [internationally] which supports international cooperation – across finance, technology transfer, debt and trade, and the full and effective participation of developing countries in global economic decision-making”¹⁷⁴ especially at the World Trade Organisation.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11. Annex 2 para 3.

¹⁷³ UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11. Annex 2 para. 15.

¹⁷⁴ UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11 Annex 2 para.8

¹⁷⁵ UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11. Annex 2 para. 68-69

The Mauritius Review reaffirmed the significance of good governance including “sound economic policies and solid democratic institutions” as the base for sustainable economic growth, poverty eradication and employment. The SIDS asked the international community to support their national goals and assist their implementation through improved financial and technical support.¹⁷⁶ The SIDS called on international organisations to avoid a “one size fits all approach” to development. Instead, the SIDS asked that the international organisations recognize their diversity and the importance of “development approaches based on real partnership and mutual respect”.¹⁷⁷ The difficulty of integrating local cultural norms and practices into governance institutional frameworks derived from colonial periods was acknowledged.¹⁷⁸ The Strategy also identified a [stronger] role for the regional organisations, noting that successful implementation depended on “effective human, institutional and technical capacity development, effective monitoring and coordination”.¹⁷⁹

But they didn’t discuss Ownership. The word Ownership did not feature in either the Earth Summits or the SIDS global fora until the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway, the consensus Outcome of the 3rd International SIDS Conference held for the first time in the Pacific in the small island developing state of Samoa in 2014. This was a decade after the HFLAE in Paris - and five years

¹⁷⁶ UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11. Annex 2 para.85-86

¹⁷⁷ UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11, Annex 2: Report of Panel Four on Addressing emerging trends and social challenges of the sustainable development of SIDS. 90:para13.

¹⁷⁸ UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11 Annex 2: Report of Panel Four on Addressing emerging trends and social challenges of the sustainable development of SIDS, 88:para 5.

¹⁷⁹ UNGA. 2005. Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louise, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005. A/CONF.207/11 Annex 2, para 83.

after the Forum Leaders agreed to the Forum Compact in Cairns. But the idea of Ownership in Samoa was subordinate to the Conference's theme of "genuine and durable partnerships" between donors and countries. To understand how Ownership emerged in tandem with genuine and durable partnerships in the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway, I examine the evolution of the Pacific's regional engagement with aid effectiveness - and the idea of Ownership across the region.

5.3.4 The High-Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness and Paris: Consensus on Ownership

After the Millennium Summit, there was a shift in who convened the meetings - and who was invited into the conversation. The OECD and the Bank led a series of High-Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness that extended the conversation beyond the donor members of the OECD and the research and policy actors within the Bank. The developing countries including the Pacific SIDS were now invited into the policy deliberations. The UN, now collaborating with the OECD and the Bank, supported the HLFAE, and convened parallel fora on Financing for Development.

Initially, Pacific participation in the HFLAE [and the accompanying FfD fora] was limited. Those countries not attending relied on the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat [PIFS] to represent their interests and communicate the key message on their return to the Pacific. They became progressively more involved. Pacific spokespeople were increasingly vocal at Accra. But it was not until I reviewed the records of the Busan Outcome in 2011, the 4th HLFAE, that I identified a substantial and vocal Pacific presence; not only was there a substantial Pacific representation, but the Pacific voice - reporting at plenaries, or from the floor - was strong. The PIFS was represented on the Busan Steering Committee, which determined the agenda

for the forum. Representatives from five Pacific SIDS and the PIFS spoke across the various plenaries on the Pacific states' experiences in aid effectiveness and development.¹⁸⁰

5.4 Conclusion

The OECD claimed consensus in Paris. With “unprecedented” consensus in Paris, the idea of Ownership as the pathway to effective partnerships for effective development became the dominant paradigm. The “unprecedented” consensus in Paris transformed the idea of Ownership into a global idea which would shape future relations between donors and countries – and create a pathway to effective partnerships and better development outcomes.

However, my review of the global policy debates suggests that the apparent consensus masked a contestation between competing pathways to development: on one hand, the multilateral agencies and donors, led by the OECD and the World Bank, promoted Ownership as the precursor to the effective partnerships necessary for effective development. On the other, the developing countries, including the Pacific SIDS, asserted claims for equity and

¹⁸⁰ Six Pacific countries [Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu] and the PIFS were engaged in consultations prior to the Busan forum. At least five countries and two regional organisations from the Pacific were represented at the Busan Forum. The then-Chair of PIANGO, the Pacific Association for NGOs, convened a forum on CSO development effectiveness “we have valued our inclusion as equals at the HLF negotiating table” ; Samoa spoke on its good practice initiatives, including the regional dialogue on climate finance and development effectiveness [p138]; the Cook Islands spoke on the value of knowledge sharing – and especially the Forum Compact as a tool for collaboration to strengthen public service delivery; PIFS’ Secretary General reaffirmed the value of the Forum Compact “regionally-led and country-driven” as a regional platform beyond aid effectiveness for development effectiveness, identifying the Compact as a vehicle guiding implementation post-Busan; the Solomon Islands noted that south-south cooperation between the Pacific and Caribbean was strong on climate change adaptation; five Pacific countries [Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea Tuvalu] and New Zealand formed a panel to discuss the Aid Initiative, asserting the SIDS offered opportunities as well as challenges; Samoa, Cook Islands and Solomon Islands were on a panel which reaffirmed the significance of mutual accountability in development partnerships and argued for the significance of regional organisations such as PIFS who can promote policy coherence and accountability by aligning global expectations with country realities. Post-Busan, priority should be given to domestic accountability, they argued, rather than accountability to donors, by assigning prominence to country level systems practices and institutions. GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011: 77;145;152;186;189.

equality as the basis for the effective partnerships necessary for effective development. These two assertions reflected competing rationales for – and assumptions about – aid’s contribution to development. Both developed and developing countries agreed on the need to work in partnership to achieve effective development. But they diverged on the premise on which the partnership was founded.

The donor-led argument for Ownership as the pathway to effective development emerged through the HLFAE and the related UN-led FfD. Ownership, promoted primarily by the World Bank and OECD and their powerful member-states, the bilateral donors,¹⁸¹ emerged as a semaphore for calls for efficiency and effectiveness in the way aid resources are used by aid receiving countries to generate economic growth – and development. The proposition for Ownership was constructed as a causal and instrumental transaction, an incentive or ‘reward’ for good behaviour, signified by demonstrations of appropriate economic and social policies and institutions.

In contrast, the developing countries’ argument for partnerships for development premised on equity and equality emerged through the UNGA Declarations on Development – through claims which were elaborated through the Earth Summits and the SIDS conferences, where the Pacific SIDS voice was strong. The proposition for development as equity and equality, was framed as a relational construct. It placed partnerships as an outcome of equity, signifying

¹⁸¹ In 2005, the OECD represented 30 members: Austria Belgium Canada Denmark Finland France Germany Greece Iceland Ireland Italy Japan Luxembourg Netherland Norway Portugal Spain Sweden Switzerland Turkey, United Kingdom United States Australia New Zealand Czech Republic Hungary Korea Mexico Poland Slovak republic – primarily “global north” states although Mexico is seen as “global south”. Note: The DAC had only 23 members. In 2005, the World Bank represented 184 members; including Australia and New Zealand; and the following 10 Pacific island countries: Fiji, Samoa, PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tonga and Kiribati; Marshalls, FS Micronesia and Palau. Tuvalu and Nauru joined the WB in 2010 and 2016 respectively. OECD Website Members

relations as equals based on reparation, compensation and respect, rather than as an incentive or reward for good behaviour and sound policies and institutions.

The argument for equity and equality reflected the developing countries – including Pacific SIDS - ongoing historical experience of colonisation and their contemporary experience of vulnerability and disadvantage. Calls for equity and equality emerged, through the global fora on SIDS, the Earth Summits and the Development Decades, as a catchphrase for acknowledgement of the historical legacy of colonial exploitation [of raw materials, human labour or land], economic constraints [particularly the ongoing consequences of unequal access to science and technology, or global economic decision-making processes, and unfair trade practices] and environmental vulnerability through climate change. Economic constraints and environmental vulnerability were particularly relevant for the Pacific SIDS, given the implications of their scale, geography, population growth, limited resources and frequency of natural disasters for their economies and sustainability.¹⁸² For the Pacific SIDS, the pathway to development represented a relational construct built on a moral framework of collective action to manage shared resources, particularly the balance between human activity, globalisation and the environment, responsibly.

The meeting in Paris was significant for the Pacific SIDS: it was an opportunity for moving relations with donors forward. The HLFAE offered reassurance: it affirmed the central place

¹⁸² See, for example: Toatu, T. 2001. Unravelling the 'Pacific Paradox' – the case of Kiribati, *Pacific Economic Bulletin*, 16(1)May; Duncan, R. and S. Pollard. 2002. A Framework for Establishing Priorities in a Country Poverty Reduction Strategy; Pollard, S. 22/5/2012. Approaches to Development A Framework for the Pacific, DevPolicy Blog. Duncan, R. 2016. Sources of Growth Spurts in Pacific Island Economies. *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies* 3(2):351-365; UNDRR The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

of national governments in determining their development priorities; it offered familiar policy instruments and tools through which to signify those priorities [and to trigger ODA]. It promised more ODA, even though countries were increasingly reliant on aid.¹⁸³

But it wasn't a place for the Pacific SIDS [or other "developing" countries] to resolve the differences which underlay the competing rationales for the most effective pathway to development: the claims, on one hand, of the need to address corruption and incapacity, the absence of political will and commitment; versus the calls for reparation and compensation to overcome historical exploitation and contemporary disadvantage. The HLFAE did not address the issues raised by the SIDS at other global fora: the calls for systemic transformation to address claims of unfair trade and inequitable access to decision-making in the global financial institutions that led the global economy.

The OECD may have claimed a global consensus in Paris. But I suggest that it was a consensus formed in acknowledgement of the asymmetries of power by the Pacific SIDS, rather than a true meeting of minds. The consensus, I argue, was, as far as the Pacific SIDS were concerned, a strategic compromise. The question was: would the differences between donors and the Pacific SIDS over the appropriate starting point for the pathway to development - and how an effective partnership could or should be constructed - influence how the global idea of Ownership was implemented in the Pacific? Or would the global idea of Ownership – and all

¹⁸³ Dornan, M. and J. Pryke. September 2017. Foreign Aid to the Pacific: Trends and Developments in the Twenty-First Century: Foreign Aid to the Pacific. *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* 4(3):386–404.

it entailed, given the reliance on aid in the Pacific - change the position previously promoted by the Pacific SIDS?

While only four Pacific countries and the Forum Secretariat were represented at the 2nd HLFAE in Paris, by the time of the 4th HLFAE in Busan in 2011, Pacific SIDS were engaged. While the number of countries represented had only increased to five, their participation and leadership was prominent.¹⁸⁴ The Executive Director of the leading civil society network in the Pacific, PIANGO, convened a civil society forum. Representatives from the Pacific countries led several panel discussions. The Pacific was represented on the Busan steering Committee This was two years after the Forum Compact was endorsed by Pacific leaders in Cairns. Similarly, while Ownership had not been on the agenda in any of the various Earth Summits or the early SIDS conferences, Ownership emerged at the International Conference on SIDS hosted by Samoa in 2014, five years after the Forum Compact was agreed. Had the Forum Compact, with its foundations in the Paris principles, persuaded the Pacific to reframe its rationale for effective partnerships for development? Addressing this question was part of the next step in my research.

Having traced the global origins of the idea of Ownership, I turn next to examine how the idea of Ownership arrived in the Pacific. I examined the arrival of Ownership through the lens of the region's key political organisation, the Pacific Islands Forum [the Forum], whose leaders formally welcomed the principle of Ownership to the region when they endorsed the Forum

¹⁸⁴ While there may have been more Pacific countries represented, only five were identified in the proceedings. GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011. See also footnote 180.

Compact in Cairns in 2009. In light of the story of Ownership recounted in this Chapter, I begin my investigations, not with the endorsement of the Forum Compact in Cairns, but with the emergence of the regional voice through the Forum's predecessor, the South Pacific Forum, in 1971, to clarify whether the contests in the global debates were mirrored in the region – in order to then examine the implementation of the global idea of Ownership by the countries.

Chapter 6 From Paris to the Pacific: Ownership in the region

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4, my examination of the origins of Ownership in the global policy debates between donors and the “developing” countries, including the Pacific small island states, revealed the compromise which lay beneath the OECD’s claims of a global consensus in Paris. In this Chapter, I examine how the global idea of Ownership travelled from Paris to the Pacific to find out what that compromise meant for the region.

The global idea of Ownership was reaffirmed by the Pacific’s premier political organisation, the Pacific Islands Forum, when the Pacific leaders endorsed the Forum Compact in Cairns in 2009.¹ The principles agreed in Paris became the foundation, the “international best practice,” which would guide implementation of the Forum Compact.² The Forum assigned its Secretariat responsibility for overseeing implementation across the region. The key donors in the region, Australia and New Zealand, [who were also members of the Forum] gave additional ODA to the Secretariat and other agencies to facilitate the Compact’s implementation.³

Given the Secretariat’s leading role in oversight of the Forum Compact, I trace the evolution of the Pacific region’s engagement with global aid and development policy and practice

¹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 2009, Forum Communique 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns, Australia, Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific August 2009

² The Leaders agreed the new development compact would be based on six principles, including: “...to draw on international best-practice as expressed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action.” Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 2009, Forum Communique 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns, Australia, Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific August 2009

³ Australia and New Zealand contributed additional ODA to the Forum Secretariat and other multilateral agencies to support implementation of the Compact across the region.

through the lens of the Pacific Islands Forum [and its predecessor, the South Pacific Forum], and the work led by its Secretariat.⁴ Because I was especially interested in tracing the evolution in how aid – and the eventual relation with the idea of Ownership - was framed by Forum, I drew on the Forum archives intensively.⁵

The South Pacific Forum emerged on the back of the cooperation and trust established by Tonga, Fiji and Samoa in their common pursuit of an equitable market for their produce. Through their collaboration as the Pacific Islands Producers Association [PIPA], the newly independent states advocated with New Zealand for a common price for their bananas – at some sacrifice to Samoa, which, as a former colony, had been offered a preferential deal by New Zealand.⁶ The combined negotiations delivered a fair deal for all three countries with New Zealand.⁷ This was one of the first successes of regional economic cooperation as independent states.⁸

Similarly, when the metropole powers refused to permit discussion of “politics” at the South

⁴ The South Pacific Forum was established in 1971; it was supported, from 1973, by a Secretariat, the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation [SPEC]; the SPEC was later renamed the South Pacific Forum Secretariat in 1988; and then, when the SPF became the Pacific Islands Forum [PIF] in 1999 to better reflect the inclusion of its northern neighbours – and the Bureau was renamed the PIF Secretariat in 2000. See Fry, G. 2019. *Framing the Islands: Power and Diplomatic Agency in Pacific Regionalism*. Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*.

⁵ The Forum archives included, in particular, the records of the PICS Partners Meetings, the key annual meeting of donors’ representatives and countries’ senior government officers from across the region. The PICS Partners Meeting was instituted in 1991 and was discontinued in 2014. Note, however, that Fry observes frequently that the major debates on trade or fishing or the university were not always documented in the Forum minutes.

⁶ Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 170; Fry observes that PIPA was later joined by Cook Islands, Niue, and the Gilbert and Ellis Islands. Fry, G. 1981. Regionalism and the Politics of the South Pacific. *Pacific Affairs*, 54(3:Autumn):462-463

⁷ Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 170-171; Mara notes that the Pacific Producers Association later became the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation and, later, following the change of the South Pacific Forum to the Pacific Islands Forum in 1999, it became the Forum Secretariat

⁸ Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*; and also: Fry, G. 1981. Regionalism and the Politics of the South Pacific. *Pacific Affairs*, 54(3:Autumn):462-463.

Pacific Conferences,⁹ several Pacific countries determined to create an alternative forum where politics could be discussed. In 1971, the independent states of Fiji and Samoa, with the self-governing Cook Islands, took the initiative to create a Pacific-led forum in which social, economic and political issues of relevance to the Pacific could be addressed.¹⁰ Other Pacific countries soon joined them; as did, on invitation, Australia and New Zealand. The resultant South Pacific Forum led negotiations on aid in the region with donors. They commissioned the region's first aid review in 1976¹¹ and convened a major conference of all countries and donors and technical agencies from across the region, and further afield, in 1980.¹² In 1989, the Leaders established a formal process for these negotiations, the Post-Forum Dialogue.¹³ In 1990, the World Bank's first economic review of the region found that the region was the highest recipient of aid per capita in the world – and the worst economic performer.¹⁴ As a result, the Forum's Secretariat established an annual regional conference, the PICS-Partners Meetings in 1991.¹⁵ This annual meeting offered the key senior policy advisors from region's major donors and the Pacific Forum countries a forum in which to negotiate common arrangements on aid policy and practice. The annual PICS-Partners Meetings continued until 2014.

My key purpose in tracing the evolution of aid policy in the region through the lens of the

⁹ The trigger was a refusal to discuss the nuclear tests which France was undertaking across various sites in the French Pacific between 1960- 1996 [as other, such as the British had done at Maralinga between 1952-1963 and the USA had done in the Marshalls between 1946-1963]; the first visible discontent was shown at the South Pacific Conference in Pago Pago, when the Pacific leaders argued for a greater say in determining the Conference program; having believed they had won the argument, at the next Conference in Lae in 1965 they were disappointed to find they had little say over the agenda; as a result, Mara, followed by several others, walked out of the Lae conference. Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*.170

¹⁰ Fry, G. 1981. Regionalism and the Politics of the South Pacific. *Pacific Affairs*, 54(3:Autumn).

¹¹ Finau, P. P., C. Craw, L.R. Morgan, R.G. Crocombe, M. Qionibaravi, A.V. Hughes and R.G. Spratt. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11.

¹² Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*.

¹³ Pacific Forum Secretariat

¹⁴ World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s Vol.1: Regional Overview*.

¹⁵ The Forum Secretariat replaced the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation [established 1973] in 2000, when the South Pacific Forum formally became the Pacific Islands Forum.

Forum and its Secretariat was to construct a picture of the historical context of aid relations – and ensuing aid policy and practice - in the Pacific in order to understand why the Leaders endorsed the global idea of Ownership in Cairns in 2009. I hoped an understanding of the regional context might help explain why the Pacific SIDs had accepted the global idea of Ownership when previously, in global fora outside the HLFAE, they had aligned with the argument for equity and equality as the precursors to effective partnerships for development. Second, in accord with the conceptual framework laid out in Chapters 2 and 3, I was seeking to identify the policy “broker” for the idea of Ownership: that point of authority whose expertise and knowledge acted to facilitate the shift in power [as argued by Stone and Freeman] necessary for the successful translation of policy from one setting, such as Paris, to another, the Pacific countries. The Forum Secretariat seemed a likely candidate.

My starting point was the emergence of the independent Pacific states from their former status as colonised territories.

6.2 Aid in the Shadow of Colonisation:

Contemporary aid to most Pacific countries is a legacy of their history of colonisation.¹⁶ As Thomas observes, exchange has been at the heart of the “uneven entanglement of global and local power relations on colonial peripheries”¹⁷ across the Pacific since Magellan first named

¹⁶ See Ferns, who draws from Hodge and Cooper, Dimier and Gorman to outline the connections between European colonial development policies and post-war foreign aid. Cooper, Ferns notes, offers evidence that the link between post-war attempts to promote development in “underdeveloped” worlds grew out of “modernising policies developed in colonial bureaucracies”. While Dimier and Gorman “reveal the continuities in personnel and policies between European colonial practices and the international development framework” Ferns, N. 2020. Colonialism as Foreign Aid: Australia Developmental Policy in Papua New Guinea, 1945-75. *Australian Historical Studies*, 51(4):462.

¹⁷ Thomas, N. 1991. *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture and Colonialism in the Pacific*, (Acknowledgements).

the oceans “Pacific” in the 16th century.¹⁸ Even as the colonial powers ceded independence to their Pacific territories, aid was an object in the exchange relations between the emerging states and their former colonial authorities.¹⁹ Aid is, simultaneously, an exchange which acts both to constitute and to reinforce social relations.²⁰ To understand the historical forces which have shaped the exchange relations represented by aid is to understand its influence on contemporary relations. As Thomas explains:

The properties of exchange relations derive from broader cultural structures and premises, from inequalities and asymmetries in rights over people, social groups and their products – and also from the histories which engender cultural and political transformations of notions and relations. Exchange thus mediates conditions and relations that are not, or not wholly constituted within the immediate frame of exchange. If actions and events are to be understood politically, they need to be situated historically: many of the factors which make a particular exchange relation distinctive are not visible in its enactment but must be tracked through the longer-term dynamics of the social situation.²¹

To gain an appreciation of how the history of colonisation exercised influence over contemporary relations between the region’s leading donors and the Pacific Forum countries, I turned, following Thomas’ recommendation, to review relations at the point where coloniser and colonised became donor and aid-recipient: the period immediately before and after independence for the countries – the new states and self-governing territories - which formed the South Pacific Forum. I began by identifying how the colonial powers divided the Pacific under their various spheres of influence through the 20th century - and the emergence of

¹⁸ Ferdinand Magellan named the Pacific Ocean in 1520 on his voyage to find the spice islands [the Maluku islands in Indonesia]; islanders from the region used the name Moananuiakea [Hawaiian islands] or Te Moana Nui A Kiwa [Maori] to describe the Pacific oceans.

¹⁹ For example, see the Colonial Development Grants discussed in the Government of Kiribati National Development Plans for 1970 and 1975. Most of the British colonies had received aid from the British government the aid program under the legislative authority of the Colonial Development Act of 1929, varied by several further pieces of legislation up until the 1940s. Overseas Development Institute. 1964. *British Aid – 5 Colonial Development: A factual survey of the origin and history of British aid to developing countries*.

²⁰ See the discussion put forward by Hattori, in Chapter 3 A Conceptual Framework: Understanding Policy Change.

²¹ Earlier, Thomas observes, “Exchange relations seem to be the substance of social life. Inequality is often expressed through unfairness in distribution or contempt in giving, just as egalitarianism is manifested in careful reciprocity and parity... exchange is always, in the first instance, a political process, one in which wider relationships are expressed and negotiated in personal encounters...” Thomas, N. 1991. *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture and Colonialism in the Pacific*, 7-9.

independent Pacific states after the 1960 UN resolution outlining the framework to grant independence to colonial countries and peoples.²²

6.2.1 From colonisation to independence: a brief history of entanglement

The Colonisers – and future donors

At the turn of the 20th century, the imperial colonial powers of Germany, Britain and France shared influence across the region. The end of World War Two brought change: it brought the aftermath of the disruption and damage generated by war itself; and it signified a shift in the attitudes and expectations of the people living in the region.²³ The peoples of the Pacific islands had experienced the ravages of war. They had also experienced an equality – and the benefits of access to technology and education – in their wartime relations with the Japanese and American forces, particularly the African Americans.²⁴ These changes contributed to a re-calibration of the political status of the colonial powers and the territories they colonised.

The allies emerged victorious from World War 2 – and several key members of the alliance, France, Britain and the USA, became the most significant colonising powers in the Pacific. These three countries were also founding members of the United Nations.²⁵ In alignment with

²² In 1960 the UNGA Resolution 1514(XV) adopted *the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*; in 1961 UNGA resolution 1654 (XVI) established the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence of Colonial Countries and Peoples. [also known as the Special Committee on De-colonisation or C-24] UN Decolonization.

²³ Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 127.

²⁴ Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 126-127.

²⁵ There were 51 founding members of the United Nations which was established by Charter of the UN and the Status of the International Court of Justice in 1945. The UN replaced the previous trust mandates of the league of nations with a new system of trusteeship. Although the current UN website observes that the main goal was to move “trust territories” towards self-government or independence Banivanua challenges that claim: she offers the interpretation that the UN didn’t contemplate widespread decolonisation, but rather, saw the trusteeship arrangements as a system for management of the colonies. Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 123.

the new UN Charter affirmed in San Francisco in 1945, these three colonial powers adopted the revamped UN “International Trusteeship System” in their administration of their colonies across the Pacific.²⁶ Britain assumed authority over most of the territories under German control before the Treaty of Versailles. This meant that Britain, or their former dominions, Australia and New Zealand, acting on their behalf as trustees under various UN mandates, were in positions of authority over 11 Pacific countries.²⁷ France retained authority in its overseas territories of Vanuatu [shared with Britain], as well as New Caledonia, French Polynesia, and Wallis and Futuna.²⁸ The USA gained influence in the north, exercising a mandate on behalf of the UN across the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands [over the islands formerly under Japan’s authority between the wars], in addition to their existing authority over the territories of Guam and American Samoa.

Contrary to the expectations of some,²⁹ the movement for decolonisation gained ascendancy in the UN. Independence movements emerged across the former colonial territories: and colonies across the Indian sub-continent, Latin America and Africa were granted [or

²⁶ The UN International Trusteeship system was intended to “promote the advancement of the inhabitants of trust territories and their progressive development towards self-government or independence. The system was administered by the Trusteeship Council; the Council suspended operations in November 1994, a month after Palau, the last remaining UN trust territory, assumed independence. UN Trustee Council.

²⁷ Australia was designated as their delegated trustee over Papua New Guinea and Nauru under various League of Nations mandates – and continued as trustee administrator under the UN Charter Trusteeship Arrangements; similarly, New Zealand was delegated as trustee over Samoa first under the League of Nations arrangements, then under the UN Charter Trusteeship arrangements. Papua was an Australian territory from 1906. The Cook Islands and Niue associated with New Zealand.

²⁸ Germany was forced to relinquish all its colonies after World War 1. Japan, a British ally in World War I, assumed League of Nations mandates over what is now the Northern Marianas, Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia [FSM] and the Marshall Islands between the wars. In the last years of World War 2, Japan was driven from these countries. The UN revoked the earlier mandate, assigning trusteeship to the USA in what became the UN Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. At the same time the USA administered territories in Guam and American Samoa. France continues to exercise ongoing claims and administrative control over New Caledonia and French Polynesia [and islands of Wallis and Futuna].

²⁹ Banivanua Mar challenges that claim; she offers the interpretation that the UN didn’t contemplate widespread decolonisation, but rather, saw the trusteeship arrangements as a system for management of the colonies, Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 123.

demand[ed] independence. In 1960, the UNGA passed a resolution to grant independence to the colonies – and established the decolonisation committee.³⁰ Even Britain acknowledged the change in the air. The British Prime Minister, Harold MacMillan, famously, if somewhat belatedly, declared, the “wind of change” alongside “the growth of national consciousness,” was blowing.³¹ Those winds blew across the ex-dominions of Australia and New Zealand and across to the Pacific. But the decolonisation movement across the Pacific was neither linear nor uniform. Despite the depth of anti-colonial sentiment underlying the various movements across the Pacific, the UN’s *1960 Declaration on Independence* represented an ambiguous framework for decolonisation. This ambiguity influenced both who gained independence in the Pacific, and how quickly they did so.

The move to independence

Banivanua Mar documents the shift in consciousness and consequent independence movements which emerged after World War 2 across the Pacific.³² There were, she explains, growing anti-colonial movements stretching from Samoa to Tahiti, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, and East and West New Guinea.³³ These were, she says, “explicitly anti colonial, autonomous ‘native leadership movements’ [which] formed around newly radicalised

³⁰ In 1960 the UNGA Resolution 1514(XV) adopted *the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*; in 1961 UNGA resolution 1654 (XVI) established the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence of Colonial Countries and Peoples. [also known as the Special Committee on De-colonisation or C-24]. UN Decolonization

³¹ MacMillan, H. 3/2/1960. The Wind of Change, Address by Harold MacMillan to members of both Houses of the Parliament on the Union of South Africa, Cape Town.

³² “Around the Pacific, numerous counter-colonial moments and movements blossomed after the war, many as a result of a handful of influential people like Fifi’i.” in Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 132.

³³ Banivanua Mar nominates some of more well-known movements: John Frum and Nagriemel movements in Vanuatu; Fifi’i and Maasina Rule in the Solomon Islands; Pouvanua A Oopa in Tahiti; and the Paliau movement in Manus and another in East New Britain. Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 132. In Samoa, the Mau independence movement has been documented by Field, M. J. 2008. *Mau: Samoa’s Struggle for Freedom*.

individuals and communities.”³⁴

However, as Banivanua Mar illustrates, the UN Resolution 1514 of 1960 neglected the question of the right to self-determination of people within a self-governing but settler-colonial state.³⁵ This neglect particularly affected the future of indigenous peoples in those Pacific territories held by the metropolises of France, the USA and [encompassing Oceania] in Australia. Similarly, despite pressure from the UN, the resolution which accompanied the Declaration [especially the three conditions it laid out for defining self-government and independence] allowed the metropolises to define the timetable for change. Banivanua Mar argues that the resultant “stalled programme of decolonisation in the Pacific was determined by the structures of neglect and racial thinking of the colonial period.”³⁶ Britain and Australia, in particular, she argues, transformed decolonisation from “a process of national liberation” to a “sedate and conservative” movement towards “constitutional development.”³⁷ While Australia was pursuing an assimilationist agenda in Papua New Guinea, she argued, Britain held the view that many of its colonies were simply incapable of pursuing self-government;

³⁴ Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 132.

³⁵ The UN Resolution 1514 of 1960 referred to the UN Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. As Banivanua Mar discusses: This question generated the Saltwater Principle – ie only those non self-governing territories separated by ocean or saltwater from their administering territories would be able to evolve towards self-determination and self-government; several states, such as the USA and Australia, disputed this definition. In 1960, despite the rhetoric of the right to self-determination in the resolution of the Declaration on the Granting of independence, this right was constrained by a requirement that independence and freedom “must cause no partial or total disruption to the national unity and territorial integrity of existing states’. The Declaration was followed by a resolution defining that self-government and independence required one of three conditions: 1) the emergence of a sovereign independent state; 2) the free association of a formerly non self-governing territory with an independent state; and 3) the integration of a formerly non self-governing territory into an independent state [these effectively precluded the saltwater principle]: States such as France or the USA simply redefined their relationship to their territories by means of plebiscites and referenda to incorporate their territories into their “metropole” state. Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 141-146.

³⁶ Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 151.

³⁷ Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation in the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the End of Empire*, 151.

they were too small and inconsequential.³⁸ One of the “essential weaknesses” of the colonial administrations, Banivanua Mar observes, “was their tendency to chronically underestimate the capacity of indigenous peoples.”³⁹

Despite the colonial administrations’ lack of faith, the first tangible signs of political independence from European colonisation in the Pacific began with the declaration of Samoa’s independence from New Zealand in 1962.⁴⁰ Another six countries declared independence in the next two decades [see Table 6.1 above]. The growing movement for autonomous political independence culminated with Vanuatu’s rejection of “Condominium rule” under France and Britain in 1980.

Other Pacific countries made different political choices about the nature of their independence. In the north, the American trust territories of Palau, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia; and, in the south, the self-governing countries of the Cook Islands and Niue, chose to “freely associate” with their respective colonising powers, the USA

³⁸ Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 151-152, citing McIntyre – McIntyre explains that contemporary debate amongst the metropolises [based on the decolonisation experience in the subcontinent and Africa] observed several factors in assessing the viability of Pacific colonies’ capacity to make the transition to statehood ie the factors or conditions which indicated a colony was capable of governing: population size; the level of “nationalist fervour” [in the Pacific, this emerged more as the re-assertion of cultural pride and identity]; the metropole’s level of distraction to other matters – reflecting the relevance of historical legacies and the perceived political and financial costs especially to international reputation, of NOT decolonising. McIntyre concludes that in the Pacific, decolonisation relied on several factors [some of which overlapped with previously noted factors]: the UN’s growing anti-colonialism, Britain’s domestic or internal push for accelerated decolonisation; the ambitions of the educated pacific elites; and Britain’s distraction towards the EU and NATO. McIntyre, W. D. 2016. *Winding up the British Empire in the Pacific Islands*, 259-260.

³⁹ Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*, 151.

⁴⁰ For an overview of the decolonisation and political status of various countries in the Pacific see: *Emerging from Empire? Decolonisation in the Pacific: Proceedings of a workshop at the ANU, December 1996*, edited by Donald Denoon, July 1997; Banivanua Mar, T. 2016. *Decolonisation and the Pacific: Indigenous Globalisation and the Ends of Empire*; Firth, S., 1989. Sovereignty and Independence. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 1(1/2)(Spring and Fall):75-96.; McIntyre, W. D. 2016. *Winding up the British Empire in the Pacific Islands*.

and New Zealand.⁴¹

17. Others are yet to assert their choice. Confirming Banivanua's hesitation about the ambiguity inherent in UN Resolution 1514 of 1960, seven decades on, calls for sovereignty remain unresolved for the indigenous peoples of several Pacific territories. Despite the presence of independence movements in New Caledonia and French Polynesia, both remain overseas collectivities of France.⁴² Similarly, West Papua, despite a growing independence movement, remains under Indonesian authority.⁴³ While Bougainville, now an autonomous region of PNG following the Peace Agreement reached in 2001, awaits the outcome of the consultations with the PNG government following their recent referendum in favour of independence.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Palau, Marshall Islands and FSM negotiated Compacts of Association with the USA; while Niue and Cook Islands are self-governing territories although recognised as sovereign by several states at the UN - their relationship with New Zealand gives support on foreign affairs, defence [if requested] and citizenship rights in New Zealand; similarly, Samoa has a treaty of friendship with NZ which gives rights to support on defence if requested and access to citizenship/residence in New Zealand. Tonga negotiated an agreement for protection with the British Empire, the Treaty of Friendship, on 18 May 1900.

⁴² France classifies its Pacific [and other] territories as "overseas collectivities" ie in effect, France considers these territories to "be" France. France recently held a series of referenda in New Caledonia in accord with the conditions laid out by the 1998 Noumea Accord and consequent Organic Law in March 1999 to determine the question of independence from metropole France. Despite the concerns expressed by the independence movement, the outcome of the 3rd and final referendum in December 2021 determined that the territory remained a part of France, rather than a step closer to independence. Pro-independence leaders (and others) have challenged the integrity of the results, arguing that the boycott by Kanak voters [called because covid disproportionately affected many Kanak communities who thus, were in mourning, making campaigning impossible], meant that the third referendum did not reflect genuine outcomes. Sartre, J. 13/12/2021. New Caledonia rejects split from France in vote marred by boycott. *The Guardian*. The Kanak people in New Caledonia continue to seek a political settlement with France. DFAT. April 2022. New Caledonia Country Brief; Maclellan, N. 2/10/2020. Our accession to sovereignty is inevitable, *Inside Story*; and again, Maclellan, N. 22/4/2024. As protests grow in New Caledonia, Australia backs France's Indo-Pacific Strategy, DevPol blog. Similarly, calls for sovereignty for French Polynesia continued during the pandemic (*RNZ News*. 25/10/2021. Pro-independence party join French Polynesia Anti-vax march.) More recently, the local Assembly in Tahiti, considered pro-independent, demonstrated its critique of France in its recent endorsement of the Treaty of the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons against France's wishes. Maclellan, N. 2/10/2023. French Criticism of Nuclear Ban Treaty Highlights Canberra's Dilemma. *The Interpreter*, The Lowy Institute.

⁴³ Kingsbury, D. 20/7/2022. Papua Division Enflames Tensions. Australian Institute of International Affairs, Australian Outlook.

⁴⁴ Dziedzic, A. and C. Saunders. December 2019. Greater autonomy and independence for Bougainville Institutional Options and Issues for Transition; *ABC Pacific* 19/05/2021, Bougainville President wants independence from PNG by 2025; McKenna, K. and E. Ariku. 19/11/2021, Bougainville Independence: Recalling Promises of International Help, *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute.

For the Pacific states which achieved political independence under the decolonisation movement, there was one more item on their independence agenda: the economic self-reliance which would ensure the genuine exercise of their sovereignty. For many of the new Pacific states, the path towards economic autonomy proved more challenging than the assertion of political sovereignty.⁴⁵ Accepting aid offered by their former coloniser “as an interim measure,” was a significant, if reluctant, step.⁴⁶

The Donors

Each of the major colonial powers in the Pacific became major aid donors in the region in the decade after their colonies were formally granted independence.⁴⁷

As Britain withdrew from the region,⁴⁸ Australia emerged as the most significant grants-donor

⁴⁵ As McIntyre explains, “Although the departing British administrators assured the island governments that aid and technical assistance would ease their path to sovereignty, many soon found themselves categorised as MIRAB states: dependent on Migration, Remittances, foreign Aid and Bureaucracy,” citing Bertram, I.G. and R.F. Watters, *The MIRAB economy in South Pacific Microstates*, *Pacific Viewpoint* 1985, 26(3): 497-519, in McIntyre, W. D. 2016. *Winding up the British Empire in the Pacific Islands*, 259.

⁴⁶ Tabai, I. 2012. Interview with President Ieremia Tabai of Kiribati, in I. Johnstone and M. Powles, [Eds], *New Flags Flying: Pacific Leadership*, 188-193.

⁴⁷ Although Britain closed the Western Pacific High Commission in Suva in 1952, it remained the major incumbent colonial power at the time independence was granted to many Pacific countries. Britain exercised authority over the colonies of Fiji, Solomon Islands, and the Gilbert and Ellice Islands (subsequently the separate states of Kiribati and Tuvalu). Britain extended its protection to the Kingdom of Tonga. And, in combination with the French, Britain shared authority over Vanuatu under the condominium arrangements. Australia, as a former dominion of Britain, emerged as the UN-mandated trustee in Papua New Guinea and Nauru; while New Zealand, also a former dominion of Britain, continued to hold its UN-mandated trusteeship in Samoa. The Cook Islands were annexed by the British at the request of the chiefs and people of Rarotonga and other islands. Most of the islands were declared part of Britain dominions, in October 1900; In 1901, the islands were included within the boundaries of the colony of New Zealand by order in Council under the UK Colonial Boundaries act of 1895. The Cook Islands have had a formal relationship with New Zealand since: it is now formally a self-governing state in free association with New Zealand; its citizens automatically acquire New Zealand citizenship. Niue also became a colony of New Zealand in 1901 and became a self-governing state in free association with New Zealand since 1974.

⁴⁸ Both Banivanua Mar and McIntyre explain that Britain, the major colonial power in the region after World War Two, was initially reluctant to promote independence across many of its [former] colonies. These countries, Britain claimed, were “too small, too weak in resources and too remote to be sovereign” that they could never achieve independence. McIntyre, W. D. 2016. *Winding up the British Empire in the Pacific Islands*, preface.

in the Pacific.⁴⁹ In second place is New Zealand. Australia often negotiates aid relations with the same Forum states where one of the three powers - either Australia, Britain or New Zealand - once exercised colonial, or trustee, authority. As Table 6.1 Aid Relations Independence and Contemporary illustrates [see Appendix 6.1 Aid Relations Independence and Contemporary], Australia was the most significant donor by value of aid spent as grants in all of the Forum countries in 2018 and one of the top three donors by value of aid spent as grants in every Forum country in 2009, bar those countries whose former colonial authority remains their key donor [that is, in the self-governing states of Cook islands and Niue, which remain in free association with New Zealand, the French overseas collectivities and the USA Compact-states].⁵⁰

Transitioning relations: motivations and consequences

Lancaster and others have narrated the range of motivations which can lie behind a donor's decision to "give" aid: a sense of moral obligation or altruism; commercial interests including resource exploitation; or the alignment of geo-political and geo-economic interests, both domestic and international.⁵¹ As the Pacific states gained independence, the former colonial

⁴⁹ Note: Official Development Assistance, or ODA, can be offered as a grant or a loan. I use the terms aid and ODA interchangeably to refer to bilateral or multilateral development grant aid. The Lowy Institute's Pacific Aid Map captures ODA and OOF [Other Official Flows]; it defines grants as transfers made in cash, goods or services for which no repayment is required; whereas a loan must be repaid and can be concessional or non-concessional. The Development Policy Centre's Australian Aid Tracker advises that ODA as a percentage of a country's Gross National Income (GNI) is the most commonly used measure to assess the generosity of a country's foreign aid. In 2015, Australia was the 14th most generous DAC member contributing 0.29% of GNI as aid; in 2022, its ranking dropped to 27th with 0.19% of GNI for aid. In 2009, Australia ranked 17th at 0.29% and in 2018, Australia ranked 17th at 0.23%. See webpage: DevPolAidTracker .

⁵⁰ Financial transfers from France remain a key contributor to the economies of New Caledonia and French Polynesia. While the arrangements in the Compact states in the north reflect "domestic" transfers under the USA's administrative arrangements, the Compact funds are the largest source of financial transfer for each of these states. Australia contributes ODA to both the USA Compact states and French territory of Wallis and Futuna, which is the only ODA-eligible French Pacific territory. In 2009, Australia was the 4th largest donor in the RMI spending \$2.09m; in 2018, Australia was again 4th largest donor, spending \$3.53m; FSM and Palau. Australian ODA to W&F includes Australia award scholarships, access to the Direct Aid program small grants scheme and assistance with COVID19. DFAT webpage: DFAT Country Brief

⁵¹ See discussion in Chapter 5 The Global Idea of Ownership, in relation to the explanation offered by the Marshall Plan and Truman's 4-Point Plan which offered a range of motives for "economic assistance", including to create markets for

powers and their colonies were forced to re-cast relations. They were now peers, with equal rights and obligations before international law; but they also carried deep histories. Aid relations between the [now] donors and aid-receiving countries were entangled by multiple, sometimes conflicting, motivations which reflected their mutual histories as much as contemporary aspirations.

Ferns offers an illustration of the complexity which can lie behind donor motivations in his historical analysis of Australia's aid to Papua New Guinea [PNG].⁵² As the largest contemporary donor to PNG, Australian aid is often described as a measure of Australia's "generosity" to the former colonial territory.⁵³ Yet, echoing Lancaster's findings in relation to the USA's motivations for giving aid, Ferns shows that the origins of Australia's aid "generosity" in fact, reflect mundane domestic motivations. Australia's historical aid generosity was, Ferns argues, an outcome of political "territory-marking" and pedantry within Australia's various government departments during PNG's pre-independence era. Aid flows reflected the bureaucracy's capacity to manoeuvre the accounts to reflect a more favourable interpretation

"superior" American technology and to establish "bulwarks of democracy" against communism. Similarly, the Pearson Commission observed multiple reasons or purposes for "giving" aid including altruism, economic growth, encouraging democracy. In a slightly different process but towards similar ends, Lancaster demonstrated that America's domestic interests were a paramount influence on the size and direction and character of its aid budget; while Van der Veen's study of four European donors found that each donor defined the purpose of their aid generosity differently, and that the way countries frame that purpose has shaped aid policy choices, past and present. The purpose ranged from a sense of [colonial] obligation [or recompense]; a desire for international influence or reputational reward; and humanitarian concerns.

⁵² Australia's financial contributions to the two territories which eventually formed the independent state of Papua New Guinea date from 1906, when Britain delegated full control of the protectorate of Papua to Australia. After World War 1, the League of Nations mandated German New Guinea under Australian control. In 1949, Australia brought both territories under one administrative arrangement to establish the Territory of Papua and New Guinea.

⁵³ Ferns, N. 2020. Colonialism as Foreign Aid: Australia Developmental Policy in Papua New Guinea, 1945-75. *Australian Historical Studies*, 51(4):459-476; Lancaster, C. 2007. *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*; van der Veen, A. M. 2011. *Ideas, Interests and Foreign Aid*. Note: A study by Grounder in 2007 on the contemporary motivations for Australia's aid to Papua New Guinea was inconclusive and declared the need for more time series analysis. Grounder, R. 1999. Modelling of Aid motivation using time series data: the case of Papua New Guinea. *Oxford Development Studies* 27(2):233-250.

of the level of Australia's engagement in PNG in order to achieve several bureaucrats' desires to be viewed favourably on the international stage by the UN and others.⁵⁴

In contrast, there has been little consideration of why states, including those in the Pacific, accept aid. The decision to accept aid is, I argue, a deliberate rather than opportune act.⁵⁵ For many of the Pacific's independence leaders, relations with their past colonisers - and now, emerging donors - were clouded by the ambivalence of their shared histories.⁵⁶ Notwithstanding the potential improvements in the standard of living that aid could provide, the Pacific leaders' experience of injustice, racism, arrogance and exploitation under colonialism influenced the choices they made about aid after independence, as did pragmatism.⁵⁷ While Ratu Mara eloquently argued to his peers that political independence must be balanced by economic self-reliance for genuine autonomy,⁵⁸ the Pacific leaders acknowledged that not all Pacific countries had achieved independence with a sound

⁵⁴ Ferns, N. 2020. Colonialism as Foreign Aid: Australia Developmental Policy in Papua New Guinea, 1945-75. *Australian Historical Studies*, 51(4):459-476.

⁵⁵ Wallis, J. 2017. Special Report: Crowded and Complex: The Changing Geopolitics of the South Pacific." Australian Strategic Policy Institute.

⁵⁶ Memories of disrespect can run deep: when I interviewed one senior diplomat from the region, he told me of a story which he said was passed down as a moral tale between diplomats across the region. The story relates of an Australian aid bureaucrat, who, when displeased by the turn in the discussion with Pacific representatives around the negotiation table, whipped out the personal cheque-book [that's how old the story is] and declared to the colleagues across the table: "Unless you get through me, you won't get any of that!", gesturing to the chequebook. Personal communications of a senior Pacific diplomat with the author, Fiji, 2016.

⁵⁷ See for example: Braine, B. and Mr. Hooley. 26/6/1978. Banaba Debate, UK Parliament Hansard, Vol. 952 Column 1034. Mara, K. 26/10/1970. Address by the Prime Minister of Fiji on the 25th Anniversary Commemorative Session, General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. In K.Mara, *The Pacific Way: A Memoir*, University of Hawai'i. 237-242; Tabai, I. 2012. Interview with President Ieremia Tabai of Kiribati, in Johnson, I. and M. Powles [eds]. 2012. *New Flags Flying: Pacific Leadership*, 188-193. Mara, in Fry 1980:462, cited Corbett, J. and J. Connell. 2014. The Promise of the 1970s: Ratu Mara on the World Stage, *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 103(3)301-310; Fry, G. 1981. Regionalism and the Politics of the South Pacific. *Pacific Affairs*, 54(3:Autumn):462-463.

⁵⁸ Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*.

economic base.⁵⁹ Aid was accepted as a necessary but interim measure.⁶⁰ The important point, the Pacific leaders asserted, was to engage in respectful relations. They wanted to ensure future relations with their former colonisers were re-cast more equitably and equally, as peers. This was reflected in the choices they made as a region and in their engagement with the rest of the world, as illustrated, regionally, by the establishment of the South Pacific Forum in 1971 by the Pacific leaders; and nationally, by Samoa's delayed decision to join the UN.

The South Pacific Forum

The creation of the South Pacific Forum [SPF] in 1971 reflected the depth of the disrespect felt by the Pacific leaders in their relations with former colonial powers who continued to assert their presence in the region as if Pacific interests were irrelevant. The Pacific leaders wanted a voice on the political interests that mattered to the Pacific - with their authority as Pacific leaders acknowledged by the "metropolitan powers", particularly those still intent on exercising their colonial authority and jurisdiction despite the "wind of change", such as France. As Ratu Mara later recalled:

The powers seemed incapable of realizing that the winds of change had at last reached the South Pacific and that we peoples of the territories were no longer going to tolerate the domination of the [South Pacific] Commission by the Metropolitan powers. We were *sick of having little to say and no authority*.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Nauru, Fiji and PNG were deemed to have relatively sound national economies when they became independent, although even the latter two continued to receive aid from their ex-colonial administrations after independence; but others, such as Samoa and Kiribati, started from different bases. See: Patelisio P Finau, C. Craw, L.R Morgan, R.G. Crocombe, M. Qionibaravi, A.V. Hughes, R.G. Spratt, June 1976, More Effective Aid, A Report to the South Pacific Forum, SPEC(76)11, p8

⁶⁰ Jeremiah Tabai insisted that the new Republic reject Britain's aid: "...I strongly believe political independence must be accompanied by economic independence and so we gave up, ahead of schedule, the aid Britain had promised us over a five-year period. We weren't economically independent by then, but we wanted to show we were on the way towards doing things for ourselves." Jeremiah Tabai, the first President of the Republic of Kiribati and former Secretary-General of the South Pacific IForum, reflecting on Kiribati's decision to reject Britain's promised aid soon after independence. Tabai, I. 2012. Interview with President Ieremia Tabai of Kiribati, in I. Johnstone and M. Powles, [Eds], *New Flags Flying: Pacific Leadership*, 192.

⁶¹ The Promise of the 1970s: Ratu Mara on the World Stage, Corbett, J. and J. Connell. 2014. The Promise of the 1970s: Ratu Mara on the World Stage, *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 103(3)301-310; Fry, G. 1981. Regionalism and the Politics of the South Pacific. *Pacific Affairs*, 54(3: Autumn):462-463.

The decision to establish a political forum which gave regional interests primacy was shaped by the pragmatics of economics and geography. A regional forum entailed logistics: transport, accommodation and administration. Despite the reasonable condition of several of the region's fledgling states' economies, there was little spare cash - including in Fiji, whose new Prime Minister, Ratu Mara, was a leading advocate for the Forum.⁶² This was the reason, Mara later explained, that he invited New Zealand host the first meeting of the five leaders - and persuaded the other Pacific leaders that Australia and New Zealand, as key trading partners, should be invited to join the Forum. They would offer, he argued, the kind of leadership which could resolve the economic problems the region faced.⁶³

Despite Ratu Mara's powers of persuasion, there were fears amongst some Pacific leaders that the two metropolises would dominate the forum proceedings. The inclusion of Australia and New Zealand would, they feared, jeopardise the interests of the islands because these two countries did not face the same issues as the Pacific. Despite these misgivings, Australia and New Zealand were invited to the first meeting in Auckland.

The establishment of the Forum showed the new independence leaders' initiative - and their pragmatism. While Pacific leaders were willing to challenge France on its refusal to permit "politics" in the South Pacific Conference [SPC], they also chose to maintain relations with their former colonisers, Australia and New Zealand. Geography, trade and economics

⁶² Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*.

⁶³ Mara says that he asked New Zealand to host a meeting of the five leaders because Fiji couldn't afford to; and the group invited, ANZ to join after Mara argued persuasively that they were key trading partners and could provide leadership to resolve the economic problems they faced. Nauru and the others feared that ANZ would dominate - they did not face the same problems - and thus jeopardise the interests of the islands. Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*, 171.

provided strong and pragmatic incentives, despite fears that Australia and New Zealand might dominate the Forum due to their stronger and wealthier economies.⁶⁴

Today, the Forum claims its place as the region's premier political organisation, representing 18 countries including, since 2016, the French collectivities of French Polynesia and New Caledonia.⁶⁵ However, the early fears that Australia and New Zealand, as major metropolises and significant donors, might dominate the Forum's agenda and its resolutions, continue to surface.⁶⁶

Australia and New Zealand have consistently been the two largest member-donors to the Forum since its establishment, as well as the largest bilateral donors to many of its members.⁶⁷ They provide substantial ODA funding to support the Forum's ongoing operations, including various program and project funds. Prior to 2018, Australia and New Zealand together funded two thirds of the Forum's operating costs, plus other ODA for other regional programs. They also provide independent ODA funding to every country which is a member of the Forum, except the recently admitted French collectivities.⁶⁸ Given the significance of aid to domestic and regional budgets, many of the Pacific Island Forum members conduct negotiations on political matters with Australia and New Zealand in a nuanced fashion.

⁶⁴ Fry, G. 1981. Regionalism and the Politics of the South Pacific. *Pacific Affairs*, 54(3:Autumn):462; Corbett, J. and J. Connell. 2014. The Promise of the 1970s: Ratu Mara on the World Stage, *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 103(3)301-310; Maclellan, N. 10/5/2019. Thirty Years on, a Spirit of Reconciliation in New Caledonia; TShibuya, E. 2004. The problems and potential of the Pacific islands Forum. Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*.

⁶⁵ The Pacific Islands Forum webpage cites that the Forum is the regional top political and economic organisation.

⁶⁶ For example, *The Australian* 6 /4/2015. Fiji Wants Australia Out of The Pacific Islands Forum.; Herr, R. 26 /3/2018. Australia-Fiji Relations in 2018: Finding a New Normal, *Asia Pacific Bulletin*.

⁶⁷ The Lowy Institute, Pacific Aid Map.

⁶⁸ See Appendix 6.1: Aid Relations: Independence and Contemporary, Table 6.1 for a list of Pacific countries and the top three donors.

The independent state of [western] Samoa

For some Pacific countries, their decision to re-engage with the broader world, post-independence, was carefully calibrated to ensure that the scars of past trauma had healed.⁶⁹ For example, while the independent state of [Western] Samoa was the first to claim independence in 1962, their government waited more than a decade before they sought admission to the UN. His Excellency Tupua Tamasese Lealofi IV, Samoa's member of the Council of Deputies, explained why when he addressed the UNGA in 1976:

"A Pacific island is a fragile thing. We had been touched by an alien world. That touch had left its mark. We needed time to recover, to look at the world, to decide for ourselves how close to it we could afford to come and still retain our way of life and the things that are important to us. Now we believe we know where we are going...in today's world, we need friends..."⁷⁰

Samoa achieved its intent.⁷¹ In 2009, in the aftermath of the worst tsunami in its history, Samoa's government acknowledged the many friends who gave support.⁷² Its leadership is recognised across the Pacific and further afield.⁷³

As the formation of the South Pacific Forum and Samoa's decision to join the UN each illustrate, the Pacific leaders dealt with the shadows of colonial relations with pragmatism. They did the same with their economies.

⁶⁹ For an account of the impact of colonisation in Samoa and the corresponding independence movement, the Mau, see Field, M. J. 2008. *Mau: Samoa's Struggle For Freedom*.

⁷⁰ Lealofi IV, T. T. 15/12/1976. Address by the Deputy Head of State of Western Samoa to the UN General Assembly, 31st Session, 100th Plenary meeting, A/PV.100, 1491: 19-20.

⁷¹ Similarly, although Tuvalu gained independence in 1975, it did not join the UNGA until 2000.

⁷² Government of Samoa. December 2009. Samoa Post Disaster Needs Assessment, following the earthquake and tsunami of 29th September 2009, xii; and also: Government of Samoa. 2009. Tsunami: Samoa 29 September 2009: An account of the tsunami disaster, the response, its aftermath, acknowledgement and the trek to recovery.

⁷³ "...Samoa is widely known in the region as a 'role model' for the Pacific. This is in addition to other accolades such as the 'shining star' and 'grand jewel' of the region. ...while some may demur, it is a fact that Samoa has made great progress in improving the quality of its social services since independence." Amosa, D. U. 2012. *Social Policies in Samoa*, ix.

6.3 Negotiating Economic Self-Reliance: Aid and Relations

The Pacific leaders recognised that economic self-reliance in a rapidly globalising world required access to global markets. It required the capacity, technology, skills and infrastructure to produce goods or commodities for sale. It also required the ability to transport these goods or commodities to markets. It required, as Samoa's former Prime Minister had observed, friends. The Pacific leaders understood the pragmatic reality of interdependency: relationships and alliances were necessary for survival.⁷⁴

While trade utilising their own resources was the preferred path to economic self-reliance, aid was a necessary stabilising force while building capacity and alliances could be achieved, given the island countries' "unique vulnerabilities".⁷⁵ While the Pacific's independence leaders felt compelled to accept aid "in the interim", the experience of colonisation influenced their deliberations on how aid relations would be negotiated. They intended to manage donor relations as equal partners, with mutual tolerance and respect.⁷⁶

Pacific strategies for economic self-reliance

The Pacific leaders adopted a two-fold strategy to build economic self-reliance: to "sound a

⁷⁴ Hau'ofa, E. 1985. *The Future of Our Past*.

⁷⁵ Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11. See also: Amosa, who notes: "...the issue of {SIDS} vulnerability was first given formal expression ... at the 1977 Commonwealth Finance Minister Meeting in Barbados... the special characteristic of small states ... their reliance on trade, high dependent on capital inflows and, in some cases, lack of natural resources, minister urged the international community adopt a more flexible approach to their requirement and special measures to assist them.. the secretary designed program to assist overcome the disadvantage of small size, isolation and scarce resource which severely limited the capacity of such countries to achieve their development objective or to pursue their national interest in a wider international context. Amosa, D. U. 2012. *Social Policies in Samoa* (foreword); and McLean, D. 1985, the first report to "highlight the inherent vulnerability of small states to external interference". McLean, D. 1985. *Vulnerability: Small States in the Global Society*

⁷⁶ Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*. East West Centre: Hawaii.

coherent and articulate voice”, in the region through the South Pacific Forum; and as members of the UN.⁷⁷

When the Pacific leaders established the Forum, it was intended as a meeting place where the Pacific interests, political and economic, were debated amongst equals.⁷⁸ Regionalism was an emerging idea which had to be considered carefully, with roles and responsibilities thoughtfully negotiated.⁷⁹ While most of the Pacific leaders agreed on the potential benefits of regional cooperation, they also knew that they needed to establish trusted networks within the region, as the early members of PIPA had achieved in bargaining for a common position on bananas with New Zealand.⁸⁰ They needed to build from common ground; and regional infrastructure was high amongst their joint priorities. The Pacific countries sought to establish regional shipping and aviation; access to reliable and cheaper energy supplies, to support manufacturing and reduce the everyday costs of living; and to establish telecommunications to promote business.⁸¹

While the Forum was a regional venue for establishing a unified voice through regional alliances, the independent Pacific states also sought a platform at the UN. The Pacific states

⁷⁷ Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*.

⁷⁸ Fry, G. 1981. Regionalism and the Politics of the South Pacific. *Pacific Affairs*, 54(3:Autumn):462-463. Note: In advocating for their own forum where the Pacific's interests could be debated without domination by the metropolises, the Pacific leaders mirrored the global shift in relations augured by the Pearson Commission's inquiry into aid, released just before the Forum was established.

⁷⁹ Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*. East West Centre: Hawaii.

⁸⁰ For example, the predecessor to the South Pacific Forum (SPF), the Producers Association, was able to establish trust between Samoa and Fiji when Samoa withdrew its opportunity for a monopoly on the sale of bananas to New Zealand – which allowed a market prices to respond to supply not only demand – and Fiji to enter the market. Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*.

⁸¹ Primary amongst the Forum's objectives was engagement to develop regional infrastructure, such as regional shipping; access to more reliable and cheaper energy supplies and telecommunications; and aviation see for example, the record of the first forum: South Pacific Forum. 1971. Leaders Communique. South Pacific Forum Leaders Inaugural Meeting. Wellington, 5-7/8/1971.

only became eligible to join the UN when they became independent. Between 1970 and 2000, 12 Pacific states joined the UN.⁸² The UN offered the opportunity to forge external alliances with the global community and was an arena where Pacific leaders could advocate for the structural equity necessary to underwrite the emerging Pacific states' journeys to economic self-reliance.

At the UN, the Pacific leaders echoed the calls made by their peers, the newly-independent countries from Africa and Latin America,⁸³ for greater opportunities for economic independence through equitable access to the decision-making structures of the global finance institutions and to the world's markets, to give genuine momentum to their newly-asserted status as states.⁸⁴ They sought a level playing field.

Negotiating relations

With the global and regional strategic framework in train, the Pacific leaders sought to clarify the state of aid relations in the region. As their starting point, the Forum leaders commissioned their secretariat, the South Pacific Economic Bureau [SPEC], to undertake the first review of aid in the region in 1976.

⁸² Due to their status as self-governing free associates of New Zealand, Niue and the Cook Islands, although members of the Forum, but not fully independent states, were accorded access/membership of several UN programs and agencies under a "special status" arrangement.

⁸³ The G77 was established in 1964 through the Joint declaration of 77 countries; membership now covers 134 countries, plus China. In 2013, Fiji was appointed the first Pacific state to chair the G77. See: Fiji Government Webpage and also Chapter 5 The Global Idea of Ownership.

⁸⁴ Efi, T. 28/9/77. Address by the Prime Minister of Samoa to the United Nations General Assembly. 11th Plenary Meeting 32nd Session, New York. A/32/PV.11: 155-156. See Chapter 5: The Global Idea of Ownership, the UN admission speeches of the Independent states of Fiji and Kiribati.

6.3.1 The Aid Review

Diagnosis of the problems

In 1976, estimated official aid flows to the region were US\$500m.⁸⁵ The review confirmed the significance of aid to the Pacific. It warned, however, that not only was aid ineffective, but dependence on aid was likely to continue “for the foreseeable future”.⁸⁶ Critically, the review found that donors dominated the countries’ economic development agenda.

Aid, the review team claimed, reduced prospects for moving countries towards self-reliance - the Pacific leaders’ aim. First, aid was focused on the wrong objectives: increasingly directed towards service-provision, rather than investment and economic growth.⁸⁷ Second, donors’ conditions on the use of aid – particularly their preference for tied aid and high-import capital-intensive projects, rather than financing local costs and services - undermined recipient countries’ capacity to deliver on their priorities.

Inequality between, and within, countries, the review determined, was a significant issue. Resources were unequally distributed between the Pacific countries. Aid negotiations were open to “manipulation” by powerful groups and elites within both the donor agencies and the

⁸⁵ This was \$120 per person per year across the region. See: Finau, P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:1. This is equivalent to around \$2.64b in 2023. According to the Lowy Institute’s Pacific Aid Map, in 2020 the total development finance [ODA: grants and loans] spent in the Pacific = US\$4.25b [ODA \$3.28].

⁸⁶ The Task Force observed: “...the fundamental importance of aid to developing Pacific countries; the great disparities between and within Pacific countries; the certainty that most of them will require increasing aid for the foreseeable future; the tendency for aid to worsen important defects instead of remedying them, and the ineffectiveness of aid towards its stated objective of increased self-reliance. We noted problems of aid staffing, lack of co-ordination and increasing numbers of aid donors; inefficiencies at country and regional level; the effect of aid on behaviour of the recipient governments and people; and a general absence of public information and informed debate on aid. Two themes ran through our discussions: the need to look at the development process as a whole... psychological, social and political as well as economic factors; and the way in which official aid flows can be concealed or manipulated to the advantage of groups with political or bureaucratic power, amongst donors and recipients...” see Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:1.

⁸⁷ Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:1.

aid-receiving countries. Aid, the Review team warned, served to “reinforce existing institutions and elites” rather than to transform societies through major social and economic reform, potentially making inequity within countries worse.⁸⁸ The countries’ elites’ proclivity for manipulation [a small step away from allegations of corruption], the report advised, was further compromised by poor aid practices within donor agencies and aid receiving countries.⁸⁹

The aid review also considered relations between the Pacific countries and their donors at length. Overall, the review found that the donors “were inclined” to dominate the economic development agenda. Aid functioned to “determine the relationships between donors and recipients” in the Pacific.⁹⁰ Aid was given and received “for a mixture of strategic, political and economic reasons”.⁹¹ But, the Review team claimed, because of donors’ “unequal power”, donor interests prevailed over the development agenda.⁹² The increasing presence of multiple donors in the region would, the Review team suggested, only lead to an increased politicisation of, and dependency on, aid.⁹³

Recommendations

The Review team made several key recommendations in relation to donors’ domination of the

⁸⁸ The report said: “Aid tends to reinforce existing institutions and elites. Aid tends to be self-perpetuating because of the behaviour it induces in both donor and recipient organisations and people.” Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:11.

⁸⁹ One of the key tasks set by the Review’s terms of reference was to “investigate and report on the...means by which developing members of the region might be assisted in expanding their economic planning and aid coordinating capacities...” Aid Review Task Force Terms of Reference and Membership (Annex A) in Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11.

⁹⁰ Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:3.

⁹¹ Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:3.

⁹² Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:3.

⁹³ Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:8.

economic development agenda, aid management practices, aid effectiveness and the role of the Secretariat.

In a series of moves that anticipated shifts in the region's aid policy three decades later under the banner of Ownership, the review team identified a series of strategies to improve economic planning and aid coordination. These included tools and mechanisms to improve information sharing, reporting and coordination, including annual aid consultations, between donors and aid-receiving countries.⁹⁴

To counteract the dominance of donors in setting the economic development agenda, the Review team recommended that donors and Pacific countries develop policies to strengthen relations to reflect the interests of the Pacific states:

.....It is not our task to approve or disapprove of these trends [to dominate], but we draw attention [both] to the likelihood of this weakening relationships within the region, to the long term detriment of the island states, unless the policies of donors and recipients are aimed at strengthening regional relations in the interests of the island nations...⁹⁵

⁹⁴ The Task Force recommended the use of a "standard checklist" for project appraisal and funding; simpler language and procedures to facilitate access to aid; greater information flows between donors and recipient countries and those within the countries [and outside national governments]; and that donors reduce their demands on recipient countries for information and time through shared or joint reporting, data analysis, and "background visits" to countries. Regular annual aid consultations were recommended. The Task Force noted although donors used both project and programme aid, most aid remained subject to conditions on its use. They argued that donors' preferences for tied aid and high-import capital-intensive projects - rather than financing local costs and services, without restrictions - undermined recipient countries' capacity to deliver on their priorities. Donors, the review asserted, should prioritise their support to align with recipient countries' national development plans and strategies. They also recommended that countries should prepare data, development plans and reports for sale to donors "and others needing basic information". Visits by experts "unlikely to be of use to the region should be cut out". Visitors should always "see the lowest level official who can reasonably deal with their needs". Regional statistics on aid and development were required. Donors, the review asserted, should prioritise their support to align with recipient countries' national development plans and strategies. Most countries had such plans, the review team observed - even if the donors did not! They also recommended that countries should prepare data, development plans and reports for sale to donors "and others needing basic information". Visits by experts "unlikely to be of use to the region should be cut out". Visitors should always "see the lowest level official who can reasonably deal with their needs". Regional statistics on aid and development were required. Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:7-8.

⁹⁵ Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:8.

Specifically, the team recommended, donors should adjust **their** aid practices to ensure alignment with Pacific countries' national development plans and strategies.⁹⁶ They recommended that countries prepare development plans and reports for sale to donors or others, to reduce the burden of administering to excessive numbers of "visiting experts" repeatedly seeking similar information.⁹⁷ It also recommended that visiting experts meet only with the officials relevant to their information and decision-making requirements, not to expect political leaders or senior government officials to meet them.

To enhance aid's effectiveness, the Review recommended that donors evaluate "all their policies and actions"⁹⁸ affecting the Pacific countries, including in the areas of investment, trade, migration and training, together with improving their aid management practices; and engage in "more frank" aid negotiations with their Pacific colleagues.⁹⁹ The Review also recommended a stronger role for the forum's secretariat, then called SPEC, in facilitating better aid policy and related practices, including for project design and appraisals.

The Review team's diagnosis of the issues besetting aid's influence and effectiveness in the region and the dominance of donors became a recurring theme in the Pacific over the next

⁹⁶ Most countries had such plans, the review team observed - even if the donors did not! The Task Force noted although donors used both project and programme aid, most aid remained subject to conditions on its use. They argued that donors' preferences for tied aid and high-import capital-intensive projects - rather than financing local costs and services, without restrictions - undermined recipient countries' capacity to deliver on their priorities. Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:8.

⁹⁷ Visits by experts "unlikely to be of use to the region should be cut out". Visitors should always "see the lowest level official who can reasonably deal with their needs". Regional statistics on aid and development were required. Aid Review Task Force Terms of Reference and Membership, (Annex A) in Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11.

⁹⁸ Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11:11.

⁹⁹ Other recommendations included changes to the way aid was delivered: that donors would support recurrent costs; and that the region undertake a review of the role [and influence] of consultants through public debate within countries. Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11.

three decades. Remarkably, the review's findings were uncannily similar to the problems which the global idea of Ownership proposed to redress in Paris nearly three decades later.

But in 1976, the Pacific leaders were optimistic that they could resolve the issues and concerns raised in the Review.

6.3.2 Mutual Help for Mutual Benefit: the First Pacific-led Aid and Development Policy

The Pacific leaders rejected the donors' dominance of their economic development agenda. They proposed, instead, to re-cast development relations in the region. The Pacific leaders convened one of the region's first conferences of donors, technical organisations and Pacific countries in Honolulu in 1980 to negotiate a Pacific-led development agenda.¹⁰⁰ The agenda was framed as an exchange between peers, guided by the principle of mutual help for mutual benefit.¹⁰¹ Aid, the Pacific leaders asserted, was a resource; it was part of the exchange relations: not the determining factor.¹⁰²

There were four steps to the renewed development agenda. First, Ratu Mara told the assembly, it was imperative that the Pacific peoples controlled their own destinies, through national, regional and global cooperation:

¹⁰⁰ The Conference included a large cast of political actors from within the region and the Pacific rim-countries: 18 Pacific island states territories and self-governing countries [excepting only PNG, Niue and FSM]; the five former or contemporary colonial powers; as well as three countries, two of which would emerge as major donors [Japan and EU] in the region; two donor agencies [Australia and Canada]; seven UN agencies and two IFIs including the World Bank; three secretariats including SPC and SPEC from the Pacific; two civil society organisations from the Pacific; and 14 different academic institutions from the former colonial powers and the Pacific region. Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*.

¹⁰¹ Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*.

¹⁰² The Aid Review asserted that aid "determined" relations. Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11.

...We must continue to strive to develop in order to achieve a way of life to which we aspire and be able to control our own destinies...to find ways to improve the welfare of our people and achieve the best possible quality of life based on what exists in each island society...[which] can be achieved through both national and regional efforts and cooperation with others in the global community....[giving] priority to meeting basic human needs, improving the standard of living, achieving self-sufficiency, independence in determining our destiny, and the pursuit of happiness and peace as goals of the Pacific islands [through]....an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance, to exchange ideas and experience on issues of common interest and concern... to promote greater understanding and better relations amongst our peoples...¹⁰³

Second, there was recognition of interdependency between the interests and influence of the Pacific islands and “the world community”.¹⁰⁴ As Ratu Mara argued, it was incumbent upon the Pacific leaders to balance collective unity within the region with an understanding of how the broader world operated. The Pacific could no longer choose not to participate in the global community if they were to fully exploit their resources to improve their standard of living for the benefit of their people. In summing up the conference, Ratu Mara explained:

There was concern with the Pacific islands’ role in the world community and with the impact of the latter on the Pacific islands. In order to allow for both, there was general agreement that the Pacific islands should speak with a more united voice.....in a world where there is concern with multinational corporations, ocean resources and 200-mile exclusive economic zones, development assistance, trade, power plays and strategies...not only should we speak with a united voice but we also must understand these international problems and develop strategies for the development of our resources for the benefit of our peoples...”¹⁰⁵

The leaders who gathered in Honolulu understood that contribution - and interdependency - was fundamental to the Pacific way of life. As Samoa’s Prime Minister, Tupuola Efi, explained to his peers at the UN, the Pacific drew strength from acknowledging, with humility, the contribution that all have to offer:

¹⁰³ Ratu Sir Kamisese K. T. Mara, 27 March 1980, Opening Address, in Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*, 77.

¹⁰⁴ The Pacific leaders met in Honolulu in 1980 with “the outside countries” and international organisations to determine a strategy for national efforts, supported by regional and global cooperation, to address the region’s “special needs and problems” as “part of the world community”. Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*, 88-89.

¹⁰⁵ Ratu Sir Kamisese K.T. Mara, Conference Chairman: “[for the]...greater achievement of national interests through cooperation amongst ourselves and between us and our friends in the world community...” in Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*, 5 (Introduction).

What is to say which man has the right perspective? The man on top of the mountain certainly has the best panoramic view and can see the whole picture. But the man in the canoe is better placed to see the school of fish. All have a role to play. The art lies in allowing each to make his contribution, in the pooling of complementary resources...neither can ignore the other.¹⁰⁶

The art of interdependency lay in allowing each to make their contribution according to their position and role. There were three domains: national, regional and global with differing perspectives and thus differing mandates, capacities and access to resources. The task for all was to understand and respect each other's potential for contribution: which meant understanding each other better.

Lastly, those gathered in Honolulu agreed that mutual commitment, through the exchange of "mutual help for mutual benefit", was the basis for building productive relationships, positive partnerships, which would achieve the common effort of "a more equitable and just international economic order". Again, as Ratu Mara observed:

...In all these regional endeavours...what brings us together is a common enterprise and a commitment to the promotion of the economic and social welfare of the island countries and peoples of the region. This is the kind of positive and partnership approach through which we as a region can contribute to the common effort by all nations to bring about a more equitable and just international economic order based on mutual help and mutual benefit...¹⁰⁷

This was the first opportunity for the Pacific region's leaders to assert their strategy for development with the region's multilateral and bilateral donors. A re-set in the regional relations "determined" by aid was fundamental to the renewed development agenda. As Ratu Mara declared in his closing address:

...We have been divided by our historical past.... We are united by the mutuality of our needs. But unless we maintain and build upon this unity and protect our interests with a united voice, we shall be exploited and be the losers in the scramble by the technologically advanced countries and by the

¹⁰⁶ Efi, T. 28/9/77. Address by the Prime Minister of Samoa to the United Nations General Assembly 11th Plenary Meeting 32nd Session New York. A/32/PV.11: 155-156.

¹⁰⁷ Ratu Sir Kamisese K.T.Mara, 27th March 1980, Opening Address, in Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*, 78.

multinationals for scarce resources that we have in abundance and in particular, the wealth of our seas. It is, therefore, quite obvious... that we should carry forward and maintain the momentum of this consensus that we have achieved at this meeting....as the president of Kiribati reminded us, the ideal aid is that which enhances our capacity to be self-reliant... I am sure that donors of aid will also agree that it will be as helpful to them as to us, as aid recipients, if there is a common approach and common method of giving and receiving aid, rather than each donor or recipient making its own independent approaches or setting its own procedures...¹⁰⁸

Ratu Mara appealed to his regional peers for unity. Aid was necessary, to unlock the wealth of the resources within their waters; but without a unified voice, they risked ongoing exploitation in the face of the superior technology of the “advanced countries”.¹⁰⁹ They risked being “losers in the scramble” for the Pacific’s abundant wealth.¹¹⁰ Ratu Mara asserted the end goal of self-reliance as the central purpose for accepting aid. He also sent a message to the donors. It was a message which pre-empted the principles which underpinned the 1st high level forum on aid effectiveness in Rome, over two decades later: harmonise your methods for transferring aid, if you really want to help.

While the Conference in Honolulu was deemed a resounding success by its organisers, pursuit of the development agenda in the following decade proved challenging for the Pacific region.

6.3.3 The “Lost Decade” of Development: the 1980s

There was ongoing volatility in the price of oil through the decade,¹¹¹ debt crises in Latin America and Africa; and recessions in several countries.¹¹² In the Pacific, the volatility in oil

¹⁰⁸ Ratu Sir Kamisese K.T.Mara, 29th March, 1980, Opening Address, in Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*, 80.

¹⁰⁹ Ratu Sir Kamisese K.T.Mara, 29th March, 1980, Opening Address, in Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*, 80.

¹¹⁰ Ratu Sir Kamisese K.T.Mara, 29th March, 1980, Opening Address, Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*, 80.

¹¹¹ Gately, D. 1986. Lessons from the 1986 Oil Price Collapse. 1986/06 Brookings Institute.

¹¹² See Chapter 3: The End of the Golden Age, the Debt Crisis and Development Setbacks, in UNDESA. 2017. *World Economic and Social Survey 2017: Reflecting on the seventy years of development policy analysis*. The WESS 2017 refers to

increased the cost of transport, and goods imported into the region; and the value of Pacific exports dropped. The cost of living increased.¹¹³ However, while some national economies were hit hard,¹¹⁴ overall, the region weathered the global economic storm, protected in large part by an increase in the volume of aid flows.¹¹⁵ Despite some setbacks which had shaken trust in regional cooperation during the 1970s,¹¹⁶ for the most part, the Forum collectively pursued regional development through the decade, as intended by its founding members.¹¹⁷ The Forum was also proactive in taking regional concerns to the UN.¹¹⁸

Several Pacific countries encountered major financial and political crises during the 1980s.¹¹⁹ The financial crisis in the early 1980s hit Samoa - and its incumbent government – particularly hard: foreign reserves were depleted, exports reduced and the government was heavily in

the “lost decade” in relation to Latin America and Africa: while it refers to a more positive development trajectory in Asia over the same period, the report did not specify its views on the Pacific region.

¹¹³ World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s Vol.1: Regional Overview*.

¹¹⁴ SPEC. *Directors Annual Report 1981-82*.

¹¹⁵ The 1985 Directors Report for SPEC reported that “prudent economic policies, improved returns and growth in certain commodity exports and increased flows of bilateral and multilateral assistance, the members of the South Pacific forum managed to fare better than average among the developing countries.” Australia and New Zealand, the region’s largest economies, survived the first wave of global crises. According to Development Policy Centre Aid Tracker, Australia maintained its aid commitments to the Pacific through the 1980s. Australian aid continued, as it had for much of the preceding decade, although a slow increase, even though the Australian economy experienced several setbacks during the decade. By the turn of the decade both ANZ were experiencing inflation, recession and drought - and their economies were in trouble. As Australia’s then Prime Minister Keating infamously said of Australia’s early 1990s recession, “This was the recession we had to have.” Millmow, A. 1/12/2015. Twenty-five years on from the recession we had to have. *SMH*

¹¹⁶ For example, the differences over the consortium arrangements for the regional airline Air Pacific - and Fiji’s eventual takeover of the regional air service in 1974; the formation of the regional shipping line. See Chapter 10 in Fry G. 2019. *Framing the Islands: Power and Diplomatic Agency in Pacific Regionalism*, for a comprehensive discussion of the region’s achievements and challenges during the decades 1970-80. The viability of the Forum’s subsidies to the regional shipping line was repeatedly reassessed during the 1980s See SPEC. *Director’s Annual Report 1980/81*; and *1981/82*; and *1984/85*.

¹¹⁷ Fry refers to this as the shift from regional and sectoral economic integration to collective diplomacy; Fry offers examples of collective diplomacy on trade in the 1970s, and indicates that through the 1980s, the Forum’s increasingly drew on collective diplomacy in its regional and global advocacy, for e.g., in relation to establishment of the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). Not all collective diplomacy was unanimous: there were rifts amongst the countries; for example, diplomacy to create the FFA reflected an underlying debate between the countries who sought to exploit fish as a resource vs those who saw the role of the FFA as resource management; when the FFA was confirmed, the Nauru Group emerged, to pursue the commercial exploitation of the fish within their waters. They did work with the FFA, in the first instance. Fry G. 2019. *Framing the Islands: Power and Diplomatic Agency in Pacific Regionalism*.

¹¹⁸ SPEC. *Director’s Annual Report 1980/81*; *1981/82*; and *1984/85*.

¹¹⁹ World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s Vol.1: Regional Overview*.

debt.¹²⁰ Subsequent fuel and food shortages, compounded by low wages, led to Samoa's first and largest public sector strike and eventually, a change in government.¹²¹ Samoa was not the only country facing tough times. Several Pacific neighbours were facing political unrest, some of it marked by extreme violence. Political unrest characterised Vanuatu's path to independence in 1980; and the dissatisfaction continued afterwards.¹²² New Caledonia was tragically marked by a decade of political violence, between independence activists and settler communities, and within the independence movement; culminating in political assassinations.¹²³ Fiji experienced two military coups in 1987; it was seen by some as the start of Fiji's "coup culture".¹²⁴ In Bougainville, the secessionist conflict with PNG re-surfaced violently in 1988.¹²⁵

At the UN, the Forum leaders put forward a unified regional voice early in the decade. The Pacific countries formed negotiating blocs and alliances to successfully advocate for agreements which reflected Pacific interests.¹²⁶ Regional concerns over maritime boundary rights and the impact of nuclear testing coalesced into the successful negotiation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1982 and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty in

¹²⁰ Amosa, D. U. 2012. *Social Policies in Samoa*, 41.

¹²¹ Amosa, D. U. 2012. *Social Policies in Samoa*.

¹²² SPEC. 1981. *Directors Report 1980/81*, observes that the 11th Pacific Forum especially referenced the events on Espiritu Santo, passing a resolution for peace and stability to be maintained; MacClancy, J.V. 1984. Current Developments in the Pacific: Vanuatu since independence: 1980-83, *The Journal of Pacific History* 19(2) (April):100-112.

¹²³ The Forum meeting minutes in 1988 and 1989 record with "deep regret" the ongoing violence, and subsequently, their "deep sadness" at the assassination of the independence leaders in New Caledonia. South Pacific Forum. 1988. 19th Forum Communique. South Pacific Forum, Nuku'alofa, Tonga 20-21 September 1988; South Pacific Forum. 1989. Forum Communique. 20th South Pacific Forum Tarawa, Kiribati, 10-11 July 1989. For a retrospective overview, see Maclellan, N. 10/5/2019. Thirty Years on, a Spirit of Reconciliation in New Caledonia.

¹²⁴ Firth, S. and J. Frankel and B. Lal (eds). 2009. *The 2006 Military Takeover in Fiji: A Coup to End all Coups?*

¹²⁵ Regan, A. 2018. The Bougainville Referendum Arrangements: Origins, Shaping and Implementation, Part One: Origins and Shaping. *DPA Discussion Paper* 2018/4.

¹²⁶ See Chapter 10 in Fry G. 2019. *Framing the Islands: Power and Diplomatic Agency in Pacific Regionalism* for a comprehensive discussion of the region's achievements and challenges during the decades 1970-80.

1985.¹²⁷

Despite the ongoing political and financial crises across the region, the Forum continued to pursue collective opportunities to develop the regional infrastructure necessary to establish their national economies. The Forum engaged an array of issues in the name of regional development: trade opportunities; better, cheaper and more reliable access to energy; consolidation of the regional shipping line and related maritime issues; civil aviation; tertiary education; telecommunications; and resource management [especially in fishing].¹²⁸ The expanding regional development agenda brought donors. The Forum leaders had charged their secretariat, the SPEC, with the responsibility for ensuring the right kind of information and arrangements were in place for determining development policy, accessing aid and managing development.¹²⁹ SPEC carried two key responsibilities: policy and advisor support; and secretarial and administrative functions.¹³⁰ Despite a review of the region's institutional arrangements, as early as 1982, SPEC's Director observed that the agency was experiencing conflict in fulfilling both responsibilities.¹³¹ The administrative burden of managing increasing donors - and the complexity of their requisite paperwork - was increasing. The number of feasibility studies multiplied with every development proposal and every donor. Some donors

¹²⁷ The UN CLOS lays down a comprehensive regime of law and order in the world's oceans and seas, establishing rules governing all uses of the oceans and their resources. The Convention also provides the framework for further development of specific areas of the law of the sea. (UNCLOS and UNODA Treaties Database.) The SPNFZT or Treaty of Rarotonga formalises the prohibition of nuclear explosive devices in the south Pacific. It has been ratified by 13 countries in the region. the three Compact states in the north [RMI FSM and Palau] are not parties to the treaty although they are eligible. If they joined the Treaty, its scope would incorporate their territories. Treaty of Rarotonga

¹²⁸ See SPEC *Director's Annual Reports for 1980-81, 1981-82, 1984-85, 1990-91*.

¹²⁹ The records available from the 1980s Directors Reports [which also included the minutes of the Forum meetings] show that the Forum commissioned a review of the region's institutional arrangements in 1980-81; SPEC led a regional workshop to promote skills in development planning in 1982; and aid was available to support an annual "fellowship" program in technical training between governments across the region. But offers of aid under the SPARTECA trade arrangements with Australia were not pursued in 1985.

¹³⁰ SPEC. 1982. *Directors Annual Report 1981-82*.

¹³¹ SPEC. 1982. *Directors Annual Report 1981-82*.

were questioning the effectiveness of aid.¹³² By the end of the decade, the Forum's Secretariat¹³³ was routinely dealing with a dozen major bilateral donors as well as multiple multilateral agencies and the Banks.¹³⁴ The potential conflict in the SPEC's capacity to meet both its key responsibilities remained.

For the Forum, aid continued to be framed as a resource which supported the strategy of mutual help for mutual benefit, as laid out in Honolulu Conference at the start of the decade. Aid enabled access to the technical skills and infrastructure needed to support regional and national development through "self-help and mutual assistance".¹³⁵ But as the decade turned, and countries were recovering from various political and financial crises, the framing of aid shifted: from aid as a means to an end, a sign of an existing and committed partnership,¹³⁶ to a framing which asserted that the effective use of aid was the basis for establishing partnership.¹³⁷ This shift was promoted by the World Bank's first review of the region's economic performance in 1990.¹³⁸ The Review found that aid was not only increasingly important to the region's economies but that the region was the highest recipient of aid per capita in the world while, simultaneously, the world's worst economic performer.¹³⁹

¹³² For example, SPEC observed the complexity of aid arrangements for European Communities projects added to their management burden; while the European Communities Commission expressed concern about the effective utilisation of aid under the Lome Convention. SPEC. 1982. *Directors Annual Report 1981-82*, para 160-161.

¹³³ In 1988, Forum leaders renamed the SPEC the Forum Secretariat: South Pacific Forum. 1988. *Forum Communiqué*. 19th South Pacific Forum, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 20-21 September 1988.

¹³⁴ Canada, USA, Japan, UK, Germany and France, Australia and New Zealand; the Commonwealth Secretariat, UN, ESCAP, UNDP, UNCTAD; WHO; ILO; ITC; ADB and the World Bank.

¹³⁵ See SPEC. *Annual Director's Reports between 1980/81-1984/85*; and SPEC. 1988. Minutes of the meeting between the Committee on Regional Institutional Arrangements and invited dialogue partners.

¹³⁶ Ratu Sir Kamisese K.T.Mara, 29th March 1980, Opening Address, in Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*, 80.

¹³⁷ South Pacific Forum Secretariat. 4-7 Feb 1991. Pacific Island Countries-Donors Meeting, Summary of Proceedings: SPFS(91)3.

¹³⁸ World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s Vol.1: Regional Overview*.

¹³⁹ World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s Vol.1: Regional Overview*.

The answer, the Review said, was better aid coordination; this was the basis from which partnership emerged. The development strategy adopted by the Pacific leaders in Honolulu a decade earlier, of mutual help for mutual benefit – and its underlying assertion of equity and equality between the Pacific countries and donors – was under challenge. The recently renamed Forum Secretariat stepped up to mediate the shift.¹⁴⁰

6.4 The 1990s Shift: from Mutuality to Coordination

6.4.1 “Learning lessons from the 1980s”:

The Bank’s findings re-oriented the framing of the strategy for aid and development in the Pacific. The 1990 Review brought a shift in the conversation from mutual exchange between the donors and Pacific countries to the countries’ accountability and effectiveness. The conversations moved from the Pacific Forum leaders’ assertion of the quality – and equality – of relations between countries and donors, to the quality of aid delivery by countries. It wasn’t simply a rhetorical shift. It reflected a shift in power.

Reframing the problem:

As we have seen, the Bank’s analysts declared the problem was that despite the highest per capita receipt of aid in the world, the Pacific region was one of the worst economic performers

¹⁴⁰ An address by Fiji’s Minister of Finance reported: “... the meeting is essentially about trying to forge a more productive partnership between PICS and the donor community, to bring about an improvement in aid delivery and utilisation ...we need to identify practical means for progressing the donor/recipient dialogue and formulate measures to increase the effectiveness of the development assistance provided to the region. The terms and conditions of donor assistance must be married as effectively as possible with the policies and capacities of the island governments.” Dinner Address by Hon. Josevata N Kamikamica Fiji’s Minister of Finance and Economic Planning at the Opening of the PICS/Donors meeting, 4 Feb 1991, Annex 2, In South Pacific Forum Secretariat. 4-7 Feb 1991. Pacific Island Countries-Donors Meeting, Summary of Proceedings, SPFS(91)3.

globally.^{141 142} The real issue, the Bank's analysts asserted, was that the region's governments were not effectively or efficiently using aid to ensure the "sound" policies and institutions necessary to achieve economic growth and development.¹⁴³ Pacific governments needed to use aid more effectively and efficiently to stimulate economic growth through private investment. They needed to institute public sector reform to improve government planning and allocation of resources to ensure the economic growth which promotes development.

The Bank's analysts recommended a re-orientation in national planning, aid management and coordination.¹⁴⁴ Countries, the Review argued, needed to plan better; and donors needed to

¹⁴¹ This was referred to as the Pacific Paradox. As one commentator, Wallace, observed: "The region's good time have passed many tiny nations by, leaving them mired in poverty. Critics blame government waste, depleted natural resources." Wallace, C. P. 16/3/1995. The 'Pacific Paradox' Islands Of Despair: The Region's Good Time Have Passed Many Tiny Nations By, Leaving Them Mired in Poverty. Critics Blame Government Waste, Depleted Natural Resources. *Column One, Los Angeles Times*. See also: World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s Vol.1: Regional Overview*; and Toatu, T. 2001. Unravelling the 'Pacific Paradox' – the case of Kiribati, *Pacific Economic Bulletin*, 16(1)May.

¹⁴² The review also found that a high proportion of aid spend, in fact, "boomeranged" back to the donor countries – particularly Australia – in the shape of payment for capital, training and technical and advisory services sourced from Australia. In reality, the proportion of aid spend in most Pacific countries was far less than claimed. And the Bank knew this. The Bank's analysis ignored this nuance in its assessment of the problem and its resolution. The report acknowledged that while the Pacific countries benefited from high aid flows, net financial transfers were "substantially lower than gross ODA flows" because of the volume of aid spent externally on goods or services. A "sizeable" amount of aid resources financed goods such as capital infrastructure resources and services such as technical assistance or human resource development which were either procured externally or took time to generate economic outcomes in the countries receiving the services. Consequently, the report's authors observed, the impact of aid flows on economic growth was "somewhat less" than expected, even though, "aid has clearly had a very positive effect on overall development." Despite acknowledging the so-called "boomerang aid", this issue was not factored into the strategy to resolve "the problem" of more effective and efficient use of aid. In effect the review simply side-stepped the debate on whether the volume of aid was sufficient to support greater economic growth in the countries; opting instead, to declare the global position: that poor performance was a matter of countries establishing "sound policies" through institutional reform. World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s Vol.1: Regional Overview*, i-vi.

¹⁴³ World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s. Vol.1: Regional Overview*, i-ii. Australia's then-Minister for the South Pacific, Gordon Bilney, is cited as saying, four years after the review: "I really don't think there is much use putting money into a country that is not looking after its own interests....we think they could do a much better job of managing their own resources." Bilney is reported by the media to have described the national and regional airline services as unprofitable "vanity" projects. Wallace, C. P. 16/3/1995. The 'Pacific Paradox' Islands Of Despair: The Region's Good Time Have Passed Many Tiny Nations By, Leaving Them Mired in Poverty. Critics Blame Government Waste, Depleted Natural Resources. *Column One, Los Angeles Times*.

¹⁴⁴ Countries, the report argued, needed to plan better; and donors needed to understand the policy context better in order to work with countries to strengthen their capacity to plan and deliver development priorities. New tools and policy instruments were required. The Bank argued, first, that countries should adopt strategic planning, based on macro-economic assessments, rather than multi-year plans; and second, that both countries and donors must commit to improving the coordination of external assistance [that is, aid or technical advice] through policy dialogue. If necessary, donors must impose conditions on their aid to ensure that countries appropriately engage in policy and institutional reform to facilitate change. Further, countries' development planning did not achieve "the primary objective, namely to ensure

understand the policy context better in order to work with countries to strengthen government capacity to plan and deliver development priorities. New tools and policy instruments were required. First countries should adopt strategic planning, based on macro-economic assessments, rather than multi-year plans. Second, countries and donors must improve the coordination of external assistance [including financial aid and technical advice] through policy dialogue. If necessary, donors must impose conditions on their aid to ensure that aid-receiving governments “appropriately” engage in policy and institutional reform to facilitate change.¹⁴⁵ Governments must adhere to practices which embody the right norms and standards for the effective and efficient use of aid.¹⁴⁶

The consequences: Leadership, coordination and capacity strengthening

In light of the Bank’s findings, there were several key shifts in aid policy and practices in the region. First, there was a shift in the how aid was framed: Aid policy increasingly became seen as a technical process, a question of policy, procedures and practices; of how aid would be delivered in country, rather than as a resource in political relationship shaped by mutual benefits. The conversations moved from the assertion of mutual help for mutual benefit premised on a relationship as equals to conversations where the Pacific countries’ capacity, or its absence [and the potential for corruption] became the problem to be fixed by better aid

that resources are used as efficiently as possible to foster economic and social development.” [p37] Under the existing policy instruments, national plans reflected “wish lists” rather than development priorities, drafted with the intent of securing donor funds. World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s. Vol.1: Regional Overview*, vii-37.

¹⁴⁵ World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s. Vol.1: Regional Overview*, 88-89.

¹⁴⁶ Countries’ development planning did not achieve “the primary objective, namely, to ensure that resources are used as efficiently as possible to foster economic and social development.” Under the existing policy instruments, national plans reflected “wish lists” rather than development priorities, drafted with the intent of securing donor funds. World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s. Vol.1: Regional Overview*.

coordination and a stronger engagement with the private sector to generate the economic growth necessary for development.

Second, there was a shift within the Forum over the responsibility for leading negotiations on aid policy and practice. In alignment with the recommendations of the 1976 Aid Review, the Secretariat assumed greater responsibility for leading the negotiation of aid policy and practices between the multilateral and bilateral donors and the Forum countries.¹⁴⁷ The Secretariat initiated the annual PICS-Partners meetings in 1991. These meetings became the key regional coordination mechanism between donors and countries.¹⁴⁸ The meeting became an annual event for two and a half decades, until 2014¹⁴⁹ offering a platform for donors and countries.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Herr argues that the SPEC had moved from a limited administrative role supporting the Forum leaders' annual meetings, to assuming a greater range of administrative and policy responsibilities. (Herr R. 16 /3/2021, Pacific Islands Forum: Finding meaning in a 'typo'?) This shift was also foreshadowed by the 1976 Aid Effectiveness Review. The SPEC was mandated by the Forum leaders on its establishment with responsibility for facilitating aid arrangements. The 1976 review recommended that SPEC take a stronger role in annual aid consultations on economic affairs, based on a regional development plan; and in advising member countries on economic development and development financing; and that SPEC take over functions previously undertaken by the UN agencies in relation to project appraisals and preparations, quality control, and the evaluation of aid projects. See Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11.

¹⁴⁸ The stated objective of the annual meeting was "to foster greater levels of cooperation, coordination and policy dialogue leading to more effective aid delivery and increased investment." South Pacific Forum Secretariat. 1992. Meeting Papers of the Pacific Islands Countries-Development Partnership Meeting, 9-12 March 1992, Suva, Fiji. (92)MP.20.

¹⁴⁹ Following the release of the Review of the Pacific Plan in 2013 ["the Morauta Report"] the Forum Leaders undertook a major overhaul of the Forum Secretariat's purpose and policy framework, resulting in the Pacific framework for Regionalism (2016). During this process, the status of several programs and their funding was uncertain; this included the Compact programs and support. In 2015, the Secretariat postponed the annual PICS Partners meeting; and the Forum leaders formally delegated the annual Compact reporting to the FEMM. Despite the support for the Compact in the 2015 Development Effectiveness Report, some of the Compact programs and support were first postponed, then cancelled in 2016 (such as the PICS Partners meetings), while other programs were reconstituted under the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development (2017). An independent evaluation confirming this strategy was accepted by the Secretary general in November 2017. Confidential Interview-Regional Organisation-BT-09062015; Brien, D. R. Jauncey and J. Winter. 30/11/2017. Findings of the Independent Review: Forum Compact Report-Final.

¹⁵⁰ The minutes of the various PICS-Partners Meetings between 1991 and 2014 reveal a common and consistent approach to the forum discussions: the annual meeting would review the region's economic performance; consult [or report] on past or forthcoming global aid and development summits and agreements, such as Rio's Agenda 21, the World Summits and HFLAE etc; discuss new orientations in aid management and development, such as the shift to strengthen private sector engagement and public sector reforms; and then coordinate capacity-strengthening initiatives to support proposed re-orientations, including strengthening aid coordination practices. Background briefing papers and policy advice on aid policy and practices were usually prepared by the Secretariat's policy advisors, often in collaboration with the leading donor or multilateral agency.

The Secretariat convened the annual meeting in collaboration with key donors, including the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], World Bank, Asian Development Bank [ADB] and Australia and New Zealand. Some, such as the OECD, were engaging with the region for the first time. The Secretariat worked with the donors to facilitate capacity strengthening initiatives with the countries' national policy-makers. These included workshops for national leaders to learn the "new tools" of strategic planning, financial management and public sector reform.¹⁵¹

These shifts reinforced an emerging view of aid as a technical process rather than a political relationship. There were claims to partnership still - but the partnership was about the mechanics of how aid was delivered to achieve economic growth for development - rather than the quality of the relationship, in contrast to the earlier proposition advocated by the leaders in Honolulu. Ambiguity about the changes ensued. When the Forum's Secretary General [and former President of Kiribati], Ieremia Tabai, who had been at the meeting in Honolulu, opened the second annual meeting in 1992, he reiterated the importance of

¹⁵¹ For example, the Secretariat in collaboration with the OECD – announcing the donor organisation's first-ever visit to the Pacific region - held a workshop in 1990 on aid policy. As the decade progress, the Secretariat collaborated with other donors and USP to offer seminars and workshops for government ministers and their public sector leadership on: improving donor-PICS relations, with the intent of re-orienting the relationship between countries and donors to one of partners; re-orienting development planning to adopt a strategic approach; re-orienting national governments to lead public sector reform; instituting public financial management practices; and stimulating private sector development. The UNDP/IMF also established the Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre [PFTAC], a training and advisory mechanism on public financial management in Pacific countries, which continues to work with national governments and others across the region. eg the Senior Officials Policy Seminar, held October 1991, reported in the Background Paper, South Pacific Forum Secretariat. 1992. Meeting Papers of the Pacific Islands Countries-Development Partnership Meeting; Economic Development Institute (EDI), World Bank (WB) and the Institute of Social and Administrative Studies, University of South Pacific (ISAS-USP). 1991. *Strategic Approaches to National Planning, Report of a Five-Day Senior Policy Seminar, 28 October - 1 November 1991, at Suva Fiji*. Organised with support of the Forum Secretariat Suva, Fiji; Economic Development Institute (EDI), World Bank (WB) and the Institute of Social and Administrative Studies, University of South Pacific (ISAS-USP). 1993. *Making Government More Effective: Public Sector Reform in the South Pacific, Report on a Four-day Seminar for Government Ministers with their Permanent Secretaries in Nadi, Fiji, 9-12 March 1993*. Supported by AIDAB and the Forum Secretariat; Economic Development Institute (EDI), World Bank (WB) and the Institute of Social and Administrative Studies, University of South Pacific (ISAS-USP). 1991. *Private Sector Development in the South Pacific: Managing the Government's role in the creation of an enabling environment, Report of a Senior Policy Seminar held at Nuku'alofa Tonga, 6-10 May 1991*. Supported by AIDAB and the Forum Secretariat.

national leadership of a country's economic development. As he had done consistently since he became President, he argued that aid was a means for ensuring self-reliance:

...While aid is important, it is not the answer to all our problems but a means for achieving self-reliance... The fundamentals are...the process **must be driven by recipients**, use sound analysis, discuss policy as well as programmes and ...[and be] integrated within the countries own economic framework...¹⁵²

The Chair of the same meeting, however, declared at its conclusion that "Aid flowed through partnership," invoking the shadow of claims made by the 1976 Aid Review that aid acted to determine relations between donors and countries. This was precisely the risk that those who had gathered in Honolulu in 1980 had sought to avoid.¹⁵³

Bargaining and questions of trust became the prevailing undercurrent between donors and countries in the annual meetings. Donors contended that countries should be more accountable for how the countries used aid; they should be more efficient and effective in how they use all resources. While the Pacific countries contended that donors should align aid with countries' development priorities, as reflected in their national development plans.¹⁵⁴

The tentative emergence of Ownership in the region

Amidst the resurgence of distrust in relations in the late 90s, the first record proposing a relationship between "Ownership" and aid effectiveness emerged in the annual PICs-Partners meeting.

¹⁵² Secretary General Talking Points, in South Pacific Forum Secretariat. 1992. Meeting Papers of the Pacific Islands Countries-Development Partnership Meeting, 9-12 March 1992, Suva, Fiji. (92)MP.20; and Finau, P. P. et al. June 1976. *More Effective Aid: A Report to the South Pacific Forum*. SPEC (76)11.

¹⁵³ As the Chairman Mr P Muller, from Samoa and then Director of SOPAC, indicated in his remarks during the 1992 PICs Partners Meeting: "There is general acceptance that what we are talking about now is partnership and that the delivery of aid must be seen as flowing through partnership." In, South Pacific Forum Secretariat. 1992. Meeting Papers of the Pacific Islands Countries-Development Partnership Meeting, 9-12 March 1992, Suva, Fiji. (92)MP.20.

¹⁵⁴ South Pacific Forum Secretariat. 1995. Meeting Papers of the Pacific Islands Countries-Development Partnership Meeting, Suva Fiji.

The Secretariat's incoming Director of its Economic Division, newly-arrived from New Zealand, observed the need to strengthen national capacities for problem analysis, planning priorities and implementation. In doing so, he argued, there was a need to "engender the sense of Forum Island Countries' ownership of the process," for determining national development priorities.¹⁵⁵ Better national capacity, and significantly, national commitment to plan, prioritise and implement would assist the region to prioritise its development needs, he claimed. His analysis reflected that of the World Bank's analysts, nearly a decade earlier [as outlined in Chapter 4]. While his proposition didn't resolve the tensions between donors and countries which continued in the PICS Partners meetings, it did pre-empt the next shift in the region's aid policy settings.

6.4.2 Harmonisation, briefly

The turn of the Millennium saw agreement in New York on the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs]¹⁵⁶ with the idea of Ownership becoming prominent through the High-level Fora on Aid Effectiveness [as elaborated in Chapter 4]. By 2002, the multilaterals shift to a common policy on Ownership was making its way to the Pacific. The Secretariat briefed the PICs-Partners meeting. The OECD-DAC, they explained, "wanted to see developing countries assume greater ownership of the development process." However, the Secretariat continued, "the different and complex procedures of donors hindered" countries from doing so.¹⁵⁷ Harmonisation, they proposed, would resolve the issue.

¹⁵⁵ See Regional Strategy, Background Paper, in South Pacific Forum Secretariat. 1995. Meeting Papers of the Pacific Islands Countries-Development Partnership Meeting, Suva Fiji.

¹⁵⁶ UNGA. 2000. UN Millennium Declaration; OECD. 2003. Rome Declaration on Harmonisation.

¹⁵⁷ OECD-DAC Donor Practices Update (02)PICPV.03, In Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2002. PIC/Development Partners Meeting, 5 July 2002 Port Vila, Vanuatu. Meeting Papers (02) MP6.

However, the distrust between donors and countries evident through the previous decade continued under the proposed shift in policy settings. There was disagreement over whether “harmonisation” was genuinely intended to reduce the administrative burden on aid-receiving countries; or whether it was a means to reduce aid to the countries. In the mix, there was a growing concern amongst both countries and donors at the high levels of dependency on aid which persisted, notwithstanding a decrease in overall aid flows to the region since 1997.¹⁵⁸ Tensions came to a head when the regional Task Force on Donor Practices convened a regional workshop between donors and the Pacific countries.

The OECD-DAC had proposed the regional taskforce to review donor practices with a view to “setting standards and best practices” to reduce the administrative burden of donor practices on countries.¹⁵⁹ Harmonising donors’ practices through identifying common standards and best practices in the areas of financial management, reporting, monitoring and design, the OECD argued, would make aid delivery more efficient.¹⁶⁰ The OECD had invited the Secretariat to join the Task Force on Donor Practices, representing all SIDS across the Pacific region.¹⁶¹

The debates centred on the growing burden on the Pacific countries to generate the data and

¹⁵⁸ In 2000, total ODA to the region was calculated at \$696m, based on contemporary OECD Receipts for Forum Island Countries. See Development Cooperation in the Pacific PIFS(04)PICR.02 in Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP.5.

¹⁵⁹ OECD-DAC Donor Practices Update (02)PICPV.03, In Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2002. PIC/Development Partners Meeting, 5 July 2002 Port Vila, Vanuatu. Meeting Papers (02) MP6.

¹⁶⁰ The harmonisation agenda had three objectives: 1) to broaden the policy focus on behaviour change to include donor practices - in addition to the earlier focus on countries’ capacity and practices; 2) to bring the language of principles, best practice standards and performance conditions, more explicitly into negotiations on aid policy and practice; and 3) to bring partnerships, which had faded from view during the earlier negotiations on coordination, back into focus. The resultant Good Practice Reference Notes identified best practice guidelines for reporting and monitoring; and for financial management and auditing; and pre-implementation. It would guide donor on how to make aid delivery and execution more flexible. See: OECD-DAC Donor Practices Update (02)PICPV.03, In Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2002. PIC/Development Partners Meeting, 5 July 2002 Port Vila, Vanuatu. Meeting Papers (02) MP6.

¹⁶¹ OECD-DAC Donor Practices Update (02)PICPV.03, In Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2002. PIC/Development Partners Meeting, 5 July 2002 Port Vila, Vanuatu. Meeting Papers (02) MP6.

reports required by the donors [and as agreed in various global commitments].¹⁶² At the workshop, both donors and countries sought reassurance that previous mutual commitments would be honoured.

The Pacific countries were sceptical of the donors' intentions. They questioned whether the donors would honour commitments made at the HLFAE in Rome to increase aid, align with countries priorities and to change donor practices. The countries' policy advisors were concerned that responding to donor demands stretched countries beyond their capacities. Often, countries claimed, "donor-driven priorities and systems" operated as key barriers to effective development.¹⁶³ Countries specified their demands: they wanted reassurance that multilateral and bilateral donors were serious and unified in their support for harmonisation with no "hidden agendas".¹⁶⁴

Donors questioned whether the absence of reliable data to account for aid spending was a matter of countries' capacity, or alternatively, indicative of a lack of commitment to identify development priorities based on sound analysis. Repeating the discussion of the early 1990s, the OECD and World Bank called for new policy tools to promote their confidence in the

¹⁶² The minutes of the annual PICS Partners Meetings between 2002-2004 reference Pacific participation or responses to an increasing range of global conferences and meetings - which incurred various commitments by virtue of the conventions of adherence in the absence of objections, including: MDGs/Millennium Summit, 2000; LDC-III Conference, Brussels 2001; FfD Conference, Monterrey 2002; World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002; Rome High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, 2003. Preparations for future meetings included: the 2004 review of the Barbados Programme of Action, due in Mauritius in Jan 2005. References to global commitments in Monterrey and Rome, however, were relayed by the donors and the Secretariat rather than the countries.

¹⁶³ Pacific Regional Workshop on Donor Harmonisation, Workshop Summary Record, Nadi, Fiji, 30-31 October 2003, Annex A to Donor Harmonisation - Pacific Progress Since Rome PIFS(04)PICR.03, in Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP.5.

¹⁶⁴ Pacific Regional Workshop on Donor Harmonisation, Workshop Summary Record, Nadi, Fiji, 30-31 October 2003, Annex A to Donor Harmonisation - Pacific Progress Since Rome PIFS(04)PICR.03, in Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP.5: last para.

countries' capacity to determine its development priorities. They proposed that countries use "credible country development frameworks" on which to base aid allocations – otherwise, aid funding could be refused.¹⁶⁵ The definition of "credible" – and the Bank's implicit threat to withdraw aid if a country's development framework was not "credible" – generated a split between the donors. Australia and New Zealand asserted that they would not withhold funds to countries, all other things being equal.¹⁶⁶

At the heart of these debates, the issue of trust remained unresolved. There were repeated calls for donors and countries to develop and build "common understandings" of the issues

¹⁶⁵ National Planning Processes in FICS: Mechanisms for integration and mainstreaming of sustainable development, PIFS(04)PICR.07, in Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP.5. A credible framework met these following criteria: setting priorities; consultation processes and involvement of "the public", [including public institutions or government, private sector and civil society; and development partners]; achieving national ownership and policy integration; Identifying investments and funding sources for implementation; an implementation strategy; monitoring and evaluation processes, including reporting to parliament on budget resources.

¹⁶⁶ The 2003 Regional Workshop on Donor Practices was led by Australia and New Zealand, the World Bank and ADB, and the Secretariat. The OECD and other donors were present, along with most Forum countries. According to the representatives of the OECD and World Bank, a bargain had been struck in Rome: the donors offered more aid, aligned to countries' priorities – in return for countries' "credible development frameworks" based on sound analysis of the country context. The workshop reports the OECD DAC acknowledged: that aid's "underperformance" was due, to "overburdening of recipient countries, to low ownership and lack of political will...[and] too little alignment with recipient country priorities and systems, insufficient coordination and too many donor procedures." But, even so, the OECD explained, donors' "respect" for country's priorities was conditional, as Rome had noted, on "[country] systems being good enough and country priorities being founded on an adequate assessment [of the development situation] for example, poverty reduction strategies. The Workshop Report concluded: participating donors and countries agreed that the barriers to effective donor country relations were donor-driven priorities and systems and demands in excess of national capacity. In resolution, they proposed the following principles should frame strategies to resolve these barriers: the need for effective country leadership in the relationship and for clear recipient country development frameworks; aid and development processes should be linked through national budgets; relationships should be a partnership based on trust and mutual accountability; use and strengthen national capacity; and information sharing; need for simplification, enhanced coordination and "respecting" recipient priorities. A needs assessment identified priority needs as: simplifying procedures and systems; harmonising procedures; aligning procedures to recipient country systems; sharing information; untying said; respecting recipient country priorities; and strengthening local capacity. see Pacific Regional Workshop on Donor Harmonisation, Workshop Summary Record, Nadi, Fiji, 30-31 October 2003, para 4-6, Annex A to Donor Harmonisation - Pacific Progress Since Rome PIFS(04)PICR.03, in Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP.5. Although the 2003 Workshop Report notes common agreement to report on progress when donors and countries met the following year ie in 2004, the PICS Partners' agenda in 2004 focused instead on different forms of aid rather than donor behaviours or countries' commitment to reform. See Donor Harmonisation: Pacific Progress Since Rome, PIFS(04) PICR.03, In Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP.5.

and solutions, and for demonstrations of trust and mutual respect.¹⁶⁷ Ultimately, the workshop concluded ambiguously: “the donor-recipient experience underlines ownership issues, genuine capacity building and that the one-size fits all concept does not apply”.¹⁶⁸

The subsequent PICS-Partners meeting in 2004 proposed a resolution, recommending ways to improve mutual trust and confidence between donors and countries. The OECD and World Bank agreed to calls from countries - and the Secretariat - for renewed capacity-strengthening in the tools of national planning, resource allocation and performance. This agreement brought the donors’ language and practices of principles, best practice standards, and conditions explicitly into aid negotiations.¹⁶⁹ It laid the groundwork for the suite of policy tools - and accompanying principles and standards - which, two years later, formed the basis of the strategies associated with the global idea of Ownership in Paris.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Pacific Regional Workshop on Donor Harmonisation, Workshop Summary Record, Nadi, Fiji, 30-31 October 2003, para 4-6, Annex A to Donor Harmonisation - Pacific Progress Since Rome PIFS(04)PICR.03, in Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP.5.

¹⁶⁸ Pacific Regional Workshop on Donor Harmonisation, Workshop Summary Record, Nadi, Fiji, 30-31 October 2003, para 4-6, Annex A to Donor Harmonisation - Pacific Progress Since Rome PIFS(04)PICR.03, in Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP.5.

¹⁶⁹ The Secretariat’s 2004 Briefing Paper, asserted that the regional workshop in 2003 had agreed that harmonisation was based on clear principles: mutual accountability and trust; clear national development frameworks linked to national budgets; country-driven and led; genuine partnerships; support for capacity building; information sharing; mature relationships that facilitate consultation; and an openness to change and flexibility. See Donor Harmonisation - Pacific Progress Since Rome PIFS(04)PICR.03, in Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP *para 4-6*.

¹⁷⁰ For example, the Bank recommended the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers [PRSPs] developed by the Bank under its Comprehensive Development Framework [CDF], as such a “credible framework”. While initially seeming to support the Bank’s proposal, at the next year’s PICS-Partners meeting in 2004 however, the Secretariat proposed an alternative, the common national planning template. The template sought to address both the Rio and High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness agendas; encouraging, amongst other aspects, “national ownership and development of partnerships” see para 4. The template drew on advice and guidelines from ESCAP, UN-SIDS and OECD. See PIFS, National Planning Processes in FICS: Mechanisms for integration and mainstreaming of sustainable development, PICS-Partners Meeting, 11 June 2004, Rotorua New Zealand, PIFS(04)PICR.07

The Secretariat's Role

Through these debates, the Secretariat pursued an increasingly familiar role of mediation between the donors and the region's national policy advisors on translating global commitments to the local context in the Pacific.¹⁷¹ However, the Secretariat was not always neutral, despite its efforts to build consensus. At the 2004 meeting, the Secretariat put forward their views plainly: too often, donor views drove the construction of national development agendas. The Secretariat agreed that an environment which promoted ownership was necessary.¹⁷² However, the Secretariat observed, "...a key barrier to ownership was that "plans may have been inspired and driven" by donors."¹⁷³ The key element of success, the Secretariat explained,

...is the essence of partnership: that is, a relationship of equal standing where each partner actively participates, puts in best efforts, seeks synergies and avoids overlap and duplication of efforts....¹⁷⁴

Despite repeated admissions by the OECD [and other donors] that their practices were a burden and barrier to ownership, donors continued to dominate countries' development planning. Genuine partnerships as equals remained an unrealised ideal for the Pacific countries, despite decades of effort to work through consensus.

¹⁷¹ According to the PICS Partners meeting records between 2000-2009, this included: the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg; the Monterrey Financing for Development conference, and the Rome High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness; the Mauritius follow-up to the Barbados Program of Action; see: Forum Secretariat [with SPREP], Briefing Paper PIFS (02)PICPV.02, Related Issues to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, PIC/Development Partners Meeting Port Vila, Vanuatu, 5 July 2002: Meeting Papers (02) MP6; PIFS, Donor Harmonisation - Pacific Progress Since Rome, PICS-Partners Meeting, 11 June 2004, Rotorua New Zealand, PIFS(04) PICR.03

¹⁷² PIFS, National Planning Processes in FICS: Mechanisms for integration and mainstreaming of sustainable development, PICS-Partners Meeting, 11 June 2004, Rotorua New Zealand, PIFS(04)PICR.07 para 56

¹⁷³ PIFS, Donor Harmonisation - Pacific Progress Since Rome, PICS-Partners Meeting, 11 June 2004, Rotorua New Zealand, PIFS(04) PICR.03

¹⁷⁴ National Planning Processes in FICS: Mechanisms for integration and mainstreaming of sustainable development, PIFS(04)PICR.07, in Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP.5. para13.

The policy on harmonisation was only briefly on the agenda, however, before the region's efforts to work through consensus blurred into the global idea of Ownership at the second High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Paris in February 2005.¹⁷⁵ At the subsequent PICS-Partners meeting in 2005, the Secretariat led its regional colleagues, donors and countries in a discussion on aid effectiveness, capacity and skills for the first time.¹⁷⁶ It was the Secretariat's first formal acknowledgement of the emerging global significance of Ownership.

6.5 The Road out of Paris: The Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles and the Cairns Compact

There were representatives from four Pacific countries and the Pacific Forum Secretariat amongst the 100 or more aid-receiving countries, bilateral and multilateral donors, international and regional organisations which gathered at the 3rd High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Paris. Representatives of all the major multilateral and bilateral donors who were engaged in the region were also present. As is the convention in global fora, in the absence of vocal objection, attendance was taken to indicate agreement.¹⁷⁷

After Paris, the Secretariat, with the assistance of an Australian-funded technical advisor, led

¹⁷⁵ See Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership Unpacking the Policy Logic; and Chapter 5: The Global Idea of Ownership; and Chapter 6: From Paris to the Pacific.

¹⁷⁶ See Pennington, B. 2005. Aid Effectiveness in the Pacific Region: A Focus on Skills Transfer, Capacity Building and Technical Assistance. Final Report. PIFS(05)PICF.03 In Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 10/6/2005. PICS-Development Partners Meeting, Funafuti, Tuvalu. Meeting Papers PIFS(05).

¹⁷⁷ As discussed in Chapter 5 The Global Idea of Ownership, records and interviews indicate that there were four Pacific countries represented in Paris in 2005: Fiji, Cook Islands, Tonga and Solomon Islands – and the Pacific Forum Secretariat; the Secretariat, together with these same countries and Samoa, attended the Accra HLFAE in 2008. Presence at the meeting, in the absence of vocal objection, is taken to indicate adherence; alternatively, an entity may later “adhere” to an agreement in writing, after the event. The OECD website lists seven Pacific countries adhering to the agreements in Paris and Accra: the Cook Islands, Fiji, PNG and Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Kiribati advises it has also adhered to Paris, although it is not listed on the website. The multilateral and bilateral donor-adherents with a presence in the Pacific, in addition to OECD, included: Australia, France, New Zealand, United Kingdom, USA, Japan, Korea, The People's Republic of China; the ADB, IMF and WB; the EU; UNDG and GFATM.

development of a “localised” version of the principles agreed in Paris.¹⁷⁸ Subsequently, the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles [PAEPs] were endorsed by the region’s senior aid policy advisors at the PICS-Partners meeting and the adjacent Forum’s Economic Ministers Meetings [FEMM] in Koror in 2007.¹⁷⁹ The report accompanying the PAEPs re-affirmed the Secretariat’s mandate to coordinate aid issues across the region. The PAEPs drew from the principles agreed in Paris. They were “work-shopped” to “fit the Pacific context”.¹⁸⁰ They focused on the mechanics of how to implement the Paris principles in the Pacific.¹⁸¹ Ownership of development, Principle 1, was a technical definition, describing ownership as:

...an accountable and transparent national development planning and financial management system/mechanism which is adequately resourced from the national budget - including longer term operation and maintenance of donor sponsored development...¹⁸²

Principle 3 emphasised the importance of Pacific ownership of regional development,¹⁸³ drawing from the Forum’s 2004 Pacific Plan and other regional policies.¹⁸⁴

The PAEPs outlined the roles and responsibilities of Pacific countries and donors and identified the tools – national planning and financial management systems; and the standards for their

¹⁷⁸ The Secretariat, the Report claimed, had commissioned the Report arising from the directions made by the 2004 PICS-Partners meeting. But the minutes of the 2004 PICS-Partners meeting show no record of this direction. Pennington, B. 2005. Aid Effectiveness in the Pacific Region: A Focus on Skills Transfer, Capacity Building and Technical Assistance. Final Report. PIFS(05)PICF.03 In Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 10/6/2005. PICS-Development Partners Meeting, Funafuti, Tuvalu. Meeting Papers PIFS(05).

¹⁷⁹ Although the aid effectiveness agenda was acknowledged by the Forum Leaders in its meeting in Nadi in 2006, the principles underlying the Paris Declaration of Aid Effectiveness were not formally adopted by the Forum.

¹⁸⁰ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2007. Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles (July 2007 Koror).

¹⁸¹ The Pennington report recommended that the Forum adapt the Paris principles to “fit the Pacific context,” through the negotiation of a locally-framed set of principles to ensure “local commitment to change the way in which aid is delivered, administered, programmed and received. See Pennington, B. Aid Effectiveness in the Pacific Region: A Focus on Skills Transfer, Capacity Building and Technical Assistance. Final Report. PIFS(05)PICF.03 In Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 10/6/2005. PICS-Development Partners Meeting, Funafuti, Tuvalu. Meeting Papers PIFS(05).

¹⁸² Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2007. Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles (July 2007 Koror).

¹⁸³ Principle 3 of the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles advises: “Greater Pacific ownership of regional development, Development Partners’ Pacific Regional Strategies designed and formulated with the Pacific Plan and other Regional Policies as their cornerstone.” Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2007. Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles (July 2007 Koror).

¹⁸⁴ The Pacific Plan was first endorsed by Pacific Leaders in October 2005, and revised in October 2007. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2007. The Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration.

implementation – accountable, transparent and adequately resourced reflecting practices in use since the World Bank review of 1991.

A year after the region agreed on the PAEPs, representatives from several Pacific countries and the Forum Secretariat travelled the 4th High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Accra in 2008.¹⁸⁵ Despite claims of progress, the outcome in Accra asserted that more needed to be done to ensure Ownership. The Accra Agenda for Action sought two additional objectives: inclusion, demanding greater attention to the role and authority of parliaments and to civil society; and a stronger focus on results.¹⁸⁶ Again, the agreement of those attending was presumed in the absence of vocal objection. This meant that by 2008, five Pacific countries and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat were considered to have endorsed the agreements reached in Paris and Accra by virtue of their presence at the meetings.¹⁸⁷ As did all the major multilateral and bilateral donors operating in the region, including Australia.

While the Pacific Forum Leaders had endorsed the concept of aid effectiveness as necessary for sustainable development at their annual meeting in Nadi in 2006,¹⁸⁸ however, it wasn't until 2009 that the Pacific Forum Leaders formally endorsed the principles agreed in Paris and Accra, when they endorsed the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination at their annual leaders meeting.¹⁸⁹ Australia's Prime Minister Kevin Rudd chaired the annual leaders meeting in Cairns. It was Australia who proposed the Cairns Compact, the third prong

¹⁸⁵ This included those who attended the Paris HLFAE, with the addition of Samoa.

¹⁸⁶ OECD. 2008. The Accra Agenda for Action.

¹⁸⁷ Eventually, seven Pacific countries formally adhered to the agreements reached in the Paris and Accra HLFAE.

¹⁸⁸ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2006. Forum Communique: Thirty-Seventh Pacific Islands Forum, Nadi, Fiji, 24-25/10/2006. PIFS(06)12.

¹⁸⁹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. Forum Communique. 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific.

in the relatively new Labor government's policy approach in the Pacific.

The Rudd government – and the Cairns Compact

Relations between Australia and the Pacific had reached a low point under the coalition government led by Prime Minister Howard and his Foreign Minister Downer in 2007.¹⁹⁰ Rudd, the opposition leader – and expectant incoming-Prime Minister after the national elections in December that year – laid out the rationale for reframing Australia's engagement in the Pacific. Appearing on Lateline, then Australia's leading national affairs talk-show on Australia's national broadcaster, Rudd argued that the Pacific's "arc of instability" meant that Australia must act more assertively in the Pacific. The region's social and political instability, he argued, emerged because progress in economic development was weak. This put Australia's security and prosperity at risk. Australia was a wealthy country and shared history and geography with the Pacific; they were neighbours. Australia was obliged to act to ensure stability in the region: which meant offering assistance to build stronger economies and stable social and political environments. Offering Australia's assistance, he said, was the right thing to do. And, he admitted, it was also in Australia's national interest to re-establish Australia's prominent geopolitical influence in the region.¹⁹¹

Rudd and his labour colleagues won the election in December 2007. In an effort to improve

¹⁹⁰ Hawksley, C. M. January 2008. *Rudd's Way: The ALP In Government And Its Policies Toward The South Pacific*

¹⁹¹ As Kevin Rudd, as Opposition Leader, said during an interview with Tony Jones on ABC Lateline in 2007: "...What I'm concerned about overall though, apart from dealing with the poverty challenge, dealing with the economic development challenge, and restabilising if you like, these microstates and these economies, which is in Australia's national self-interest as well is if we fail to act effectively, then I think we're going to see a long-term drift in Australia's strategic standing right across this region as well. So the 'arc of instability', it's not just an arc of instability, but it becomes a vehicle through which what was once an area in which we were the principal power, we become supplanted over time by other powers from beyond the region..." Rudd K. 4/7/2007. Rudd Urges Foreign Policy Re-think to Counter Instability. Tony Jones interviewing Kevin Rudd on *ABC Lateline*.

relations between Australia and the Pacific countries, the newly-installed Rudd government acted quickly: Rudd and his ministers visited across the region within several months of assuming office, in early 2008. In March 2008, Rudd announced the first steps in Australia's re-engagement in the Pacific. The Port Moresby Declaration endorsed the Paris Declaration; and announced the new Partnerships for Development, offering a "new era of cooperation" between Australia and the Pacific family.¹⁹² The Parliamentary Secretaries for International Development, and for the Pacific, Bob McMullan and Duncan Kerr, promised to build a new partnership based on listening to the Pacific countries.¹⁹³ By 2009, however, the spreading impact of the global financial crisis overtook events. Following consultations across the region,¹⁹⁴ Australia was determined to ensure that donors and countries honoured their respective commitments to maintain aid flows and deliver on the MDGs.¹⁹⁵ The response was the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Co-ordination. The Compact became the third element of Rudd's "new era of cooperation" in the Pacific.

¹⁹² Rudd, K. and M. Somare. 6/3/2008. Joint Press Conference on the Port Moresby Declaration. Port Moresby PNG.

¹⁹³ This included a series of visits to the Pacific by McMullan, Kerr and Smith, reported in: Roy, Edmond. 11/2/2008. Aust, Pacific working on damaged relationship. *ABC News*; and Jackson, C. 13/2/2008. Australia and Samoa Start on Diplomatic High Note. *Pacific Islands Report*.

¹⁹⁴ Australia's foreign minister visited several countries in the region to discuss the impact of the GFC and discuss arrangements for the forthcoming annual meeting in Cairns; Smith commented to the ABC on the purpose of his travel: "So, of course we'll have a conversation about Fiji and also about the run-up to the Pacific Island Forum leaders conference in Cairns in August, which of course Australia's very pleased that we're hosting." In *ABC News* 2/06/2009 Smith makes maiden trip to Tonga, Samoa. (See also *RNZ Pacific* 3/6/2009. Democracy and combatting the global recession will be on the agenda for talks between Australia's Foreign Minister and his counterparts in Tonga and Samoa.) New Zealand and Australia commissioned a consultant to consult across the region on the impact of the GFC, producing a report presented to the Forum meeting in Cairns (AusAID. 2009. *Surviving the Global Recession: Strengthening Economic Growth and Resilience in the Pacific*). However, staff at the Secretariat later said they were surprised to receive notice of the proposal for the Compact when they arrived in Cairns for the meeting.

¹⁹⁵ The report offered a series of recommendations, including "A well-coordinated FIC—development partner response to the impacts of the global recession would constitute a practical example of regional action under a new development framework for the Pacific." See: AusAID. 2009. *Surviving the Global Recession: Strengthening Economic Growth and Resilience in the Pacific*, 26; Delforce, J. 2009. *Surviving the Global Recession: Strengthening Economic Growth and Resilience in the Pacific*. AusAID Policy Paper presented at the 3rd China-ASEAN Forum on Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

The Compact was formally endorsed by 13 of the Pacific region's leaders¹⁹⁶ and the region's major donors.¹⁹⁷ The intent, the Compact declared, was to "bring new determination and an invigorated commitment to lift the economic and development performance of the region," by driving "more effective coordination of available development resources from both Forum Island countries and all development partners" as measured by progress in achieving the MDGs.¹⁹⁸ It acknowledged that private sector growth, governance and service delivery were essential to "faster development progress," and infrastructure was essential to economic development.¹⁹⁹ Signalling adherence to the international "best practice" agreed in Paris and Accra, the Forum leaders re-affirmed the importance of Ownership, alongside the other four principles at the heart of the effectiveness agenda, as the guiding principles for aid policy and practice in the region.²⁰⁰ The Compact acknowledged that,

...country leadership, mutual accountability and mutual responsibility between Forum Island countries and their development partners are fundamental to successful development outcomes...²⁰¹

Several decades after President McNamara had first proposed the concept to his peers at the World Bank, and four years after the "unprecedented" consensus in Paris, the global idea of Ownership had officially arrived in the Pacific.

¹⁹⁶The PIF was constituted by 14 member-countries in August 2009; but Fiji had been suspended from the Forum in the preceding May and was not present at the Cairns Forum meeting. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. *Forum Communiqué*. 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12; *ABC News* 2/05/2009. Fiji suspended from Pacific Islands Forum.

¹⁹⁷ Seven major donors supported the Compact: China was the only major donor in the region who did not endorse the Compact. The group of seven included Australia and New Zealand, ADB, WB, Japan, EU and the UN Group.

¹⁹⁸ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. *Forum Communiqué*. 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12; AusAID. 2009. *Tracking Development and Governance in the Pacific*.

¹⁹⁹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. *Forum Communiqué*. 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12.

²⁰⁰ The other four principles were: harmonisation, alignment, mutual accountability and managing for results.

²⁰¹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. *Forum Communiqué*. 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12.

The Secretariat's oversight: Implementation

The Pacific Forum Leaders assigned responsibility to the Secretariat for oversight of the Compact's implementation. A strategic advisory group and an operational working group were established between Australia, New Zealand and the Secretariat.²⁰² Australia and New Zealand gave increased funding to support implementation. Some funds went directly to the Secretariat to support regional oversight; other funds went to several other agencies in the Pacific to support implementation at national level.²⁰³

The Compact proposed regional and national strategies to strengthen development coordination.²⁰⁴ Amongst the region's senior policy advisors, there was an initial frustration that the Compact merely reiterated existing policy and practices. However, once the Secretariat gained the endorsement of one of the region's most senior national policy advisors, the rest of the region's national advisors followed suit.²⁰⁵ Under the Secretariat's coordination, the Compact's programs and activities quickly spread across the Pacific

²⁰² Confidential Interview-Australia-Donor-TD-06052016.

²⁰³ The implementation structure included a high-level advisory group composed of the heads of Australian Aid Program, the Forum Secretariat and New Zealand which advised the Compact's working group [composed of officials from the Australian aid program and the Secretariat] on strategic directions for implementation.

²⁰⁴ The Secretariat convened regional workshops to engage the region's senior policy advisors from the national governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, and others, to agree on guidelines for implementation. Programs included: a voluntary peer review process to assess the status of aid coordination and management practices in the 13 countries and two lead donors in the region, Australia and New Zealand; "south-south" attachments and other training events within the region; data collection, analysis and reporting in relation to the MDGs [entailing the performance of both countries and the donors operating in the region]; high-level dialogue between donors, national governments and the private sector; and technical advice and capacity strengthening, across various Pacific countries, in relation to: public financial management; public sector reform; and national planning, monitoring and evaluation practices. These were supported by existing programs offered by the bilateral donors and multilateral agencies, such as the financial support offered through the PFTAC and the UNDP's support with strategic planning. Consultants were also engaged by the donors for specific technical assistance across countries. Reporting included: development effectiveness, donors and countries' progress on improving the effectiveness of their aid arrangements; and the region's progress on achieving the MDGs; Australia and New Zealand also contributed additional funds to several existing programs already delivered by the UNDP [for strategic planning] and the IMF through Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre [PFTAC].

²⁰⁵ "But we are already doing this!!" a senior and much-respected national policy advisor was reported to have exclaimed when the Secretariat presented the Forum Compact to the region's policy advisors at a regional workshop on "best practice" strategies for aid coordination after Cairns. Personal communication [with a workshop participant] with Author, Fiji, 2015.

countries.²⁰⁶

Globally, the Pacific's profile in the aid effectiveness agenda increased. In 2011, Pacific representation at the Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness was strong: a Pacific representative joined the Busan Forum's steering committee; several Pacific countries, accompanied by a high-level representative from the Australian Aid Program, showcased the Pacific's experience in the conduct of Peer Reviews under the Forum Compact to the acclaim of "best practice" from the audience;²⁰⁷ and Pacific delegates participated vigorously in debates from the floor.²⁰⁸ After Busan, the principle of Ownership was integrated as one of the four guiding principles for the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.²⁰⁹ At the International Conference of SIDS held in Samoa in 2014, Ownership was incorporated into the UN's new and evolving SIDS Partnerships Framework.²¹⁰ As the post-2015 development agenda was debated, Ownership re-emerged as a core element of the Sustainable Development Goal 17 on the Means of Implementation.²¹¹

In the Pacific, the Secretariat continued to pursue its now-familiar role of facilitation,

²⁰⁶ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2011. *Synthesis of Development Partner Reporting on Aid Effectiveness in Forum Island Countries*; Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2014. *Strengthening Economic Linkages: Update on Forum Compact and Development Cooperation Issues*; PIFS. 2015. *Five Years of Improving Development Effectiveness: 2015 Tracking the Effectiveness of Development Efforts in the Pacific Report*; Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2015. *Pacific Regional MDGs Tracking Report*.

²⁰⁷ A representative from Samoa led discussion on the Peer Reviews. The critical point made by Samoa was the innovation, at their initiation, on the engagement of Pasifika expertise as equals in the conduct of the peer reviews. Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30/6/2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*. GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011

²⁰⁸ GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011.

²⁰⁹ GPEDC. 2016. The Four Effectiveness Principles, agreed in the *Nairobi Outcome Document*, Outcome of the Second High Level Meeting of the GPEDC, Nairobi, Kenya, 1 December 2016:9.

²¹⁰ UNDESA: Sustainable Development: SIDS Partnership Framework, an Outcome of the 3rd International Conference on SIDS; UNDESA. 2020. SIDS Partnership Framework: SDGs Partnership Guidebook.

²¹¹ UN DESA. Sustainable Development Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

coordination and mediation. The Compact became the focus of the PICS Partners meetings for the next five years, until 2015, when the annual meeting was postponed.²¹²

In the interim, the release of the Morauta Review of the Pacific Plan in 2013 had triggered a re-organisation of the Forum and its Secretariat's operations and policy environment.²¹³ The resultant Framework for Pacific Regionalism signalled a new way of operating in the Forum. While the Morauta Review, alongside the Development Effectiveness Review undertaken by the Forum's Secretariat,²¹⁴ both affirmed the work of the Compact, it had also stated that it was time the Forum became "an engine of debate", as "a setter of norms and standards" in the region:

The Forum should build on its gains from the Forum Compact to become an engine of debate, a champion of good practice, an advocate of reform, **a setter of norms and standards** and a source of practice advice and support to its members, in the field of improved development effectiveness in the Pacific... recognising the enduring nature of much of the region's dependency on aid flows, PIFS should build on the advance made in implementing the Forum Compact/peer review process and deepen and expand its role in advocating for, and supporting, development effectiveness in the Pacific.²¹⁵

²¹² In 2013, the Abbott government assumed office and his Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, introduced a revamped aid policy framed as Economic Diplomacy. During 2014-15, there were rumours amongst the Forum and its Secretariat that Australia would withdraw from the Compact: Abbott and Bishop, it was suggested, saw the Compact as a policy belonging to its predecessor Rudd-Gillard governments. Instead, some suggested, Australia would reallocate funding to the UN agencies. Other conversation indicated that the Secretariat, in light of the Morauta Report, was reconsidering how it allocated its [now] pooled funding from Australia. In 2015, the PICS-Partners meeting was postponed; then abandoned in the following year. Nor was there a FEMM meeting in 2016; this mattered, because the 2015 Forum leaders meeting had delegated consideration of the annual progress report on the Compact to the FEMM. By 2017, the FEMM was considering other matters; and the Compact was under review. Following the final evaluation of the Compact, several of the Compact programs (particularly reporting) were integrated into the Pacific Road Map on Sustainable Development. Confidential Interview-Fiji-Regional Organisation-BT-09062015. Personal communication with the author, Australia, 2018. Brien, D., R. Jauncey and J. Winter. 30/11/2017. Findings of the Independent Review of the Forum (Cairns) Compact including Annexes: Background Note 1: Overview of Activities and Results Under the Forum (Cairns) Compact 26 July 2017; and Background Note 2: Development Outcomes and Financing in the Pacific 2009 to 2017, 26 July 2017.

²¹³ Morauta, M., P.N. Simi, R. Killion, P. Bazeley and N. Poletti. *Pacific Plan Review 2013 Report to Pacific Leaders Volume 1 and 2*. (The Morauta Review). The review was chaired by Rt.Hon. Mekere Morauta KCMG, whose team included country representatives, Mrs Peseta Noumea Simi and Mr Redley Killion; consultants, Mr Peter Bazeley and Mr Nick Poletti; and Mr Robert Igara as advisor to Sir Mekere Morauta.

²¹⁴ PIFS. 2015. *Five Years of Improving Development Effectiveness: 2015 Tracking the Effectiveness of Development Efforts in the Pacific Report*.

²¹⁵ "The Forum should build on its gains from the Forum Compact to become an engine of debate, a champion of good practice, an advocate of reform, a setter of norms and standards, and a source of practical advice and support to its members, in the field of improved development effectiveness in the Pacific." In Morauta, M., P.N. Simi, R. Killion, P. Bazeley and N. Poletti. *Pacific Plan Review 2013 Report to Pacific Leaders Volume 1* (The Morauta Review): 117. Also quoted in the Background Note 1: Overview of Activities and Results under the Forum (Cairns) Compact prepared by the Forum Compact Review Team, 26 July 2017:5, In Brien, D., R. Jauncey and J. Winter. 30/11/2017. Findings of the Independent Review of the Forum (Cairns) Compact.

This would entail, however, a shift in the Secretariat's role of coordination and mediation to one which set the norms and standards for the region.

In September 2017, the Forum Leaders endorsed the Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development (2017). Effectively, the Road Map incorporated the Secretariat's previous Compact-related programming and reporting responsibilities under its mandate. Other programs, which had operated under the Compact's broad auspice although funded separately, remained with their original agencies.²¹⁶ In November 2017, the Secretariat's Secretary General, Dame Meg Taylor, accepted the findings of the independent evaluation of the Compact.²¹⁷ The evaluation deemed the Compact successful overall, and confirmed its incorporation into the Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development.²¹⁸ The Compact, introduced by the Rudd government at the Pacific Leaders meeting in 2009, had formally operated under the auspice of the Forum for less than a decade.

6.6 Conclusion

In this Chapter, I have examined how the global idea of Ownership travelled from Paris to the Pacific. I drew from the archives of the Forum and its Secretariat for insight into the history of relations between donors and countries in the Pacific. I explored how aid policy and practice was negotiated between the emerging independent, aid-receiving, states and their former colonisers, now donor-states, over time, in order to understand whether the global debates

²¹⁶ PIFS. 2017. *The Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development*.

²¹⁷ The Secretary General accepted the evaluation findings in November 2017. The Forum Leaders meeting was held in Apia in September 2017. Background Note 1: Overview of Activities and Results under the Forum (Cairns) Compact, In Brien, D., R. Jauncey and J. Winter. 30/11/2017. Findings of the Independent Review of the Forum (Cairns) Compact.

²¹⁸ Background Note 1: Overview of Activities and Results under the Forum (Cairns) Compact, In Brien, D., R. Jauncey and J. Winter. 30/11/2017. Findings of the Independent Review of the Forum (Cairns) Compact.

between equity and ownership were mirrored in the regional discussions on aid policy and practice.

Conscious of the shadow cast by colonialism, the Forum leaders had, in the early days of their new independence, framed aid relations as one of mutual exchange for mutual benefit. It was a policy led by the Pacific leaders who asserted relations with the donors, their former colonisers, as equals. Aid was accepted, but as an interim measure. Development assistance brought the technical skills and technology that would help the former colonies to “catch-up”, until national economies were able to stand “on their own two feet”. But by the time Ownership arrived in the Pacific, the region had a reputation as one of the most aid reliant in the world. Aid reliance weakened the Pacific countries bargaining power with the donors, whose initiatives led the policy debates in the PICS Partners meetings, the meetings established by the Secretariat to mediate relations between donors and the Pacific aid receiving states in early 1991.

Between the early optimism of mutual exchange for mutual benefit and the arrival of Ownership, the PICS Partners meetings were the venue for the region’s senior government agencies to negotiate aid policy with the donors. The donor-led policy initiatives usually dominated. The first phase, heralded by the World Bank’s review of the region’s economy in 1990, defined the problem as countries’ lack of commitment and capacity. The answer, the Bank advised, was to enhance “aid coordination” by the countries. The countries, the donors recommended, needed to build the skills and systems to use more aid more effectively to generate economic growth for development. The countries responded, adopting the new

public management approaches of strategic planning and public financial management recommended by the donors' capacity strengthening approaches. Coordination evolved, briefly, into "harmonisation" in the early 2000s. Again, reflecting the shifting global conversations represented by the emerging series of High-Level Fora on Aid Effectiveness [HLFAE] led by the multilateral agencies. Harmonisation brought, briefly, a focus on the donors' practices, individually and as a collective, in aid delivery mechanisms rather than solely on countries behaviours.

There were conversations about Ownership in the margins of various other regional meetings between the Paris Forum in 2005 and Accra in 2008. It wasn't until 2009, however, when Australia instigated the Forum Compact to mitigate the feared impact of the Global Financial Crisis on aid flows and development outcomes across the region, that the Pacific leaders endorsed the principles laid out in Paris and Accra as the foundational "international best practice" for the region's relations between countries and donors. The global idea of Ownership had arrived in the region. But relations were no longer characterised, as the Pacific leaders had sought in Honolulu in 1980, as one of mutual exchange for mutual benefit. Rather, as Rudd had declared on his own national broadcaster, aid relations in the region were framed, in Australia's eyes by Australia's desire to do the right thing, to ensure the security of Australia's own neighbourhood – and to reassert Australia's [strategic] prominence in the region.

Stepping back, it seemed that aid and development policy in the region had evolved in four over-lapping phases: mutuality, coordination, harmonisation and Ownership. Despite the

claims of a commitment to partnership in each phase, there was mutual distrust and unease between the parties. Both donors and countries sought reassurance that the other remained “committed” to previous global or regional agreements. In the main [apart from the brief focus on harmonisation], the responsibility for leading change in aid practices always returned, in the first instance, to the countries: and to the countries’ capacity to coordinate aid and generate economic growth. Coordination - and development - became synonymous with countries’ incapacity and aid dependency. The asymmetry in power, which the Forum leaders had sought so hard to re-orient through the language of mutual help for mutual benefit, evidenced in Honolulu, continued to underwrite relations between donors and the Pacific countries; the policy shift to the global idea of Ownership in Cairns seemed further evidence of compromise.

This led me to the second purpose of this Chapter. I began this Chapter looking for “the broker” for the global idea of Ownership in contemporary aid policy and practice in the region. As I assessed the evolution of aid policy and strategy from the early days of the South Pacific Forum to the implementation of the Compact, I sought to understand the contemporary role of the Forum’s Secretariat: I was looking for that frisson of authority which catalyses knowledge, practices and policymakers to create the shift in power necessary for successful policy translation. I traced the evolution of the role performed by the Forum’s secretariat through its early days at SPEC to its contemporary incarnation as the Forum Secretariat. When the Pacific leaders met in Cairns, they assigned responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Forum Compact across the region and in the countries to the Secretariat. The Secretariat liaised across countries and donors, offered information and

knowledge, convened meetings and workshops. Its performance in this role was commended by the final evaluation team. However, the Secretariat's role in relation to the global idea of Ownership, it seemed, followed that laid out by its predecessors: it acted as a conduit and mediator in relations between the Pacific countries and donors, rather than a norm-setter – the path recommended by the Morauta Report, in 2013.²¹⁹

The question over who held responsibility for “norm-setting” re-focussed my attention on the countries. In my own iterative path of inquiry between field and deskwork, I was looking to better understand those moments where and when norms were contested, when and where norms were set and re-set; those moments of “friction” indicated by innovation. Innovation, my fieldwork had revealed, was more often emerging at country level, and adopted by the Secretariat who spread innovation to other countries.²²⁰ My findings re-aligned my focus from the region to the countries in pursuit of the nexus where the shift in power that represented successful policy translation was negotiated. I found it in the countries.

In the next two chapters, I examine how the countries negotiated the implementation of Ownership in national settings in Samoa and Kiribati; and the effect of implementation on the development partnerships between each country and Australia, the largest donor for each.

²¹⁹ Morauta, M., P.N. Simi, R. Killion, P. Bazeley and N. Poletti. *Pacific Plan Review 2013 Report to Pacific Leaders Volume 1 and 2*. (The Morauta Review).

²²⁰ The Secretariat learnt from the experience in Samoa and reinforced the innovation around Pasifika engagement through the Peer reviews, asserting and reinforcing Pasifika experience as equal [to expatriate experts] in the peer reviews.

Chapter 7 Samoa: “A Shining Star”

7.1 Introduction

The previous Chapter demonstrated that the evolution of aid policy in the Pacific region since 1990 has largely reflected a strategy of compromise. This is despite the post-independence Leaders’ assertions of equity and equality when they sought to re-cast relations with donors as “mutual help for mutual benefit” in Honolulu in 1980.¹ When the Pacific Leaders endorsed the Cairns Compact nearly three decades later, seeking primarily to pre-empt the impact of the global financial crisis, it left an unspoken question: was this endorsement simply a continuation of strategic compromise - or would Ownership generate the promised shift in power relations?² While the Forum Secretariat sought to re-shape its role as a knowledge-broker,³ policy implementation was deemed a national responsibility. I turned to the countries to explore their engagement with the Compact, and the global idea of Ownership at its foundation. I was looking for the shift in power – and the accompanying power-brokers, the norm-setters.

As Chapter 4 outlines, I selected two national policy sites to examine the implementation of the global idea of Ownership: the independent State of Samoa and the Republic of Kiribati.

¹ Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*. East West Centre: Hawaii.

² “Adopted in 2005, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness seeks to help reshape the way international development aid is delivered and managed. Among its priorities is a call for a new emphasis on the role of developing countries in deciding how aid should be used – in short, “a change in the power relationship between donors and recipients”, according to Jan Cedergren, Chair of the OECD-DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness.” OECD. 2009. What The Reports Are Saying. In *Development Cooperation Report 2009, OECD Journal on Development* 10(1)70.

³ “The Forum Secretariat has developed a strong understanding of what works and what does not on issues of development effectiveness, and is in a good position to become a source of norms and standards and a champion of good practice.” PIFS. 2015. *Five Years of Improving Development Effectiveness: 2015 Tracking the Effectiveness of Development Efforts in the Pacific Report*:31. The Compact related programs were integrated under the Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development (2017). See Background Note 1: Overview of Activities and Results Under the Forum (Cairns) Compact 26 July 2017, attached to Brien, D., R. Jauncey and J. Winter. 30/11/2017. Findings of the Independent Review of the Forum (Cairns) Compact.

First, I examine implementation of the global idea of Ownership in the Independent State of Samoa to determine whether a transition in Ownership of development occurred under the Compact, in accord with claims made by the policy's logic for Ownership.⁴

My task was three-fold: First, to ascertain whether Samoa's political leaders and policy advisors had implemented the five strategies of Ownership identified by the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda, in accord with the Forum-wide agreement supported by Samoa's Prime Minister Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi [Tuila'epa] when he endorsed the Compact in Cairns. Second, if so, did implementation of the five strategies represent the assertion of the locally-situated knowledge and participation which Ostrom and her team claimed indicated a transition in Ownership of development from donors to the government of Samoa? Third, if a re-negotiation of power in relations had occurred, [as Stone and Freeman argue is necessary for successful policy change through translation] how did the exercise of Ownership by Samoa's government influence the development partnership with Australia, Samoa's most consistent and largest grant-donor? [see Appendix 3.3 Research Questions]

My approach to data analysis entailed four key steps:⁵ First, I analysed the data through the lens of Ostrom's four criteria to ascertain whether the five strategies associated with the global idea of Ownership were implemented in accord with the Paris Declaration and Ostrom's proposition for how change happens, that is, the transition in Ownership. As documented in the matrix at Table 7.1, I identified the presence of the "proxy measures" for each of the five

⁴ Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking the Policy Logic and Chapter 3: A Conceptual Framework for Policy Change

⁵ See Chapter 4 Research Design and Methodology for a description of how the data was generated.

strategies⁶ and compared them with the corresponding Ostrom criteria [see Appendix 7.1 Table 7.1 Best Practice in Samoa].⁷ I then assessed the attribution of change to identify a connection with the global idea of Ownership.

Next, having identified discrepancies between implementation and the attribution of change, I investigated the significance attributed to the idea of Ownership for local policy actors and compared this with the significance assigned by the global articulation of Ownership.⁸ I did this by analysing the local rhetoric and metaphors which policy advisors drew on to discuss Ownership in order to reveal the local values and beliefs in play; and compared this to the policy logic underpinning the global idea of Ownership. The local significance attributed to the language of Ownership revealed claims for partnership built on the assertion of equality, of “a mutuality” in understanding, with donors. I undertook a deeper historical inquiry into Samoa’s development planning archives to understand the history of aid relations in Samoa, to clarify why “a mutuality” resonated so strongly for Samoa’s political leaders and policy advisors. The resultant findings took me to the next, and third, step.

Understanding the local significance of Ownership as a mutuality, an equality with donors, in the third analytical step I re-examined local policy practices to clarify whether the strategies of Ownership, as implemented in Samoa, were characterised by behaviours of reflexivity,

⁶ These mechanisms included: a national development strategy and national budget; a national performance assessment framework; and consultation and coordination mechanisms to engage civil society and the authority of the national parliament.

⁷ Ostrom’s criteria, in summary, included participation in the identification of need, contributing resources to the solution [or intervention], enjoying or consuming the benefits [of an intervention] and deciding when the need is met, and the intervention no longer required. See Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking the Policy Logic for more detail.

⁸ As explained in Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking the Policy Logic and Chapter 3: A Conceptual Framework: Understanding Policy Change; and Chapter 5: The Global Idea of Ownership.

bargaining or innovation. I wanted to identify the connection between the local significance attributed to the idea of Ownership, and the implementation - or re-crafting, in some instances - of local policy practices in order to decide whether the Government of Samoa [Samoa] had exercised Ownership of development; and if so, according to whose “rules of the game”. This step involved identifying and categorising various policy practices undertaken in the name of Ownership for evidence of one or more of three behaviours: reflexivity [learning from experience], bargaining [negotiating from strengths] or innovation [crafting new practices and policy tools to resolve old problems]. The former two behaviours, in line with Stone and others’ argument,⁹ would indicate acceptance of the policy’s legitimacy: where norm contestation, if it occurred, was resolved in favour of the “global” policy norms underpinning the global idea of Ownership and which were then incorporated into everyday policy practices. The third behaviour, innovation, I posited, would indicate that accompanying norm contestation was more likely to have been resolved in favour of local values and beliefs, even while it may have resulted in new or adapted policy practices which continued to complement the global and regional agreements. It was innovation which would signify whether a shift in power – and a transition in Ownership of development had occurred, and if so, according to whose “rules of the game”. I sought to identify which values and beliefs, and norms, underpinned change: those norms which underpinned the global idea of Ownership, or local norms which underwrote the local significance of ownership? Lastly, having determined whether Samoa exercised Ownership - and according to whose “rules of the game” - I examine the influence of Samoa’s engagement with the global idea of Ownership on the development partnership with Australia.

⁹ See Chapter 3: A Conceptual Framework: Understanding Policy Change

The Samoa case study is in three key parts, reflecting the three key tasks nominated above. I begin by establishing the context for aid and development relations in Samoa in 2009, the year the Forum leaders, including Samoa’s Prime Minister Tuila’epa, endorsed the Forum Compact.¹⁰ After setting the context, I assess implementation of the strategies of Ownership and determine the attribution of change.

7.2 Samoa: “A Shining Star”

Good Governance

Although it wasn’t always so,¹¹ Samoa has been considered an exemplary “outlier” amongst the Pacific small island states for the quality of its governance by most donors in recent decades.¹² It was a claim defended by its longest-serving Prime Minister, Tuila’epa. Samoa was known, he reminded local media when defending his government’s record in office, as a “shining star” of the Pacific.¹³ It was a claim supported by the World Bank which, in 2009, compared the quality of Samoa’s governance favourably, for the most part, to its Pacific counterparts.¹⁴

¹⁰ Pacific Islands Forum. 2009. Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific, In Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. Forum Communique. 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. PIFS(09)12:2.

¹¹ The 1971 Report of the Committee for Development Planning, which determined the criteria and process of categorisation of LDC status, observed, on the assignment of LDC status to Western Samoa in 1971: “Relevant data for Western Samoa [and other countries is] unavailable, but there is reason to believe that these countries merit inclusion among the least developed group. The absence of data ...is in fact a reflection of the low level of their development.” United Nations Committee for Development Planning (UNCDP). 1971. Report on the Seventh Session (22 March – 1 April 1971) Economic and Social Council: Fifty-First Session. Supplement No.7:19.

¹² “...Samoa is widely known in the region as a ‘role model’ for the Pacific. This is in addition to other accolades such as the ‘shining star’ and ‘grand jewel’ of the region. ...while some may demur, it is a fact that Samoa has made great progress in improving the quality of its social services since independence.” Amosa, D. U. 2012. *Social Policies in Samoa*, ix.

¹³ See Talatalaga, K. 24/11/2012. Economy “Not Too Bad” PM Tuila’Epa Assures. *Samoa Observer*. As Prime Minister of Samoa for over 20 years, Tuila’epa was the second-longest serving incumbent Prime Minister in the world until May 2021.

¹⁴ See World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators, which report on over 200 countries and territories in relation to six dimensions of governance: voice and accountability; political stability and absence of violence and terrorism, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, control of corruption. East Asia and the Pacific are considered together: in 2009 and again in 2018, Samoa compared favourably on most indicators - except for regulatory quality – in the East Asia and Pacific category. World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators.

Oral traditions suggest that the people who settled the islands of Samoa may have been amongst the first Polynesian sea-voyagers and navigators, arriving in the region between 2-3000 years ago.¹⁵ These traditions also suggest that Samoans have lived on their islands, in accord with *Fa'a Samoa*, the Samoan Way, since the 16th century at least.¹⁶ Europeans first visited in the 18th century.¹⁷ The intermittent visits of seafaring explorers were followed by traders and later, missionaries. It was largely the traders' entrepreneurship which triggered the first of several annexations by various colonial powers in the name of the German Empire at the turn of the 20th century.¹⁸ While the imperial powers of Germany, Great Britain and the United States of America argued over the islands of Samoa as the 20th century turned, the various colonial authorities' presence in [Western] Samoa was also challenged, intermittently, across the 19th and 20th centuries by the volatile and erratic independence movement known as the *Mau u Pule*.¹⁹

¹⁵ Petchy, F. J. 2001. Radiocarbon determinations from the Mulifanua Lapita site, Upolu, Western Samoa. *RadioCarbon*, 43(1):63-68.

¹⁶ See Chapter 1: Traditional Authority, In Meleisea, M. 1987. *The Making of Modern Samoa: Traditional Authority and the Colonial Administration in the Modern History of Western Samoa*, 11-20. Meleisea reports that the "modern era" of Samoan politics began after the Tongan occupation of Samoa with Salamasina, a chiefly woman who lived in the 16th century.

¹⁷ Meleisea, M. 1987. *The Making of Modern Samoa: Traditional Authority and the Colonial Administration in the Modern History of Western Samoa*, 12.

¹⁸ Various German traders, most prominently Godeffroy and Sohns, settled in Apia in the mid 1850s, establishing copra plantations and trading stores. In 1889, following independence protests, the German consul declared Samoa a "protectorate" but there was no formal annexation of Samoa by Germany until 1900. The three powers shared consular authority – a tri-dominium – over Samoa between 1888-1899; an 1899 agreement between the three colonial powers determined that the Samoan Islands would be partitioned between Germany and the USA. [Firth, S., personal communication] Britain withdrew and left Germany and the USA as the colonising powers [the UK assumed "full rights" over Tonga in exchange for ceding rights over Samoa] over German and American Samoa respectively. When World War 1 broke out, New Zealand assumed control of Samoa on behalf of the British Empire early in 1914. After WW1, Germany was forced, under the Treaty of Versailles, to give up all its Pacific colonies. Samoa was divided between Great Britain and the USA ["Eastern" Samoa was renamed American Samoa] German colonies in the Pacific After WW2 Western Samoa became a UN Trust Territory, administered by New Zealand at the UN's direction until the Parliament of New Zealand passed the New Zealand Western Samoa Act 1961, giving independence on 1st January 1962. The independent state of WS subsequently negotiated a treaty of friendship with New Zealand in 1962. New Zealand History League of Nations and German Mandate The *Mau u Pule*, or Samoa independence movement, a nonviolent movement, surfaced first under German occupation, then following the exile of several leaders, re-surfaced prior to WW2. After the violent death of its leader and paramount chief Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III, by NZ police in 1929, the movement was subsequently officially recognised as a political party by the NZ administration in 1936 and its members became the majority in the *fono o faipule* [Council of Elders] and legislative assembly [a consultative, self-governing council], prior to independence in 1962. National Library of Australia. n.d. German colonies in the Pacific.

¹⁹ Field, M. J. 2008. *Mau: Samoa's Struggle For Freedom*.

The UN Trust Territory of Samoa became the first Pacific country to gain independence in 1962, as the Independent State of Western Samoa. In 1997, its *Fono*, or Parliament dropped Western from the name, to become the Independent State of Samoa.²⁰ Samoa is governed under the Westminster democratic traditions, with a parliament, judiciary and executive. These institutions are guided by a Constitution drawn from the integration of western liberal democratic and Samoan customary traditions of *Fa’a Samoa*.²¹ It is, So’o, has argued, an uneasy alliance of custom and tradition.²²

Apart from a brief political stand-off following the most recent national election,²³ Samoa has been known for its political stability and the longevity of its political leadership. Until May 2021, Prime Minister Tuila’epa had served Samoa as Prime Minister and leader of the governing Human Rights Protection Party [HRPP] for over 20 years. In addition to leading government, Tuila’epa had also held the positions of Minister of Finance and Minister for

²⁰ Western Samoa was formally administered by New Zealand from 1920 to 1961 [New Zealand having assumed control from Germany in the early days of WW1], initially under a League of Nations mandate; and from 1946, under a UN Trusteeships Agreement. The Fono, or Parliament amended the Constitution to rename the country as the Independent State of Samoa in 1997.

²¹ The Samoan Constitution was drafted following two conventions in 1954 and 1960; and following a plebiscite of the adult population of Samoa in May 1961, which gave a clear majority vote, enacted when the UN formally terminated the Trusteeship Agreement on 1 January 1962 and Samoa became an independent nation. Powles, G. 1961. Constitution Making in Western Samoa. *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 22(3):179–94; World Trade Organisation. 17/2/2000. Memorandum: Accession of Samoa (Restricted) on the Foreign Trade Regime prepared by the Working Party on the Accession of Samoa WT/ACC/SAM/2 (00-0597); Meleisea, M. 1987. *The Making of Modern Samoa: Traditional Authority and the Colonial Administration in the Modern History of Western Samoa*.

²² So’o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*.

²³ See these commentaries on the political stand-off: Jackson, L. C., and K. Lyons. 23/7/2021. Samoa’s Political Crisis Ends and First Female Prime Minister Installed after Court Ruling. *The Guardian*; VOA News. 26/7/2021. Samoa to Welcome First Female Prime Minister After Three Month Political Standoff. ker, K. and A.C. Tung. 13/4/2021. A Fast End to an Era of Political Dominance in Samoa. The Interpreter, The Lowy Institute; and, in contrast, on political stability: Iati I. 2013. Samoa’s Price for 25 years of Political Stability. *The Journal of Pacific History*. 48(4):443-463.

Foreign Affairs and Trade, on several occasions.²⁴ As Minister and Prime Minister, he has been directly engaged in matters of finance and foreign affairs – and aid in Samoa for over 20 years.

Regional relations

Over those 20 years, Tuila'epa had deftly, if sometimes controversially, balanced Samoa's national interests with [mostly] friendly relations across the region.²⁵ Samoa established its regional reputation through its role in the formation of first, the Pacific Producers Association and then, the South Pacific Forum.²⁶ Tuila'epa continued to build Samoa's reputation across the region. He encouraged his peers in other Pacific states to consolidate the strengths and opportunities of regionalism.²⁷ Tuila'epa, alongside his Pacific peers, endorsed the Forum Compact in Cairns in 2009.²⁸ It was Tuila'epa again, who, as Chair of the Pacific Forum in 2017, announced the policies on the "Blue Pacific" and "Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development" at the Leaders' annual meeting.²⁹

Vulnerability

²⁴ Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi's Parliamentary Career and Matai titles (Appendix), In Swain, P. 2017. *Palemia Prime Minister Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi of Samoa: A Memoir*, 265-269.

²⁵ See, for example, media reports of Tuila'epa's almost regular "stoushes" with Fiji's Prime Minister Bainimarama, where Tuila'epa repeatedly critiqued Bainimarama for his role in the region, the failure to hold elections in Fiji and his failure to meet with Pacific regional leaders, leading to claims that Bainimarama's behaviour was "not the Pacific way". *RNZ Pacific* 2/3/2009. Samoa's Prime Minister again challenges Fijis interim Prime Minister.

²⁶ Fiji's then Prime Minister Ratu Kamisese Mara reports that the generosity of Western Samoa in relinquishing its preferential arrangements with New Zealand over banana imports created an opening in the market for Fiji. Their mutual cooperation, alongside the Cook Islands, established the Pacific Islands Producers Association. Several years later, Western Samoa, Fiji, Nauru, Tonga and the Cook Islands formed the South Pacific Forum, [the predecessor for the Pacific Islands Forum]. The Pacific countries invited Australia and New Zealand to join them at their first major meeting in New Zealand in 1971. Mara, K. 1997. *The Pacific Way A Memoir*.

²⁷ Tuila'epa advised his peers that the future of regionalism in the Pacific depended on the attitude taken to national sovereignty: "Every time we join an international agreement or a grouping of nations...we agree to give up a little bit of our sovereignty, not only for the common good, but for our needs as a government and a nation. We should never complain about losing sovereignty if we do it willingly in order to gain something in return." Malielegaoi, T.S. 23/3/2005. Address on the Attitude to Sovereignty, A key to Development of Regionalism in the Pacific by the Forum Chair and Prime Minister of Samoa, at the Pacific Co-operation Foundation Annual Lecture. *RNZ*.

²⁸ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. Forum Communique: 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12.

²⁹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2017. Forum Communique. 48th Pacific Islands Forum, held Apia, Samoa, 5-8 September 2017. PIFS(17)10.

Samoa’s experiences in 2009 epitomised the Organisation for Economic Development’s [OECD] characterisation of the “dual vulnerability”³⁰ of Small Island Developing States [SIDS]: it was vulnerable through its geography and its narrow economic base.³¹ In 2009 Samoa faced the “dual vulnerability” of dealing with a global economic shock and a devastating natural disaster in the same year.

As 2009 unfolded, fears for the potential impact of the global financial crisis that began in the USA the year before, were spreading across the Pacific. Samoa’s government feared for the potential impact on the domestic economy – and on donors’ previous aid commitments.³² This concern was one of the reasons Tuilaepa told Australia’s Foreign Minister Smith on his first visit to Samoa in June 2009 that aid coordination needed to be strengthened.³³ Tuilaepa had only just negotiated a strategy to stabilise the potential impact of the GFC with his peers at

³⁰ The OECD argues that the vulnerability of those SIDS which rely on ODA stems from their “...small populations and small land masses, spatial dispersion and remoteness from major markets and high exposure to external shocks, including several climate-related events and natural disasters.” The SIDS’ vulnerability to both economic shocks and the risk of natural disasters and climate change, and their consequent reliance on aid, could be considered the ultimate “vicious circle” Source: OECD. 2018. *Making Development Cooperation Work for Small Island Developing States*, 15; Commonwealth Secretariat. 2021. *The Commonwealth Universal Vulnerability Index, For a Global Consensus on the Definition and Measurement of Vulnerability*. See also the earlier discussion in Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking the Policy Logic.

³¹ With the smallest exclusive economic zone [EEZ] in the Pacific at 98,500km², Samoa’s land mass consists of an archipelago of ten islands. Most of the population of nearly 200,000 live on two larger islands of Upolu and Savai’i. The archipelago is located in the southern Pacific Ocean to the north-east of the Tongan trench and south of the equator. Samoa’s geographic location is a key factor in its risk of major natural disasters, encompassing earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical cyclones, droughts and floods. These risks are exacerbated by a changing climate. The frequency - and destructive power - of such natural disasters experienced by the Pacific SIDS, including Samoa, has increased over recent decades. In 2005, Samoa ranked within the top 30 countries most vulnerable to the risk of three or more natural hazards. In 2012, Samoa ranked 51st on the list of countries which suffer most from extreme weather events. Samoa’s vulnerability to natural disasters is magnified by its economic vulnerability, as a small, scattered archipelago with a small population and narrow resource base, remote from the markets of the global economy. Although Samoa experiences less frequent disasters compared to other Pacific island countries, the World Bank argues that Samoa experiences a high degree of economic and social shock during disaster years. The fears posed by the potential impact of global financial crisis in 2008-2009 were a trigger for Samoa’s support for the Compact. The subsequent tsunami turned those fears into a more devastating reality. It took several years for Samoa’s economy, and its people, to recover – only to then experience the 2012 Cyclone Evans, which generated greater economic damage, although less loss of life.

³² AusAID. 2009. *Surviving the Global Recession: Strengthening Economic Growth and Resilience in the Pacific*.

³³ ABC News 2/06/2009 Smith makes maiden trip to Tonga, Samoa. RNZ News Pacific 3/6/2009. Australia Foreign minister visits Tonga and Samoa.

the Forum meeting - the Forum Compact - when he and his country faced the next issue: Samoa's worst natural disaster.

In September 2009, earthquakes deep in the Tonga Trench³⁴ triggered a tsunami which inundated Samoa's south-eastern coast, destroying homes, villages and other vital infrastructure – taking over 140 lives in Samoa and injuring many more.³⁵ It took several years for Samoa's economy, and its people, to recover.³⁶ Just as Samoa was starting to rebalance, Samoa experienced another severe natural disaster, when Cyclone Evans devastated the entire country in 2012. While a smaller number of lives were lost, the devastation to infrastructure and other areas was substantial. The economic cost suffered was more than the damage generated by the tsunami.³⁷ It was another severe blow for Samoa. It demonstrated the vulnerability that revealed why international friends - and aid - were significant for Samoa.

7.2.1 Aid Relations

The independent state of [Western] Samoa has received foreign aid since 1962.³⁸ Initially,

³⁴ The Tonga Trench refers to the northern half of the Tonga-Kermadec subduction system [the Pacific plate is being subducted westward in the trench] between New Zealand and Tonga. It stretches from north to south and is the second deepest ocean trench in the world, exceeded only by the Mariana Trench. Samoa lies northeast of the Tonga Trench. Samoa and the Tonga Trench.

³⁵ The 2009 tsunami left at least 143 dead in Samoa [plus others, in Tonga and American Samoa], several missing, numerous injured and over 850 households across numerous villages destroyed. The total economic value of the effect of the disaster was estimated at SAT\$310.11m (US\$124.04m) - or 22% of Samoa's GDP. The devastation affected Samoa's productive sectors - agriculture, fisheries, livestock commerce and tourism; as well as its infrastructure - transport power water communications, and in community and religious centres as well as housing; and the education and health sectors. See: Government of Samoa. December 2009. Samoa Post Disaster Needs Assessment, following the earthquake and tsunami of 29th September 2009, xii; Government of Samoa. 2009. Tsunami: Samoa 29 September 2009: An account of the tsunami disaster, the response, its aftermath, acknowledgement and the trek to recovery.

³⁶ In 2010, Gibson reported that post-tsunami, agriculture and manufacturing had declined – and the key supports for the Samoan economy remained aid, remittances and tourism, although these sources were tested by the 2008 GFC and 2009 tsunami. Gibson, J. 2010. Economic Survey. *Pacific Economic Bulletin*, 25(3):21.

³⁷ Cyclone Evans impacted 14 Pacific countries; in Samoa, at least 14 lives were lost and the economy sustained damages to the estimated value of US\$204m – greater economic damage than through the tsunami three years earlier. Government of Samoa. 2013. *Samoa Post Disaster Needs Assessment: Cyclone Evan 2012*.

³⁸ Western Samoa was formally administered by New Zealand from 1920 to 1961 [New Zealand having assumed control

Western Samoa’s political leaders were reluctant to accept aid. But in 1966, Western Samoa’s political leaders made the difficult call. Samoa’s first Prime Minister, Fiame Mata’afa Mulinu’u II, explained their decision to seek support from foreign sources in the 1966 national programme for economic development:³⁹

...we have done and will continue to do all we can on our own to develop our economy. It is evident, however, that we must increasingly depend on overseas capital and overseas aid if we are going to have any chance of developing commensurate with our needs. It follows then, that we must aggressively make our opportunities and needs known to private bilateral and multilateral capital aid sources....⁴⁰

The first donors emerged from Western Samoa’s colonial relationships. Western Samoa first established aid relations with its former trustee authority, New Zealand and the agency who represented the UN’s support for decolonisation, the UNDP.⁴¹ Samoa joined the IMF in 1971 and the World Bank in 1974.⁴² However, Samoa waited more than a decade after it became eligible, before joining the United Nations General Assembly [UNGA] in 1976.⁴³ As Samoa’s then-Deputy, Tupua Tamasese Lealofi IV, explained to his new peers at the UNGA, Samoa had carefully considered whether to re-engage with the “outside world” after independence. Samoans, he told the UNGA, had been traumatised by their experience under colonialism.⁴⁴

from Germany in the early days of WW1], initially under a League of Nations Mandate; and thereafter, from 1946, under a UN Trusteeships Agreement. The Samoan constitution was drafted following two conventions in 1954 and 1960; and following a plebiscite of the adult population of Samoa in May 1961, which gave a clear majority vote, enacted when the UN formally terminated the Trusteeship Agreement on 1 January 1962 and Samoa became an independent nation. See Powles, G. 1961. Constitution Making in Western Samoa. *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 22(3):179–194; and World Trade Organisation. 17/2/2000. Memorandum: Accession of Samoa (Restricted) on the Foreign Trade Regime prepared by the Working Party on the Accession of Samoa WT/ACC/SAM/2 (00-0597).

³⁹ The first national development plan for Samoa was crafted in 1965; the 1966 Programme put the 1965 Plan into action. See Appendix 7.3-Table 7.3 Samoa: National Development Plans, for a comprehensive list of national plans.

⁴⁰ Prime Minister Fiame Mata’afa Mulinu’u II, in Foreword, Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*. Prepared by the Economic Development Board, Apia, September 1966, v.

⁴¹ The independent State of Western Samoa and New Zealand signed a Treaty of Friendship in 1962, after independence. The ToF agreed to consulta each other on mutual interests, treat its citizens fairly according to their laws; and New Zealand offered Samoa support technical and administrative assistance, and international relations, if requested. New Zealand and Western Samoa. 1/8/1962. Treaty of Friendship No.6515. Apia, Western Samoa.

⁴² World Trade Organisation. 12/6/2003. Draft Report of the Working party on the Accession of Samoa to the WTO (Restricted): WT/ACC/SPEC/SAM/4 (03-3059) and World Bank Members.

⁴³ See Chapter 6 From Paris to the Pacific: Ownership in the Region.

⁴⁴ Fields reports of New Zealand’s colonialism: “racism was at its ideological foundation. New Zealand could not, or would not, accept that the Samoa point of view was a valid one. Their attitude clashed directly with the fundamental Samoan

But, in an increasingly interdependent and globalised world, Samoa needed “new friends” as well as old, so they had decided to join the UN.⁴⁵

Samoa was successful in attracting new friends. However, these friends also reflected Samoa’s increasing reliance on aid, as a country subject to the dual vulnerabilities of geography and economics. In 1971, Samoa was the first Pacific state to be designated as a Least Developed Country [LDC], opening up preferential treatment in trade, in addition to financial support.⁴⁶ In 1991, the World Bank review declared the Pacific the world’s worst economic performer despite the region receiving the highest aid per capita, globally.⁴⁷ Recent analysis of aid flows to the Pacific shows that between 2000 and 2002, eight Pacific countries were listed in the top-25 most aid-dependent nations; Samoa was ranked 25th. By 2009-2011, those eight Pacific countries were ranked in the top-20 most aid-dependent states in the world. Samoa ranked 11th.⁴⁸

pride in country and culture. They did not need legal justification for their claims that they were entitled to govern their own destiny. Samoans believed very simply that Samoa was their country and that anybody else in it was a guest, welcome or otherwise. And they looked back on a 3000-year civilisation as evidence that they were capable of looking after themselves.” See Michael J Field, 2008 *Mau, Samoa’s Struggle For Freedom*, Pasifika Press

⁴⁵ Lealofi IV, T. T. 15/12/1976. Address by the Deputy Head of State of Western Samoa to the UN General Assembly, 31st Session, 100th Plenary meeting, A/PV.100, 1491: 19-20. As an LDC, Samoa was able to access some UN agencies and programmes prior to joining the UNGA.

⁴⁶ The 1971 report of the Committee for Development Planning [which determined the criteria and process of categorisation of LDC status] observed, on the assignment of LDC status to Western Samoa in 1971: “Relevant data for Western Samoa [and other countries is] unavailable, but there is reason to believe that these countries merit inclusion among the least developed group. The absence of data ...is in fact a reflection of the low level of their development.” *Committee for Development Planning, Report on the Seventh Session, 22 March – 1 April 1971, Economic and Social Council, Official Records Fifty-First session, Supplement no.7, United Nations, New York 1971, p19*

⁴⁷ See World Bank. 1991. *Toward Higher Growth in Pacific Island Economies: Lessons from the 1980s Vol.1: Regional Overview*. This report assumed the validity of a causal relationship between aid and economic growth. Now, however, economic development researchers acknowledge that the causal effect between these two variables remains contested and “convincingly measuring the causal effect” of aid and growth is “hard”. [See Edwards, R. 23/6/2022. Chinese (and Western) aid boosts short run economic growth. DevPolicy Blog]. Burnside and Dollar, whose work the World Bank relied on heavily in its claims around Ownership and the CDF, qualified the causal claim by asserting that aid contributes to economic growth where there are sound policies and institutions, i.e. donors must be selective about which countries they give aid to; or set conditions on which aid is given – or not. Their research contributed to the general claims of aid effectiveness policy. Burnside, C. and D. Dollar. 2000. Aid, Policies and Growth. *The American Economic Review* 90(4):847-68.

⁴⁸ In one of the few studies to analyse aid flows in the Pacific, Pryke analysed aid flows to all Pacific counties between two time-intervals: 2000-2002 and 2009-2011. Pryke defines aid dependency as a percentage of GNI. Most low-income economies have an aid:GNI ratio of 10%. Pryke argues that overall, neither aid - nor the aid:GNI ratio - increased by much

Despite its continuing reliance on aid, in 2006, the UN deemed Samoa ready to graduate from least developed country status. Graduation was scheduled for 2010.⁴⁹ When Prime Minister Tuila’epa addressed the UNGA in September 2007 in celebration, he acknowledged the “immense value” of the contribution made by many new friends and development partners, including Australia.⁵⁰ But, as Samoa’s vulnerability, outlined in the preceding section, revealed, his celebrations were premature. Having staved off the worst of the impact of the GFC, Samoa was forced to defer graduation due to the devastating tsunami in 2009; and again, after Cyclone Evans in 2012. However, Samoa persisted; its economy regained ground and by 2014,

over the decade. He identifies sub-regional variations. In 2000, Samoa was deemed amongst the top-25 most aid dependent countries in world. Pryke identified a growing trend in aid dependency between 2000-2002 and 2009-2011 across most Pacific states except the US Compact states and PNG. According to Pryke, in 2000-2002, 4 PICS were in the top 20 most aid dependent countries - and: another four ranked in the next top 20 countries. Kiribati ranked 23rd and Samoa ranked 25th. Pryke argues that in 2009-2011, 9 of 11 PICS [including Samoa] had an aid:GNI ratio higher than 10%, with 8 PICS - including Samoa - amongst the top 20 most aid dependent nations in the world, and Vanuatu ranking 23rd. (See Pryke J. 17/9/2013. Rising Aid Dependency in the Pacific). According to a later study by Dornan and Pryke in 2017 which builds on earlier analysis, seven of the world’s 15-most aid dependent countries – which again, included Samoa - were located in the Pacific region in 2014, when the scale-up in Australian aid [the scale-up] reached its peak across the region. (See Dornan, M. and J. Pryke. September 2017. Foreign Aid to the Pacific: Trends and Developments in the Twenty-First Century: Foreign Aid to the Pacific. *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* 4(3):386–404.)

⁴⁹ UNGA. 18/11/1971. Resolution 2768 (XXVI) Identification of the Least Developed among the Developing Countries, 1988th plenary meeting, UN New York: 19-para65. See also UNDESA. 2009. Monitoring the Development Progress of Countries graduating from the category [LDC] Samoa, CDP2009/PLEN/2b. In 1971, Samoa was the first of five Pacific countries registered on the least developed country list. In 2006, although the UN Committee on Development agreed that Samoa remained economically vulnerable, it determined that Samoa met the criteria for graduation [meeting 2 of 3 graduation criteria of low income/per capita income, human assets but not economic vulnerability index] on two consecutive occasions. Thus in 2006, UNGA resolution 59/209 earmarked Samoa for graduation in early 2010, having determined that Samoa’s status as a SIDS would enable it to retain many of the preferential treatments available to LDCs – and thus counteract any potential economic vulnerability. Samoa was the first of the five Pacific countries to be scheduled to graduate. Across 2008-2009 Samoa experienced dual crises: the GFC and tsunami; Samoa sought a delay to graduation. Samoa’s situation was compounded by Cyclone Evans in 2012. The UN delayed graduation until 2014 when graduation proceeded. Aid to Samoa, primarily grants, increased after 2009. Australia offered more grant aid after 2012 but Samoa deferred further increases for the interim. Source: Government of Samoa. 31/12/2016. Note by the Government of Samoa on Samoa’s Smooth Transition Strategy Report to the 16th Plenary Session of the Committee for Development Policy New York, 24-28 March 2014, CDP2014/PLEN/8. In 2017 Samoa accepted a large loan from PRC to address reconstruction efforts. This made China Samoa’s largest development partner for loans; and relegated Australia to third largest donor overall in that year. See Pacific Aid Map, Lowy Institute.

⁵⁰ “The decision by the Economic and Social Council early this year to graduate Samoa from the status of least developed country is a clear reflection of the immense value to Samoa of the contribution of its development partners — including Australia, China, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand and a host of multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Commonwealth, to name some.” Malielegaoi T. S. 28/9/2007. Address by the Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa to the United Nations General Assembly, 62nd Session, 10th Plenary Meeting. A/62/PV.10.

Samoa graduated from its status as one of the Least Developed Countries [LDC]. As Samoa's Prime Minister acknowledged, with gratitude, its dual vulnerability has meant its friends - and aid - remain important. Australia, as one of Samoa's most enduring and largest aid donors, was considered a significant friend.

Relations with Australia; trade then aid

Samoa and Australia first established relations over trade in the 1950s. By 2009, Australia was Samoa's most significant export partner and its 2nd largest import partner.⁵¹ Australia became the primary source of aid to Western Samoa between 1965-1970,⁵² with grants and technical assistance to support administration, education and meteorology.⁵³ In the decades since, Australia has increasingly become one of Samoa's most significant aid donors.⁵⁴ In 2007, when Samoa was preparing its 2008 national development strategy [SDS 2008], Australia was the Samoa's largest aid donor when measured by the volume of ODA grants.⁵⁵

Relations leading up to the Compact: a new era of cooperation

When Rudd's Labor government replaced the Howard coalition government in Australia in December 2007, there was a flurry of activity across the Pacific as the incoming government

⁵¹ See World Integrated Trade Solution, webpage.

⁵² The first economic development programme published by the Government of Samoa in 1966 reports that Samoa was already engaged in trade relations [primarily agricultural exports] with the UK, Australia, New Zealand, West Germany, Netherlands, USA, Italy Japan and South Africa; Venezuela, Colombia, Denmark, American Samoa and Canada. [p21-23] And imports with Australia, South Africa, Fiji, USA, UK, Japan, Hong Kong, India, West Germany, Canada, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia [p50-53]; see: Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*:21-23;50-53; see also Johnston, W. B. 1953. Pacific Island Agriculture: The Contemporary Position in Western Samoa and Some Wider Implications, *Economic Geography*, 29(1)Jan:26-38p26 who reports that USA, UK, New Zealand were WS' primary export markets, although Australia and Canada also participated; while Australia and New Zealand were the main source of imports to WS, followed by the USA and UK in this period.

⁵³ See Australian Parliament. 1971. Australia's Parliamentary Papers: Questions and Answers. 42(4) [April]: 226-227. Britain and Australia and NZ offered grants in education administration and meteorology; while NZ also offered loans for plantation rehabilitation following a hurricane; and support to the South Pacific Commission

⁵⁴ Development Policy Centre n.d. Aid Tracker.

⁵⁵ The Lowy Institute. n.d. Pacific Aid Map.

sought to remediate Australia's "damaged" relations with its Pacific neighbours.⁵⁶ Samoa, was amongst the first Pacific countries visited by Australia's new Parliamentary Secretaries, Bob McMullan, for International Development, and Duncan Kerr, for Pacific Affairs, in early 2008. The Australian media reported that Australia sought "a fresh approach" in the Pacific.⁵⁷ McMullan announced that he intended to redress relations which had "plummeted" in recent years, as evidenced by accusations from across the Pacific, of "bullying and interference" by his predecessors in the Howard government, including then-Foreign Minister Alexander Downer.⁵⁸ McMullan wanted to work as partners, with mutual respect:

...the approach is one of much more partnership and engagement on the basis of mutual respect...we're not going to be lecturing or hectoring, we're going to try and work together...⁵⁹

The Pacific partnerships for security and development, announced by [now] Prime Minister Rudd during the election campaign, would be the mechanism for the new approach, McMullan explained.⁶⁰ Options for trade agreements and labour mobility programs were also under discussion.⁶¹ McMullan's parliamentary colleague, Duncan Kerr, added that Australia's relations with Samoa were more positive than some in the Pacific. Although Samoa continued to face challenges, they would, Kerr was sure, would rely on Australia's assistance:

...With Samoa there has not been any of the kind of tension that has been manifested as in some of the other relationships...There is no perfect nation state in the world, Australia included, so Samoa does have ongoing issues that needs to deal with and will wish to work with Australia's assistance on...⁶²

On other points, Kerr was not quite as diplomatic as his colleague. It wasn't surprising that

⁵⁶ Roy, Edmond. 11/2/2008. Aust, Pacific working on damaged relationship. *ABC News*.

⁵⁷ Roy, Edmond. 11/2/2008. Aust, Pacific working on damaged relationship. *ABC News*.

⁵⁸ Roy, Edmond. 11/2/2008. Aust, Pacific working on damaged relationship. *ABC News*. Australia's relations with several countries, including PNG, Solomon Islands and Fiji were in significant disarray. Hawksley, C. M. 2008. *Rudd's Way: The ALP In Government And Its Policies Toward The South Pacific*.

⁵⁹ Roy, Edmond. 11/2/2008. Aust, Pacific working on damaged relationship. *ABC News*.

⁶⁰ Rudd K. 4/7/2007. Rudd Urges Foreign Policy Re-think to Counter Instability. *ABC Lateline*; Rudd, K. 5/7/2007. *Fresh Ideas for Future Challenges: A New Approach to Australia's Arc of Instability*.

⁶¹ This included the PACER negotiations; and feasibility of a labor mobility program similar to New Zealand's.

⁶² Jackson, C. 13/2/2008. Australia and Samoa Start on Diplomatic High Note. *Pacific Islands Report*.

Australia might seem arrogant and heavy-handed, Kerr was generous enough to tell Samoan media, after all, it was the most powerful country in the region:

....We have made it very plain that we want to work as partners in a region where we have common interests, there's no doubt that economically Australia is the most powerful of those regional countries, so we shouldn't kid ourselves that the tone that we use won't sometime be resented.... There is no doubt that sometimes we're seen as condescending, sometimes heavy handed, but we're determined to remedy that to the greatest degree[sic] we can....sometimes, Australia won't have perfectly legitimate reasons for pursuing its own national interest, which may come into conflict with one or more of the Pacific Island Nations...⁶³

Samoan media observed that this was a curious approach to re-setting the partnership.⁶⁴

7.2.2 Aid Arrangements between Samoa and Australia

While his ministerial colleagues were visiting the South Pacific, Rudd headed north to Papua New Guinea to announce the Port Moresby Declaration, the first step in the “new era of cooperation” between Australia and the Pacific.⁶⁵ The Pacific Partnerships for Development were announced as a key platform in the new era of cooperation. The Partnerships were accompanied by the promise of more aid – if the Pacific countries performed well.

Samoa was one of the first to sign onto the new partnership agreements. Prime Minister Tuila'epa and Australia's Prime Minister Rudd signed the Partnership Arrangement between the two countries on the sidelines of the Forum's meeting in Niue in August 2008.⁶⁶ Samoa had just completed its national strategy for development. The 2008 Strategy for the Development of Samoa [2008 SDS] was the foundation of the partnership agreement between Australia and Samoa.

⁶³ Jackson, C. 13/2/2008. Australia and Samoa Start on Diplomatic High Note. *Pacific Islands Report*.

⁶⁴ Jackson, C. 13/2/2008. Australia and Samoa Start on Diplomatic High Note. *Pacific Islands Report*.

⁶⁵ Rudd, K. and M. Somare. 6/3/2008. Joint Press Conference on the Port Moresby Declaration. Port Moresby PNG

⁶⁶ Government of Australia and Government of Samoa. 19/8/2008. *Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development*.

Samoa’s National Development Strategy: 2008 SDS

Crafted nearly five decades after Samoa gained political independence, the 2008 SDS painted an optimistic picture of Samoa’s economic and social development.^{67 68} The Strategy sought to promote an “improved quality of life” for all Samoans by “ensuring sustainable economic and social progress”.⁶⁹ It claimed progress in “most measures” of human development since 1980.⁷⁰ It aligned Samoa’s development agenda with the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs], claiming that Samoa was “well advanced” in achieving the 8 MDGs.⁷¹ It attributed progress on delivering against the MDGs to strong economic growth, remittances, and high levels of government expenditure on education and health. However, the Strategy also acknowledged growing concerns over inequality in income distribution and hardship amongst vulnerable groups.

Financing the 2008 SDS

Despite the optimism of several international commentators, including the UN, IMF and ADB,

⁶⁷ In 2007, Vaai observed: “The Samoan economy is largely agriculture based with a high dependence on external personal remittances and external development aid.” Vaai, K. 2007. Samoa Economic Update 2007. *Pacific Economic Bulletin: Economic Survey*, 22(3):2.

⁶⁸ The 2008 SDS was the 13th national development strategy crafted by [or on behalf of] the Government of Samoa since independence in 1962. See Annex 7.2 Samoa: National Development Plans: most years are covered by a specific national plan, although, in some years, a situation assessment in preparation for UN roundtable discussions seems to have been drawn on as an alternative.

⁶⁹ *Minister’s Message, in* Government of Samoa. May 2008. *Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012 Ensuring Sustainable Economic and Social Progress*.

⁷⁰ The Strategy cited the “continually improving” Human Development Index value of 0.785, reflected by an increase in life expectancy of 70.8 years; a rising adult literacy rate of 98.6%; increasing enrolment across all school-levels; and a growth in average income, with GDP per capita of SAT\$6969 [US\$2543] with total GDP of SAT1248.7m [\$SU455.7m] in 2006. Government of Samoa. May 2008. *Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012 Ensuring Sustainable Economic and Social Progress: 2*.

⁷¹ The reported incidence of poverty had dropped faster than the targeted rate; universal education was deemed achievable; gender disparity in primary and second education had been eliminated; and child mortality reduced. There was less progress on environmental sustainability, although there was increased access to water and sanitation. Government of Samoa. May 2008. *Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012 Ensuring Sustainable Economic and Social Progress: 2*.

about Samoa's prospects for medium-term economic growth,⁷² Samoa continued to rely on its donors for support to fund its development expenditure. As Samoa's Minister for Finance, Minister Hang, indicated, the projected budget deficit⁷³ was forecast to be funded, largely, through donor grants and loans.⁷⁴ This included expenditure in two of the largest sectors, health and education.⁷⁵ The strong growth in funding from [donor] grants, the Minister asserted, reflected not only the Government's "willingness to bring ...about sustainable growth" in Samoa, but also "the strength of our relationships with our development partners".⁷⁶ Clearly, Samoa was pleased to sign the new Partnership for Development.

Partnership for Development:

The agreement under the Australia-Samoa Partnership for Development [P4D] committed

⁷² Va'ai reports that the leading four industries at end of 2006 were: commerce, transport and communications, public administration, finance and business services. These made up 53.5% of total GDP, the largest share of Samoa's GDP in the first decade of the millennium. He attributed this outcome to the extensive public sector reforms initiated [with donor support] since the late 1990s under the leadership of Prime Minister Tuila'epa. A key factor behind the IMF and ADB's optimism, he noted, was their positive assessment of the Government's policy, planning and management capacities. The UN had decided that Samoa was ready to graduate from LDC even though it agreed that Samoa remained economically vulnerable due to its structural vulnerabilities ie geography and economy limitations. See Vaai, K. 2007. Samoa Economic Update 2007.

⁷³ In its preparation for the SDS 2008, the Government forecast revenue of SAT\$580,653,051 [tala] of which SAT\$469,963,805 would be generated through domestic sources [down by 2.2% from the previous year which experienced a peak due to the South Pacific games]. With a forecast expenditure of SAT\$684,826,397, [including SAT\$216,089,246 classified as development expenditure], the budget forecast a deficit of SAT\$104,173,346. The actual loan forecast was SAT\$105,400,000 [p13] The budget statement noted the budget was the first to be implemented through a new medium-term fiscal framework [the forward estimates] "designed to improve economic stability, budget sustainability and better prioritisation of resource allocation." The Minister presented an annual Budget Statement, the Statement of Forward Estimates 2008/09-2010/11, a Statement of its Fiscal Strategy, key requirements under the 2001 Public Finance Management Act. Hang, N. L., 30/5/2008. Budget Address: 2008-2009, presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Samoa

⁷⁴ Samoa intended to jointly fund its priority development projects with approximately 20% of its forecast revenue, SAT\$110,689,246 - and 25% of its forecast expenditure on development - to be drawn from external grants [that is, aid] sourced from its core development partners: Australia, New Zealand, the World Bank and ADB, Japan, the EU and the Peoples' Republic of China. The deficit was to be financed through soft loans "largely by borrowings from our international development partners on concessional terms." Hang, N. L., 30/5/2008. Budget Address: 2008-2009, presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Samoa, 5

⁷⁵ The external grants, an increase of 44% on the previous year's share [from SAT\$65.6m to \$110.7m], would "strengthen education health and water as well as capacity building across ...[Government] Ministries. Government of Samoa, 2008/09 Budget Address, Hon. Niko Lee Hang, Minister of Finance, 30 May 2008 p6

⁷⁶ Hang, N. L., 30/5/2008. Budget Address: 2008-2009, presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Samoa, 6.

both governments to honour the principles enshrined in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.⁷⁷ Australia’s 2008-09 budget forecast estimated Australia’s aid commitment of A\$19.6m to Samoa in return for “enhanced performance” across priority outcomes in private sector growth and employment, health, education, governance and climate change.⁷⁸

The commitments under the Partnership were in addition to those made under the existing bilateral program.⁷⁹ Updated data shows that in the 2008-09 financial year, Australia actually contributed \$14.82m to Samoa’s total ODA spend of \$49.17m.⁸⁰ In 2009-10, as the Partnership agreement came into force, Australia contributed A\$22.83m of a total ODA spend of \$124.41m in Samoa.⁸¹

When Australia’s Foreign Minister Smith arrived in Samoa to consult with Prime Minister Tuila’epa in June 2009, Samoa’s national Strategy for Development 2008 and the Australia-

⁷⁷ Australia was present in Paris in 2005 and were assumed to have endorsed the Paris agreement. Samoa was not listed as present in Paris [although one interviewee indicated they were], however, Samoa is listed as participating in the Accra HLFAE in September 2008 and is an adherent by OECD. Samoa participated in a harmonisation study undertaken by New Zealand and the UNDP; it participated in the Paris monitoring and evaluation activities in 2008 and 2010. See Chapter 6: The Global Idea of Ownership for more details.

⁷⁸ Government of Australia and Government of Samoa. 19/8/2008. *Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development*. The Australian 2008-09 budget statement in the May 2008 had identified improved performance across five sectors: in employment and private sector development; and in service delivery and community development, across the education, health and legal sectors. see Budget Australian International Development Assistance Program 2008-09, Statement by the Honourable Stephen Smith MP minister for Foreign Affairs and the honourable Bob McMullan MP, parliamentary secretary for international development assistance, 13 May 2008 Commonwealth of Australia 2008, p39. The Australian budget statement in 2009-2010 forecast an increased commitment to \$22m under the country program of total ODA \$32.4m against the same five priorities, plus an additional sector, law and justice. See Smith S., and B. McMullan. 12/5/2009. Budget: Australia’s International Development Assistance Program: A good international citizen. Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Parliamentary Secretary International Development to the Australian Parliament, 47.

⁷⁹ See Smith S., and B. McMullan. 12/5/2009. Budget: Australia’s International Development Assistance Program: A good international citizen. Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Parliamentary Secretary International Development to the Australian Parliament.

⁸⁰ The EU and New Zealand were the next two top donor-grantors, spending A\$12.19m and A\$9.08m respectively. The world Bank topped loans with \$1.99m. Total development finance = A\$1.99b. The Lowy Institute. n.d. The Pacific Aid Map.

⁸¹ Japan and New Zealand followed, contributing A\$18.57m and A\$13.25m respectively; while China loaned A\$35.87m the IMF A\$11.46m and World Bank A\$3.59m – of a total development finance of \$2.44b spent. The Lowy Institute. n.d. The Pacific Aid Map.

Samoa Partnership for Development had been in place for nearly a year.⁸² The potential impact of the global financial crisis on the Pacific had focussed Australia's attention: the Australian Aid Program had commissioned a consultant to engage with Pacific states on the issue, producing a resultant report.⁸³ And Australia's Foreign Minister, Stephen Smith wanted Prime Minister Tuila'epa's views on the agenda for the forthcoming annual Pacific Leader's Forum, scheduled for August in Cairns.⁸⁴ According to media reports, Samoa's Prime Minister advised Smith that aid coordination required discussion.⁸⁵ Smith proposed the Post-Forum Dialogues, scheduled to occur after the Leaders retreat, as the venue for a discussion.

The Cairns Compact

Two months after Smith's visit, Samoa joined the 12 other Pacific Forum countries in endorsing Australia's initiative for the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Cooperation. One of Samoa's senior aid officials later explained their support for the Compact:

.... We had a lot of discussions internally about it ... we ... can't escape the fact that the Pacific receives a lot of aid per capita, yet ... the results were not quite there... so we said to our Prime Minister, we

⁸² Minister's Message, in Government of Samoa. May 2008. *Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012 Ensuring Sustainable Economic and Social Progress*; *RNZ News Pacific* 3/6/2009. Australia Foreign minister visits Tonga and Samoa

⁸³ AusAID. 2009. *Surviving the Global Recession: Strengthening Economic Growth and Resilience in the Pacific*.

⁸⁴ It was Australia's Foreign Minister, Stephen Smith his first visit to the Pacific in his new role. According to Australian media reports, Australia's "large aid program" to Samoa and its "strong people ties", made it a logical choice to visit. While Radio New Zealand explained that topics for discussion included Fiji's failure to return to democracy, Tonga's pledge to improve its political system for elections in 2010 and prepare for the leaders meeting in Cairns [as chair, Australia was host]. See: *ABC News* 2/06/2009. Smith makes maiden trip to Tonga, Samoa; *RNZ News Pacific* 3/6/2009. Australia Foreign minister visits Tonga and Samoa; *RNZ Pacific* 3/6/2009 Democracy and combatting the global recession will be on the agenda for talks between Australia's Foreign Minister and his counterparts in Tonga and Samoa. *RNZ News* reported Smith: "...of course we are going to have a conversation about Fiji and also about the run up [to] the Pacific islands leaders conference in Cairns in Australia, which of course, Australia is very pleased we are hosting."

⁸⁵ Mottram L., 5/6/2009. Island Leaders Call for Aid Coordination. In *Radio Australia* 4/6/2009 and cited by *Pacific Islands Report*: "Leaders in Tonga and Samoa have discussed with Australia the need for better co-ordination between countries that provide aid to the Pacific. Mr. Smith says it was suggested to him the issue should be discussed when the Pacific Islands Forum holds talks after its approaching leaders' meeting with other countries and institutions... "We are worried that we haven't got the coordination of that as well as we could...that's one of the possible suggestions...for the forum to consider in its post-forum dialogue." The AusAID report on the global recession, undertaken June/July 2009, shows the Secretary General of the Forum had raised concerns about donor coordination publicly in May 2009; this report, submitted in August 2009, reaffirmed the need for "regional action under a new development framework", through the FEMM and with Pacific leaders endorsement. AusAID. 2009. *Surviving the Global Recession: Strengthening Economic Growth and Resilience in the Pacific*, 26.

had no difficulty with the principles behind the Cairns Compact because we were already on track [to delivering the MDGs]... and we also understood the rationale...⁸⁶

A month after the Pacific Leaders met in Cairns, Samoa’s Prime Minister Tuila’epa was at the UN in New York. Climate change, the GFC and access to resources were on the agenda. Samoa intended to meet all of the MDGs, Tuila’epa declared, even though the available resources did not meet their need. He pled Samoa’s case for more durable global partnerships to redress the shortfall in resources: durable partners were those which delivered on their commitments on time, as promised by the MDG8, he asserted. This was the only way that small island states, such as Samoa could address the impact of climate change:

...Our needs are not matched by the resources at our disposal. Hence, central to our efforts to realize the MDGs is the implementation of Goal 8 on achieving durable global partnerships for development. But some aid donors either take their time to respond or do not do so at all. That is cause for justifiable alarm because if they are not forthcoming with relatively modest resources to help us achieve the MDGs, then the prospects for an effective global response to climate change will all but vanish...⁸⁷

Sustainable partnerships, Tuila’epa explained, were based on mutual trust and respect.

Samoa’s partnership with Australia illustrated such a partnership:⁸⁸

...Some development partners seem unconcerned as to where and how their development aid is spent.... Then, there are those who engage in posturing and rhetoric that are devoid of tangible or real action on the ground. Sustainable partnership is based on mutual trust and respect. That has been the foundation of Samoa’s relationship with our main development partners: Australia, China, the European Union, Japan and New Zealand. All have supported us and continue to do so at every step of our development journey...⁸⁹

Three days later, while Prime Minister Tuila’epa was still in New York, Samoa’s south-eastern coast was hit by the largest tsunami the country had ever experienced. The Prime Minister, alongside many others, lost members of his own family as the tsunami inundated his family

⁸⁶ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015

⁸⁷ Malielegaoi, T.L.S. 26/9/2009. Address by the Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa to the UN General Assembly, 64th session, 9th Plenary meeting, New York. A/64/PV.9

⁸⁸ Amongst others, including China, a donor to Samoa since the 1980s.

⁸⁹ Malielegaoi, T.L.S. 26/9/2009. Address by the Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa to the UN General Assembly, 64th session, 9th Plenary meeting, New York. A/64/PV.9.

village.⁹⁰ Foreign Minister Smith, on behalf of Australia, was one of the first to offer aid, an offer which was accepted with gratitude by the Government of Samoa.⁹¹

While the importance of aid coordination had been acknowledged by their Prime Minister before the meeting in Cairns, the recovery effort following the tsunami brought home its significance.⁹² Prior to the tsunami, the Government had identified the number of donors and corresponding projects they managed: Australia was one of 30 donors funding 142 projects in Samoa.⁹³ Each entailed different management arrangements, protocols and procedures. The Compact, it seemed, offered an opportunity for change.

7.3 Implementing Ownership under the Compact

My first task was to determine whether local aid coordination practices in Samoa had changed in accord with the global idea of Ownership, introduced formally by the agreement on the Compact. I began by assessing whether aid practices were implemented in Samoa under the Compact; then whether these reflected change in accord with the global idea of Ownership. I

⁹⁰ The tsunami wreaked havoc to over 500 households, caused over 140 deaths and injured numerous others; as well as damaged vital infrastructure, including schools, community centres and local businesses. At least 143 are known to have died in Samoa; another 34 deaths in American Samoa and 9 in Tonga. Government of Samoa. 2009. *Tsunami: Samoa 29 September 2009: An account of the tsunami disaster, the response, its aftermath, acknowledgement and the trek to recovery*.

⁹¹ In response to the urgent need for assistance, Samoa reports that Australia [and others] waived the formalities of official diplomatic notes and relied on “the strength of a handwritten note to the development partners” – and that the relationship’s strength was evident by their response. Government of Samoa, *Tsunami, Samoa 29 September 2009, An account of the tsunami disaster, the response, its aftermath, acknowledgement and the trek to recovery*, p13

⁹² Government of Samoa. 2009. *Tsunami: Samoa 29 September 2009: An account of the tsunami disaster, the response, its aftermath, acknowledgement and the trek to recovery*, 22.

⁹³ See Government of Samoa, *Partnerships for Development Policy, 2007-2009*: there were 14 major multilateral or bilateral donors, with several represented by different agencies, for example, the UN was represented by eight agencies, Australia and New Zealand by three each; another 8 ‘small’ bilateral donors; and another 8 regional or international organisations or funding source. While Australia New Zealand and the UN carried the most projects – 23, 26 and 24 projects, respectively: Japan and JICA had 15 between them, the EU carried 8 and World Bank, 9; the ADB had 7; Turkey, 2, but others, such as Canada, USA and Korea had only one project. The government of Samoa was jointly responsible – and contributing resources - to 18 projects, mainly with the multilateral and major donors.

mapped the local aid coordination practices represented by the production of the measures of Ownership indicated by the Paris Declaration;⁹⁴ and compared these against the criteria which Ostrom and her colleagues nominated as indicative of a transition in ownership from donors and to the aid-receiving country – in this site, from Australia to Samoa.⁹⁵ I then examined whether interviewees attributed changes in aid coordination practices to the global idea of Ownership identified by the Paris Declaration and adopted as “best practice” under the Forum Compact. This analysis is summarised in the matrix in Table 7.1 of Appendix 7.1 Best Practice in Samoa, and the accompanying discussion in Appendix 7.2 Implementing “Best Practice” Ownership in Samoa.

7.3.1 Implementation

As indicated in Table 7.1, Samoa’s political leadership and policy advisors participated in the strategies of Ownership identified by the Paris Declaration, and re-affirmed by the Compact. While there may have been questions about the quality or pace,⁹⁶ Samoa largely satisfied the criteria for implementation of each of the five strategies of Ownership in accord with Ostrom’s four criteria for a transition in Ownership.⁹⁷ Samoa also instituted several policy instruments and practices which strengthened or went beyond Ostrom’s criteria, and enhanced implementation of the strategies of Ownership nominated by the Paris Declaration.

⁹⁴ This also included the additional strategies and measures of Ownership [particularly the stronger coordination and authorisation measures to ensure the development strategies and budgets reflected broader consultation and engagement – and political commitment - across Parliament and civil society] nominated by the Accra Agenda for Action in 2008, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

⁹⁵ See Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership Unpacking the Policy Logic, Chapter 4 The Research Design and Methodology and Chapter 5 The Global Idea of Ownership for more detail.

⁹⁶ Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30/6/2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*.

⁹⁷ Government of Samoa. December 2010. Evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action; Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30/6/2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*.

Participation in Identifying development needs

Between 2008 and 2018, Samoa's Ministry of Finance led its departmental colleagues and others in the preparation and delivery of three consecutive national development strategies, known as the Strategy for the Development of Samoa [SDS] in 2008, 2012 and 2016. These national strategies were aligned to annual national budgets and presented to the Parliament for authorisation.⁹⁸ The Ministry also initiated sectoral strategies to link to the national strategies in several sectors [climate change, water and infrastructure]. Samoa was well-regarded for the quality of its national development strategies by its donor-partners.⁹⁹ These strategies were the basis for the priorities identified in the aid arrangements reached with the Australian government[s] in 2009 and 2016.¹⁰⁰

Authorisation and coordination

Samoa also instituted several policy instruments and practices which promoted coordination and ensured appropriate authorisation for development interventions within and outside the government – and with the donors. These strategies built a link across each of the criteria proposed by Ostrom, rather than responded specifically to one or other of Ostrom's four criteria.

The Ministry of Finance [MoF] established two mechanisms for approving development cooperation activities and aid coordination within the government: the Aid Coordination

⁹⁸ Hang, N. L., 30/5/2008. Budget Address: 2008-2009, presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Samoa.

⁹⁹ Government of Australia and Government of Samoa. 19/8/2008. *Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development*, signed 19 August 2008, Niue, by K Rudd PM Australia, and I.S. Tuila'epa, PM Samoa.

¹⁰⁰ Government of Australia and Government of Samoa. 19/8/2008. *Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development*; the partnership was re-negotiated in 2016 as the Australia-Samoa Aid Partnership Arrangement 2016-2019.

Committee [ACC] and later, the Cabinet Development Committee [CDC]. The ACC vetted the national development strategies, all aid funding requests and allocations prior to their presentation to the CDC, who vetted the strategies before presentation to the broader Parliament.¹⁰¹

Contribution of resources - authorised by Parliament

The government contributed resources to the development interventions under its national strategy. Samoa produced annual budgets which were authorised through the ACC and CDC processes, as well as presented to Parliament. The annual budget statement delivered by the Minister for Finance in 2008-09, for example, identified Samoa’s allocations towards programs that were jointly funded by the donors, in education, health and water sectors.¹⁰² Similarly, Samoa’s 2017-18 budget statement noted the Government’s commitment to jointly resource several sectors with their development partners, including education and health, infrastructure and water, communications, climate mitigation and tourism, commerce and agriculture and fisheries.¹⁰³

Enjoying the benefits of development interventions:

Samoa participated in and benefited from development interventions. This occurred in three

¹⁰¹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015; Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 30 June 2014, Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report.

¹⁰² Hang, N. L., 30/5/2008. Budget Address: 2008-2009, presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Samoa; Tuioti, S. E. 30/5/2017. Budget Address 2017-2018 presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Samoa.

¹⁰³ Tuioti, S. E. 30/5/2017. Budget Address 2017-2018 presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Samoa.

ways: through participation in planning and managing development interventions; through participation in capacity strengthening interventions funded by the donors; and through the participation of Samoa's citizens in the programs and services in education, health and other areas under the national development strategies.

Samoa's policy advisors from central and related sectoral agencies participated in donor policy dialogues, and development planning and reporting. They also engaged in programs to build the government's organisational capacity as well as the skills of individuals to manage government systems and processes.

Outside the capacity strengthening programs for the central agencies of government, Samoans participated in development interventions outlined under the three national development strategies during this period. These encompassed programs across key priority areas: health, education, and support for private sector development and civil society.

Determining when a development need is met:

Samoa's senior policy advisors participated regularly in evaluations and reviews of their own national development strategies and programs. They also engaged, across the region and globally, in evaluations and reviews of programs and strategies associated with the HLFAE and its successor, the GPEDC;¹⁰⁴ and with national and regional reporting on the MDGs, and later,

¹⁰⁴ AusAID and New Zealand MFAT. 2001. Harmonising donor policies and practices in the Pacific. Report of the joint Australia-New Zealand Research Project. Government of Samoa. December 2010. Evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. OECD. 2012. Aid Effectiveness 2011: Progress in Implementing the Paris Declaration (2011 Monitoring Survey). Including Vol 2 Country reports: Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

the SDGs.¹⁰⁵ Over the duration of the Compact, Samoa became increasingly engaged in leading discussions at global fora related to the HLFAE: Samoa represented the Pacific region at the Busan HLFAE;¹⁰⁶ they hosted the UN International Conference of SIDS;¹⁰⁷ and participated in various UN Committees to develop indicators for the SDGs and in the formation of the Partnerships Framework.

Domestically, policy advisors from across the central government agencies participated in training in monitoring and evaluation to build their capacity to assess the performance of Samoa’s national development strategy. Regionally, Samoa was an active participant in reviews and evaluations. A senior policy advisor was a member of the Morauta Review of the Pacific Plan, whose recommendations had a significant and lasting impact on the region’s institutional architecture.¹⁰⁸ Samoa’s policy advisors were actively engaged in the Compact’s Peer Reviews of Pacific and donor countries [as well as the OECD-DAC Peer review of New Zealand].¹⁰⁹ Samoa was well-regarded for the quality of their engagement in the Compact Peer Reviews and for initiating the “south-south” exchange program. The Peer Reviews, in particular, were acclaimed as innovative by others within the region and globally.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ The Government of Samoa participated in regional consultations on harmonisation in the Pacific with the ANZ study in 2001; Samoa also participated in the 2011 monitoring of progress under the Paris Declaration; Samoa was one of only two Pacific countries [the other was the Cook Islands] to participate in the global [and final] evaluation of the implementation of the Paris Declaration in 2010.

¹⁰⁶ GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011.

¹⁰⁷ UNGA. 14/11/2014. SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. Resolution 69/15 adopted by the General Assembly.

¹⁰⁸ Morauta, M., P.N. Simi, R. Killion, P. Bazeley and N. Poletti. *Pacific Plan Review 2013 Report to Pacific Leaders Volume 1 and 2*. (The Morauta Review).

¹⁰⁹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2011. Synthesis of Development Partner Reporting on Aid Effectiveness in Forum Island Countries. Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30/6 2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*; OECD. 2015. OECD Development Cooperation Peer Reviews New Zealand.

¹¹⁰ Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30 /6/2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*. GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November-1 December 2011.

7.3.2 Innovation: Pasifika Expertise and Relationships

In addition to satisfying the criteria laid out by Ostrom and the Paris measures, the Government of Samoa introduced several policy innovations which complemented and extended the strategies of Ownership nominated by the Paris Declaration and Ostrom's criteria. These innovations were initiated - and insisted upon - by Samoa: one in relation to partnerships [and relationships]; the other in relation to Pasifika expertise.

First, Samoa's policy advisors insisted that donors – and the Forum Secretariat engage local Pasifika expertise in aid and development programming and evaluations. This happened in three ways. Samoa's national program reviews were led by Samoan policy advisors [even while Samoa was willing to engage external consultants to provide technical advice]. Samoa also insisted that the Forum [and donors] engage Pacific experts as peers in regional evaluation processes, such as the Compact Peer Reviews.¹¹¹

Samoa also initiated a program of training exchanges with other Pacific countries promote Pasifika expertise through building networks; and acknowledging local experience and capacity. Samoa led several south-south attachments in collaboration with the Forum Secretariat. The attachments brought together policy advisors from across the Pacific's public sector agencies to share “best” practices in aid coordination and related policymaking.

Second, the government of Samoa introduced a new policy instrument, the *Development Cooperation Policy: Partners in Development Promoting Aid Effectiveness (2010)*, [The

¹¹¹ Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*.

Partnerships Policy], to manage aid relations between Samoa and the donors.¹¹² Australia responded positively.¹¹³ Despite the policy’s clarity, however, its objectives were not always met: several donors - including Australia – were reported to not always align with the policy’s parameters.¹¹⁴ These innovations are discussed further in Samoa [Part 3].

Australia seemed to respond positively overall to Samoa’s capacity to implement the strategies of Ownership, as promised under the aid arrangements with Australia. At a time when overall aid levels dropped in the Australian aid program, aid flows to the Pacific remained stable or increased. Between 2009 and 2018, Australian aid to Samoa nearly doubled in volume.¹¹⁵ The question was however, whether change in aid coordination practices was attributable to the influence of the idea of Ownership at the foundation of the Compact.

¹¹² The Policy delineated roles and responsibilities across the government and donors and corresponding authority and approval mechanisms for aid and development interventions; introduced black-out periods to manage donor missions to Samoa; identified preferred forms of aid delivery and established procedures and processes for policy dialogue and identified Samoa’s intention to retain control over donor engagement. Government of Samoa, December 2010, Development Cooperation Policy - Partners in Development Promoting Aid Effectiveness, Ministry of Finance Aid Coordination and Debt Management Division. The 2010 policy replaced an earlier policy dating from 2007: Government of Samoa, Partnerships for Development 2007-2009, Ministry of Finance Aid Coordination – Management; the 2007 iteration was essentially a list of existing projects donors and funding.

¹¹³ See Australian Government (AusAID) 2011. Australian Aid Program Annual Performance Report: Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development 2010-2011.

¹¹⁴ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015; Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015. Government of Samoa. December 2010. Evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action; Government of Samoa. 2020. *Samoa’s Second Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals*. Monitoring Report for the GPEDC.

¹¹⁵ In a time when overall aid levels dropped in the Australian aid program, aid to the Pacific countries was stable and or increased. The Lowy Institute’s Pacific Aid Map shows that in Samoa, over the duration of the Compact, the grant aid spend from Australia was A\$22.83m in 2009 of a total ODA spend of \$124.41m [China was the largest lender at A\$35.87m]; in 2017, Australian grant aid spend was A\$34.24m of total ODA spend of A\$191.92m [China remained top lender at A\$18.10m] in 2018, Australian aid grant spend increased to A\$40.84m [China remained top lender at A\$26.15m] See the Pacific aid map. In 2013, in the year the Rudd government was displaced by the Abbott government, Australia’s ODA grant aid spend in Samoa was A\$37.20m [the highest grantor, ahead of NZ and WB] of a total ODA spend of A\$179.46m [China was the leading lender of all ODA with total A\$43.31m]. In 2014, Australia’s ODA grant aid spend was A\$31.03m of a total ODA spend of A\$149.62m [while China’s loan spend dropped to A\$11.15m].

7.3.3 Attributing Change

While local aid practices seemed to adhere to the strategies nominated by Paris in accord with Ostrom's criteria under the umbrella of the Compact, it was not clear that this reflected the influence of the global idea of Ownership. Apart from two practices claimed as innovations [the Partnerships Policy and the Compact Peer Reviews], Samoa's seeming adherence to the strategies of Ownership more often reflected changes which had been underway for over a decade. As interviewees explained, Samoa's political leaders and policy makers had instituted a major shift in their approach to development, and aid relations, in the early 1990s, long before the Compact – and idea of Ownership - was introduced to the Forum Leaders in Cairns by Australia. Although some changes were taking time to consolidate, local policy practices around aid coordination had been undergoing change for the subsequent two decades.¹¹⁶

Samoa was well-versed in national development planning when their Prime Minister endorsed the Compact in Cairns. While Western Samoa had pursued economic development plans since soon after independence,¹¹⁷ in 1995, the Government initiated a new approach to development planning.¹¹⁸ The government declared a new development partnership with its citizens, promising to build national economic wealth. It offered a partnership with the private sector to promote investment. It dedicated itself to reforming its own operations: initiating a

¹¹⁶ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015; Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015; Government of Samoa. December 2010. Evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action; Government of Samoa. 2020. *Samoa's Second Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals*. Monitoring Report for the GPEDC.

¹¹⁷ Government of Western Samoa. 1965. *Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965*.

¹¹⁸ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015; Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015; See Appendix 7.3 Samoa: National Development Plans. Some version of a national development strategy – whether named an economic plan or programme or a strategy for development - had been crafted under [if not with] the authority of the government of Samoa since 1965.

series of public sector reform programs, supported by capacity strengthening initiatives in administration, financial management and performance assessment.¹¹⁹ Similarly, the government had established practices and procedures to ensure its annual budget supported its national development plans.¹²⁰ The government’s coordination mechanisms, the ACC and CDC, were in place well before the Paris Declaration. While the ACC initially took the lead in reviewing plans against revenue sources, the government was re-calibrating to ensure the CDC engaged with the full authority of their designated role of ensuring that the ambitions of the government’s agenda was balanced by sufficient resources.¹²¹ These initiatives and programs – all of which aligned with the strategies of Ownership - continued under the Compact and were, for the large part, well regarded.¹²² Samoa’s slow, but mostly reliable¹²³ economic growth since the 1990s was attributed, primarily, to the success of these reforms and the national leadership that generated them.¹²⁴

However, Samoa’s policy advisors were clear: these changes could not be attributed to the global idea of Ownership under the Compact’s mandate [or even under the influence of the Paris Declaration]. Senior policy advisors I interviewed in Samoa were adamant that neither the Paris Declaration nor the Compact drove the change in Samoa’s aid coordination practices.

¹¹⁹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015; Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015; Confidential interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015.

¹²⁰ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015; Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015; Government of Samoa. December 2010. Evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action; Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 30/6/ 2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*.

¹²¹ According to one interviewee, the ACC was instituted as early as 1998; the date for the CDC is estimates as the early 2000s; both were in operation when the government instituted a major departmental restructure which did three things: brought line management responsibility for all finances under the Ministry of Finance [including all aid monies previously managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]; introduced performance-based budgeting [in lieu of line-item budgeting]; and passed the Financial Management Act 2004. Prime Minister Tuila’epa credited the shift from line-item budgeting to performance-based budgeting as one of the most significant changes in financial management practices during his leadership. Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

¹²² Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 30/6/2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*.

¹²³ Except for those periods impacted by natural disasters in 1990-91, 2009 and 2012.

¹²⁴ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015; Amosa, D. U. 2012. *Social Policies in Samoa*.

As one senior and well-respected policy advisor, with decades of experience in the government, declared: “We were already doing it”.¹²⁵

Another senior policy advisor, who had advised in the highest echelons of government observed:

....the Paris Declaration, it wasn't that it wasn't important, but at that time, there was no impetus for us to look very thoroughly and to say, “Oh, let's do this, let's do that!” ...it was only when it was brought home to us that we should be reviewed to see where the Paris Declaration was, and so forth... that I could look back and say, “At the end of the day, whatever global bandwagons come along, at least we could say with confidence... we've been there and done that!” And that is exactly how I felt... That's the reason why we didn't take it seriously enough, because we were doing our own thing... I think it's partly coincident that it all worked out and that it is all parallel to each other but I think you also need to take note of the fact that, in terms of ownership of all those change processes, we were very conscious of where we wanted to go, so we were very grateful that everything has fallen into place and that the Paris Declaration reaffirms what we had started... so to come back to the Compact, to me, it's a secondary thing...having gone through the Paris Declaration period and come to this, it still remains the same in terms of what Samoa had done...¹²⁶

The Paris Declaration [and the Compact in its trail] may have aligned with Samoa's interests, but neither was compelling as a driver of change.¹²⁷ Samoa was “doing its own thing”.¹²⁸ The policy measures of Ownership under the Compact [and its policy predecessor, the Paris Declaration] reinforced a change process which had been ongoing for over 20 years in Samoa when I interviewed the policy advisors. As another senior policy advisor acknowledged, it was Samoa's political leaders and its senior policymakers who drove change, in part due to what they learnt from their experiences during the financial crisis of the early 1980s – and, in part, having learnt to do what was necessary to maintain relations with the donors:

...what has driven it is what people learnt when they had to count those 28 days [of the 1982 financial crisis] ... Paris allows us to keep donors accountable... We are not devaluing the influence of aid or the Compact... but some of these things also have to be sold ... not for here, but for the audience in Canberra or New Zealand, so they feel they are doing a lot better, or much better than what other people say...for the Ministry [of Finance], the Compact is significant... the same in AusAID... the honest

¹²⁵ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

¹²⁶ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

¹²⁷ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

¹²⁸ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

truth is, some don't know about it... I think ownership is critical but what do you call ownership and where does it come from? ... no one would see relevance of Compact, to the general public it doesn't matter - although it does for the Ministry of Finance - you dress it up through the reforms...¹²⁹

Instead, senior policy advisors and others attributed the major shift – and subsequent changes in local aid coordination practices - to a collective political leadership and vision. The integrity, strength and longevity of their Prime Minister Tuila'epa's leadership was key.¹³⁰ Tuila'epa, senior advisors explained, had brought a political commitment and capacity which encouraged the emergence of a dedicated and skilled professional cohort of policy advisors across the public sector; and together, they developed a common vision for change.

As the Prime Minister Tuila'epa explained, the reforms instituted in the 1990s, were “necessary”. Following the economic crises of the 1980s, Samoa needed better strategies to manage resources to achieve economic growth and sustainable development. The 1995 Samoa Economic Strategy was key, Tuila'epa explained, in capturing the collective [and local] vision for change:

For Samoa, the change process we undertook was necessary because we knew back then as a government which had survived an economic and financial crisis in the early 1980s, that with a narrow resource base which was basically agricultural, **we had no option but to look at ways of strengthening our approach** to develop and enhance other sectors of the economy, **change the role of government to be more effective, efficient and accountable in resource mobilization, allocation and utilization** to support key sectoral activities to promote economic growth and sustainable development. This whole new approach was encapsulated in a vision that was promoted with the introduction of the first Statement of Economic Strategy (SES) issued in 1995. This planning strategy was renamed as the Samoa Development Strategy (SDS) as it has come to be called these days and remains the guiding strategic framework for Samoa's development. This massive reform effort was greatly assisted by our development partners and they remain supportive of our ongoing work to continually improve and refine our reforms.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015.

¹³⁰ Prime Minister Tuila'epa was elected to Samoa's parliament in 1981. He has carried various portfolios, as Minister for Finance, Deputy Prime Minister, amongst others. He was Prime Minister from 23 Nov 1998 to 23 July 2021. Tuila'epa was Samoa's longest serving Prime Minister. During the period of my fieldwork, he was the second-longest incumbent Prime Minister in the world, with nearly 23 consecutive years in office. He is leader of the opposition and remains the leader of the Human Rights Protection Party.

¹³¹ Tuila'epa Lupesoliai Sa'ilele Malielegaoi, Message from the Honourable Prime Minister of Samoa, in Government of

The strategies of Ownership promoted by the Paris Declaration [and by extension, the Compact], senior advisors explained, offered: “a common understanding of the direction for change....the common vision needed for success.”¹³² The language of the Paris Declaration offered a vehicle which made it easier to have the conversations that Samoa wanted to have with donors; to hold the donors to account for understanding the desired direction for change – and how to achieve development success.

This made the Compact’s claims to give “new determination and an invigorated commitment” to effective policy measures and practice responses” in accord with the “best practices” laid out by Paris and Accra curious.¹³³ As the donors knew [or should have, because their funds supported these initiatives], many of those changes were already underway in Samoa. Samoa’s concerns about the impact of the GFC on the donors willingness to continue to honour aid-commitments might explain part of Tuila’epa’s decision to raise aid coordination with Australia’s Foreign Minister Smith in their talks in June 2009. But it didn’t explain the major shift in aid relations – and in Samoa’s development agenda – in the early 1990s which Samoa’s policy advisors identified as the original trigger for change in aid coordination practices [amongst other things]. Nor was it clear why the Paris Declaration’s offer of a

Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30/6/2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*, iv.

¹³² As Samoa’s evaluation of the implementation of the Paris Declaration in 2010 [led by government and local advisors] observed, the policy “gave all development stakeholders a common understanding for the direction of the change - it effectively provided the common vision needed for success.” The Evaluation Team noted that, even though donors were amongst the first to use the language of the Paris Declaration and sometimes moved at a faster rate than Samoa desired, not all donors supported genuine change - even when their organisations officially endorsed the Declaration. Time, encouragement and commitment “driven by innovative and flexible individuals”, was necessary to sustain the “major organisational and policy change” required for the Paris Declaration to be truly effective. Government of Samoa. December 2010. *Evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action*, 70.

¹³³ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 5-6/8/2009. *Forum Communiqué*. 40th Pacific Islands Forum, PIFS(09)12. Annex B Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific.

"common understanding...the common vision needed for success" continued to matter to Samoa's policy advisors and political leadership, two decades later after Samoa had initiated major change in its development approach. The puzzle – the mismatch between rhetoric and practice - continued to evolve.

7.3.4 Untangling the Webs of Significance

My interest lay not in whether the Paris Declaration and its regional counterpart, the Compact, were implemented, per se; but rather, in testing whether the strategies nominated by the global idea of Ownership, claimed as central to the policy's logic for change, could [and did] influence development partnerships. If the global idea of Ownership promoted by the Compact [and its foundational policy, the Paris Declaration] did not drive change, I was curious to understand why it was endorsed by Samoa – and what had driven change prior to its endorsement. I was curious to know what had happened in past relations with donors that made the question of a common understanding and vision of such import to Samoa's political leadership, and to the cohort of [now senior] policy advisors responsible for negotiating relations with donors. I began by examining the local significance attributed to the idea of ownership in order to explore the origins of the motivation behind the sustained change in aid practices over the decade and more since the early 1990s.

I re-analysed contemporary interviews of policy advisors and consultants, comparing the local significance attributed to the idea of Ownership with the meaning assigned by its global articulation in Paris – to clarify what the ownership represented for Samoa's political leadership and policy advisors. Analysing the local rhetoric and metaphors used to discuss

Ownership would reveal, I hoped, the locally-situated values and beliefs and norms in play.

The results are discussed in Chapter 8: Samoa [Part 2].

Chapter 8 Samoa: “A Mutuality...an Understanding”

8.1 Introduction

Given Samoa’s insistence that change in local aid coordination practices was instigated well before agreement on the Paris Declaration, yet, at the same time, the same policy advisors advised that Paris offered a language for achieving “a common vision, a common direction” with donors, I investigated the discrepancy between implementation and the attribution of change. I examined the local significance attributed to the idea of Ownership. I compared the policy advisors’ responses with the significance assigned to the global articulation of Ownership. I was looking for the local motivation for change in aid coordination. The answer led me to inquire into the history of aid relations in Samoa to understand why Samoa’s policy advisors and leadership understood the idea of ownership differently from its global articulation in the Paris Declaration.

8.2 The Motivation for Change: the Local Significance of Ownership

We are looking for... a mutuality...even donors have their commitment to their taxpayers...looking after their interests, right, because they are spending it on development assistance...we recognise that; but at the same time, we are saying, because you have no idea of the culture or the environment... be a partner with us... we don’t want you to impose, nor do we want to antagonise... we just want a partnership where we can discuss things and ...develop an understanding and a way forward...¹

For Samoa’s policy advisors, the local significance attributed to the idea of ownership entailed calls for a relationship with donors as equals. Ambiguity around definition of the global idea of Ownership gave Samoa’s policy advisors the leverage to assert space for dialogue, space to

¹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

recalibrate relations.² The global language of Ownership offered an avenue to hold donors accountable for their commitments to Samoa, despite “that issue” of aid reliance.³ It provided space to argue the case for Samoa’s interests legitimately, to assert “what is it that you want.”⁴ In doing so, Samoa argued for recognition that understanding the local context would ensure more effective development outcomes, “to bring about the change in what you want and how it will be implemented.”⁵ The idea of Ownership proposed by the Paris Declaration offered a point of leverage to assert Samoa’s interests in an unequal relationship: to work together to ensure the right kinds of interventions, built on local knowledge and understanding, that would achieve the desired development outcomes because they drew from local knowledge of the culture and the environment.

Samoa’s senior policymakers understood that donors carried obligations to their own constituents, their taxpayers, to account for the effective and efficient use of aid. As one interviewee commented:

...even donors have their commitment to their taxpayers... looking after their interests, right, because they are spending it on development assistance...we recognise that... ⁶

They understood what the global idea of Ownership represented for its donors:

...that basically, we lead the process, whatever is provided to us by way of external assistance is complementary, we should be in the steering wheel and, not to control, but to guide how we are going to be working together, with our development partners...there is a shared agenda, there’s articulated

² Cornwall A. August 2007. Buzzwords and Fuzzwords: deconstructing development discourse, *Development in Practice*. 17(4-5) 471-484. As Cornwall argues, “Development’s buzzwords gain their purchase and power through their vague and euphemistic qualities, their capacity to embrace a multitude of possible meanings, and their normative resonance. The work that these words do for development is to place the sanctity of its goals beyond reproach.” She observes, “Policies depend on a measure of ambiguity to secure the endorsement of diverse potential actors and audiences. Buzzwords aid this process, by providing concepts that can float free of concrete referents, to be filled with meaning by their users. In the struggles for interpretive power that characterise the negotiation of the language of policy, buzzwords shelter multiple agendas, providing room for manoeuvre and space for contestation.”

³ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

⁴ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

⁵ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

⁶ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

commitments and there is also the whole idea that you are accountable to each other on what is being done as part of the relationship...⁷

But, this senior policy advisor also admitted, Samoa also had “to be seen” to own the development processes:

It’s good to be seen that you are leading the process and that you own the process, otherwise, you can be tossed around... [in the past] we were very vulnerable and gullible and at the mercy of the development partners....we were very much at their mercy because there was no dialogue about what it is that you want and what is the situation that can bring about the change in what you want and how it will be implemented...⁸

Samoa’s senior policy advisors were acutely aware of the power imbalance in relations with donors generated by their reliance on aid – and the expertise and resources aid offered. They were also acutely aware of their own obligations as leaders, to their government, their nation and their families. It was their responsibility, as leaders, to perform effectively and efficiently on behalf of their government and their families. Honouring this responsibility demanded they establish a shared understanding of their culture and their environment, as equals with donors. They wanted a partnership with donors based on understanding and dialogue, not dominance and antagonism. This, Samoa’s policy advisors offered, was the way to ensure the effective partnerships that all agreed were necessary for achieving development.

For Samoa’s senior policymakers, the idea of Ownership at the heart of the Paris Declaration offered a pathway to equality with the donors, beyond their reliance on aid. The language of Ownership as a precondition for partnership opened the opportunity to promote “a mutuality” between Samoa and the donors. It offered the opportunity for Samoa to “discuss things” with donors and build “an understanding” of “our culture, our environment”.⁹

⁷ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

⁸ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015

⁹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

However, to create such a partnership “when you have that issue” of aid reliance, a senior and respected policy advisor in the Ministry of Finance declared, “at the end of the day, you want ownership because if you start allowing people to impose their views on you...you practically say, ‘Well, game over’.”¹⁰ Samoa, the advisor continued, “has been prepared to transform” to meet donors’ requirements.¹¹ But Samoa also demanded [diplomatically] a “mutuality...an understanding,” in return. The idea of Ownership offered by the Paris Declaration could be an opportunity to build the foundations of a “genuine and durable” partnership, if it was approached with a mutual accountability between Samoa and its donors.¹²

My puzzle had taken another turn: why did equality in their partnerships with the donors carry such resonance for Samoa’s political and policy leaders? For over two decades, Samoa had implemented precisely the suite of strategies proposed by the global idea of Ownership: yet Samoa’s policy advisors still sought equality in their relations with the donors, a decade on from Paris – and five years after the Compact was agreed. Were the claims that the Paris Declaration – and the global idea of Ownership at its heart – would shift power relations, hollow?

Rather than assume that aid reliance diminished equality in relations, I wanted to understand why it had been difficult to ensure the space for the right kinds of dialogue, especially in recent years, when one of the agreed premises underlying the idea of the Ownership in the Paris

¹⁰ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

¹¹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

¹² Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

Declaration was that partnership was the path to effective development. I turned to the historical records of Samoa's development trajectory since independence to find an explanation for the call for a mutuality, for equality in relations.

Between 1965 and 2009, when the Compact was endorsed, the independent state of Samoa had produced some 14 national development plans or strategies.¹³ In addition, there were various reports on the development situation prepared "for consultation" with the donors, [usually the UN]. These seemed to substitute for a national development plan during the corresponding period.¹⁴ These strategies and situation assessments were also, implicitly and explicitly, a record of aid relations.

For the purposes of my analysis, I categorised the strategies and plans into three phases: the post-independence development plans and reports between 1965-1988; the "Tuila'epa plans" between 1992-2004; and the "Paris plans," roughly encompassing those development plans crafted between the first high level forum on aid effectiveness in Rome in 2003¹⁵ and the Compact's integration into the Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development in 2017.¹⁶

¹³ See Appendix 7.3 Samoa: National Development Plans

¹⁴ Government of Western Samoa. October 1988. Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs, Vol 1, Main Report. Prepared for the Round Table meeting in Geneva.

¹⁵ See Appendix 7.3: Samoa: National Development Plans – this encompassed plans between 2005-2007; 2008-2012; 2012-2016; and 2017-2020.

¹⁶ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2017. *Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development*.

8.3 The Significance of “A Mutuality”

8.3.1 *The Post-Independence Development Plans*

The post-independence development plans and reports show the close and continuing relations between Samoa and several donors: its past colonial administrator turned “friend” and bilateral donor, New Zealand; the agencies under the UN, to whom Samoa attributed credit for facilitating its independence;¹⁷ and the ADB and World Bank. It was often advisors from one or other of these agencies, engaged because of their expertise as economists or anthropologists, who wrote the early plans during the first three decades, post-independence.¹⁸ Often, I imagine - as someone who has been in a similar position of crafting contemporary iterations of sectoral strategic plans and reports - these advisors carried persuasive [even if implicit] authority, as writers of the plans and as the representative of a prospective donor and source of aid. This unique role gave advisors the opportunity to influence how development was framed, as well as how development would be achieved.

The post-independence plans identified two key purposes: first, to define the vision that the pursuit of “development” would facilitate and scope the nature of the development objective; and second, to secure aid monies to resource the proposed development activities to enable that vision.¹⁹

¹⁷ Andrew Gerakas, an advisor to the Minister for Economic Development in 1965 who drafted the 1965 Economic Plan and subsequent 1966 Economic Programme on behalf of the Government of Western Samoa, noted, that the Samoa and the UN had built a “relationship of trust” due to UN’s role in releasing Samoa from the trustee arrangements with NZ in support of independence.

¹⁸ For example, Tololima Leifi Auvva’a’s Masters’ thesis on education policy in Samoa documents how the missionaries introduced reading and writing in English, with Samoan translations, in the 19th century which influenced formal education through to the 1950s. The 1995 SES brought Samoan and English literacy and numeracy to equal prominence in the Ministry of Education’s formal education curriculum and pedagogy. Auvva’a, T.L April 2003. *Continuity and Change: Education policy and historiography of education in Western Samoa*, Master of Education (Honours) James Cook University.

¹⁹ Western Samoa’s first Minister for Finance and Economic Development, G.F.D. Betham called for aid in the House of Assembly in October in 1964 when he presented the 1965 budget. He announced his intention to ask the Parliament to finance a development plan in 1965 “to bring about the best results in creating jobs and income”, with a 5-year programme

The post-independence vision:

The post-independence plans show that Samoa sought “a better life for all Samoans” through economic development.²⁰ The pathway to development was defined as a choice between continuing, as a “small and closed society” to rely on the “subsistence affluence” enabled by traditional Samoan customs and practices – or to open up Samoa to the capitalised markets of the global economy.²¹ The plans opted for the global economy. In the words of Western Samoa’s then-Minister for Finance and Economic Development, G.F.D Betham, the intention was to support Western Samoa,

...to provide a better life for our people, and at the same time, preserve and enhance as much as possible the Samoan way of life....²²

The development strategy – and the path to success

The strategy to achieve “a better way of life” was defined, effectively, as jobs and investment.²³ The 1965 Economic Plan and subsequent 1966 Economic Programme proposed

to be crafted in 1966 for the next five years, 1966-70. Substantial local finances, he said, were required and “outside aid would be sought from all available national and international aid sources. See: Rankin, R.F. 1964. Apia, Call for Belt-Tightening in Western Samoa, *Pacific Islands Monthly*, 35(12) Dec 1. When announcing the Plan in 1965, Minister Betham said: the plan aims to demonstrate that “the nation...is willing to undertake its own programmes and make its own efforts...[and] show we are willing to co-operate and work hard in our development efforts” in order to build the case for overseas funding - whether investment or aid - because “...there is little chance that the Government’s economic development efforts alone will stimulate the economy to grow as fast as ..the population.” Samoa, he said, had only sought aid from New Zealand and the UN thus far and could seek aid from other sources, but, “in addition to aid,” Samoa must encourage “new economic enterprise by outside [private] capital and know-how.” Betham, G.F.D.[Minister for Finance & Economic Development and Chairman of the Economic Development Board]. January 1965. Western Samoa’s Economic Plan for 1965. Memorandum of Transmittal, Parliamentary Paper 1965-No1. Apia, Western Samoa, 1-2.

²⁰ Government of Western Samoa. 1965. *Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965*, 3.

²¹ The 1982 report prepared for the LDC negotiations in 1982 asserted: Western Samoa could choose to “...remain a small and closed society, at a subsistence level which would probably provide adequate quantity [not necessarily quality] of food but none of the consumer goods, medicine and other modern convenience that come with economic development” or to integrate with the world economy through “the type of development which allows for greater and more beneficial exchange”. The first choice was “not really an option”. Few societies, the report claimed, “having glimpsed the modern economy”, return to the “closed” world of the subsistence economy. The challenge was, “having become part of the international economy... a question of preserving what is best in traditional value and developing the economy so that [Western Samoa] becomes more reliant on trade and less on aid”. Given the constraints of size and geography which limited access to markets and resources, however, “Western Samoa must rely on aid for some years to come”. See: Government of Western Samoa. December 1982. *Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs*. Main Report AP/RTM/83 SAM(Vol I): 15-16.

²² Government of Western Samoa. 1965. *Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965*, 3.

²³ Government of Western Samoa. 1965. *Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965*; Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*.

support to private enterprise or government initiatives [funded by aid or private foreign investment] to create jobs and increase individual incomes. The expected increase in incomes would generate domestic savings which could then generate further domestic investments or attract foreign investment, in the shape of private capital or foreign assistance [loans or grants]. Agriculture, tourism, manufacturing industries, and remittances, were the expected source of revenue in the nascent domestic economy.²⁴

One or more variations on this formula for economic development was repeated across the series of development plans and situation assessments between 1965 and 1992.²⁵ But the expected economic growth envisaged by one plan after the other did not emerge.²⁶ By the early 1980s, while the ongoing aid reliance was assumed,²⁷ the frustration over Samoa's failure to achieve economic growth was increasingly strident in each subsequent plan.

Two explanations were offered for the lack of progress in achieving economic growth: the first explanation nominated the issues of isolation and geography – with consequent constraints on access to markets, knowledge and expertise. Seemingly in an admission of defeat, the plans deemed the consequences of Samoa's geography as outside anyone's influence.²⁸

²⁴ There was some ambivalence around remittances as a source of income. Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*.

²⁵ See for example, Government of Western Samoa. December 1982. *Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs*. Main Report AP/RTM/83 SAM(Vol I):2-3; and Yusuf, S., and R K. Peters Jr. 19/11/1985. Western Samoa: The Experience of Slow Growth and Resource Imbalance.

²⁶ In 1971, Western Samoa was designated as a least developed country by the UN, which gave Samoa access to support from the IMF and IBRD. It was the first Pacific country to be designated as an LDC. At that stage, Samoa was not a member of the UN. Western Samoa joined the IMF in 1971 and the IBRD/World Bank in 1974; and the UNGA in 1976. The 1971 Ad Hoc Group of Experts' report advised that the "absence of data" was evidence of the need to include Western Samoa in the list of LDCs. UNGA. 18/11/1971. Resolution 2768 (XXVI) Identification of the Least Developed among the Developing Countries, 1988th plenary meeting, UN New York, 18-19.

²⁷ Given the constraints of size and geography which limited access to markets and resources, however, "Western Samoa must rely on aid for some years to come". See: Government of Western Samoa. December 1982. *Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs*. Main Report AP/RTM/83 SAM(Vol I):15-16.

²⁸ Yusuf, S., and R K. Peters Jr. 19/11/1985. Western Samoa: The Experience of Slow Growth and Resource Imbalance.

The second explanation related to judgements of Samoa's political and social organisation; and, in particular, the consequences of Samoan "communal" practices on individual and collective entrepreneurial initiative.²⁹ According to this explanation, not only were Samoans inherently inferior, but Samoa's political, economic and social traditions, the traditions and practices of *Fa'a Samoa*, were an impediment to economic growth. Development, the plans asserted, could only be achieved through adopting the superior technical expertise and knowledge offered by donors: expertise and knowledge that Samoans were yet to acquire. This was considered an area where, the plans indicated, influence could be exercised.

8.3.2 The Post-independence Economic Challenge

More than food and a fale

From the first, the development plans presented an essentialised, infantilised view of "the Samoan" and the superiority of the "western" way of life.³⁰ It began with the 1965 Economic Plan and the accompanying five-year Economic Programme, produced in 1966. Both the Plan and Programme were crafted with the assistance of a UN-funded, New York-born, economic development advisor. The 1966 Programme describes the character and nature of "the Samoan," an example of:

...the purest surviving Polynesia type, he is conservative and unspoiled...living their lives in their traditional native fashion almost entirely unaffected by contact with civilization... he is prone to be content with his few possessions. It has truly been said that if a Samoan has healthy children, a neat

²⁹ See the introduction in the second economic development programme Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*, compiled by Andrew Gerakas, [UN-funded] Economic Advisor, at the request of the Economic Development Board, Government of Western Samoa, 26-27. This report demonstrated a deep knowledge of the chiefly matai system and went on to suggest these traditions left Samoans ill-equipped to engage with economic development or the global economy. Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*:2.

³⁰ The Plan defines economic planning "an attempt to measure the economic needs of the nation as related to its growth and plan for growth necessary to meet the needs... [must] develop the statistics... measure growth patterns...establish statistical goals...[and] programmes of action...[through] sophisticated economic analysis and projections...to allow the proper planning and decision-making to be made." Government of Western Samoa. 1965. *Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965*: 3-4.

and comely wife, a house of his own, a coconut tree and a banana tree and a few pigs, he has intelligence enough to know that he is well off...³¹

Samoans, the 1965 Plan advised, wanted more than "...food and a *fale*."³² Despite the "blessing" of Samoa's climate and natural resources, Samoans "can see with their own eyes how the *palagi* [white people] live."³³ Samoans, the Plan asserted, sought "a change from a poor, frustratingly, fruitless way of life to one which offers hope and the promise of economic well-being."³⁴ They wanted "...to send their children to school, so they can live a better life as well as to help their families...[and access] the whole realm of government services."³⁵

Economic development, the Plan forecast, would bring to Samoans:

...not only political independence but an economy which assures that independence... [and]... the opportunity for a decent way of life and the dignity that comes with economic well-being.³⁶

Samoans, the post-independence plans and reports explained, inherently lacked the capacity – the knowledge, skills, attitude and motivation – to engage with the discipline and focus required for economic development.³⁷ However, the real challenge, the plans and reports declared,³⁸ lay in determining whether the traditions and customs of the Samoan people, the

³¹ Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*: 2.

³² The Plan defines economic planning "an attempt to measure the economic needs of the nation as related to its growth and plan for growth necessary to meet the needs... [must] develop the statistics... measure growth patterns...establish statistical goals...[and] programmes of action...[through] sophisticated economic analysis and projections...to allow the proper planning and decision-making to be made." Government of Western Samoa. 1965. *Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965*: 3-4.

³³ Government of Western Samoa. 1965. *Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965*: 3-4.

³⁴ Government of Western Samoa. 1965. *Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965*: 3-4.

³⁵ Government of Western Samoa. 1965. *Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965*: 3-4.

³⁶ Government of Western Samoa. 1965. *Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965*: 3-4.

³⁷ There was a view held by some *palagi* commentators that Samoans were reluctant to grasp "new" practices of "economic development" because they feared it would destroy their old way of life. See for example, the introduction to the 1966 Economic Programme, quoting the former New Zealand High Commissioner J.B. Wright, who retired to become a planter in Western Samoa. He argued that the pressures of a growing population meant the old ways of farming were over and that Samoa must change its agricultural practices, it "simply must" increase its national income "if it were to safeguard its right to determine its destiny" and hold on to any customs. Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*: xii.

³⁸ Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*: 2; Government of Western Samoa. December 1982. *Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs*. Main Report AP/RTM/83 SAM(Vol I): 3; Yusuf, S. and R K. Peters Jr. 19/11/1985. Western Samoa: The Experience of Slow Growth and Resource Imbalance.

Fa'a Samoa – the Samoan way of life, framed through the relations and responsibilities of the village, the “*aiga* and the *matai*”³⁹ – were a strength, or an impediment to achieving “development”. It was, it seemed, a clash of civilisations in the idyllic Pacific.⁴⁰ The explanations proffered by the plans and reports were certain of the superiority of western worldviews over those of *Fa'a Samoa*.

The necessary entrepreneurial skills and initiative, the 1966 Programme lamented, were simply not available in Samoa. One of the biggest problems, was “to find...the managerial and technical skills” which could deliver the kinds of projects which could generate economic growth.⁴¹ Opportunities could not be exploited,

...not only because there is a lack of capital but simply because the knowledge to exploit such opportunities is not available...as an isolated community whose economy is almost entirely based on agriculture of ... the primitive village type...⁴²

The Samoans, the 1966 Programme claimed, were isolated; their approach to their economy was “lackadaisical”.⁴³ They indulged in inefficient agricultural practices, motivated by “subsistence” rather than “economic enterprise;” and their attitude to opportunities was “insular”.⁴⁴ The key reason for the absence of entrepreneurial initiative, one Plan declared, was the authority of the *matais*, who controlled the land and its use – and how resources were

³⁹ Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*: 26-27. This report demonstrated a deep knowledge of the chiefly matai system: it describes the life of the ‘*aiga* [family] and the strength of the extended family networks – “of blood marriage and adopted connections” - across the village/s, acknowledging that family ties are strong. The whole ‘*aiga*, it acknowledged, “is involved in upholding the honour of the title that gives them identity and standing in Samoan life.” Acknowledging the centrality of the *matai*, “that member of the family on whom the title is conferred by the family is the acknowledged chief for the family. Selected by common consent of the ‘*aiga*, the *matai* assumes responsibility for directing the use of family lands and other assets belonging to the ‘*aiga*. The *matai* must by his behaviour do honour to the title he bears and the people whose social status is bound up with it...in return for his leadership the *matai* is rendered services of by the *tutua* [untitled] and *matai* [titled]...there is not the autocratic type of relationship that one might think exists....for example, [at a marriage]...all will decide [on the conduct of the ceremony]...”

⁴⁰ Huntington, S. 1993. The Clash of Civilisations? *Foreign Affairs* 72(3) (Summer): 22-49.

⁴¹ Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*: 27.

⁴² Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*: 27.

⁴³ Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*: 26-27.

⁴⁴ Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*: 26-27.

distributed amongst the “*aiga* and *nu’u*.”⁴⁵

As each Plan failed to deliver the economic benefits promised, their successor Plans sought to explain failure. The 1975 Plan, written by another consultant [this time from ADB], continued the theme set in the 1960s, with a slight variation: Samoan culture was acknowledged as both a strength and a problem. But the dilemma remained. The Plan explained, encouragingly, that the “institutional system and structures around the *aiga* and the leadership of the *matais*” offered a strong social and political foundation “rarely found in developing countries.” Unfortunately, however, such a system was not capable of generating the economic growth necessary to reduce “the dependence on foreign aid”.⁴⁶ The chiefly *matai* system,⁴⁷ the Plan observed, carried power, status and authority. But, the exchange systems⁴⁸ that the *matai* system oversaw presented problems for a vision of economic development which relied on individual initiative and productivity, rather than egalitarian sharing:

...such a free sharing of any accumulated wealth has provided scant encouragement for individual initiative and productivity; instead, it has produced an egalitarian sharing of economic benefits and security. But institutions which favour equality and security at the expense of fostering individual initiatives and productivity may not be entirely compatible with the goals of a society experiencing rising aspirations for the motor vehicles and other produced of commercial economies....⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Government of Western Samoa. 1966. *Western Samoa Economic Development Programme 1966-1970*: 27.

⁴⁶ The Plan declared “in the *aiga* and the village and other institutions... a foundation ‘seldom found in developing countries’ they still faced challenges before they could reduce “dependence on foreign aid” – the basic strengths of the agricultural resources and the village institution have not, by themselves, been sufficient to provide the growth in the economy which the people have a right to expect” including the tropical affluence of the climate and country. Government of Western Samoa. November 1975. *The Third Five Year Plan for the National Development of Western Samoa 1975-1979*: 1.

⁴⁷ As the head of the *aiga*, the *matai* was responsible for overseeing family and village relations through production and distribution networks across and outside the village. So’o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*; Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. *The Samoan Culture and Government*.

⁴⁸ Drawn on to satisfy existing obligations or create others as insurance against future hardship.

⁴⁹ Government of Western Samoa. November 1975. *The Third Five Year Plan for the National Development of Western Samoa 1975-1979*: 81-84.

The answer, the Plan proposed, was a “village development project” based on a reorientation of incentives to foster individual initiative.⁵⁰

The plans and reports produced through the next decade reflected a similar pattern of judgement. Written by expert advisors, funded by donors, they repeatedly declared that Samoa’s political and social traditions were a key impediment to economic development.⁵¹ If anything, the language became even more derisive of the Samoans and *Fa’a Samoa*, and the operations of their chiefly system, *Fa’a Matai*, as the decade progressed. It was a question, the economic development planners claimed, of incentives.⁵² The plans and reports consistently ascribed Samoa’s failure to achieve reliable economic growth, particularly in agriculture, to the Samoans’ persistence in retaining their traditional social and political ways of organising, such as the way the land and its resources are assigned and cultivated amongst the *‘aiga* under the direction of the *matai*.

While the plans and reports continued to ascribe economic failure to *Fa’a Samoa*, and its chiefly *matai* system, the Samoans wanted change. The plans had achieved their one of the objectives proposed in 1965: Samoa was attracting more aid – and more donors.⁵³ The donors

⁵⁰ Government of Western Samoa. November 1975. *The Third Five Year Plan for the National Development of Western Samoa 1975-1979*:81-84. Acknowledging that “the Samoan village, its families and individual workers showed no lack of initiative and productivity in response to ‘felt needs’ for projects considered important to the village way of life” such as a church or pastor’s home, the Plan proposed that the way to generate more efficient and effective agricultural outputs was to find a way to respond to the “felt needs’ of the individual, his family and village. Awards, or other incentives, were suggested.

⁵¹ See for example, Government of Western Samoa. December 1982. *Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs*. Main Report AP/RTM/83 SAM(Vol I): 3; and Yusuf, S. and R K. Peters Jr. 19/11/1985. Western Samoa: The Experience of Slow Growth and Resource Imbalance.

⁵² Yusuf, S. and R K. Peters Jr. 19/11/1985. Western Samoa: The Experience of Slow Growth and Resource Imbalance.

⁵³ Australia and Britain joined New Zealand to become the primary sources of bilateral aid to Western Samoa between 1965-1970. See Australia’s Parliamentary Papers, Questions and Answers, vol 42, No.4 [April 1971] pp226-227, [sourced via Trove, digital records, National Library of Australia, Monday 25 January 2020]. The development budget was considered separate from the operational budget and largely financed through foreign assistance, being a mix of tied and untied grants loans; and sometimes, the addition of private investment. Bilateral and multilateral agencies and donors also provided

and their aid also brought an increasingly complex administrative burden on the unseasoned governments' fledgling public sector.⁵⁴ But neither the aid – nor the plans – were delivering economic development.

Aid and Samoa's economy

Access to aid morphed into dependence.⁵⁵ In 1971, Western Samoa was registered as a least developed country.⁵⁶ When Western Samoa delivered its 3rd Economic Development Plan in 1975, foreign sources represented over 76% of planned development expenditure.⁵⁷ While remittances and tourism were helping to off-set the [growing] trade deficit, Samoa was losing its foreign exchange reserves due to the size of its current account deficits – with resultant borrowing from the IMF. The ability to service projected deficits depended on continued access to IMF resources and foreign assistance. Concern over Samoa's capacity to finance its

assistance in kind, such as technical [or expert] assistance, commodities [often emergency relief] such as food or medical/education supplies. Scholarships were funded separately yet again. In 1975, Samoa received support from multiple bilateral and multilateral agencies with education and training scholarships and programs including: New Zealand, Australian, Canada, USA, UK, Netherlands, India, and the UN. Government of Western Samoa. November 1975. *The Third Five Year Plan for the National Development of Western Samoa 1975-1979*: 8-29 and 81-84.

⁵⁴ Amosa, D. U. 2012. *Social Policies in Samoa*.

⁵⁵ Growth was low through the 1970s. "Years of relying on foreign capital to bridge the gap between domestic savings and investment" had left Western Samoa ranked as one of the poorest countries in Polynesia, a World Bank report claimed in 1985. Yusuf, S. and R K. Peters Jr. 19/11/1985. Western Samoa: The Experience of Slow Growth and Resource Imbalance.

⁵⁶ The 1971 report of the Committee for Development Planning [which determined the criteria and process of categorisation of LDC status] observed, on the assignment of LDC status to Western Samoa in 1971: "Relevant data for Western Samoa [and other countries is] unavailable, but there is reason to believe that these countries merit inclusion among the least developed group. The absence of data ...is in fact a reflection of the low level of their development." United Nations Committee for Development Planning (UNCDP). 1971. Report on the Seventh Session (22 March – 1 April 1971) Economic and Social Council: Fifty-First Session. Supplement No.7: 19.

⁵⁷ The 1975 Plan observes that the development budget was considered separate from the operational budgets and largely financed through foreign assistance, being a mix of tied and untied grants loans, and sometimes, private investment. The 1975 Plan notes the following donors provided an array of development funds to Western Samoa: Tied funds from aid agencies included capital project assistance: NZ, Australia UK and EDF; soft loans: ADB, IDA, UK, EDF and 'other'; Untied funds from foreign sources: the NZ Money Market, NZ Government, Bank of New Zealand and Colonial Life Insurance. See Government of Western Samoa. November 1975. *The Third Five Year Plan for the National Development of Western Samoa 1975-1979*: 48. In addition, bilateral and multilateral agencies and donors also provided assistance in kind, such as technical [or expert] assistance, commodities [often emergency relief] such as food or medical/education supplies. Scholarships were funded separately yet again: in 1975, Samoa received support from multiple bilateral and multilateral agencies with education and training scholarships and programs including: New Zealand, Australian, Canada, USA, UK, Netherlands, India, and the UN. Government of Western Samoa. November 1975. *The Third Five Year Plan for the National Development of Western Samoa 1975-1979*: 8-29.

domestic costs - public sector salaries and related projects – was growing.⁵⁸ At the same time, despite the increased level of aid on offer, the increase in tied aid meant that “the Government was able to exercise less control over the direction and shape of the development plan” as the budget’s share of foreign assistance increased.⁵⁹ It also raised the implication that prospective foreign assistance would only be available if “scarce domestic counterpart funds are very carefully managed.”⁶⁰ The Government either needed to find alternative means to raise revenue or exercise restraint; the prospect of an austerity budget loomed.

The arrival of the 1980s offered little relief. As the decade turned, the economic forecast remained gloomy.⁶¹ Another global economic shock – this time, the global oil crisis – triggered a national crisis which carried social and political ramifications for Samoa - and particularly, for the government.⁶² The crisis was the trigger for a major shift in Samoa’s approach to development, although it was a decade before the shift emerged. It was the 1982 financial crisis which laid the ground, a decade later, for “the Tuila’epa plans”.

⁵⁸ Government of Western Samoa. November 1975. *The Third Five Year Plan for the National Development of Western Samoa 1975-1979*:45.

⁵⁹ Government of Western Samoa. November 1975. *The Third Five Year Plan for the National Development of Western Samoa 1975-1979*: 1-47.

⁶⁰ Government of Western Samoa. November 1975. *The Third Five Year Plan for the National Development of Western Samoa 1975-1979*:1-47

⁶¹ A roundtable report advised that, by the end of the decade Western Samoa would need additional resources “more than ever before”. Government of Western Samoa. December 1982. *Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs*. Main Report AP/RTM/83 SAM(Vol I):66-67.

⁶² Government of Western Samoa. December 1982. *Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs*. Main Report AP/RTM/83 SAM(Vol I): 9.

8.3.3 The 1980-81 Crisis: “the 28 days”

...what has driven it is what people learnt when they had to count those 28 days...⁶³

The decade began with a major financial crisis in Samoa. Oil prices escalated due to the world fuel crisis. Exports were stagnant. The cost of key imports of fuel, food and consumables increased.⁶⁴ The flow of external resources stagnated across trade, private capital and foreign aid. There was an increase in domestic borrowings and inflation. The resultant deficit in the balance of payments, alongside a drop in foreign aid, generated a political and social crisis across the country.⁶⁵ The low wages and an increasing cost of living was particularly felt by the public sector in Apia, Samoa’s largest workforce. The public sector went on strike. The government’s leaders were initially dismissive of the strikers, but it became the biggest strike ever in a Pacific island country, lasting over three months.⁶⁶ Its effect impacted every village and every family in the country.⁶⁷

The crunch came when Samoa’s government was unable to pay for much-needed fuel on

⁶³ Confidential interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015.

⁶⁴ Food and fuel constituted some 40% of imports.

⁶⁵ Government of Western Samoa. December 1982. *Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs*. Main Report AP/RTM/83 SAM(Vol I):9.

⁶⁶ The public service strikes took place over 90-days between 6 April and 2 July 1981. It was described by contemporary commentators as “the most important event in modern Samoan history, second only to the Mau rebellion against the New Zealand administration”. Snell, R. 1992. Western Samoa Trade Unionism: The 1981 Public Service Strike. *New Zealand Journal of Industrial Relations* 17(1):69-84 citing the *Pacific Islands Monthly*, July 1981:13.

⁶⁷ After the event, Snell cited a local observer, Va’a who described the level of disruption, conflict and ill-feeling generated by the strike amongst families and the community. The strike had political consequences for the Tupuola government and for families: “...only the Mau movement may have provided [the level of] divisive emotions and responses comparable to those engendered by the strike. Families often were split apart over the issue... coming in the final year of Tupuola’s three-year term, the strike ...was responsible directly for the decline and fall of his political empire... with virtually every public servant on strike, able to recall with some bitterness the hunger, deprivation and financial insecurity caused by it...the situation was even more pronounced in Western Samoa... [with] a social structure based upon close-knit family ties and consensual decision-making processes and a very large public service...” Drawing from Howe, who argued that most literature at the time downplayed the dynamic of the interplay between local culture in the transfer of external institutions as process of mutual adjustment, which changes taking place both within and between the local system and the introduced institution, Snell framed the dispute as an example of institutional transfer accompanied by a process of mutual adjustment “a sharp confrontation between adopted European institutions and value systems (of both the strikers and the government) and Samoan values and methods of dispute settlement ... a clear clash between the forces of modernity and tradition.” Snell, R. 1992. Western Samoa Trade Unionism: The 1981 Public Service Strike. *New Zealand Journal of Industrial Relations* 17(1): 2, citing *Kerry Howe, 1984, Where the waves fall*.

several freighter-ships sitting in the Apia harbor. Samoa only had foreign exchange reserves “equivalent to the value of less than three weeks’ imports.”⁶⁸ With people already queuing to buy canned fish and no reserves to pay for the fuel, Samoa was desperate. The IMF recommended structural reform. But Samoa was reluctant to take another bail-out from the IMF: as one senior government executive involved in the decisions at the time related:

...We’d already gone cap in hand to the IMF in 1971 – we didn’t want to go again. But early ‘80s, things weren’t looking good.⁶⁹

Samoa’s treasury wrote a cheque, knowing that [in the days of telex] it would give them 28 days to resolve the situation. They hoped their bilateral “friends”, Australia and New Zealand, would extend help. As a senior official in Government explained how their expectations of their friends were dashed:

...our head of state at the time, he was an articulate person, he had the view that if you ask Australia and NZ they will give cash... that wasn’t the case..⁷⁰

Australia and New Zealand, whilst sympathetic, insisted Western Samoa accept the IMF’s conditions: an austerity program in return for a financial bail-out. A senior executive, an intimate witness to the event, recounted the impact of those 28 days and the subsequent concession to accept the IMF’s conditions:

when you are queuing up to buy canned fish ...that was basically the situation, [there were] no reserves.... you make sure you have access to canned fish...[then]...when the petroleum boat arrives and you know there is no reserve to pay for it and the level of petroleum supplies are almost down to zero, who do you talk to? Those are the extreme parameters that you hit. ... (you talk to) no one.... it’s a nightmare, if the rumour goes out, they clean up the [petrol] stations...those are the days of the telex, so sometimes when you read it, you just pull out the plug and sit there... (and ignore it)....because it basically got to the stage ...what we did for our petroleum supplies, it got to a stage where we wrote a cheque to ... bank in Washington, and sign it... you get 14 days for postal, 14 days for it to clear... basically you get a whole month of credit...and then you go to the IMF... I saw the letter, from [New Zealand Prime Minister] Muldoon, which basically said “Yes, we feel for your problems and all that, but comply with IMF, and then they will help you” ...and we did...⁷¹

⁶⁸ Government of Western Samoa. December 1982. *Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs*. Main Report AP/RTM/83 SAM(Vol I):12.

⁶⁹ Confidential interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015.

⁷⁰ Confidential interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015.

⁷¹ Confidential interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015.

The shame of those 28 days has not been forgotten. It was, the then-senior executive explained, one of those “extreme cases” which shaped the future Prime Minister Tuila’epa, a young treasury official at the time, and his peers in government.⁷² The cohort of young policy advisors who were forced to negotiate those 28 days - and accept the bail-out - never wanted to go through such an experience again.⁷³ Tuila’epa, and his fellow government peers, would never forget:

... I never want us to go through that again... those are the extreme cases.....those extreme situations... so, when people say why do you keep pushing?... you know, why is the PM always getting aggressive... and in the back in his mind, [I know] he is thinking "that crisis, it can come back again..."⁷⁴

The lessons learnt during the “28 days”, have driven the political leadership and the cohort of once-youthful policymakers in their policy decisions on aid and development since.⁷⁵ It constituted a critical point where those in government decided that they - and Samoa - had to change direction. The trauma generated by this crisis, the senior executive explained, accounted for the government of Samoa’s approach to aid and development - not policies such as the Paris Declaration, or the Compact:

...its more the disasters really shocked...the crises of the early 80s are the key points that the country had to realise it had to push itself ... I am not belittling the [Forum] Compact but in the context of development... it certainly has helped, but in a general supportive way, but not in driving it...⁷⁶

With the bail-out, Samoa was forced into a more stringent austerity program than that initiated by the IMF in the decade before.⁷⁷ Three years later, experts from the World Bank

⁷² Tuila’epa was then a senior official in Treasury. Swain, P. 2017. *Palemia Prime Minister Tuila’epa Sa’ilele Malielegaoi of Samoa: A Memoir*, 55-56.

⁷³ Confidential interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015.

⁷⁴ Confidential interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015.

⁷⁵ Tuila’epa was a senior although young treasury officer leading up to the 1980-82 financial crisis, joining the Minister of Finance after several years with the ACP in Brussels. Three decades later, in 2012, Tuila’epa referred to this crisis when he defended his government’s contemporary management of the economy.

⁷⁶ Confidential interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015.

⁷⁷ Amosa, D. U. 2012. *Social Policies in Samoa*.

experts visited Samoa to discuss, again, “the development problem”. Yet again, the donor-experts advised Samoa that it faced the same two impediments to economic development: the isolation brought by geography which constrained access to global markets; and constraints of the responsibilities and obligations of the *Fa’a Samoa* which constrained the entrepreneurial capacity of Samoans – and their potential to create wealth.⁷⁸ But this time, Samoa’s political leaders and policy advisors argued for a different kind of resolution.

8.4 “The Tuila’epa Plans”: Continuity through Change

8.4.1 Leadership – and a Common Vision

Tuila’epa in Parliament

Amidst the crisis of the 28 days, Tuila’epa, the country’s first graduate in commerce, decided to resign from his position in Treasury⁷⁹ and stand for Parliament in the by-election in the seat of Lepa. In 1981, Tuila’epa, won his seat in the Parliament. Aligning with the Human Rights

⁷⁸ Many Samoans, the Bank staff claimed, “...with whom we discussed the matter of development were of the opinion that the nation was not animated by a desire to strive after economic growth. Life was carefree, food plentiful, the want of the populace moderate and satisfied from their earnings and the remittances from overseas. Thus, development was devoid of the urgency that springs from acute poverty or a widening gap between aspirations and current consumption standards, or even the strategic concerns that strengthen the development motivation of some...countries”. The Bank staff argued for the dismantling of Samoan matai traditions: farming, they said, was unlikely to be productive, “as long as it is conducted on communal lines and managed by chiefs. Hence, on strictly economic grounds, a fragmentation of the authority and ownership structures is highly desirable”. They encouraged a shift towards more individualistic, privatized, methods of farming, which, they claimed, were producing results elsewhere, such as East Asia. they argued: “a resurgence of agriculture through a redefinition of property rights and a rewiring of the power structure of the village should gradually raise the tenor of economic activity...experience in East Asian countries suggests that agro-industries run and managed on capitalist lines rather than on communal ones are generally more efficient and profitable...the steady mutation of traditional forms of organisation, ownership and property rights will remain a spur to such “modernization”...[although] village corporations and the church can provide then entrepreneurial impulse and managerial scaffolding ...A coconut-cocoa-taro culture is a recipe for progressive immiseration, ...[but] if wants are truly limited and preserving an unhurried lifestyle is the dominant concern...perhaps [modernization/industrialisation] may not be worth the socio-political anxieties this might entail.”⁷⁸ Yusuf, S. and R K. Peters Jr. 19/11/1985. Western Samoa: The Experience of Slow Growth and Resource Imbalance, 22-23.

⁷⁹ Tuila’epa entered politics in part because after of being overlooked for the role of Secretary of Finance. Swain, P. 2017. *Palemia Prime Minister Tuila’epa Sa’ilele Malielegaoi of Samoa: A Memoir*, 59-60.

Protection Party [HRPP] after his election,⁸⁰ he and his colleagues formed Government several months later. Tuila'epa became the Minister for Finance, [alongside assuming responsibility for the portfolios of Commerce, Trade and Industry] in Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana's third Government. This was a portfolio responsibility he held on three occasions over the next two decades, including during 1984-85; and again, between 1988-2001, during first term of his Prime Ministership.⁸¹ Under his leadership, Samoa's approach to managing the economy, and to aid negotiations, changed.

A supporting cohort: and a common vision

Tuila'epa was supported by a cohort of peers who also moved up the ranks of government as he consolidated his leadership role in the HRRP and eventually, became Prime Minister. This cohort, with Tuila'epa at the forefront, developed a vision for a different pathway to development. As with Tuila'epa, this cohort was also educated in the universities of Australia and New Zealand. Some were experienced in employment in those locations too. As one of the cohort, now a respected senior diplomat, explained during our interview, they formed a common vision because they "wanted to make things happen":

... so we got to the stage where we felt we've got the capacity to do things now, we are looking at the framework as something else, and that's when it all came about...we were ..not making much progress in terms of Samoa's development and we felt the pressure because we are a very narrow base, small open economy, so...we were getting a pool of educated people who certainly had a different vision of things, who wanted to make things happen... and that's what we did...⁸²

⁸⁰ Tuila'epa did not formally join the HRRP until after elected. Swain, P. 2017. *Palemia Prime Minister Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi of Samoa: A Memoir*, 55.

⁸¹ Tuila'epa was again Minister for Finance between 2014-2016. Tuila'epa Aiono Sa'ilele Malielegaoi was Samoa's Finance Minister on three separate occasions: between 1984-85; 1988-2001; and again, in 2014-2016. He was elected to Parliament in May 1981; and became leader of the Human Rights Protection party in November 1988; he was Deputy Prime Minister between May 1981-November 1998; Minister for Tourism, and for Trade Commerce and Industry between 1988-1990; Minister of Natural Resources and Environment from September 2020-May 2021; and Minister of Foreign Affairs November 1998 -May 2021. He was Prime Minister between November 1998-May 2021; he continues in office as the member for Lepa, and Leader of the Opposition Human Rights Protection Party [HRPP]. Swain, P. 2017. *Palemia Prime Minister Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi of Samoa: A Memoir*.

⁸² Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

This cohort, like their Prime Minister, were more familiar with how donors operated. They had learnt from their studies and employment overseas. They were unified and cohesive in their aspirations: they knew where their strengths lay.⁸³ Under Tuila'epa's leadership, the Government's policymakers began to negotiate a shift in aid relations – and development.⁸⁴ They began with the roundtable meeting in Geneva in 1988, a regular event hosted by the UN [and other donors] to discuss Samoa's "progress" as an LDC.⁸⁵ While the donors [and their reports] continued to identify the "constraints" imposed on development by the authority and obligations of *Fa'a Samoa*, Tuila'epa and his colleagues wanted change.

*The 1988 Geneva Roundtable*⁸⁶

Under Tuila'epa's leadership, Samoa's policy advisors took greater control of the development agenda and its implementation. The 1988 report sought to reframe aid relations: it laid out a development strategy to build the capacity of the public sector through reforms and re-asserted the strength of *Fa'a Samoa* as the foundation of development in the independent state of Western Samoa.⁸⁷ This time, when the parties sat around the table to negotiate the "impediments" to development in Samoa, the Government's policy advisors - that emerging young cohort of professionals - argued the necessity and integrity of the fundamentals of Samoan society.⁸⁸ The motivation and incentive for development, they

⁸³ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

⁸⁴ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

⁸⁵ Government of Western Samoa. October 1988. *Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs, Vol 1, Main Report*.

⁸⁶ The "roundtables" were a condition of Samoa's status as an LDC. See Appendix 5.1 Global Timeline of International Fora including the LDC conferences which began in 1991.

⁸⁷ Samoa's parliament amended the constitution to drop Western from its name in 1997, Constitution Amendment Act (no2) 1997.

⁸⁸ Government of Western Samoa. December 1982. *Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs*. Main Report AP/RTM/83 SAM(Vol I): 1 "...its traditional institutions and customs, the fundamentals of which Western Samoa naturally wishes to preserve, call for an ingenuity in the planning of development programmes that can overcome the motivational constraints without jeopardizing the social cohesiveness and security which the existing

argued, relied on building from those traditional relationships and practices to develop new frameworks for economic efficiency which affirmed Samoa's own institutions:

...Western Samoa cannot afford to do away with the harmony and security provided by the extended family network, the village administration system and ...its cultural practices. The challenge is to find a framework and... a land management system which ensures that the traditional relationship will be consolidated through higher production and income for the community as a whole...this is an issue which the Samoa Government, its political leadership and the social and intellectual community must address ... to show that its institutions are capable of meeting the required standard of economic efficiency ...[and] ...performance in respect of social order, justice and community building....⁸⁹

The report made several key arguments. It argued that:

- a) more effective development must build on the strength of Samoa's custom and traditions, not in spite of them;
- b) more aid also brought the burden of managing complex aid management procedures and reporting requirements from multiple donors; and
- c) that the Government's administrators lacked capacity to coordinate or allocate the aid effectively. Samoa's public sector needed training to build capacity - the knowledge and skills, and the mechanisms - to coordinate aid effectively and to link resources to development programming.⁹⁰

Significantly, the report argued that how aid supported the Government's aspirations, was critical. Development, Samoa's policy advisors argued, was best delivered as a partnership, through dialogue. The rationale for aid, they argued, was to provide access to technical

mode of production and distribution facilitates. It's often misunderstood status of "affluent subsistence" notwithstanding, Western Samoa's socio-economic structure has certain rigidities that entail a formidable challenge to the planners and managers of the economy."

⁸⁹ Government of Western Samoa. October 1988. *Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs, Vol 1, Main Report*, 4-5.

⁹⁰ Government of Western Samoa. October 1988. *Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs, Vol 1, Main Report*, 8-11 and 86-87. The 1975 plan had similarly argued: Acknowledging that previous plans have been prepared with temporary assistance from outside Samoa, the plan declared it was time to appoint a "core group" responsible for planning and preparing the general economic policy "if future plans are to have full meaning and... reflect the true Samoan aspirations" Government of Western Samoa. November 1975. *The Third Five Year Plan for the National Development of Western Samoa 1975-1977*: 296-297.

expertise that the Government of Samoa did not have; and resources to bridge the gap between domestic resources and achieving development.⁹¹ Samoa and its development partners were, the report argued, “co-financing” the same giant project, the “economic development” of Samoa.⁹²

Arguing that the plans should be seen as mechanisms for long term planning in economic and development policymaking, Samoa sought regular dialogue with donors to discuss aid flows to meet the country’s needs and to ensure annual budget decisions were linked to programming and objectives.⁹³ As one senior official in the Ministry of Finance at the time explained the impetus for the shift:

...we started asking ourselves, where is it’s all going? Is anything happening? What are we getting in our value for money? ... it was just a shopping list...⁹⁴

Another of the government’s senior policy advisors - and a key member of the cohort - recalled:

...at the time, we had comprehensive development planning [the World Bank model] they weren’t really linked to how we design and program with the development partners there....it was an awareness at the time that we needed to put something in place in order for us to better prepared as to how we can go into negotiations with the donors ...which is when we established the aid coordination committee...⁹⁵

Further, she explained:

... we were very much at their mercy, because there was no dialogue about what is it that you want, and what is the situation, that can bring about the change in what you want and how it will be implemented. It was simply, we have this money, so tell us what you want to be done with whatever allocation is there... and project proposals were just picked out of nowhere.

⁹¹ Over 50% of all foreign assistance came from Australia and New Zealand. And another 10 bilateral or multilateral or other donors: Japan [major donor since 1985]; Germany, Netherlands, China, USA, UNDP, EEC, ADB and World Bank, OPEC/Saudi Arabia, Government of Western Samoa. October 1988. *Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs, Vol 1, Main Report*.

⁹² This arrangement, the report said, “needs to be planned and implemented as meticulously, with the obligations of each partnership appropriately specified, as the co-financing partners are prone to do in the case of a single project at the micro level” Government of Western Samoa. October 1988. *Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs, Vol 1, Main Report*, 88.

⁹³ Government of Western Samoa. October 1988. *Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs, Vol 1, Main Report*, 88-89.

⁹⁴ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

⁹⁵ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

There was no consulting framework out of which the country was looking at what is going to be actually needed, how much of that is going to come from the donors and how much you will be involved in the design, in the implementation right up to completion of the activity. I think most donors because of their need to be risk averse, were most likely to simply discuss the nature of a project and then will look at ways to implement and get it done quickly and this is when most of them were hiring managing contractors and ...staff supplementation schemes... (which was) more to the benefit of the donor... ⁹⁶

The report argued for three mechanisms to address the ineffectiveness of aid: ⁹⁷

- a) An annual ‘financing partners’ dialogue, with its development partners, in Apia [not Geneva or Paris] which used the plan as a tool to guide policy and resource negotiations – not a “shopping list,” or begging bowl. The dialogue, they determined, would go “beyond good intentions” to become working meetings which addressed and committed partners to delivery, focusing on policies and programmes as well as financing negotiations.
- b) An institutional mechanism to coordinate policies and programs within Government.
- c) A capacity strengthening program to address the management deficiencies in Samoa’s public sector institutions.

Samoa offered a vision for bringing local knowledge and context to the negotiating table on an equal footing with the donors’ economic development expertise. Samoa’s emerging political and policy leadership was intent not merely on recovering from the trauma of the financial crisis early 1980s and its aftermath, but on reasserting control of their development. These negotiations foreshadowed the changes proposed by the global idea of Ownership under the Paris Declaration [and extended by the Compact] by nearly two decades.

⁹⁶ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-30012015.

⁹⁷ Government of Western Samoa. October 1988. *Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs, Vol 1, Main Report*, 88-89.

Driving Change

The recommendations of the 1988 negotiations in Geneva provided a blueprint for change under Tuila'epa's leadership as Minister for Finance and Deputy Prime Minister, then as Prime Minister, for the next two decades. The cohort of his peers, moving up the ranks of government alongside Tuila'epa, supported him in these endeavours. Tuila'epa's leadership was critical. One of the cohort explained why:

We were just not moving anywhere... so there was a very strong sense of urgency that while we also had a very stable Government, a progressive one, that we needed to fix... to make use of those opportunities and so we did... you can talk until you are blue in the face, but if there is no leadership and commitment it won't happen...and that was where we were very fortunate we had a prime minister...he had the full knowledge of the frustration we were having, I mean we were drawing up five year, seven year, 10 year, 15 year plans and going around at that time of where if you wanted to sell your plans you engaged the UN who draw up these roundtable meetings...in Paris, for Gods' sake, not here in Samoa...either they bought into it or they didn't and if they did...things got shifted because we did not hold as strong as we should... because at the end of the day, you had to match it with things like an implementation plan...[which was] an issue of capacity... so we got to the stage where we felt we've got the capacity to do things now, we are looking at the framework as something else, and that's when it all came about...⁹⁸

The Government of Samoa initiated an increasingly assertive and strategic approach to its economic development planning. Tuila'epa and his policy team drew on the same tools – the national development plans - of the preceding eras to define the change.⁹⁹ [These were the same tools and practices which later emerged as international “best practice” under the Paris Declaration and the Compact.] The 1992 Strategy under Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana – guided by Tuila'epa as Minister for Finance, began the formal shift in direction.¹⁰⁰ But it was the strategy prepared in 1995 which clearly laid out the path.¹⁰¹ “Three decades of

⁹⁸ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

⁹⁹ Samoa replaced comprehensive plans with strategic plans in 1992 – aided, in part, by the intensive training and policy advice provided by the World Bank, Australia and the Forum Secretariat

¹⁰⁰ Apart from a declared pivot in the Government's role, the economic development approach of the 1992 strategy was remarkably similar to its predecessor: it aimed to consolidate past investments, promote efficiency in the economy, create employment and revitalise the agricultural sector. Government of Western Samoa. March 1992. *Seventh Development Plan 1992-1994: DP7*.

¹⁰¹ In 1992, Tuila'epa was the Finance Minister, a role he held between 1988 – 2001 [he also held Trade, Commerce and Industry between 1988-98; & Deputy Prime Minister 1996-1998]. Tuila'epa became Prime Minister in 1998 when he

development plans, sectoral strategic, technical assistance and aid-funded capital projects have failed,” the strategy asserted, to generate economic growth and “relieve us of our dependence on aid.”¹⁰² The new strategy set the course for the long haul.¹⁰³

8.4.2 A New Development Strategy – and a New Kind of Partnership

Grounded in context

Fundamentally, the new Strategy differed in three nuanced ways from its predecessors: it was written “to be read and understood” by Samoans – rather than donors and their consultants.¹⁰⁴ Its primary purpose was to be a tool to guide national economic development – not to secure aid funds through negotiations at roundtables in far-away cosmopolitan cities. And, significantly, it sought to reconcile the apparent dilemma that had beset economic development in Samoa since independence: it grounded the strategy for economic development in the villages, in *Fa’a Samoa*, the Samoan way.¹⁰⁵ It sought to balance compromise with contribution, and effect continuity through change, key principles of *Fa’a Samoa* and its governance pillar, *Fa’a Matai*.¹⁰⁶

assumed responsibility for Police, Foreign affairs, Legislative Assembly and Telecommunications. He was Prime Minister until 2021, when HRPP lost the national election; he held his seat of Lepe and remained leader of the Opposition in the Assembly/Fono. Tuila’epa became prime minister when Tofilau retired due to ill health in 1998.

¹⁰² Government of Western Samoa. 1995. *A New Partnership: Statement of Economic Strategy, 1996-97*, Vision

¹⁰³ Foreword, Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana, in Government of Western Samoa. March 1992. *Seventh Development Plan 1992-1994: DP7*: “This plan would concentrate on strategy, rather than projects. It identified four elements: a shift away from new investments to consolidation of existing investments, making more effective use; greater efficiency across the economic, including in Government: focusing on human resource development, manpower planning, rationalisation of Government activities and continued privatisation; employment creation through foreign investment especially in tourism, education and training; and revitalisation of the primary sector.”

¹⁰⁴ Tuila’epa’s preface to the 1996-97 SES explained that since independence, Samoa had had several medium-term development plans, most “written with the help of foreign consultants.” These plans, he asserted, may have been read by others outside Samoa - consultants, donors and international agencies - but had been largely ignored within Samoa. This was going to change: this plan was written in simple language for all Samoans. The Plan was also written in Samoan as well as English.

¹⁰⁵ Government of Western Samoa. 1995. *A New Partnership: Statement of Economic Strategy 1996-97*, Vision.

¹⁰⁶ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. *The Samoan Culture and Government*, 117-138.

Compromise: neoliberal economic growth and new public management tools

With Tuila'epa at the helm of the Ministry of Finance, the government was confident, and willing to engage with the global economy. Under the 1996-97 A New Partnership: Samoa Economic Strategy [96-97 SES],¹⁰⁷ the government laid out a development strategy to access global markets through the adoption of neoliberal policies, as espoused by the World Bank and other donors.¹⁰⁸ It also proposed a new partnership with the citizens of Samoa. The government would partner with the private sector to create an enabling environment in which jobs and investment - domestic or foreign - in and by the private sector, were to form the foundations of economic growth.¹⁰⁹

Samoa instituted the first of several consecutive programs of Public Sector Reform [PSR],¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Government of Western Samoa. 1995. *A New Partnership: Statement of Economic Strategy 1996-97*, Vision.

¹⁰⁸ See PM Tuila'epa's speech at the 1997 FEMM where he observes that the region's economies face "pressing economic and social problems" constrained by "distance from international markets, the smallness of our domestic markets... [and] not very efficient public services, trade and fiscal imbalances...increasing populations and labor forces...[mean we] need to upgrade skills and create employment to provide...the prospect of financial independence" but he observes, "the World Bank's 1991 World Development Report ...gives us four clear pointers...to overcome these constraints and realise our development objectives..." by [first] establishing a sound macroeconomic policy environment...[second] removing restrictions and regulations which cause distortion in efficient resource allocation.. [and] to support development of the private sector [and continue] the public sector reform process to reduce Government's role in the economy through corporatisation and privatisation...to take advantage of the opportunity the global economy offers ...; [third]...benefit from...information technology [and fourth]... focus on human development... growing economies need skilled works and professional trained managers..." Malielegaoi T.S. 1997. Address by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Government of Samoa, Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, Cairns Australia, 11 July 1997, SPFS(97)5, Annex 4.

¹⁰⁹ "...a freer economy, and a greater role ... for the private sector...the Government's role in the economy is not to act directly as an entrepreneur but rather to provide a climate conducive to the growth of the private sector.... [the Government's] success...is predicated on the adoption of an appropriate strategy and associated policies to give effect to it...the essence of DP7." Government of Western Samoa. March 1992. *Seventh Development Plan 1992-1994: DP7*, iii.

¹¹⁰ There have been three phases of Public Sector Reform [PSR] and complementing these, three phases of Public Financial Management Reforms [PFMR] – the third phase of the PFMR is ongoing in 2020. The PSR were funded initially as institutional strengthening projects [ISPs]. They sought to build individual capacity as well as restructure the public sector. The first PSIP 1992-1995 was influenced by new public management approaches: it sought to introduce efficiencies by restructuring the public sector, aligning skills responsibilities and incentives [pay]. It sought to improve staff skills and knowledge through in-service and technical training. It sought to rationalise the public sector through workforce planning; and by strengthening the middle management, outlining career paths, increasing accountability and offering incentives for performance. CDC approved the first Manual for Project Planning and Programming in 1998: it outlined a common approach to ensure efficient use of scarce resources to achieve the SDS. Sector planning manuals were introduced and revised in 2000, 2002 and 2009 and 2015 to support the PFMR plans. Sector plans were revitalised under the 2009 PFMR plan. The SMERF manual supported monitoring evaluation and reporting on progress. The Public Sector Investment Program, a planning tool introduced in 2015, supported both PSR and PFM. It supports the Governments investment program. Varied donors have supported these reforms either through funding and or technical assistance or policy advice since their inception: these include Australia, New Zealand, the World Bank, ADB and UNDP. (see Government of Samoa

putting new public management,¹¹¹ an approach promoted by the donors, New Zealand and Australia at the core of the reforms. Through capacity strengthening under its public reform programs,¹¹² the government laid out a program to ensure the public sector had the skills and capacity to manage the new development pivot.¹¹³

As one of Samoa's senior policy advisors later recalled, they were willing to compromise. They were willing to learn the tools and practices of new public management promoted by the public sector reforms, and encouraged [and funded] by the donors, including Australia:

We are using tools that donors are asking us to put in place and we've no problem with that...for eg introducing Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks, benchmarking performance...Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks, so there is a lot more predictability on resource allocation, building up our financial systems...generally lifting the entire process where we are in a position to be able to make better decisions and feel more informed...and why it comes back to next level of engagement with donors ...aligning their system to ours...if you are having many donors with different systems, it's a nightmare for a small island country...there has certainly been a lot of give and take...at the end of the day when you are dealing with some donors, mainstreaming approaches is what we are looking for and we are achieving that because Samoa has been prepared to transform what it can into meeting those requirements in the best way possible...¹¹⁴

A central feature of these reforms, Tuila'epa later claimed, was the shift to performance budgeting - and the corresponding shift to instigate a system through which departmental

website: Tuila'epa's government introduced four key reforms: privatisation of state enterprises; performance budgeting systems; liberalisation of the finance sector to enhance competition; and an investment policy. Malielegaoi T.S. 1997. Address by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Government of Samoa, Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, Cairns Australia, 11 July 1997, SPFS(97)5, Annex 4.

¹¹¹ Hood, C. 1995. The New Public Management in the 1980s: Variations on a Theme. *Accountability, Organisations and Society* 20(2/3):93-109.

¹¹² For example, see: *Making Government More Effective: Public Sector Reform in the South Pacific: Report on A 4-day seminar for Government Ministers with their Permanent Secretaries*, 9-12 March 1993, Nadi Fiji, EDI-World Bank and ISAI-USP; *Private Sector Development in the South Pacific, Managing the Government's role in the creation of an enabling environment*, Report of 5-day senior policy seminar, 6-10 May 1991, Tonga, EDI-World Bank and ISAS-USP; and *Strategic Approaches to National Planning, Report of a 5-day senior policy seminar*, 28 October – 1 November 1991, Fiji, EDI-World Bank and ISAS-USP. All were led by John R. Baker, EDI-World Bank and funded by the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau [AIDAB] and the UNDP.

¹¹³ Vaai claimed that by the turn of the century, Samoa's approach [success in] a broad suite of Government-led reforms – including a more effective and responsive public sector – had put Samoa in good stead for achieving positive economic growth, making Samoa “more responsive” to development requirements. A key factor, Vaai argued, was the sound management of Government finances; and the resultant changed attitudes arising from the new partnership between govt and private sector; and a focus on a more efficient and effective public sector – with policy and institutional reforms.

¹¹⁴ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

heads would be allocated resources to achieve defined tasks - and “rewarded or penalised” in accordance with their performance. This was proposed as the incentive to ensure resources were used effectively and efficiently. Again, this feature foreshadowed the norms and practices promoted by the global idea of Ownership under Paris [and the Compact] nearly a decade later.¹¹⁵

Re-orienting the Dialogue with Donors

However, compromise required mutual respect, if it was not to become merely compliance – or evolve into coercion. Everyone must contribute for real change: even donors. The new Strategy aimed to reset aid relations with donors through instituting new practices for policy dialogue: Samoa established the Aid Coordination Committee [ACC]¹¹⁶ to ensure internal rigour and consistency in preparation for negotiations with donors over aid resources. The ACC was followed by the Cabinet Development Committee [CDC], which aimed to strengthen parliamentary engagement and authority in aid negotiations [amongst other things]. The Government successfully advocated with the UN to re-locate aid negotiations, first to the Pacific [Suva], and then, to Samoa itself. This was more than symbolic: it meant that discussions with donors could be firmly located in “our culture and our environment”.¹¹⁷ It reflected the core motivation underpinning the shift in direction: the assertion of equality in relations with the donors, despite “that aid reliance”.

¹¹⁵ See Stern, E. D. et al. 2008. *Thematic Study on the Paris Declaration, Aid Effectiveness and Development Effectiveness* which identifies the links between the Paris Declaration and the neoliberal and good governance agendas.

¹¹⁶ The ACC was established in 1988; followed by the CDC in 1998. In retrospect, one advisor wished they had put more energy into building the capacity of the CDC alongside the ACC. This was being redressed, she said. Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

¹¹⁷ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

*Fa'a Samoa – and Fa'a Matai, the chiefly way*¹¹⁸

The fundamental difference in the new approach was that, unlike the post-independence strategies, the 96-97 Strategy put the village at the heart of Samoa's economy: "The heart of Samoan life and economy is in the villages."¹¹⁹ In "direct response" to the "concerns expressed in consultations" across Samoa, the 96-97 SES grounded the strategy and the economy in the villages – and, thus, in the relationships under the authority and responsibility of *Fa'a Matai*, the Chiefly Way.¹²⁰ While the benefits of the partnership between Samoa and the private sector would be "widely distributed," but "the pursuit of individual profit should not displace the communalism which characterises Samoan culture."¹²¹

Unlike the post-independence strategies, the 96-97 Strategy asserted that Samoans could negotiate and lead change. Samoa's policy advisors were willing to compromise; but Samoans also wanted to contribute to the relationship. As a senior policy advisor explained, in retrospect:

... so as we learnt going over the years of the things that were not well done and out of which we were not really benefitting, we decided to stop using some of the systems that were then in place and ...it was the opportunity that caused us to really reflect on the kinds of things we were asking the donors to provide for us and ...and ...taking into consideration that fact that we do have a contribution to make to the relationship...¹²²

The strategic approach aimed to build Samoa's capacity to access the global economy – but the framework for development would be grounded in *Fa'a Samoa*. Samoa's policy advisors would learn skills, align practices, and restructure departments. New practices for policy

¹¹⁸ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government.

¹¹⁹ Government of Western Samoa. 1995. *A New Partnership: Statement of Economic Strategy, 1996-97*, Vision. Note: this was in direct contrast to earlier reports and plans, such as that by the World Bank in 1985 which described the village as "outside the economy". Similarly, earlier strategies described Samoans as "incapable of change".

¹²⁰ Government of Western Samoa. 1995. *A New Partnership: Statement of Economic Strategy, 1996-97*, Vision

¹²¹ Government of Western Samoa. 1995. *A New Partnership: Statement of Economic Strategy, 1996-97*, Introduction

¹²² Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-30012015.

dialogue - inviting the donors to change - were introduced. But Samoa also wanted -and needed to contribute. The desire to contribute was grounded in *Fa'a Samoa* – and its constituent governance pillar, *Fa'a Matai*. As So'o observes, a leader's authority, as a wise *matai*, comes through service.¹²³

So'o asserts that, while to an outsider, *Fa'a Samoa*, Samoans' term for their political and economic system,¹²⁴ may appear to be an hierarchical society, he proposes that it is more accurate to describe it as a society "where all the positions have been allocated," and accordingly, where all know their place.¹²⁵ All relationships are mediated through one's ascribed social rank and political status, derived from one's relationships through family networks, the "*aiga*, and the related geographical territory and alliances, represented through a network of villages, of one's *nu'u*, under the protection of the *matai*, the family representative whose acquisition of the title relies on ancestry, service and consensus.¹²⁶ *Fa'a Matai*, the Chiefly Way, can be described as the backbone of *Fa'a Samoa*¹²⁷ - and, So'o asserts,

¹²³ So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*.

¹²⁴ As a *palagi* scholar, my nascent knowledge in this area draws from the literature of key Samoan governance scholars, see Appendix 8.1: Understanding *Fa'a Matai* and *Fa'a Samoa*: A Brief Synthesis of Key Scholars in the Literature.

¹²⁵ So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, 153.

¹²⁶ So'o advises that traditionally, every family member is entitled to be elected to a *matai* title. In practice, the acquisition of a chiefly *matai* title is based on both ancestry and the respect of the "*aiga*, or family, to whom the title belongs, and is an acknowledgement of demonstrated service to, and capacity to protect and provide for the extended family. So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, 19.

¹²⁷ Personal communication with author, Australia, 2023: A Samoan colleague explains that *Fa'a Samoa*, or the Samoan Way, encapsulates five "pillars" which guide Samoans in their daily life and responsibilities: the Way of the Church; the Way of the Family; the way of the Village; the Way of the Culture; and the Chiefly Way, or *Fa'a Matai*, which encapsulates the traditions, principles and practices of governance of the family, the village and the district – and forms the foundation for national governance. There are nuances in the definitions and description of relationships of *Fa'a Samoa* and *Fa'a Matai* across the key Samoan scholars. For further explanation of *Fa'a Samoa* and *Fa'a Matai*, see Appendix 8.1 Understanding *Fa'a Matai* and *Fa'a Samoa*: A brief synthesis of key scholars in the literature. For key text, see: So'o A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*; Pule'aga: *Views of Governance in Samoa*, by Huffer E. and A.Schuster, in E. Huffer and A. So'o (Eds). 2000. *Pulega I Samoa/Governance in Samoa*, 41-66; Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. *The Samoan Culture and Government*; Meleisea, M. 1987. *The Making of Modern Samoa: Traditional Authority and the Colonial Administration in the Modern History of Western Samoa*.

of socio-political affairs in Samoa.¹²⁸ According to Huffer and So'o, who have written extensively on the values and beliefs which underpin Samoan principles of governance, a wise *matai* will not only govern for the *'aiga*, or family but also, through the *fono* or council, for the good of the *nu'u* or village.¹²⁹ Le Tagaloa describes four concepts of political thought which underpin *Fa'a Matai* and frame the social organisation of the Samoan people and culture.¹³⁰

These four concepts are:

- a) The *inclusive rights of each individual in the community* as a potential heir to a *matai* title: hence, *Fa'a Matai*, she writes, encourages the values and beliefs of inclusivity and equal opportunity. This understanding encourages all groups to work in mutual respect towards the achievement of common goals which benefit the whole community and village.
- b) The second concept is of *the unity and holism of life*: the concept of *aganuu* encompasses the duality of nature and nurture in life, balancing the essence of the natural world and the sum of learned experience. This understanding encourages the *matai* [and others] to look at the whole, not just a part: a *matai* who encourages this practice reaps their own reward, for those who benefit from the *matai's* inclusive and wholistic consideration are expected, in return, to acknowledge the *matai's* wisdom and consideration through their service or contribution.

¹²⁸ See So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, xi; and Huffer E. and A. Schuster. 2000. *Pule'aga: Views of Governance in Samoa*, in E. Huffer and A. So'o (eds). 2000. *Pulega I Samoa/Governance in Samoa*, 41-66.

¹²⁹ See *Pule'aga: Views of Governance in Samoa*, by Huffer E. and A. Schuster, in E. Huffer and A. So'o (Eds). 2000. *Pule'aga I Samoa/Governance in Samoa*, 41-66; Le Tagaloa explains that each *fono-a-matai* carries a three-fold function: the Tulafono or traditional law and constitution of the *fono* is established for each *nu'u*, which legislates the position of each *matai* title within the village district, island and appoints executive and judicial functions, collectively as the *fono* or as its individual members. See Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. *The Samoan Culture and Government*.

¹³⁰ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. *The Samoan Culture and Government*, 126.

- c) The third concept is encompassed by the process of *soalaupule*: this concept encourages *a consultative and inclusive approach to decision-making* which involves ensuring all the relevant people affected by a decision are part of the decision-making. The ensuing agreements are more effective because all are part of the decision-making process and therefore assume responsibility for its successful implementation.
- d) The final concept is respect for the capacity to adapt to change and new ideas: It is essential for the integrity of the *Fa'a Matai*, Le Tagaloa wrote, that *matai* demonstrate their capacity to adapt by remaining open to new ideas, to ensure continuity [and resilience] through change.¹³¹

Le Tagaloa argues that these four concepts influence the way Samoans choose to integrate Samoan and “outside” (or “Western”) culture. Le Tagaloa illustrates this influence in her discussion of the creation of Samoa’s Constitution. The Constitution, Le Tagaloa argues, is built on the integration of “western” liberal democratic and Christian traditions with those of *Fa'a Matai*.¹³² The concept of *soalaupule*, Le Tagaloa explains, was a fundamental principle which guided the deliberations and proposed functions of Samoa’s Constitution and operation of its parliament, or *fono*.¹³³ The *matais* acted in service to their village, and by extension to the whole [and future] nation, to reach consensus with wisdom and respect for relationships and obligations under *Fa'a Matai*. In alignment with the precept of *soalaupule*, the *matais* engaged in a process of deliberation and negotiation that aimed to ensure consensus and unity across

¹³¹ See Appendix 8.1 Understanding *Fa'a Matai* and *Fa'a Samoa*: A Brief Synthesis of Key Scholars in the Literature.

¹³² The preamble to the Constitution acknowledges the independent state of Samoa’s foundation in both “Christian principles and Samoan custom and tradition”. Legislative Assembly of Western Samoa. 1997. Constitution of the Independent State of Samoa 1960: Constitution Amendment Act (No 2) 1997 No. 15. Samoa.

¹³³ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government, 126.

Samoa under the authority established by the Constitution. In the act of creating the Constitution, Le Tagaloa argues, the constitution-makers acknowledged the significance – and openness – of creating continuity through change.¹³⁴¹³⁵ The constitution-makers declared the independent state of Samoa to be guided by a blend of Christian and Samoan custom and tradition.¹³⁶ In doing so, the constitution-makers effectively extended the practices and authority of *Fa’a Matai* and related conceptual principles beyond the “*aiga* and the *nu’u* to encompass governance of the whole country. In developing their new framework for governing the country according to the precepts of *Fa’a Matai*, Samoa’s “founding fathers”, Le Tagaloa argues, gave Samoa’s subsequent political leaders a new responsibility: to reconcile Samoan and *palagi* worldviews by giving a national scope to the practices and principles of *Fa’a Matai*, beyond the village, yet grounded by the authority of *Fa’a Matai*. As Le Tagaloa observed, “What is new in the exercise is the national requirements and considerations.”¹³⁷ This reflected a respect for continuity through change - a capacity to adapt and change which continues to be proudly acknowledged by Samoans. As one interviewee explained, drawing on the example of Christianity, Samoans’ capacity to adapt ideas and practices from outside and incorporate these changes under the umbrella of *Fa’a Samoa* continues:

...they [Samoans] have basically Samoan-ised Mass... There is something about the society here that is open to ideas from outside, maybe because that’s how we have always been... everyone has a relative in American Samoa, or Australia or the US... but then we are so confident that then we shift it and say it’s ours, even if its foreign... we have always... if you look at Christianity, if you try and differentiate between what is traditional and what is (introduced) it’s a whole cocktail, but then we say well that’s Samoan customs...¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government, 117-125.

¹³⁵ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government, 126.

¹³⁶ The Constitution of the independent state of Samoa, 1960 [the Constitution was crafted in 1960 following two conventions and came into force on 1 January 1962, when the New Zealand Parliament relinquished its trusteeship/mandate by law in the NZ parliament; Legislative Assembly of Western Samoa. 1997. Constitution of the Independent State of Samoa 1960: Constitution Amendment Act (No 2) 1997 No. 15. Samoa; Government of Samoa webpage.

¹³⁷ My emphasis. Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government, 117-138.

¹³⁸ Confidential interview-Samoa-Consultant-LW-19052015.

From the Village to the Nation

The challenge identified by Le Tagaloa - to reconcile Samoan and *palagi* worldviews by giving a national scope to the practices and principles of *Fa'a Matai*, beyond the village, yet grounded by the authority of *Fa'a Matai* - flowed beyond the legislature to the executive. Tuila'epa and his cohort of policy advisors responded in the early 1990s when they transformed Samoa's approach to development. In the early 1990s, Tuila'epa and his contemporaries in government established a national framework for economic development that balanced the worldviews of *palagi* with those of Samoan custom and tradition. This meant, in daily life, balancing the practices of new public management and neoliberal economic development with those of *Fa'a Samoa* and, *Fa'a Matai*; to shape an effective public sector which could facilitate and exercise the obligations of national leadership and management as the executive arm of government, to promote the country's national economic development while remaining grounded by the ways of the village.¹³⁹

Nearly two decades on from that major shift reflected in the 96-97 Strategy, in the same year that the Pacific region's senior aid policy advisors endorsed the *Pacific Principle for Aid Effectiveness*, So'o re-examined the relationship between *Fa'a Matai* and the liberal democratic institutions and processes of the state in Samoa.¹⁴⁰ There was, he found, an ongoing but "uneasy" alliance between custom and democracy in Samoa.¹⁴¹ So'o concluded

¹³⁹ As Tuila'epa acknowledges in his memoir, all Samoans continually negotiate *Fa'a Samoa* and *Fa'a palagi* as they proceed about their daily lives. But *Fa'a Samoa*, he explains, offers a way to negotiate from strength because it enables Samoans to make their own judgements about what kind of development is in their best interests. He observes: "...All Samoans living in the modern world have a double inheritance and have to learn to negotiate the complexities and confusion, excitements and joys of living in two worlds.... *Fa'a Samoa* provided the people of Samoa with a structure and process that enables them to negotiate with the agents of development and make their own judgements about what developments are in their best interests." Swain, P. 2017. *Palemia Prime Minister Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi of Samoa: A Memoir*, 77-78.

¹⁴⁰ So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*.

¹⁴¹ So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*.

that although western democratic institutions and practices had “both positive and negative impacts” on indigenous institutions and their associated values and practices, democracy in the western sense remained “restricted by the persistence of customary ideals.”¹⁴² *Fa’a Matai*, he asserted, continued to be:

...an encompassing system inside which most, if not all, micro aspects of Samoan society operate and under which all socio-political affairs are controlled. Amongst the ideals espoused in this system are appreciation and encouragement [even enforcement] of collectivist values, recognition of and respect for high-ranking titles, and adherence to traditional procedures and practices... any change towards the realization of liberal democracy must, therefore, be examined against the existing matai system....¹⁴³

So’o argues that contemporary practices of governance represented a synthesis of tradition and democracy – a synthesis which has resulted in gradual change over time. He says:

...some of the traditionally respected practices, ideals and values have been discarded as irrelevant to current political conditions, while others that are seen as more suitable have been adapted. In this way, Samoan custom and tradition continue to adapt to new circumstance – as has always been the case...¹⁴⁴

This synthesis of continuity through change was the context which framed Samoa’s endorsement of the Compact – and their engagement with the language of Ownership it represented.

8.5 Conclusion

I began this part of the story of ownership in Samoa by investigating the discrepancy between implementation and the attribution of change. Samoa had clearly implemented all the strategies of Ownership; but its senior policy advisors were adamant that neither the Paris Declaration, nor the Compact, drove change. When I examined the local significance

¹⁴² So’o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, xi.

¹⁴³ So’o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, xi.

¹⁴⁴ So’o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, xiii.

attributed to the idea of Ownership, I found that Samoa's policy advisors saw an opportunity in the language of Paris for a mutuality with donors, an opportunity to build understanding of "our culture, out environment". Tuila'epa, and a cohort of likeminded policy advisors, had formed a common vision in pursuit of a mutuality in understanding, an equality, with donors, well before either Paris or the Compact were endorsed. Their desire for equality was the motivation for change. Its origins lay in a history of paternalism, even racism, in aid relations in Samoa. It had motivated Tuila'epa and his colleagues in the early 1990s to take a new direction, to find a new way to bring economic development to Samoa, grounded in the wisdom of *Fa'a Samoa* and guided by the precepts of *Fa'a Matai*.

In the nearly two decades since the 1988 report, Samoa's political leaders and policy advisors had changed their approach to development – and aid relations. They sought to negotiate as equals with the donors, despite "that aid reliance".¹⁴⁵ Samoa's policy advisors consistently demonstrated practices characterised by behaviours of reflexivity and bargaining: they were willing to reflect on past experience, to learning and reshaping future practice. They were willing to bargain: to undertake or accept some practices or outcomes in return for other practices or outcomes. More often, I realised, the examples of reflexivity and bargaining [such as the adoption of strategic planning; the realignment of financial responsibilities including the performance based budgeting; the coordination and approval mechanisms within and outside government] closely aligned with the global norms promoted by the global idea of Ownership under the Compact [and Paris]. The characteristics of reflexivity and bargaining indicated Samoa's willingness to accept the legitimacy of incoming policy norms and

¹⁴⁵ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

institutions. It indicated a willingness to compromise, I argue, in order to build a mutuality with donors, to build space for a genuine and durable partnership.

In endorsing the Compact, Tuila'epa and his peers exercised the obligation and opportunity to continue to show leadership through contribution, inclusion and service in accord with the precepts of *Fa'a Matai*. Since the 1990s, they had laid the ground for a mutuality with the donors through compromise and contribution. But that mutuality remained elusive. They continued to seek accountability in their partnership with donors: a demonstration of understanding of, and respect for, Samoa's culture and environment. In doing so, I argue, Tuila'epa and his policy advisors also positioned themselves as policy-brokers: as negotiators of the shift in power in relations with the donors. As norm-setters, not only norm-takers.¹⁴⁶

I turned next, to ascertain whether Samoa's policy advisors were able make real the opportunity they saw in the language of Paris. Samoa's policy advisors had shown their willingness to compromise - and their capacity to contribute. Were they able to negotiate, yet again, to create the mutuality, the understanding of culture and environment, in their partnership with Australia through the opportunity presented by the global idea of Ownership at the foundation of the Compact? Samoa had already shown their capacity for reflexivity and bargaining through the changes instituted well before the Paris Declaration and the Compact were agreed. My next step was to determine whether the innovations in aid practices, the Partnerships Policy and the Compact Peer Reviews, which emerged during the Compact's duration, constituted evidence of the shift in power that reflected a transition in Ownership

¹⁴⁶ Acharaya, A, 2009, Whose Ideas Matter? See also Chapter 3.

of development – and if so, how did these changes influence the development partnership with Australia?

Chapter 9 Samoa “...Well, Game over!”

9.1 Introduction

...at the end of the day, you want ownership because if you start allowing people to impose their views on you...you practically say, ‘Well, game over’...¹

My examination of change in local aid coordination practices instigated by Samoa since the early 1990s had revealed that reflexivity and bargaining were well-entrenched behaviours amongst Samoa’s policymakers. I began the third part of the story of Ownership in Samoa by re-examining the local policy practices instituted under the Compact’s ambit for characteristics of reflexivity, bargaining – and, particularly, innovation. I wanted to identify connections between the local significance of attributed to the idea of Ownership, the desire for “a mutuality,” and practices instituted under Compact’s ambit in order to decide whether Samoa had exercised Ownership of development according to its “rules of the game”. Given the motivation ascribed to change in the 1990s, I was seeking evidence of practices – and change in those practices - whose formation revealed, or facilitated, the influence of the precepts which underpinned *Fa’a Matai*. I was looking, particularly, to understand whether there was an equivalence - or prominence - between these precepts and the local practices represented by the Partnership Policy and Compact Peer reviews, practices instituted in alignment with the global and regional agreements of Paris and Cairns and acclaimed as innovations.

¹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

Re-capping the model for understanding policy change

My model for [re]analysis of the policy logic of the global idea of Ownership argued that the policy practices characterised by reflexivity or bargaining would indicate Samoa's policy advisors' acceptance of the global norms and practices inherent in the global idea of Ownership. This entailed identifying the "soft stuff" of global norms which underpinned the global practices present in the global strategies of Ownership – and comparing these with local policy practices to identify the norms which they might represent; and identifying those "new" practices that might be informed by or reflect the concepts of *Fa'a Matai* – and efforts towards achieving the local understanding attributed to Ownership: a mutuality through understanding, reflecting equality in the partnership. Innovation would reflect the strategic choice to give prominence to local norms in crafting new or adapted practices to solve old problems. Innovation made it more likely that change in local policy practices reflected the assertion of local values and beliefs, reflecting local norms informed by the principles of *Fa'a Matai*. In effect, it made it more likely that locally situated knowledge would counteract the dominance of asymmetrical power relations inherent in aid and development, as argued by Ostrom and her colleagues. Innovation would diminish counterclaims of isomorphic mimicry: innovation would reveal the relevance of substance over form, even if form "looked like" the global language of Ownership. I was looking for those points which revealed a possible contestation of norms: where innovation in practices might signify the prominence of local norms as equivalent to, or dominant over, global norms. The norm contestation underlying the choices made in crafting these practices, I argued, constituted signs of a shift in power – and the transition in Ownership of development. It signified, as Ostrom had argued, the

assertion of locally situated knowledge which might act to counteract the dominance of the donors.

The matrix in Table 9.1 Renegotiating Best Practice in Samoa: Global and Local Norms summarises this analysis [See Appendix 9.1 Renegotiating Best Practice In Samoa: Global and Local norms]. I compare the norms and practices under the proxy measures of Paris and aligned with Ostrom’s criteria [as outlined in Table 7.1 earlier] with those of *Fa’a Matai*, as described by Le Tagaloa and others. Then I categorise the local practices according to the behaviours reported by the interviewees in explanation of their implementation and characterised by reflexivity, bargaining or innovation.²

9.1 The re-negotiation of Ownership: A Shift in Power?

An understanding of relationality and relationship,³ demonstrated through service and contribution, was critical for Samoa’s policy advisors in their pursuit of a mutuality with the donors. This influenced how they understood their roles as policy leaders on behalf of government – and how they drew on the language of Ownership as leverage to create the desired mutuality with donors. The Partnership Policy was a key example.

² See the discussion in Chapter 3 per the analytical model for policy change drawn from the literature on policy translation, norm contestation and ideational change.

³ See Professor Upolu Luma Vaai, who defines Pasifika relationality as: “...reality is constituted by relationship, by the dynamic flow of relationship in an infinite multiplicity of becoming: ocean, land, person, god...the idea of co-inherence is key to relationality... we are in the other (land, sea, ancestor...)...relationship starts from the whole to the part and back again to the whole...” Professor Upolu Luma Vaai, Masterclass on Pasifika Philosophies: why it is both a challenge and opportunity, Pacific Theological College, 04 September 2023, Canberra Presentation slides provided during the Masterclass.

9.1.1 Innovation: The Partnership Policy

“The key thing”, one senior and much respected policy advisor declared, when I interviewed her about the relationship between Ownership and the Compact, “was the aid partnership policy.”⁴ As another senior advisor explained, an effective partnership demanded clarity about each partner’s role and responsibilities and how they engage:

....we looked, we thought, there has to be a policy framework which will define how we will engage with the development partnership, so we have an aid policy, we are probably the first country that has an aid policy and that document has been reviewed twice now....⁵

The policy problem

A senior Ministry of Finance policy advisor described the mid-80s as a time of “mistakes and chaos” within the government – particularly between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance:

But in the mid-80s, that was when I went to Foreign Affairs, because this division (Aid Coordination and Debt Management) was in Foreign Affairs, it was a pretty messy place... it was like being thrown into the den of lions I had no clue, ah, but I learnt very fast that the processes we had were terrible... Ministries were all over the place, scrambling for whatever the donors were giving out to them...I think we were very vulnerable and gullible and at the mercy of the development partners...so I thought to myself, well we had better be organized, otherwise it’s going to be a huge task...”⁶

It was clear to Samoa’s political leaders and policy advisors that strategic change was required: a central plank in that change was the way relations with the donors were organised:

...coming in the early 90s... we were already doing a lot out of the mistakes and chaos we were in, we were already designing, looking at strategic ways by which we could change how we do things.....so there was the exercise done ...on harmonisation, we were already in front then because, with the establishment of the aid coordination committee, we said to the donors, we are getting ourselves organized and we are going to look at ways by which we will also lead how the donors are going to be organized...⁷

⁴ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015

⁵ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015

⁶ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-30012015 See Appendix 9.2 Public Sector Reform, for an analysis of the public sector through the lens of the analytical model for policy change. The roles and responsibilities for government finances in general, aid in particular, were confused between the Ministry of Foreign affairs and the Ministry of Finance until a restructure in the early 2000s clarified lines of responsibility.

⁷ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

The first attempt to link Samoa's expectations for a mutuality the donors with the opportunity offered by the global language of Ownership resulted in the 2007 Partnerships for Development Policy.

What the policy did

In an attempt to "lead" how the donors would be organised, the 2007 Partnerships for Development Policy document listed the donors, the projects funded and the value of their aid contributions.⁸ Despite the promises to harmonise donor practices and procedures made in the preceding seven years in the Monterrey Consensus, the HFLAE in Rome and Paris – and in the regional dialogues on aid⁹ - Samoa's policy advisors were dealing with over 30 different donors across more than 140 projects.¹⁰ Each entailed different management arrangements, protocols and procedures. It was a useful scoping exercise, but it wasn't a strategy for achieving the desired mutuality. A year later, in 2008, the addendum to the first Partnership for Development Agreement between Australia and Samoa enhanced the original Partnership for Development Policy.¹¹ The addendum described the mechanisms within Samoa for the authorisation of aid and development priorities and the roles and responsibilities of the respective parties, Australia and Samoa to the Agreement.¹² By 2010, Samoa had re-crafted

⁸ Government of Samoa. 2007. Partnerships for Development 2007-2009.

⁹ See Chapter 6 From Paris to the Pacific.

¹⁰ See Government of Samoa. 2007. Partnerships for Development 2007-2009: Australia was one of 30 donor or funding sources funding 142 projects in Samoa. Each entailed different management arrangements, protocols and procedures there were 14 major multilateral or bilateral donors, with several represented by different agencies, for example, the UN was represented by eight agencies, Australia and New Zealand by three each; another 8 'small' bilateral donors; and another 8 regional or international organisations or funding source. While Australia New Zealand and the UN carried the most projects – 23, 26 and 24 projects, respectively: Japan and JICA had 15 between them, the EU carried 8 and World Bank, 9; the ADB had 7; Turkey, 2, but others, such as Canada, USA and Korea had only one project. The government of Samoa was jointly responsible – and contributing resources - to 18 projects, mainly with the multilateral and major donors

¹¹ Government of Australia and Government of Samoa. 19/8/2008. *Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development*. Addendum.

¹² Government of Australia and Government of Samoa. 19/8/2008. *Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development*. Addendum.

the Partnership Policy again, to release a revised Development Cooperation Policy [the 2010 Partnerships Policy].¹³

The 2010 Partnerships Policy was a more sophisticated effort than the first iteration. It told a stronger, more substantial story. The Policy dealt directly with the “top story”, the problem of the administrative burden and harmonisation across donor protocols - by establishing the framework for “how the donors are going to be organised”.¹⁴ It also, however, clearly articulated the roles and responsibilities, with clear lines of authority, between Samoa and the donors. It laid out Samoa’s expectations of the processes and practices to be followed in negotiations with donors. It identified and mechanisms for dialogue, within government and with the donors. In doing this so clearly, it outlined Samoa’s expectations of donors’ behaviours, as their peers and equals.

The Policy’s strategies

Through the 2010 Partnerships Policy, Samoa:

- a) Instituted calendar “blackouts”, regular periods, of several weeks at a time, when donor “field-missions” were not encouraged [nor invited]. The “blackouts” enabled Samoa’s public sector to prioritise their workloads – especially during budget preparation and other intensive work-times.
- b) Identified the government’s responsibility to lead coordination, while identifying a role for donors as leads on steering committees in the sectors they funded. This acknowledged the

¹³ Government of Samoa. December 2010. Development Cooperation Policy - Partners in Development Promoting Aid Effectiveness.

¹⁴ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

donors "need" for oversight of their funded programs, while prioritising Samoa's leadership: respecting the accountability each held to their respective taxpayers.

- c) Defined Samoa's preferred aid modality as budget support.
- d) Affirmed the link between the allocation and accounting for aid resources and the national strategy through the sector plans and their respective consultation mechanisms [steering committees and focal points].
- e) Instituted quarterly development partner meetings as an alternative to the "ineffective" regionally-based PICS-Partners meetings, to better promote dialogue and negotiation on the interventions that best responded to "the culture and the environment" in Samoa – this located the negotiation of development interventions by their relevance to context through access to Samoan policy advisors and programme implementers, rather than in response to "wish lists" or in response to potential aid sources.¹⁵
- f) Prioritised consultation with civil society, private sector and the sectors through the established mechanisms for consultation: between donors and the central agencies [through the ACC]; between the central agencies and sectors [through the sector planning committees and within department's sector plans]; and between donors and their respective priority sectors [through the sector or project committees].

The Policy fulfilled several concerns identified by Samoa in the 1988 report.¹⁶ It re-defined aid relations and was the first comprehensive articulation of the practices and processes through which relations between the donor and Samoa were negotiated. In doing so, it performed a

¹⁵ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-IQ-6052015.

¹⁶ Government of Western Samoa. October 1988. *Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs, Vol 1, Main Report*.

dual function. It reflected the norms which underpinned the concept of partnership and results promoted by donors through the global idea of Ownership: norms which Samoa's policy advisors had already accepted under the new public management approaches promoted through various public sector reforms instituted since 1992 and their engagement in the Paris Declaration.

The Policy also, however, [re]framed relations in accord with the guiding concepts of *Fa'a Matai*. In assigning prominence to the articulation of mutual roles and responsibilities of donors and Samoa, the Policy showed a respect for consensus and harmony that was integral to Samoa's expectations: "everything had to be mutually agreed".¹⁷ It accorded with concepts of *soalaupule*, unity and holism, reflecting the value and significance which Samoa's policy advisors placed on corresponding norms of inclusion, contribution and service. And it was underpinned by one the most significant concepts which informs *Fa'a Matai* in the performance of their leadership: the allocation or division of responsibilities and resources across relationships, in a place "where all the positions have been allocated".¹⁸ While aid was critical for the small island state, the relationship with the donors was about more than just aid flows.¹⁹ It was about the relationships through which aid flowed: and these relations required a mutuality, a shared understanding of culture and environment from which

¹⁷ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015

¹⁸ See So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, as discussed earlier. The prominence on defining relationships through ascribed political and social rank from birth and across family networks that characterised *Fa'a Matai* meant that ensuring ways to incorporate and define new relationships with entities of 'unknown' or ill-defined social and political status – such as donors, was significant to creating genuine partnerships. In a place where ascribed social rank and political status shapes every interaction and relationship, uncertainty of the protocols governing such relationships encouraged confusion and vulnerability – and ineffective development.

¹⁹ The Government of Samoa had in fact, refused offers of more aid from Australia during the recovery period following the 2012 Cyclone Evans. Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30/6 2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*.

effective partnership – and hence, effective development, could emerge.

While Samoa's policy advisors were looking for a similar outcome - a genuine partnership for development - to that claimed by the global idea of Ownership, their starting point, and their pathway, was different. The Policy offered a more nuanced guide to relations and decision-making. Samoa's Ministry of Finance offered the donors a policy instrument that fitted within the shape of the strategies promoted by the global idea of Ownership; but it was informed by Samoa's past experience – and grounded in the precepts of *Fa'a Matai*.

The Policy demonstrated to the donors, as foreseen by that one-time junior policy advisor, now a much-respected senior policy leader, that Samoa was now organised. It illustrated Samoa's policy advisors' willingness and capacity to not only reflect on their experience, but to bargain – and to experiment and innovate. Samoa's policy leaders crafted a new practice centred in local values, beliefs and norms, of relationality and mutuality. Its intent was to bring Samoa and the donors into relationship as equals. This, Samoa made clear, was the pathway to more effective development partnerships.

We have evolved the relationship because, in the early days, it was simply the donors giving us what they planned to give us and we had no choice, no say, we were simply the recipient... but now we have looked at the relationship and the structure... and we considered the development partners alongside with all our other development partners like the non-state actors [etc... our country partners, as defined in the 1997 SES]... we had to look at our systems first, so we got the institutions up... we thought there has to be a policy framework that defines how we act as partners...now it's a partnership relationship...so we are defining the relationship as a partnership of commitments, and that ...everything had to be mutually agreed... there was no longer a dictate of what was to do what and who was going to get what...²⁰

²⁰ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

The Partnerships Policy was a strategic move that demonstrated an evolving relationship between Samoa and its donor-partners. Through their engagement with the tools and instruments promoted under the public sector reform – which aligned with the strategies of Ownership, Samoa had already demonstrated their willingness to accept and integrate donor-norms where it these aligned with local norms. But to consolidate a relationship as equals, by asserting a mutuality in relations, they needed the donors to understand that other norms could hold prominence, in addition to those promoted by the global idea of Ownership. A mutuality in understanding was the bedrock for genuine accountability in the partnership.

9.1.2 Innovation: Compact Peer Reviews, South-South Attachments – and Pasifika expertise

With support from the Secretariat, Samoa contributed to two other policy initiatives under the Compact,²¹ the Peer Reviews and South-South Attachments. The Peer Reviews in particular, were acclaimed by donors, in the region and globally, as innovative.²²

The Peer Reviews

The Peer Reviews were instigated by the Forum's Secretariat in accord with their responsibilities under the Compact.²³ The Peer Reviews became a key feature of the Compact's presence in the region. Samoa took a leading role in the conduct of the Compact's Peer

²¹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2015. *Five Years of Improving Development Effectiveness: 2015 Tracking the Effectiveness of Development Efforts in the Pacific Report*.

²² GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011
Australian Government (AusAID) 2011. Australian Aid Program Annual Performance Report: Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development 2010-2011.

²³ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 5-6/8/2009. *Forum Communiqué*. 40th Pacific Islands Forum PIFS(09)12, Annex B Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific: 2: "The Forum Secretariat establish and report annually to the Post-Forum Dialogue on a process of regular peer review of the Forum Island countries national development plans to promote international best practices in key sectors improve effective budget allocation processes and guide support from development partners."

Reviews, across the Pacific. One of Samoa’s most senior policy advisors participated in at least seven country peer reviews, as well as the joint OECD DAC-Compact review of New Zealand. All fifteen Forum Member countries – the 13 aid-receiving countries and two donor countries - which endorsed the Compact participated in a Peer Review between 2009-2017 in accord with their commitment in Cairns. The Peer Reviews received global endorsement when several Pasifika representatives, including Samoa’s most senior policy advisor on aid, together with a senior Australian aid representative, spoke on the achievements of the Peer Reviews at the Busan High Level Forum in 2011.²⁴

Samoa was considered by the Secretariat, its regional peers and the donors, particularly Australia, as a leader for its engagement in the Compact Peer Reviews. In fact, although the Busan and other fora claimed the Peer Reviews as innovative,²⁵ similar review mechanisms had been in place in development practice for several decades. The OECD-DAC Peer reviews established in 1962,²⁶ and the African Peer Review Mechanism established in 2003²⁷ are two illustrations. The critical innovation, I suggest, lay in its affirmation of Pasifika expertise. The claim of equality, as peers, with the expatriate consultants usually engaged by donors to undertake similar training, evaluations and reviews. Samoa, in particular, insisted that review teams include Pasifika practitioners as experts and peers who brought valued specialist

²⁴ GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011.

²⁵ GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011.

²⁶ The OECD-DAC instituted aid reviews – reviews of its members development assistance efforts and policies in 1962; these were not published until 1994. By 2000, the reviews had become known as peer reviews. Each OECD member is peer reviewed every five years. The intent of the peer reviews was to assess “the extent to which the development policies strategies and activities of the reviewed country meet the standards set by the DAC”. It was this practice which was extended under the Compact under the auspice of the Forum Secretariat. OECD. 2006b. *The DAC in Dates: A History of the OECDs Development Assistance Committee*.

²⁷ The African Peer Review Mechanism promoted by the African Union.

knowledge and expertise to the teams.²⁸ Samoa's insistence on Pasifika expertise reflected its own experiences of reflexivity and willingness to adapt to change:

...our experience evolved into new things which we were happy to manage and change and review but knew that we had to change, we had to do a lot of reforms for us to get to something that we can sustainably manage... those were processes that we have discarded...people have to review and evaluate the merits of these things and not have to do as a ritualistic process...²⁹

The South-South attachments

The South-South attachments were also grounded in Samoa's confidence in Pasifika knowledge and expertise. Again, with support from the Forum Secretariat, Samoa's Ministry of Finance offered public sector officers from other Pacific countries the opportunity to undertake in-country "work-attachments". The "work-attachments" offered these officers the opportunity to learn from Samoa's policy experience in aid coordination. Few other small island states had instituted similar practices. As a senior policy advisor explained:

...I think the main issue here is the example of showing them [officers from other countries] how the policy, the resource allocation, is linked. Its [this knowledge] missing terribly from where they come from...³⁰

The attachments were an idea which had been discussed through the decades in the regional PICS-Partners meetings.³¹ The innovation lay, again, in Samoa's initiative to instigate the process, as a validation of Pasifika knowledge experience and expertise. Although the work attachments were described by Samoa's policy advisors as a "substantial effort", the attachments became a respected mechanism between Pacific islands policy advisors for spreading ideas, tools, and practices across the region.³²

²⁸ Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30/6/2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*; Brien, D., R. Jauncey and J. Winter. 30/11/2017. Findings of the Independent Review of the Forum (Cairns) Compact including Annexes: Background Note 1: Overview of Activities and Results Under the Forum (Cairns) Compact 26 July 2017; and Background Note 2: Development Outcomes and Financing in the Pacific 2009 to 2017, 26 July 2017.

²⁹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

³⁰ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015

³¹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 11/6/2004. The PICS-Partners Meeting, Rotorua, New Zealand. Meeting papers (04)MP.5.

³² Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2015. *Five Years of Improving Development Effectiveness: 2015 Tracking the Effectiveness of Development Efforts in the Pacific Report*.

Samoa's advocacy for Pasifika expertise was significant for two reasons: it brought locally-situated knowledge to the design, delivery and evaluation of development interventions; and it was an opportunity for Samoa's policy advisors to share their experience with others in the region – and globally. It aligned with Ostrom's argument that locally-situated knowledge was the means to counteract the asymmetries in power relations inherent in aid and development. By insisting on the relevance and validity of Pasifika expertise, Samoa was reflecting the primacy of precepts under *Fa'a Matai*: a respect for inclusion, contribution and service – and for creating continuity through adapting to change. In promoting Pasifika expertise, Samoa's policy advisors also challenged development-archetypes of the vulnerability of the small island developing states – and the corresponding assumptions of the superiority of external technology and advice. Again, as it had through the Partnerships Policy, Samoa had instigated practices that asserted the primacy of locally-situated knowledge and experience while utilising the "shape" of practices promoted by the global language of Ownership. It was strategic and clever diplomacy.

All three policy instruments and their accompanying practices were a reflection of the innovation that constituted the exercise of Ownership of development, according to Samoa's "rules of the game".

9.1.3 The Exercise of Ownership

Samoa understood the claims of the global idea of Ownership as a precursor to effective partnership. The global policy norms of responsibility and leadership and the promotion of effective and efficient use of aid resources, were understood and accepted by Samoa. These

norms were not inconsistent with local precepts of leadership under *Fa'a Matai*. But the global idea of Ownership in the Paris Declaration – and the Compact - did not drive change.

The global idea of Ownership did not reflect the whole story. Change was already underway in Samoa by the time the Compact was endorsed. The Paris declaration was, as one advisor explained, “coincident to the way we wanted to go.” Samoa was inspired, rather, by their own experience and the consequent significance which Tuila'epa and senior policy advisors attributed to the language of Ownership: as an opportunity to reframe relations with donors as equals. Samoa sought a mutuality in understanding: they were driven by the historic shame of inequality – and a desire to hold donors accountable for playing their part in the partnership, through a mutual understanding of each other's culture and environment.

Samoa demonstrated reflexivity, bargaining - and innovation - in the practices they adopted or instituted, to exercise Ownership of their development agenda. While reflexivity and bargaining demonstrated their willingness to compromise, to accept global policy norms, innovation indicated a renegotiation in power in relations.

The Partnership Policy was central to the Samoa's aspirations for engaging as equals at the negotiation table with donors – especially Australia. By taking the language of the idea of Ownership – of roles and responsibilities, of effectiveness and efficiency - it shifted the conversation from the old narrative of vulnerability and ineffectiveness to a new conversation. By reframing the relationship to a conversation of mutual rights and responsibilities, inclusive consultation, shared decision-making and mutual accountability, it asserted a relationship of

equals. It was a key step in Samoa's strategy, articulated in the discussions at the UN roundtable in 1988, for more effective development partnerships. It was one more step in the journey which Samoa had long-ago mapped. It was consciously and deliberately bringing locally-situated knowledge into the relationship. The Partnerships Policy was innovative: it was a new way of "seeing" old problems.³³ In doing so, it gave prominence to the local values and beliefs which shaped local norms, while respecting the policy norms which underpinned the global idea of Ownership. Local norms, drawn from locally-situated knowledge [to use Ostrom's words] became **locally-situated** practice – and created, through local eyes, the basis for more effective partnerships. In giving equivalence to local norms underpinned by local values and beliefs with its origins in *Fa'a Matai*, the Policy gave salience to the mutuality that ownership signified for Samoa's policy advisors. The Policy, I argue, constituted an opportunity for a shift in power in aid relations between Samoa and the donors, such as Australia. As one interviewee said:

Whatever global bandwagon...we were very conscious of where we wanted to go.. at the end of the day, you want ownership because if you start allowing people to impose their views on you...you practically say, 'Well, game over!'...³⁴

It was the assertion of locally-situated knowledge within the parameters of the Compact [and the Paris Declaration before it], through the Partnership Policy and the insistence on Pasifika expertise, through the Peer Reviews and South-South Attachments, which reflected the renegotiation of power – the capacity to influence – relations with donors. These practices were innovative because they underpinned by the precepts of *Fa'a Matai*; the precepts of how leadership according to a *matai*, is to be enacted. This was the precedent set when

³³ See Chapter 3 A Conceptual Framework: Understanding Policy Change

³⁴ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-IQ-6052015.

Samoa's leadership integrated Christianity as a pillar of *Fa'a Samoa*.³⁵ And again, when Samoa's political leaders brokered a new Constitution as they won independence from New Zealand in 1962.³⁶ And so, this was the path which Tuila'epa and his government took in the early 90s when they set a new direction, seeking to balance *Fa'a Samoa* and *Fa'a palagi*. As Tuila'epa observes:

...All Samoans living in the modern world have a double inheritance and have to learn to negotiate the complexities and confusion, excitements and joys of living in two worlds.... *Fa'a Samoa* provided the people of Samoa with a structure and process that enables them to negotiate with the agents of development and make their own judgements about what developments are in their best interests.³⁷

Under Tuila'epa, with the support of his peer-cohort, now senior policy advisors and leaders in government, Samoa renegotiated control of their development, while looking for opportunities to strengthen relations with the donors, including Australia their largest and most consistent donor. The "innovative" Partnership and other policy instruments took the shape of the global strategies of Ownership. But their strength lay in the wisdom of *Fa'a Matai*: and the offer of a partnership constructed in accord with local norms of contribution, inclusion and service. An offer willing to accommodate the global norms promoted by the global idea of Ownership but which gave equal prominence to local norms and aspirations. The question which emerged next was, what effect Samoa's nuanced exercise of Ownership had on the development partnership with Australia? Did the exercise of Ownership put Samoa in the driver's seat, as promised so long ago?

³⁵ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government.

³⁶ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government.

³⁷ Swain, P. 2017. *Palemia Prime Minister Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi of Samoa: A Memoir*, 77-78.

9.2 The Influence on Partnership:

9.2.1 *The Policy Claim: Ownership = Effective Partnership*

The third claim of the policy logic underlying the global idea of Ownership argued that the exercise of Ownership would promote more effective partnerships between donors and aid-receiving countries.³⁸ I examine whether the shift in power, the renegotiation of power represented by the exercise of Ownership, was sustained by Samoa – and how it influenced partnership with Australia. Samoa was offering a nuanced relationship which understood the local aspirations for a mutuality as the precursor to a more effective, genuine, durable and sustainable, partnership. How did Australia respond, in practice?

The negotiating governments

The two countries were distinguished by the respective stability, or otherwise, of their governments during the period between 2009, when the Compact was agreed in Cairns, and 2017 when the Compact was subsumed under the Pacific Roadmap on Sustainable Development.³⁹ Samoa's government under Prime Minister Tuila'epa was one of the most stable in the Pacific and remained in power throughout the period. In contrast, in the same period, Australia was led by five different Prime Ministers across six governments.⁴⁰ Australia

³⁸ The Millennium Declaration's Goal 8 prescribed the establishment of a global partnership for development. It identified six targets which would indicate the global partnership had been established. These described what the global partnership would do to end poverty. They did not describe the qualities of a good partnership or how to facilitate a better partnership. The Paris Declaration pursued a similar line. Despite the frequent and liberal use of the term partnership, neither the Paris Declaration or its related policy texts, including its regional companion in the Pacific, the Forum Compact, defined what constituted a partnership; or how a better partnership was to be established. The final evaluation of the Paris Declaration identified "better partnerships" between donor and aid receiving countries as a key component in achieving more effective aid. Declaring "more inclusive and effective partnerships for development" as a key domain of change, the evaluation claimed to examine improvements in the quality of aid partnerships through evidence of stronger "transparency, trust, and country ownership". However, not only did the evaluation fail to offer significant evidence of change over the duration of the evaluation period, but the indicators of a "more inclusive and effective partnership" were both poorly articulated and self-recursive.

³⁹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2017. *Pacific Road Map on Sustainable Development*.

⁴⁰ Between 2007 and 2018, Australia was led by five different Prime Ministers across six governments. Under the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd governments between 2007-2013, Kevin Rudd, first as Prime Minister and later as Minister for Foreign Affairs,

and Samoa entered three different bilateral aid arrangements during this time, led, on Australia's part, by the Rudd/Gillard/Rudd Labor governments between 2007-2013; and the Abbott/Turnbull coalition governments between 2013-2018. Australia's positions on relations in the Pacific, and aid in particular, under the Rudd/Gillard governments were largely set by Rudd during his first Prime Minister-ship [the Rudd/Labor aid regime], while Australia's interests under the coalition government were largely represented by the Hon. Julie Bishop as Foreign Minister during both the Abbott and Turnbull Prime Minister-ships [the Bishop/Coalition aid regime, 2013-2018]. While Samoa remained largely consistent in its foreign policy approach, Australia's policy positions on aid – and the policy tools accompanying them, as well as its foreign policy, shifted under the two regimes.⁴¹ Drawing largely from the Australian government's evaluations of the performance of the Australia-Samoa aid partnership between 2008-2018, I show that the different Australian governments illustrated different approaches to partnership – and a different response to Samoa's exercise of Ownership.

The rationale for partnership

played the leading role on foreign policy, including the Australian aid program. When Australia's coalition parties assumed government in September 2013 under the Prime Ministership of Tony Abbott, he appointed Julie Bishop as the Minister for Foreign Affairs. She remained in the portfolio for the duration of the next two changes of Prime Minister, under first Turnbull in 2015; and then Morrison in 2018. Until her resignation from the portfolio after a failed leadership bid in August 2018, Bishop provided the constant leadership on foreign policy, including aid policy and programming under the coalition governments between 2013 and 2018. In contrast, Samoa was led by the same Prime Minister Tuilaepa – and the same focal point for aid negotiations in the Ministry of Finance – throughout the corresponding period.

⁴¹ Government of Australia (Department of Defence). 2016. *Defence White Paper*; Government of Australia (Department of Foreign Affairs). 2017. *Foreign Policy White Paper*.

There were common threads across the Samoa and Australia's rationale for partnership, although each emphasised different elements. Both Australia and Samoa recognised their interdependency, the proximity of neighbours bound by shared geography and history in an increasingly globalised world. Significantly, however, the respective rationales for partnership were intimately linked to identity: for Samoa, as a small and vulnerable island-state who must collaborate to survive; and for Australia, as a regional leader "with responsibilities" for ensuring prosperity, security and stability.

Both Samoa and Australia agreed on partnership as the mechanism for maintaining relations. Their different rationales, however, revealed the recognised asymmetries in relations. Samoa articulated their case for partnership during preparations at the UN for the International Conference on SIDS in early 2014. Collaboration, the head of Aid Coordination in Samoa's Ministry of Finance explained to her UN colleagues, was the only way to counteract Samoa's vulnerability and achieve development as a Small Island Developing State:

...No country on its own... can solve their problems unaided. In our global world, where SIDS are an integral part...we must work collaboratively with all... SIDS are a "special case" due to their unique characteristics, challenges and vulnerabilities and the impact these have on their members' ability to achieve sustainable development on their own – hence cooperation with others must play a major part if they are to make much headway...^{42 43}

⁴² Simi, N.P. 24/2/2014. Statement by Ms Peseta Noumea Simi Assistant CEO, Ministry of Finance, Independent State of Samoa, to the 3rd International Conference on SIDS First Preparatory Committee Session, UN New York.

⁴³ Similarly, when the Pacific SIDS had met the previous July 2013 in preparation for the UN Conference on SIDS, under Samoa's leadership, they determined that Partnerships would be the theme of the forthcoming global conference, to be held, for the first time, in a Pacific country: "...The Meeting noted that Partners are equally accountable both on their past commitments which still have to be fulfilled as well as on future ones. It agreed that empowered, genuine and durable partnerships are based upon mutual trust, equality, respect and accountability. These are anchored in national ownership and require political will delivered through long-term and predictable commitments. Partnerships in all their forms should be utilized, enhanced and strengthened to ensure meaningful engagement and achieve the vision of self-reliance. The Meeting strongly supports the theme, "the sustainable development of SIDS through genuine and durable partnerships." Pacific SIDS 10-12/7/2013. "The Nadi Outcome Document"- Accelerating Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development, Pacific SIDS Regional Meeting, Suva Fiji, Preparatory Meeting for the 2014 3rd International Conference on SIDS.

It reflected a reasoning which echoed the words of her former Deputy head of State when Samoa joined the UN, more than four decades earlier, underpinned by the *Fa'a Matai* precepts of contribution, inclusion and service.⁴⁴ Samoa's policy leaders had long been keenly aware of where they hoped a mutuality with donors would lead. Mutuality was central to the reforms initiated in the early 1990s. And the language of partnership proposed by the Paris Declaration offered an opportunity to make Samoa's call for "a mutuality," mutual. To recount the words of the senior policy advisor whose interview opened this Chapter, in her recall of the significance of their own reforms in relation to the Paris Declaration and subsequent/consequent engagement with the donors:

...we are saying, because you have no idea of the culture or the environment... be a partner with us... we don't want you to impose, nor do we want to antagonise... we just want a partnership where we can discuss things and ...develop an understanding and a way forward...⁴⁵

As another colleague, a key advisor within Government responsible for leading negotiations of Samoa's Partnerships Policy, described, Samoa's relationship with the donors would be negotiated in very practical terms:

...there's a shared agenda, there's articulated commitments and there is also the whole idea that you are accountable to each other on what is being done as part of the relationship...⁴⁶

Whereas, in 2007, when Rudd argued the case for Australia's engagement in the Pacific in the lead up to the national elections,⁴⁷ Rudd posited partnership as the answer to the problem of instability and under-development in the Pacific. The Pacific's instability and under-development, he argued, carried implications for Australia's prosperity and security - and its

⁴⁴ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government.

⁴⁵ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-IQ-6052015.

⁴⁶ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

⁴⁷ Rudd, K. 5/7/2007. Fresh Ideas for Future Challenges: A New Approach to Australia's Arc of Instability.

reputation and dominance as a leader in the geopolitics of the region.⁴⁸ He argued for more aid to the region. It was, Rudd said, "the right thing to do".⁴⁹ Rudd proposed the new Partnerships for Development and Security which, Rudd argued, would be a critical strategy in repairing the "damaged relations" of the previous Australian government under Howard and Downer.⁵⁰

Bishop was largely in agreement with Rudd's rationale for giving aid to the Pacific. She offered an explanation for Australia's partnership with the Pacific as a "natural", given shared geographical proximity, people to people links and historical ties.⁵¹ Both Rudd and Bishop agreed that Australia's position as a principal power in the region, [according to Rudd] and its responsibility as a regional power, [according to Bishop] was a critical, if less-discussed, reason for Australia's engagement, through partnership, with the Pacific Island states.⁵²

The mechanics of the partnership or aid arrangements

⁴⁸ Rudd's argument for Australia's engagement in the Pacific echoed similar propositions put forward throughout the history of post-war aid for development: as indicated in Chapter 5 The Global Idea of Ownership. George Marshall, the Truman Plan and the Pearson Commission had all put forward similar rationales for giving aid.

⁴⁹ Rudd K. 4/7/2007. Rudd Urges Foreign Policy Re-think to Counter Instability. Tony Jones interviewing Kevin Rudd on *ABC Lateline*; Rudd, K. 5/7/2007. Fresh Ideas for Future Challenges: A New Approach to Australia's Arc of Instability.

⁵⁰ When Rudd first proposed the new policy instrument, he designated it as a Partnership for Development and Security; by the time of the Port Moresby Declaration, it was designated the Pacific Partnerships for Development.

⁵¹ As Bishop told the audience during a keynote speech in Brisbane on Australia's Pacific Partnerships: "Australia is an enduring partner, and our development assistance is designed to support stronger economic and stable governments in the Pacific. Geography binds us together for we all call this region of the Pacific home...Australia and other nations of the Pacific are natural partners, tied together by geography, history and a combined love of our region. There's great affection between the people of the Pacific and the Australian people, an affection that is enduring, particularly on the rugby league field....Australia is deeply committed to working more closely with Pacific Island nations on their journey to peace and prosperity...We do this work in partnership with Pacific Island countries because we have their interests at heart and the interests of the region that we all call home. Australia aims to remain a valued and trusted partner for the Pacific as we work together building stronger, more secure and enduring economies and communities. The very best days of our long and close friendship lie ahead of us." Bishop, J. 9/7/2018. Keynote address: Australia's Pacific Partnerships.

⁵² Australia, said Bishop: "has a primary responsibility to partner with the nations of our region and to support their efforts at improving the standard of living...PNG and the Pacific more broadly, are vital to Australia's interests. Stability and security and prosperity in the Pacific is important for the people of our region so there can be a brighter future for the next generation of Pacific leaders. Australia will always be a close friend and neighbour of Pacific nations. But we are also a regional power, with the responsibilities that entails." Bishop J. 27/9/2014. Keynote Speech by the Hon Julie Bishop MP, PNGAA Symposium Dinner.

In 2008, as the newly-appointed Rudd Labor government in Australia resumed engagement with the Pacific under a “new era” of cooperation,⁵³ Rudd laid out the case for the central platform in that new era of cooperation: Australia’s new Partnerships for Development [P4Ds].⁵⁴ The Pacific Partnerships for Development, Rudd said, would

...provide a new framework for Australia and the Pacific Island nations to commit jointly to achieving shared goals... by working together, we can improve the impact of our development assistance and provide better results for the people of the Pacific islands. ...the Government of Australia is committed to working with the Pacific Island nations on the basis of partnership, mutual respect and mutual responsibility...⁵⁵

A year later, the P4Ds were complemented by the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination.⁵⁶ Australia and Samoa signed the Partnership for Development in August 2008.⁵⁷ Under the coalition government, with Bishop at the helm of foreign affairs, the P4Ds were replaced, first, by the Aid Investment Plan 2015-2019,⁵⁸ and then the Aid Partnership Arrangement, 2016-2019.⁵⁹

Similarities and differences in arrangements – and language

Under each regime, the aid arrangements between Australia and Samoa agreed on three key areas of performance: ODA flows; programs funded across the key priority areas; and the

⁵³ Rudd, K. and M. Somare. 6/3/2008. Joint Press Conference on the Port Moresby Declaration.

⁵⁴ See Chapter 6 From Paris to the Pacific : Ownership in the Region.

⁵⁵ Prime Minister of Australia (Rudd, K.). 6/3/2008. *Port Moresby Declaration*; Rudd later describe the relationship between the P4D and the Compact. the “new era of cooperation” would ensure that Pacific countries were “in the drivers seat in their relationship with development partners,” the donors: “...In the past, Australia's discussions with Pacific island nations had been centred on what development assistance Australia can provide. The Partnerships for Development have altered this approach by focusing on how the Partner country will strengthen its efforts to achieve agreed outcomes and how Australia can improve the targeting of its support. ... While the Partnerships for Development give the analysis and plans to make progress towards the MDGS, the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination gives the PICs and Australia the tools to put these plans in place. By putting the PICs in the driver’s seat in their relationship with development partners and providing the mechanisms for better coordination among development partners, again Australia's objective is to enhance aid effectiveness. Rudd, K., 21/10/2010. The Importance of Aid Effectiveness, Kevin Rudd Archive.

⁵⁶ Rudd, K., 21/10/2010. The Importance of Aid Effectiveness, Kevin Rudd Archive.

⁵⁷ Government of Australia and Government of Samoa. 19/8/2008. *Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development*.

⁵⁸ Australian Government (DFAT). 2015. Aid Investment Plan Samoa 2015-16 to 2018-19.

⁵⁹ Government of Australia and Government of Samoa 7/12/2016. Australia-Samoa Aid Partnership Arrangement 2016-2019, signed by the Australia’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop and Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign affairs, Samoa, Tuila’epa Malieagoi, Apia.

quality of the relationship.

While the aid arrangement under Rudd regime drew on the language of Paris Declaration, the partnership was clearly a transactional arrangement: Australia offered aid, with a commitment to increases over time in return for Samoa's performance in delivering on agreed priorities.⁶⁰ Climate was acknowledged as a central priority. The arrangements focused on mutual signs of collaboration and incentives, including capacity strengthening.

With the change of government in Australia, the Abbott/Bishop regime put their stamp on aid arrangements, dissolving AusAID and merging the Australian aid program under the remit of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade;⁶¹ and reframing aid as economic diplomacy. Bishop reversed Australia's commitment to support Samoa's climate concerns. She asserted a renewed interest in performance and accountability - measured through return on investment. While the form of partnership arrangements continued, aid was an investment. But the transaction was nuanced: Australia now committed to continue aid in return for Samoa's delivery of the agreed priority programs.

There were two key difference in the two approaches to partnership under the Rudd and Bishop regimes: the priority accorded to climate; and the language through which performance was to be assessed and encouraged. The Rudd partnership committed to offer more aid as an incentive for good performance. Under Bishop, Australia committed to

⁶⁰ Government of Australia and Government of Samoa. 19/8/2008. *Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development*

⁶¹ See the DevPol Blog archives on the AusAID DFAT merger.

continue aid, subject to performance. Poor performance, Bishop observed, would be penalised:

When projects don't deliver the results we expect, they'll be put on a rigorous path to improvement or be terminated. If a program has failed, we will call it for what it is, and come up with a better way to meet the challenge.⁶²

9.2.2 The Influence of Mutuality on the Partnership

I reviewed the assessments of the partnership's performance against their set objectives, as reported in the Australian Partnership Performance reports between 2008-2019. I analysed reports for contemporaneous assessments of ODA flows, the quality of program performance [on the programs delivered by the government of Samoa]; and analysed the reports for shifts in the quality of the relationships between Australia and Samoa over time. I compared these assessments with interview transcripts and media reports and related policy text.

Initially, under the Rudd regime, Australia responded positively to the Samoa's exercise of Ownership, focusing on incentives, encouraging performance and demonstrating a respect for mutual learning and understanding. Under the Bishop regime, however, the Australian aid program's management of relations became increasingly punitive, giving more prominence to the norms of effectiveness and efficiency - and accountability to its taxpayers, rather than the mutual relationship.

ODA Flows 2008-2018

⁶² Julie Bishop Unveils 'New Aid Paradigm', Kirk, A. 18/6/2014 ABC PM with Linda Mottram, reporting on Bishop's speech at the National Press Club in Canberra.

There was a consistent, if variable, flow of ODA from Australia to Samoa between 2009-2018.⁶³ Although the Rudd government had promised to increase aid in return for good performance,⁶⁴ according to the Partnership assessments, Samoa received more ODA, albeit in comparatively small increases, in the latter half of the decade under the Bishop regime.⁶⁵ The Abbott/Bishop regime had, in fact, reduced total ODA flows under the Australian Aid Program, but most Pacific countries were largely protected from these cuts.⁶⁶ The reports invariably deemed that Samoa had honoured its obligations to implement the strategies associated with the global idea of Ownership in return.

Program performance and quality of relations under the Rudd regime: 2008-2013

Under the Rudd regime, the assessments of the partnership's performance in delivering against the indicators reflects the difficult time experienced by Samoa in 2009 and again in 2012. As a result of the major natural disasters in those years, Samoa redirected development

⁶³ For consistency, I have relied on the aid flows documented in the Australian Aid Program Annual Performance Reports – which reflect the assessments of the Australian aid program over the period; the Pacific Aid Map may reflect different data across the comparative years. The trend is the key point that I address.

⁶⁴ The Rudd government had forecast its intention to "scale up" Australia's ODA to meet a new commitment of 0.5% of GNI in the Port Moresby declaration 2008; and the aid partnership arrangement with Samoa 2008.

⁶⁵ Although during the tsunami and Cyclone Evans, Australia committed more aid to Samoa to support the humanitarian recovery. Bishop's regime benefited from an absence of natural disasters. Note: Most of the Australian Aid Program Annual Performance reports [but not all - 2009 reported on the mutual obligations of timely predictable and effective aid, and then again, between 2014-19] reported that Australia's ODA was timely, predictable and effective, but there was no evidence offered to substantiate the first two claims. Similarly, reports between 2015-2019 claimed GoA met three additional criteria in relation to how ODA was channelled to Samoa: that decisions on aid were transparent; that GoA had aligned funded priorities to the GoS national development plans; and that GoA used GoS financial systems 'where it made sense to do so', with associated claims that budget support, the GoS preferred mechanism, was utilised around 70% of the time. Again, the reports offered no evidence to verify these claims, apart from pointing to the presence of Samoa's national development strategies. See Government of Australia (DFAT) Annual Aid Program Performance Reports for Samoa between 2015-19.

⁶⁶ Wood et al advise that Abbott not only reduced but capped the aid budget, paving the way for subsequent coalition governments to make the lowest overall aid contributions ever by an Australian government, reaching a low, close to 0.2% of GNI in 2017-18 and 0.2% in 2019-20. Overall, the Pacific experienced a comparatively modest fall in aid [rather than the rapid growth experienced immediately before 2013] and was largely insulated from the Abbott-cuts. The apparent aid increase to the Pacific since 2017-18 per GNI:ratio is attributed primarily to the combined effect of an increase in aid spending under the COVID pandemic and a corresponding decrease in Australia's GNI. Wood et al also make the argument that since 2018, the increase in aid to the Pacific is likely motivated by geo-strategic [a desire to off-set China's influence into region] rather than development concerns. Wood, T., M. Dornan and S. Muller. 11/1/2021, Change and Continuity in Australian Aid: What the aid flows show, 5-11.

efforts towards the humanitarian response and recovery. The strength of the relationship between Samoa and Australia was cited by both as a key reason for the strength of the [eventual] recovery.

While the performance of the programs under the partnership varied over the five years of the Rudd era, the reports are characterised by movements towards mutual accountability: and the relationship is revealed as of equal importance as the program's delivery. That is, the way the program delivered, mattered as much as what was achieved: demonstrating a mutual respect for the respective responsibilities of each partner.

During the Rudd regime, Australia more often used the offer of additional ODA as an incentive or reward for better performance; and budget support was the default preferred "delivery" channel for aid flows. Where necessary, Australia offered to build the capacity of government systems to ensure their reliability and rigour. Between 2009-2013, the reports are optimistic about the mutual strength and capacity of each partner's commitment to implement their partnership obligations. Program delivery was met with incentives to perform better. They demonstrated this in four main areas: policy dialogue and incentives; open discussion of the importance of the quality of the relationship; a willingness to reflect on areas to improve donor practices; and respect for Samoa's leadership across the region and globally, as well as domestically.⁶⁷

Program performance and quality of relations under the Bishop regime: 2013-2018

⁶⁷ See Government of Australia (AusAID), Annual Programme Partnership Performance Reports for Samoa for 2010-2011 and 2011-2012. For example, Policy dialogue and incentives were seen as an opportunity to improve and reward performance. Incentive tools, such as the joint policy action matrix, generated positive policy dialogue which led to increases in ODA, as agreed performance targets were met.

In contrast, the assessments of the program and the nature of the relationship changed under the Bishop regime. Performance was framed more as a return on investment - and failure to perform was subject to penalties. Both the means of delivery [i.e. budget support as a preferred channel for ODA flows] and the prospect of withdrawing or suspending ODA were used to respond to, even penalise, judgements of poor performance.

The reports assessed a relatively stable performance across most programme areas, although they were not always satisfactory: performance in the health and education sector, for example, was consistently rated "amber", that is, at risk of failing to achieve its objectives.

But the apparent stability in the program was not similarly reflected in the relations between the two governments. The tone and approach during the Bishop regime was punitive and autocratic rather than mutual, collegial and encouraging. When performance did not meet benchmarks, the Australian Aid Program was equally likely to bring in external advisors, suspend payments, or transfer responsibility for a program's management in order to meet benchmarks in quality and timeliness. The language of Ownership, leadership and mutual accountability was not as strongly demonstrated; and a higher value was placed on [Samoa's] demonstration of efficiency and effectiveness - and accountability to Australian taxpayers.

The sense of mutuality and collaboration demonstrated in earlier assessments of the Partnership, under the Rudd regime, was absent.

In its place, the Australian Aid program increasingly assumed responsibility for program

delivery, even, at one point, referring to the government of Samoa as DFAT's "delivery partner", delivering DFAT's aid program; effectively, suggesting that the government of Samoa was doing work on behalf of Australia in delivering its own development strategy in its own country. It was difficult to read such a term as an acknowledgement of Samoa's ownership of its development. Mutuality, it seemed, was not longer a priority in the partnership, at least, not for Australia.

Samoa noticed the absence. Whereas Australia, when Rudd was at the helm, had consulted Samoa on the potential impact of the GFC, this was increasingly not the case. Samoa noticed the absence of consultation or acknowledgement. It was contrary to expectations, under Fa'a Samoa, of the norms of inclusion, contribution and service. As Tuila'epa later recalled in his memoir:⁶⁸

...A country often goes ahead and does its own thing and forgets about the other guy. I was getting tired of the way that New Zealand and Australia treated us. We are their 'partners' in the Pacific. Consultation and discussion, before significant policy changes, would strengthen our partnership in the PIF and beyond.⁶⁹

While Australia was intermittently distracted by the intrigues of its own political leaders' manoeuvres for domestic leadership,⁷⁰ Samoa increasingly turned to the region, and to its global friends, to establish partnerships based on mutuality and understanding:

⁶⁸ On this occasion he was referring specifically to the in relation to the [surprise] announcement in 2014 that Australia and New Zealand intended to normalise relations with Fiji which had been suspended from the Forum as a result of refusing to give a timeline for holding "free and fair" elections.

⁶⁹ Swain, P. 2017. *Palemia Prime Minister Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi of Samoa: A Memoir*, 21

⁷⁰ See earlier footnote: Note the change in both labor and coalition leaders between 2011-2018 Australia's political leadership was in disarray, as Morrison lobbied behind the scenes to replace yet another elected leader of the coalition, Turnbull Rudd neglects friends in the Pacific, Jenny Hayward-Jones, the Interpreter Lowy Institute, 21 March 2011

- Through the engagement of a senior policy advisor as a key member of the Morauta review of the Pacific Plan,⁷¹ Samoa was influential in the direction of two subsequent regional policies which reframed the Pacific and the role of its Forum: the Pacific Framework for Regionalism, in 2016; and the “Blue Pacific” announced at the 2017 Forum leaders meeting in Apia, which was Chaired by Samoa’s Prime Minister. The Blue Pacific redefined the Pacific’s development narrative.⁷²
- Samoa engaged with their regional peers to craft the Pacific Road Map on the Sustainable Development,⁷³ which built a bridge between the Compact’s regional programming and reporting, and the framework offered by the global SDGs;
- After Samoa initiated the first International Conference of SIDS in the Pacific, hosting the 3rd International Conference on SIDS in Apia in 2014,⁷⁴ the resultant outcome, the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway, was influential in the subsequent establishment of a new approach to building partnerships at the UN, the SIDS Partnership Framework.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Morauta, M., P.N. Simi, R. Killion, P. Bazeley and N. Poletti. *Pacific Plan Review 2013 Report to Pacific Leaders Volume 1 and 2*, “The Morauta Review”.

⁷² Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 5-8/9/2017. *Forum Communiqué*. 48th Pacific Islands Forum, Apia Samoa. PIFS(17)10.

⁷³ Effectively the ‘best practices’ from Compact were integrated into the Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development in 2017: south-south collaboration, peer reviews, and capacity strengthening around planning and financial management. The reporting was merged into one regional wide effort complemented by voluntary national reporting to the UN. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2017. *Pacific RoadMap for Sustainable Development*.

⁷⁴ When the Government of Samoa spoke to the UN in preparation for the 3rd International Conference on SIDS, it proudly asserted its prominence in the region for the strength of its development effectiveness - endorsing the GoA’s assessment in its performance reports on the partnership. The representative also asserted the need to strengthen partnerships between donors and SIDS. Again, Samoa reiterated, equality and mutuality were key to stronger partnerships. The head of Samoa’s aid coordination and debt management team explained that preparatory meetings with her regional colleagues in the Pacific had reiterated the importance of a better approach to partnerships. Simi, N.P. 24/2/2014. Statement by Ms Peseta Noumea Simi Assistant CEO, Ministry of Finance, Independent State of Samoa, to the 3rd International Conference on SIDS First Preparatory Committee session, UN, New York.

⁷⁵ The SAMOA Pathway, the outcome document of the 2014 International Conference of SIDS, that the UN made the decision to assemble a formal approach to facilitating partnerships with SIDS. The UN Framework on SIDS Partnerships was convened in December 2015. One member of the steering committee explained, a partnership inheres certain qualities: a “genuine and durable” partnership meant partners must listen carefully to the needs and challenges [of SIDS]; and they must stay the distance. The UN Framework Committee commissioned a series of analytical work on partnerships. This produced the Partnerships Toolbox in 2019. This resource defined the elements of a partnership between SIDS and donors. The Toolbox made a distinction between a “genuine and durable” partnership and other relationships: “Partnerships operated differently from many other relationships: They are not hierarchical relationships... they are relationships among equals, where everyone contributes, shares responsibilities, is accountable for agreed upon tasks, and gains something of value in the end.” “Genuine and durable” partnerships, the Toolbox noted, demonstrate these principles: Ownership and

In parallel, Australia had released its Defence policy, reframing the Pacific as part of the “Indo-Pacific” sphere of influence; then a year later, Australia released its Foreign Affairs White Paper.⁷⁶ Again, both were released absent consultation with Australia’s “partners” in the Pacific. Tuila’epa’s weariness with the way Australia treated the Pacific, and Samoa, had turned to anger by the time the Prime Minister spoke, on behalf of the Forum, at the Lowy Institute in Sydney in August 2018:

The reality is stark - we are again seeing invasion and interest in the form of strategic manipulation. The big powers are doggedly pursuing strategies to widen and extend their reach and inculcating a far-reaching sense of insecurity. The renewed vigour with which a ‘Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy’ is being advocated and pursued leaves us with much uncertainty. For the Pacific there is a real risk of privileging Indo over the ‘Pacific’. There has been a reluctance to engage in open discussions on the issue and to share information to assist us in decision-making...At the very time the region has become a more crowded and contested strategic space. I get the sense that.... “...our traditional Forum partners left the neighbourhood, even if momentarily, and are coming back to claim a jurisdiction under their watch and to consider a re-energized Pacific strategy. Such an approach must be genuine and durable and premised on understanding, friendship, mutual benefit and a collective ambition to achieve sustainable results. And in the process, our partners have fallen short of acknowledging the integrity of Pacific leadership and the responsibility they carry for every decision made in order to garner support for the sustainable development of their nations. Some might say that there is a ‘patronising’ nuance in believing that Pacific nations did not know what they were doing or were incapable of reaping the benefits of close relations with countries that are and will be in the region for some time to come. In cases where emerging partners have engaged with Pacific countries without conditionality, the relationships are perceived to be associated with corruption or unprecedented environmental degradation. One has the tendency to be bemused by the fact that the reaction is an attempt to hide what we see as strategic neglect.”⁷⁷

9.3 Conclusion

My aim in Samoa was three-fold, in accord with my intent to test the policy logic of the global idea of Ownership.

buy-in from all partners; A high degree of participation by stakeholders and beneficiaries; Mutual trust between partners; and lastly, Transparency and accountability. The UN Partnerships Framework also described the norms and criteria for partnership with SIDS: Sids-specific; Measurable; Achievable; Resilient; Timely. The definition mirrored Samoa’s national report in preparation for the Conference - and was endorsed by the Pacific SIDS in their preparations for the Conference. See: UNDESA: Sustainable Development: SIDS Partnership Framework. n.d.

⁷⁶ Government of Australia (Department of Defence). 2016. *Defence White Paper*. Government of Australia (Department of Foreign Affairs). 2017. *Foreign Policy White Paper*.

⁷⁷ Malielegaoi, T. S. 30/8/2018. Pacific Perspectives on the New Strategic Landscape. Address by Hon Prime Minister of Samoa and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, The Lowy Institute, Sydney Australia.

Implementation

First, I ascertained that all five strategies of Ownership and more, appeared to have been successfully implemented in Samoa. Yet, Samoa's senior policy advisors were insistent that neither the Compact [nor the Paris Declaration before it] was the driver of change. Samoa, senior policy advisors insisted, was already navigating its own voyage well before the agreements reached in either Paris or Cairns.

By the time the Compact was endorsed in Cairns, Samoa had instigated change in their aid coordination practices, reflecting more than a decade of public sector reform and capacity strengthening under the influence of new public management and neoliberal economic growth policies promoted by the donors. While many of the practices nominated by the global idea of Ownership in Paris in 2005 and promoted as the basis of the Compact in 2009, were already in train in Samoa, this was "coincidental." Samoa was charting its own course.

The motivation for change: mutuality

Second, I clarified the source for change by identifying the local significance attributed to Ownership. While neither the Paris Declaration nor the Compact drove change in Samoa, their language offered the opportunity for leveraging equality in relations with the donors. Samoa sought to keep the donors accountable for the promises made in Paris [and multiple other fora]. Not only the promise of aid, but the promise of genuine and durable partnership. They sought a partnership built on a shared understanding of "our culture, our environment". At its heart, Samoa's policy advisors wanted dignity and respect as equals with the donors.

After the paternalism, even racism, which had characterised historic relations with donors, the government of Samoa, under Tuila'epa's leadership, with a supportive cohort of peers, formed a new policy vision: to achieve the change they wanted in their nation's economic development while drawing from the strengths of *Fa'a Samoa* and its governance pillar, *Fa'a Matai*, to guide their governance. Samoa accepted the need for new skills and capacity if they were to achieve economic development. But they also sought to contribute, to serve – and were willing to compromise where necessary, to ensure, as a wise matai does, continuity through change. Over the next two decades, Tuila'epa, and his government colleagues, grappled with the power at the heart of aid relations as they moved up the ranks of government. They became the policy-brokers, the norm-setters.

The exercise of ownership – and partnership

Third, I identified that Samoa exercised Ownership of their development: they reflected on their own experience and learnt new skills, new ways of operating. They bargained and negotiated. And they innovated. They instituted a new governance framework. This aligned with the shape of those practices promoted by the global idea of Ownership. While some practices reflected an acceptance of global policy norms, others, however, were grounded in the strength of locally-situated knowledge, values and beliefs. Taking inspiration from the precepts of *Fa'a Matai*, Samoa asserted the primacy of Pasifika expertise and experience, to strengthen their bargaining positions through innovation – drawing on the opportunity offered by the language of Paris to pursue their aspirations for a genuine and durable partnership located in a mutuality of understanding, of Samoan culture and environment.

In crafting new ways of working within the aid effectiveness paradigm, Tuila'epa and his supporting cohort became policy brokers: they set new norms, and gave prominence to local norms, to achieve change. They negotiated respectfully with the donors, crafting change through the shape of the aid effectiveness paradigm – but breathing life into the global practices of Ownership through integrating locally-situated knowledge: the locally situated norms, of contribution, inclusion and service, to craft “new” and innovative practices acceptable to donors and to Samoa.

Initially, Australia, as a key development partner to Samoa, responded favourably to the shift in relations. Under the Rudd regime, Australia's aid program accepted the argument that development outcomes depended on the quality of the partnership and encouraged a mutuality in relations. But when the Bishop regime brought economic diplomacy – and aid as a return on investment - to the fore in relations, the norms of accountability to Australia's taxpayers dominated, rather than accountability to the quality of the partnership. Samoa's Ownership of its development agenda was undermined by the Australian Aid Program's return to a focus on accountability at the expense of mutuality.

Next, I turned to the second case study site. I examine the implementation of the global idea of Ownership in Kiribati to understand how the idea of Ownership influenced development partnerships in the Pacific's largest blue ocean-state.

Chapter 10 Kiribati: “Pick the Low-lying Fruit”¹

10.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the second national case study site, Kiribati. In this Chapter, I examine implementation of the global idea of Ownership in Kiribati to determine whether a transition in Ownership of development occurred in accord with claims made by the policy’s logic; and if so, assess how the exercise of Ownership in Kiribati influenced the development partnership with Australia. In light of my findings in relation to Samoa, Kiribati presented an opportunity to compare the influence of context in the iterative conversation between meaning and power in the translation of global policy into local practice.²

As in Samoa, my task in Kiribati was three-fold: first, to ascertain whether Kiribati’s political and policy leadership had implemented the five strategies associated with the global idea of Ownership under the ambit of the Forum Compact. Second, if so, whether implementation represented the assertion of locally-situated knowledge through participation, which Ostrom had claimed necessary for a transition in Ownership of development from donors to the government of Kiribati. Third, if a transition in Ownership of development occurred, how did Kiribati’s exercise of Ownership influence the development partnership with Australia, its largest and influential donor.

¹ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

² The case study sites were selected to compare the local implementation with the global idea of Ownership at the heart of a global policy, the Paris Declaration, which had been re-affirmed regionally through the Forum Compact. It was not intended as a comparison of policy implementation between the two study sites, but a comparison of how each implemented a global/ regional, policy which claimed Ownership as its motivating influence. It was a comparison of local translation of a global policy. See Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking Policy Change and Chapter 3 A Conceptual Framework: Understanding Policy Change.

As with the case study in Samoa, I undertook four steps in analysing the data: First, I analysed implementation of the global idea of Ownership by the government of Kiribati by comparing the presence of the measures established under the Paris Declaration against the Ostrom's four criteria. This analysis is captured in the matrix at Table 10.2 Implementing Best Practice in Kiribati [Appendix 10.1: Best Practice Ownership in Kiribati]. I then reflected on reports of implementation to ascertain whether policy advisors attributed change in aid coordination practices to the influence of the global idea of Ownership promoted by the Compact [and the Paris Declaration].³

As in Samoa, there were discrepancies between the reports of implementation of aid coordination practices and the attribution of change by Kiribati's policy advisors. Again, the global idea of Ownership did not appear to be a significant factor driving change in local aid coordination practices in Kiribati. As in Samoa, I re-calibrated my next step in the analysis. I re-analysed the data to understand the local explanations for change in aid coordination practices in accord with the characteristics in behaviours outlined by the policy change model in Chapter 3. I found evidence of reflexivity and bargaining – but not of innovation. There seemed little interest in “owning” aid at all.

Next, I examined the local significance attributed to Ownership for an explanation of the discrepancy between implementation and the expectations of the global idea of Ownership. This examination revealed the sense of ownership as the assertion of mastery over the resources under one's legitimate authority. Aid, it was accepted, was legitimately “owned” by

³ See Appendix 10.2 Analysis: Implementing “Best Practice” in Ownership in Kiribati for more detail.

the donors. This meant, however that claims to effective development lay through the assertion of sovereignty over Kiribati’s resources, such as the fish in Kiribati’s 3.5m^{km2} of ocean territory. Kiribati saw the prospect of development in its exploitation of the fish; not through aid. Puzzled by what this dissonance might mean for aid relations, I pursued inquiries further, through an archival investigation of the records of Kiribati’s development planning and related text to understand the origins of this nuanced stance on aid and its implications for contemporary aid relations. I compared my findings in the archives with those generated through my contemporary interviews of I-Kiribati political leaders and policy advisors.

This led, in my next step, to a further re-calibration in my approach. I revisited the data, expanding the domain of my inquiries beyond aid coordination practices to encompass the broader development agenda pursued by political and policy leaders in Kiribati. My aim was to identify whether a shift in power, indicating the exercise of ownership through the assertion of locally-situated knowledge had occurred in those policy and practices which supported the broader development agenda, outside aid and, largely, under the leadership of President Anote Tong during his three terms of government between, 2007 and 2016.⁴ Kiribati’s journey to find an alternative source of revenue to aid was the starting point.

⁴ President Tong was in office for three terms between 2003 and January 2016. His administrations carried primary responsibility for policy implementation of the strategies of Ownership under the Compact [As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, Kiribati is not noted as attending Paris in 2005, and although advisors’ reported that Kiribati later adhered by letter, OECD does not list Kiribati on the adherent list for either Paris or Accra; Kiribati is noted on the list of adherents to the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation following the 2011 HLFAE]. National elections for the *Maneaba ni Maungatabu* were held towards the close of 2015. A new government emerged under the President Taneti Maamau in March 2016. I undertook primary fieldwork [interviews, observations and document collection] during November and December 2015, as President Tong’s tenure came to a close. My analysis and interpretation reflect data generated in interviews and observations made during the President Tong’s tenure, supplemented by desk review of related literature [documents, media, speeches] between 2016-18, the first years of President Maamau’s government. Apart from New Zealand’s Peer review – which included Kiribati as a consultation-country – Kiribati’s direct engagement with Compact-auspiced activities led by the Forum appears limited after 2015. In 2017, the Forum integrated its Compact programs and other responsibilities into the Pacific Road Map on Sustainable Development. See Appendix 10.1 Best Practice in Kiribati and 10.2 Implementing “Best Practice” in Ownership in Kiribati, for an extended discussion.

This led to the fourth step in my analysis: after ascertaining whether Kiribati sought to exercise ownership over its development in domains outside the aid sphere, I then examined the influence of Kiribati's choices for the development partnership with Australia.

This case study of Kiribati is in two parts. I begin, in this part, with an overview of the context for aid and development context in Kiribati in 2009, the year that Kiribati's Special Envoy joined the Forum Leaders annual meeting in Cairns on behalf of President Tong,⁵ where, on behalf of Kiribati, she endorsed the Compact⁶ and sought the Leaders' endorsement for Kiribati's own proposal, the Oceanscape strategy.⁷ I then move into the first and second steps in the analysis, as outlined above.

10.2 Context: The arrival of the global idea of Ownership in Kiribati

The grainy texture of context, as demonstrated by the Samoan case study, is crucial to understanding the significance attributed to the idea of Ownership by those charged with responsibility for implementing the related strategies. In this section, I outline the context for aid relations in Kiribati in 2009. Over the course of the year, Kiribati committed to implement

⁵ On the 13 July 2009, the inter-island ferry, the *Uean Te Raai II*, sank enroute between Tarawa, the capital of the Republic of Kiribati, and Maiana, the President's home island. Thirty-five people lost their lives. (see TAIC. 13/7/2009. Final Report into the capsizing and foundering of the Single outrigger passenger ferry *Uean Te Raai II* off Maiana Island in the Republic of Kiribati.) In the aftermath of the tragedy that directly affected his home island, the President withdrew from the Pacific Forum Leaders meeting in Cairns. He delegated this task to his Vice President. She, in turn, became ill, enroute to Cairns; and so, the Secretary for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, travelling with the Vice-President, was appointed as Special Envoy to the Pacific Leaders Forum. She was one of two representatives from Kiribati who attended the meeting and the only woman in the room during the Leaders retreat.

⁶ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. *Forum Communique*. 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12.

⁷ The Pacific Oceanscape concept and its companion, the Pacific Ocean arc initiative, were table by Kiribati; they aimed to increase investment, learning and networking in relation to marine protection areas. The leaders asked the Secretariat to work with other CROP agencies to develop a framework for the concept, drawing on the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy. The revised strategy was endorsed in the 2010 Forum leaders meeting. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. *Forum Communique*. 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12.

the global idea of Ownership when it endorsed two key arrangements in aid and development. The first, when President Tong, with his counterpart, Prime Minister Rudd, signed the Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development bilateral arrangement on the sides of the Leaders’ Special meeting held in Port Moresby in January; and the second, eight months later, when Kiribati joined its fellow-Forum Leaders in endorsing the Forum Compact at the annual leaders’ meeting in Cairns. Although Kiribati had had some engagement with the outcomes of the various high-level fora on aid effectiveness,⁸ it was these two agreements which formally brought the global idea of Ownership to Kiribati. The agreements reflected a long history. Kiribati had relied on aid since independence was granted in 1979; and Australia was one of its largest donors.

10.2.1 *Tungaru, the Gilbert Islands and the Republic of Kiribati*

Kiribati’s oral story-telling traditions explain that the archipelago of Tungaru was settled by ocean-voyagers from the ‘first island’, Samoa, and beyond. These migration-journeys, the archaeologists suggest, most likely occurred in the 14th century.^{9 10} Two hundred years later, during the 16th century, the ship records of European sea-voyagers reported sightings of several islands across the Tungaru group.¹¹ It was not until the 18th century that ship-records

⁸ Kiribati’s senior policy officers had endorsed the Pacific Aid Effectiveness principles in Koror in 2007. But Kiribati had not yet adhered to either the Paris Declaration (2005) nor the Accra Agenda for Action (2008).

⁹ Kirion, M.T. and B. Karaiti, From Samoa and Beyond, Chapter 2, in Talu, A. et al. 1992. *Kiribati Aspects of History*, 7-11.

¹⁰ In contrast to the oral traditions, contemporary archaeologists estimate that the migration-journeys which “most likely” established contemporary “Gilbertese” society may have arrived in the islands 4-5000 years ago and were subsequently followed by the Samoan migrations some 1-2000 years later, in the 14th century. MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*, 1-3.

¹¹ MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*, 16-17. The UN report on decolonisation indicates that most of the passing ships which recorded sightings during the 18-19th centuries were unintentional - in the course of commercial activities elsewhere - “discovered” Tungaru and associated islands. United Nations Department of Political Affairs Trusteeship and Decolonisation. 1979. Decolonisation: Issue on Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) No.15, July 1979.

report actual contact between the visiting vessels and the islands.¹² A sighting reported by Thomas Gilbert, captain of a convict transport with the first fleet travelling from Sydney's penal settlement at Botany Bay in 1788 led the Russian map-maker, von Krusenstern to re-name the archipelago as the Gilbert Islands in the 1820s.¹³ In the 19th century, European seafarers finally stepped ashore. Whalers and other passing seafarers began to more regularly trade goods and services with islanders from the Tungaru and other island groups.¹⁴ The seafarers exchanged iron tools and tobacco - in return for supplies and services, including coconuts and copra; poultry and pigs [left by earlier visiting ships]; and sexual and laboring services.¹⁵ ¹⁶ While some islanders boarded the passing ships willingly, in response to the hardship inflicted by recurring droughts across the island group, others were "black-birded," to nearby Pacific countries, such as Fiji,¹⁷ or further afield, to Australia or Latin America, as indentured labour on sugar plantations and in other industries.¹⁸ In the same period, visitors began to settle in the islands.¹⁹ Sometimes the visitors were transient, drifters and deserters, who became temporary beachcombers till the next ship arrived. Others were more permanent, seeking to establish local trading ventures.²⁰ Some visitors also brought illness,

¹² MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*, 15.

¹³ MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*, 15.

¹⁴ United Nations Department of Political Affairs Trusteeship and Decolonisation. 1979. Decolonisation: Issue on Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) No.15, July 1979:5 says 1850 onwards... blackbirding occurred between 1860-1875, a specific blackbirding raid in 1863 of note took some 100 men to Peru; but there were also reports of gilbertese destroying the slave ships and slaughtering the crews.

¹⁵ MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*, 19

¹⁶ MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*, 19. MacDonald was unable to confirm whether the sexual services were mutually offered. Whereas labor migration, he advises, was often chosen by islanders in response to the hardship inflicted by recurring droughts across the island group.

¹⁷ United Nations Department of Political Affairs Trusteeship and Decolonisation. 1979. Decolonisation: Issue on Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) No.15, July 1979.

¹⁸ United Nations Department of Political Affairs Trusteeship and Decolonisation. 1979. Decolonisation: Issue on Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) No.15, July 1979:5. See also: Higginbotham, W. 17/9/2017. Blackbirding: Australians history of luring, tricking and kidnapping Pacific Islanders. *ABC News*.

¹⁹ United Nations Department of Political Affairs Trusteeship and Decolonisation. 1979. Decolonisation: Issue on Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) No.15, July 1979.

²⁰ MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*, 21.

alcohol and guns.²¹ Others brought the Christian faith. The first of these groups, Protestant Christian missionaries from Hawaii and Samoa, were followed the Catholic missionaries.²² Both faiths developed a strong following that continues today, even as other Christian faiths spread across Kiribati. But the predecessors of today’s bilateral and multilateral donors, the British colonial administrators, did not arrive until the cusp of the 20th century.

It was the rivalry between the “great powers” of Europe – the imperial empires of Germany and Great Britain – which led to an agreement between the empires to assign the Gilbert Islands to the authority of colonial Britain’s jurisdiction in 1886.²³ Great Britain waited until 1892 to make the Gilbert Islands a “protectorate” of the British Empire.²⁴ In 1916, in the aftermath of World War 1, Britain proclaimed the Gilbert Islands – which extended to include the archipelagos of the Line Islands, Phoenix Islands, Ellice Islands and the solitary raised coral limestone island of Banaba – a single crown colony.²⁵ On 12 July 1979, the United Kingdom

²¹ According to the UN, the spread of measles, in particular, reduced the population dramatically by the 20th century. United Nations Department of Political Affairs Trusteeship and Decolonisation. 1979. Decolonisation: Issue on Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) No.15, July 1979:6.

²² The first group were sponsored by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the London Missionary Society; the second by the Sacred Heart Mission, in the middle of 19th century. MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*, 22.

²³ The Declaration between the Governments of Great Britain and the German Empire relating to the Demarcation of the British and German Spheres of Influence in the Western Pacific, April 6, 1886. see UN report on decolonisation... Decolonisation: Issue on Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) No.15 July 1979, a publication of the UN Department of Political Affairs Trusteeship and Decolonization,

²⁴ Even then, ironically, because the British were reluctant to add a financial burden, they asserted that the colony must pay for itself: “the appointment of a resident in the newly established protectorate was made on the understanding that contributions from the local chiefs together with other receipts would be enough to cover his salary” United Nations Department of Political Affairs Trusteeship and Decolonisation. 1979. Decolonisation: Issue on Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) No.15, July 1979:7.

²⁵ The British Government asserted its interest in the islands under the Western Pacific Order in Council of 1877, and the Pacific Order of 1893. It claimed the Gilbert and Ellice Islands as a protectorate in 1892. In 1901, Britain annexed Banaba [aka Ocean] island and brought it into the G&E colony. Other islands [of commercial interest for their coconuts, copra and guano] across the Phoenix and Line islands were annexed between 1861-1889 but not formally brought into the Gilberts and Ellice Colony until after 1916 [and as late as 1972]. In 1916, Britain declared the collective island groups, formerly protectorates, a single British Crown Colony. Although the Crown’s powers remained largely the same, this meant the Colony was a dominion of the UK and its Colonies, and its inhabitants were British citizens – not simply “protected persons” as under the former protectorate. In 1975, the Gilbert and Ellice Islands were deemed separate colonies; in 1978, Ellice colony became the independent state of Tuvalu; and in 1979, the Gilbert Islands were deemed the independent Republic of Kiribati. see UN United Nations Department of Political Affairs Trusteeship and Decolonisation. 1979. Decolonisation: Issue

relinquished its authority over the Gilbert Colony, now known as the Republic of Kiribati, after eight decades of colonisation.²⁶

10.2.2 Governance in Kiribati:

The new Republic of Kiribati adopted a blend of British and American liberal democratic traditions. Its President [*te Beretitenti*] is both head of state and of the government. The President is nominated by the members of the *Maneaba ni Maungatabu* [the legislative assembly] and elected by universal adult suffrage. The President appoints their own Cabinet from amongst the members of the Maneaba, with the addition of the ex-officio member, the Attorney General.²⁷

In 2009, the fourth *te Beretitenti*²⁸ of the Republic of Kiribati, President Anote Tong, was leading the government. First elected in 2003, this was the second year of his government's second term in office. The government faced challenges. The government of Kiribati was yet to adequately reconcile the difference between the gap in its domestic revenue and the expectations of an increasingly urban and young population for more, and better,

on Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) No.15, July 1979:8-9. The administrative centre was first established in Tarawa in 1895 then moved to ocean island in 1908 until WW2 then returned to Tarawa in 1946 [after provisional headquarters were established in Funafuti between 1943-46]. MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*.

²⁶ The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council. 26 June 1979. The Kiribati Independence Order 1979: No.179 Pacific Islands.

²⁷ Government of Kiribati, My government website: <https://kiribati.gov.ki/my-government/kiribati-parliament>

²⁸ Prior to Anote Tong's incumbency, the office of *Te Beretitenti* was formally held by three elected presidents, each serving several terms: Teburoro Tito, Teatao Teannaki, and Ieremia Tabai; however, each formal incumbency was interrupted, resulting in several occupants acting as *te Beretitenti* at different points in time; these included: Tion Otang, Ata Teaoataia, Tekiree Tamuera and Rota Onorio. See website: Presidents of Kiribati.

opportunities in life.²⁹ The report card on progress on the MDGs was mixed.³⁰ According to the World Bank and the ADB, the government’s effectiveness at the time was low, compared to other countries in the region.³¹ The ADB expressed concerns about Kiribati’s capacity to achieve its development aspirations. Chief amongst its concerns were the risk posed by climate change and the capacity of its government’s performance, especially its “passive” management of public finances, including its fiscal and aid management practices. Development planning and aid management, the ADB claimed, both required “stronger performance.”³²

But neither the work of government nor of development was a straightforward task in Kiribati.

In 2009, President Tong and his diplomatic officers were in New York to explain to their peers and colleagues at the UN just how challenging the task was.³³

²⁹ The Republic of Kiribati consisted of 33 coral-limestone islands – constituting the 32 low lying atolls and one raised island of Banaba – of which approximately 20 were more or less permanently inhabited, across three major island groups: the Gilbert islands, which carries the largest population and on which the capital of Tarawa – the seat of government administration and commercial centre – is located; the Line islands and the Phoenix Islands. Apart from Banaba, which has a high point of approximately 87-metres, none of the other atolls are higher than 3 metres above sea level. The capital of Tarawa is closer to Fiji some 2200ks south, than it is to the second-most populated centre of Kiritimati Islands, in the northern Line Islands over 3200ks to the east, famous as the first place to witness the new day, and is closer yet again to Honolulu, approximately 2160ks to the north. Banaba is the western-most island territory and is approximately 400ks to the west of Tarawa. Kiribati land territories represent some 810^{km2}; but as a result of its widely dispersed island-territories, Kiribati has the 12th largest EEZs in the world, representing approximately 3.5m^{km2} over three different time zones.

³⁰ The 2007 MDG report released by the government of Kiribati presented a mixed report card: Kiribati was deemed unlikely to achieve Goals 1 [eradicate extreme poverty and hunger] and 3 [gender equality and empowering women] and 7 [Ensure environmental sustainability]; efforts towards goal 6 were mixed [unlikely to combat HIV but strong likelihood of combating TB] but goal 2 [achieve universal primary education], 5 [maternal health] and 8 [global partnership for development] were all deemed potentially achievable. Note, the MDG goals were, in retrospect, considered too ambitious in relation to many countries, which is one reason that the UNGA proposed that SDGs entail NDC instead of the [mistaken] adoption of global goals. The MDG reports that although national GDP had increased overall since the early 1990s, it was in decline between 2003-2006, reflecting a pattern of erratic cycles of growth followed by decline since the 1990s. Republic of Kiribati. 2007. *Millennium Development Goals 2007*.

³¹ Kiribati ranked 23.44 in relation to government effectiveness; its ranking on regulatory quality was even lower; although on all other indicators [control of corruption, rule of law, political stability, and voice & accountability] Kiribati compared reasonably to other countries in the region, including Samoa. See World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators n.d.

³² Asian Development Bank. 2008. *Kiribati: Social and Economic Report 2008*:12.

³³ UNDESA. 2009. Least Developed Countries Resolutions and Reports Graduation from LDC Status: Kiribati Case: Government of Kiribati Presentation.

President Tong was in New York to plead for assistance, again.³⁴ Kiribati had been registered as one of the Least Developed Countries [LDCs] with the UN in 1986, just seven years after the Republic gained independence.³⁵ In 2006, the UN had pre-qualified Kiribati for graduation from its status as an LDC. In 2009, President Tong and his diplomatic officers were again in New York to argue against the UN's decision.³⁶ President Tong's argument to the UN - and his government's difficulty in bridging the gap between revenue and his country's expectations for development – rested on the challenges presented by Kiribati's dual vulnerability.³⁷

10.2.3 Vulnerability: geography and economics

Graduation, the government of Kiribati argued to the UN Committee in New York, would be premature and risk undermining their existing achievements.³⁸ President Tong and his diplomats claimed that Kiribati was increasingly vulnerable to dual and interlinked threats on two grounds: the risk of more frequent and more extreme natural disasters; and the impact of global economic shocks.³⁹ The existential threat posed by the impact of climate change to small islands, such as Kiribati, was increasingly apparent.⁴⁰ It was exacerbated by the

³⁴ Tong, A. 25/9/2008. Statement by the President of Kiribati to the UNGA, 63rd Session, 9th Plenary meeting. A/63/PV.9:21; Tong, A. 25/9/2009, Statement by the President of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA, 64th Session, 7th Plenary meeting. A/64/PV.7.

³⁵ Committee for Development Planning, Economic and Social Council, Report on the 22nd session New York 19-22 March 1986, E/1986/26 Official records, 1986, Supplement No. 6, p.48

³⁶ UNCTAD. 23/1/2009. Note: Vulnerability Profile of Kiribati, 27.

³⁷ OECD. 2018. *Making Development Cooperation work in Small Island Developing States*; Tong, A. 25/9/2009, Statement by the President of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA, 64th Session, 7th Plenary meeting. A/64/PV.7.

³⁸ The vulnerability assessment report to the UN concluded: "Poverty reduction on any sizeable scale is difficult to foresee in a country so heavily constrained by smallness, remoteness and environmental pressure....Poverty reduction, for a vast majority of the dispersed islands, is beyond reach, despite the rental income [fishing licences] accruing to the central government and benefitting many households..." UNCTAD. 23/1/2009. Note: Vulnerability Profile of Kiribati, 8.

³⁹ UNDESA. 2009. Least Developed Countries Resolutions and Reports Graduation from LDC Status: Kiribati Case: Government of Kiribati Presentation. Tong, A. 25/9/2009. Statement by the President of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA, 64th Session, 7th Plenary meeting. A/64/PV.7.

⁴⁰ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). 2007. Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report. In R.K Pachauri, and A. Reisinger (eds). Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report.

international financial crisis which emerged in 2008 which threatened the domestic economy. Both threats undermined Kiribati’s capacity to achieve sustainable development. Recovery from natural disasters took scarce resources - people and finances - away from activities to strengthen economic growth. Global crises impacted on the resources available to assist Kiribati, either to recover from natural disasters or to build [and rebuild] its economy.⁴¹

The government of Kiribati argued to the UN’s Committee for Development Planning that although Kiribati appeared to meet the relevant threshold for two of the three criteria [the criteria related to low income and human capital], the assessment reflected calculations based on highly volatile factors and unreliable data.⁴² Kiribati’s domestic economy relied on three core sources of revenue: the interest from the phosphate trust fund; fees from fishing licences issued to Distant Water Fishing Nations [DWFNs]; and remittances from overseas employment

⁴¹ OECD. 2018. *Making Development Cooperation Work for Small Island Developing States*.

⁴² Dissatisfaction with the calculations underlying economic vulnerability was a factor in the new Vulnerability Index produced by the Commonwealth Secretariat. The definition and measurement of vulnerability has been much debated [see Commonwealth Secretariat. 2021. *The Commonwealth Universal Vulnerability Index, For a Global Consensus on the Definition and Measurement of Vulnerability*]. In 2009, graduation from LDC status required that countries meet at least two of three “threshold” criteria in consecutive assessments. The three criteria were: low income based on assessment of GNI; human capital; and economic and environmental vulnerability. In 2009, the Government of Kiribati (GoK) argued that despite meeting the thresholds on low income and human capital, its capacity to continue to do so was volatile. The constitutive factors relied on variables that remained outside Kiribati control: net income factors were influenced by transfers from abroad including: fishing licence revenue; the trust fund [RERF] drawdown; and remittances. RERF drawdown was conventionally used to balance recurrent budgets [deficits] rather than address development needs; the RERF was highly susceptible to global financial shocks: as demonstrated in 2002 and 2009 - when the RERF for one fund manager dropped over 50% of the value of the 2008 Government budget. Similarly, revenue from fishing licences was volatile: revenue depended on how productive the waters are and the strength of the US dollar. As was revenue from remittances: these were dependent on the ongoing employability of seafarers: the high cost of transferring seafarers from Kiribati to other ports was a key factor. The GoK argued that the GNI was actually going down; and as a SIDS, Kiribati remained vulnerable on multiple fronts to adverse global events: high fuel prices, which impact on essential services; high food prices exacerbate existing poverty, of 37% of population living on A\$3.per day; limited export and production base; limited access to overseas markets: high transport costs; inability to meet quarantine and quality standards; remoteness from airline and shipping routes; small limited production capacity generates high cost of exports; high unemployment: secondary school enrolment rate neglects quality of education; and high youth literacy rate has not translated into employment for 15-24 year olds; high vulnerability to climate change and sea level rise: only 2-metres above sea level at highest point and limited land space – climate change affecting survival not simply adaptation: impact on limited groundwater lens: agriculture/food security/human health; impact generates economic damage and could for e.g., consume in the future, the equivalent GDP of 10-20% of 2009 recurrent budget of \$88m. and 40-80% of development budget. See: UNDESA. 2009. Least Developed Countries Resolutions and Reports Graduation from LDC Status: Kiribati Case: Government of Kiribati Presentation.

[particularly its seafaring workforce, but increasingly, other initiatives such as the seasonal labour programs in New Zealand and Australia]. Kiribati argued all three sources were subject to the fluctuations of global markets.⁴³ In a country where 37% of its residents lived below the poverty line, global fluctuations also affected the cost of the imported fuel and food which were critical to I-Kiribati's well-being.⁴⁴ Conversely, the challenges of establishing global markets for their exports was constrained. Kiribati faced the reinforcing cycle of a limited export and production base, high transport costs, limited infrastructure and remoteness from regular transport routes. These factors compounded Kiribati's economic vulnerability.

Kiribati's second argument was that climate change was an increasing threat – particularly the risk posed by rising sea-levels in a low-lying country of limited land space. The impact of rising sea-levels on the underground freshwater lens across the islands, Kiribati told the UN Committee for Development Policy [UNCDP], would threaten food security, human health and agricultural development.⁴⁵ They asserted that rising sea-levels were forecast to generate economic damage of US\$8-16m annually by 2050 – the equivalent of 40-80% of current ODA and 10-20% of the government's recurrent budget.⁴⁶

⁴³ As noted earlier, it was the convention of the Government of Kiribati to draw down the RERF to balance the recurrent budget NOT to meet development expenditure. The RERF Trust fund had demonstrated its susceptibility to fluctuations in the global financial markets with the sudden decrease in value of stocks during then-current [2008-2009] global financial crisis; fishing licence revenues were dependent on multiple factors outside I-Kiribati control including: the vagaries of buyer-demand; the productivity of fish stocks in I-Kiribati waters; and the strength of the US-dollar (the currency of exchange); while the level of remittances returned to the country depended on the ongoing employability of i-Kiribati seafarers in a volatile employment market.

⁴⁴ UNDESA. 2009. Least Developed Countries Resolutions and Reports Graduation from LDC Status: Kiribati Case: Government of Kiribati Presentation.

⁴⁵ The presentation to the UN committee didn't expand on the risk to livelihoods or homes. UNDESA. 2009. Least Developed Countries Resolutions and Reports Graduation from LDC Status: Kiribati Case: Government of Kiribati Presentation.

⁴⁶ World Bank forecast cited in UNDESA. 2009. Least Developed Countries Resolutions and Reports Graduation from LDC Status: Kiribati Case: Government of Kiribati Presentation.

Kiribati won the argument before the UNCDP in 2009 and retained the status and preferential treatment accorded an LDC⁴⁷ But the urgency to find a path to sustainable development - and redressing his country’s ongoing reliance on aid in the rising threat of climate change - continued. President Tong, and Kiribati, needed more options in their development tool-box. In the absence of the kind of patronage-relationship which other Pacific countries held,⁴⁸ Kiribati turned, once more, to its long-time donor-partner, Australia.

10.2.4 Relations with Australia

Australia had been one of the first countries in the region to establish diplomatic relations with the new Republic.⁴⁹ Alongside New Zealand and the UN, Australia joined the British in offering aid to ease the transition to independence. Australia’s initial contribution through grants of aid at independence was minimal,⁵⁰ but over the next three decades, Australia became one of Kiribati’s largest and most consistent grant-aid donors, amongst an expanding donor-pool, by 2008, of twenty-seven different bilateral and multilateral agencies.⁵¹

⁴⁷ When the UNCDP met in March subsequently, they found that Kiribati no longer eligible for graduation. (See UN Committee for Development Policy. Report on the Eleventh Session (9-13th March 2009), Economic and Social Council 2009. Supplement No.13. E/2009/33:24). Kiribati again argued against graduation in 2015. Kiribati was again approved for graduation in 2018 and again in 2021, but due to the impact of the COVID pandemic, graduation was deferred until 2024. (See UNCTAD. 27/9/2021. The Least Developed Countries Report 2021: The Least Developed Countries In The Post-COVID World: Learning From 50 Years Of Experience.)

⁴⁸ Kiribati is one of three Pacific SIDS [the others are Nauru and Tuvalu] which do not have an “association” or relationship, formal or otherwise, with a larger [and usually former colonial] power: for example, the Micronesian states in the north each has a Compact of Association with the USA; similarly, the Cook Islands and Niue are in free association with New Zealand, while Samoa has a treaty of friendship with New Zealand. Fiji and PNG have a ‘special relationship’ with Australia.

⁴⁹ *Australian Foreign Affairs Record* 50(7) (July 1979) records that Mr E.J.L. Ride presented his letter of introduction as High Commissioner to the Republic of Kiribati on 12th July 1979.

⁵⁰ Alongside the UK Development Aid Funds estimated expenditure of A\$11,108,370 Australia complemented this with A\$4000 plus Food Aid of A\$79,000 - and in-kind estimates of A\$2,131,000. Other donors grant-aid included the UNFPA [A\$55,546], World Wildlife Fund [A\$25,000], European Development Fund [A\$430,020]- and ADB Loan of A\$750,000. This compared with local estimated development funds of A\$244,660 - with finance “to be negotiated” of A\$939,070 see table III details of estimated expenditure by revenue source 1979. Australia key contributions [cash and in kind] supported food aid, fisheries and hand tools, plants and vehicles, sewerage pipes in Tarawa, fridges - and a film of independence. Government of Gilbert Islands. 1979. 1979 Development Fund Estimates Presented to the House of Assembly, in Paper No. 52/78.

⁵¹ In 2009-2010, Australia contributed A\$12.91m to the Government of Kiribati development expenditure. Australian ODA constituted grants of \$12.91m, followed by grants from Taiwan A\$10.61m and Japan A\$8.71m of a total A\$43.47m ODA

Despite the significance of Australia's aid contributions in 2008, Australia's relations with its Pacific neighbours were strained. Australia's Foreign Minister Downer, and Prime Minister, John Howard, were focused on managing the risks generated by the increasing instances of "destabilised and failing states"⁵² in the region's "arc of instability".⁵³ In the Pacific, there were allegations of bullying and intimidation by the Australian coalition-government under Howard and Downer, while Australia's government, in return, expressed concerns about the "arc of instability" across the region.⁵⁴ While Howard may have had the reputational advantage of being one of the few [if not the only] Australian Prime Ministers to visit Kiribati,⁵⁵ Australia's relations with Kiribati had also been tested. There were allegations that Downer had interfered in diplomatic relations between Kiribati and its ally, Taiwan, by arguing that Kiribati should support China instead.⁵⁶ It was also rumoured that Downer had declared Kiribati, "the second worst" place in the Pacific that he had been obliged to visit in the course of his official duties.⁵⁷

But the most pressing issue for President Tong was Australia's stance on labour migration.⁵⁸

and total development finance of A\$2.44b; in 2008, Australia contributed \$9.68m, Japan \$9.15m and EU A\$7.41m of a total ODA spend of A\$32.2m and total development finance spend of A\$1.99b. The Lowy Institute Pacific Aid Map.

⁵² John Howard, cited in Dobell, G. 2007. *The Arc of Instability: The History of an Idea*. In the ANU Strategic and Defence Studies Centre *40th Anniversary Seminar Series* 14 September 2007.

⁵³ Dobell, G. 2007. *The Arc of Instability: The History of an Idea*. In the ANU Strategic and Defence Studies Centre *40th Anniversary Seminar Series* 14 September 2007.

⁵⁴ In 2007, Howard and Downer's – and Australia's – relations with the Pacific region were tense. The Australian government had framed the region as an "arc of instability". Downer responded forcefully to criticisms of Australia "had a duty to do more than 'farm out dough'", he is reported to have said. (See: *Financial Times* 19/4/2007. Downer defends Australia's Pacific Policing). In a speech reported by the Sydney Morning herald, Downer rejected claims that Australia was a "bully in the region, showing little respect for the sovereignty of its neighbors." He suggested that the sluggish economic performance of the region was due to "poor leadership." Some leaders, Downer said, "had concerned themselves more with self-interest than national interest." See: *SMH (Sydney Morning Herald)* 9/8/2007. Downer blasts corrupt Pacific leaders.

⁵⁵ John Howard travelled to Kiribati for the 2001 Pacific Island Forum leaders annual meeting. The meeting was originally scheduled to take place in Fiji and was re-directed to Tarawa following the 2000 Speight-led coup.

⁵⁶ There were allegations that Downer had intervened in Kiribati's diplomatic relations with other countries, "urging" Kiribati to favour China rather than Taiwan in 2004. *Taipei Times*. 19/4/2007. Downer defends Australia's Pacific Policing.

⁵⁷ Wheeler, T. 5/4/ 2011 Nauru was the worst place. *Crikey*

⁵⁸ Government of Kiribati. 2015. *Kiribati's National Labour Migration Policy*. While President Tong began discussions when

Tong had made several requests for access to Australia’s labour market, which Howard and Downer had consistently refused.⁵⁹ In 2005, the Howard government offered an alternative: a training college in the Pacific, delivering Australian-standard qualifications. The Australia-Pacific Technical College was established in 2007.⁶⁰ In the same year, both Kiribati and Australia had national elections.

In October 2007, Anote Tong was re-elected President for a second term in government⁶¹ and on 3 December the previous opposition leader, Kevin Rudd, was sworn in as Australia’s 26th Prime Minister and the Australian Labor Party assumed government.⁶²

President Tong delivered his government’s policy statement to the Maneaba in early December 2007 just three days after Rudd was sworn into office. The President put the labour market and partnerships at the forefront of his government’s priorities. He announced the expansion of relations through “opening up of new labour markets” would be the “cornerstone” of his government’s foreign policy.⁶³ It was his intention to “further strengthen (existing) partnerships” as well as to “identify new partners”.⁶⁴ Tong singled out the

he took office in 2003, and reference was made in the KDPs between 2003-2016; Kiribati’s national labor policy was formally published in 2015.

⁵⁹ Downer and Howard had consistently refused to consider a seasonal labor migration program; but relations had improved in 2005 following the Pacific Forum, when Howard proposed an alternative training institution - later known as the Australia Pacific Technical College - rather than continued to refuse Kiribati’s [amongst others] proposal for a pacific seasonal worker program. see: Dobell, G. November 2006. Australia confronts its Pacific taboo: Pacific Workers, *Pacific Economic Bulletin* 21 (3)126-140.

⁶⁰ later renamed the Australia Pacific Training Coalition. APTC Website.

⁶¹ Tong was re-elected to his seat in August 2007 and became President on 17th October 2007; he made his speech to the Maneaba on 6th Dec 2007.

⁶² A convention established during the days of early self-government. See Van Trease, H. 1993. *Atoll Politics: The Republic of Kiribati*.

⁶³ Tong, A. 10/12/2007. Policy Statement (Draft v3 6 Dec 2007) presented by *Te Beretitenti* to the Second Meeting of the 9th Parliament, Ambo, South Tarawa, Kiribati.

⁶⁴ Tong, A. 10/12/2007. Policy Statement (Draft v3 6 Dec 2007) presented by *Te Beretitenti* to the Second Meeting of the 9th Parliament, Ambo, South Tarawa, Kiribati.

partnership with Australia for specific comment. He hoped, he said, for “more constructive engagement” with the newly-elected government in Australia.⁶⁵

Dealing with the Rudd Government

In opposition, the Australian Labor Party [ALP] had sought to show they understood the Pacific and its priorities. They acknowledged the threat posed by climate change – and they wanted to engage differently with the Pacific. Prior to their election, Labor’s shadow spokesman for international development, Bob McMullan, promised resources to deal with the effects of climate change in the Pacific. Kiribati was specifically noted amongst the intended beneficiaries.⁶⁶ A Labour government would, McMullan said, take its lead from the Pacific:

...We can’t just sit in Australia and say this is what people should do. We can only offer support, but we’d be offering support to develop plans, to implement the plans, to do the research...⁶⁷

Kiribati was one of the first Pacific countries visited by McMullan after Labor won government, in February 2008.⁶⁸ McMullan reiterated the offer of “a fresh approach in the Pacific,” built on partnership and mutual respect:

... Broadly, the approach is one of much more partnership and engagement on the basis of mutual respect," he said. "We're not going to be lecturing or hectoring, we're going to try and work together with them and I think we set a pretty good standard with the way we started. The relationships we've established with ministers and leaders in those countries is very positive...Particularly from a development assistance point of view, we're working towards the implementation of the Prime Minister's commitment before the election to a Pacific partnership for security and development, and that's a top priority for us..."⁶⁹

On 27 January 2009, at the Pacific Forum Leaders Special Meeting in Port Moresby⁷⁰ President

⁶⁵ Tong, A. 10/12/2007. Policy Statement (Draft v3 6 Dec 2007) presented by *Te Beretitenti* to the Second Meeting of the 9th Parliament, Ambo, South Tarawa, Kiribati.

⁶⁶ *RNZ Pacific International* 24/7/2007. Australia’s Labour Party commits to big spending battling climate change in Pacific.

⁶⁷ *RNZ Pacific International* 24/7/2007. Australia’s Labour Party commits to big spending battling climate change in Pacific.

⁶⁸ *RNZ* 4/2/2008. Australian officials on Pacific tour as part of Canberra’s fresh approach.

⁶⁹ Roy, E. 11/2/2008. Aust, Pacific working on damaged relationship. *ABC News*

⁷⁰ The Pacific leaders held a Special Meeting held to discuss Fiji’s status as a member of the Forum, following Fiji’s failure to honour its undertaking to hold an election by March 2009. The Leaders agreed to “targeted measures (which) would

Tong and Prime Minister Rudd signed a new arrangement on aid, the Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development.⁷¹

10.2.5 Aid Arrangements with Australia in 2009

The Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development

As with the other arrangements agreed under the Rudd government,⁷² the Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development [P4D] asserted Australia’s commitment to “closer cooperation and engagement” through the “principles of mutual respect and mutual responsibility for improved development outcomes.”⁷³ The agreement claimed to establish:

...our shared vision to work together in close cooperation to meet our common challenges and to raise the standard of living of the people of Kiribati, ...to advance Kiribati’s development vision as articulated in the Kiribati Development Plan 2008-2011.⁷⁴

The Agreement defined the Partnership’s core purpose as support for economic growth for development. The priorities for funding included: basic education, workforce skills, economic growth and management [including public financial management; stronger management of the Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund (RERF) trust fund; and better fisheries management.]⁷⁵

comprise suspension of Fiji from participation in Forum events and...to benefit from Forum regional cooperation initiatives.” Angelo, T. Pacific Islands Forum 2009. *New Zealand Yearbook of International Law* (7)2009:271-276.

⁷¹ Government of Australia and Government of Kiribati. 27/1/2009. *Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development*. Port Moresby.

⁷² The Partnership for Development Agreement [2009] was in addition to a separate arrangement between both governments, the Memorandum of Understanding on Development Cooperation.

⁷³ Government of Australia and Government of Kiribati. 27/1/2009. *Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development*. Port Moresby.

⁷⁴ Government of Australia and Government of Kiribati. 27/1/2009. *Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development*. Port Moresby. The P4D agreement notes this its ambit was additional to other elements of the bilateral and regional programs, where support to Kiribati remained ongoing.

⁷⁵ This was additional to the support for reform of public sector management and government provided through the continuing bilateral aid program; and the regional investing in pacific public sector capacity initiatives expected to be operating by mid-2009. Other bilateral and or regional programs, of varying sizes and complexity, included support for economic infrastructure, health, trade and climate change. A fourth priority, infrastructure, was added in 2012 when the Partnership was extended. See Government of Australia and Government Kiribati. 27/1/2009. *Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development*. Port Moresby; and DFAT. 26/11/2014. *Kiribati-Australia Partnership for Development Updated Schedules*.

The Partnership also acknowledged the significant impact of climate change on sea-level rise. The crux of the arrangement was a straightforward transaction. The Government of Australia [Australia] agreed to extend additional and predictable long-term funds, and capacity strengthening support in key areas, [including building more effective national institutions], in return for the Government of Kiribati [Kiribati] successfully implementing the agreed priorities under their national development plan – including the promotion of economic growth and poverty reduction. Additional funds were conditional on Kiribati meeting the “jointly-determined” measures of performance.⁷⁶ The measures of performance, including incentive-based payments, related to priorities already identified by Kiribati in its national development plan. Australia also agreed to align with and strengthen Kiribati’s decision-making, finance and procurement systems.

In return, Kiribati agreed to improve the management of public resources and strengthen capacity in the public sector, especially public financial management; and ensure the “optimal use” of aid through effective coordination of development programs and donor reporting.⁷⁷ These were the same strategies as those nominated by the global idea of Ownership in the Paris Declaration, and affirmed later that year by the Pacific Leaders, in Cairns, as the foundation of the Compact.

Australia and Kiribati agreed to hold annual partnership talks, alongside broader donor consultations to review progress and increases in aid. The agreement put the priorities and

⁷⁶ The agreement also proposed a study on the costs of long-term sustainable delivery of government functions and the role of the private sector, to examine the depth and scope of each partner’s contribution to the partnership. Government of Australia and Government of Kiribati. 27/1/2009. *Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development*, 8-9.

⁷⁷ Government of Australia and Government of Kiribati. 27/1/2009. *Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development*.

policies of the government of Kiribati - captured in the Kiribati National Development Plan 2008-2011, which drew from President Tong’s 2007 Government Policy Statement - at its core.

The Kiribati National Development Plan 2008-2011

Approved in April 2008, the Kiribati National Development Plan 2008-2011 offered a vision of “a vibrant economy for the people of Kiribati” through “enhancing economic growth for sustainable development”.⁷⁸ The “ultimate goal” was “economic growth” in order to improve the lives of Kiribati’s people - who were its “main assets,” - by developing the economy and their capabilities.⁷⁹ This, the Plan claimed, would lead to “the creation of employment opportunities and a skilled workforce that can access not only the national but the international labour market”.⁸⁰

The Plan identified six priority areas: human resource development; economic growth and poverty reduction; health; environment; governance; and infrastructure.⁸¹ The Tong Government intended to deliver on its priorities by strengthening the private sector; reducing government involvement in commercial enterprises; and instituting financial reforms to improve budget and cash flow management. Resources for implementation of the Plan, President Tong explained, would be secured through “prudent” financial management,

⁷⁸ Foreword by Hon. Natan Teewe, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, In Government of Kiribati. 2008. *Kiribati Development Plan 2008-2011*: iii.

⁷⁹ Government of Kiribati. 2008. *Kiribati Development Plan 2008-2011*:1.

⁸⁰ Government of Kiribati. 2008. *Kiribati Development Plan 2008-2011*:1.

⁸¹ These priorities were, the Plan acknowledged: ...similar to the last plan...with the only difference in the title and regrouping of the Key Priority Areas [KPA]...for simplicity, clarity and better linkages with current government roles and functions. The Plan built from previous plans. These key policy areas [KPAs] included: human resource development, economic growth and poverty reduction, health, environment, governance and infrastructures (sic). Highlighting the same policy areas identified in earlier plans, the Plan chose different KPAs to respond to ‘the need for simplicity, clarity and better linkages with current government roles and functions: Government of Kiribati. 2008. *Kiribati Development Plan 2008-2011*:16

including strengthened management of the RERF;⁸² changes to tax legislation; and better returns from marine resources, “in partnership with those who harvest our resources for their profit”.⁸³

The 2009 Annual Budget [December 2008]

The Plan did not include budget forecasts for its duration. Instead, in December 2008, the government laid out its fiscal strategy for the forthcoming financial [calendar] year 2009 the first full year of implementation of the Plan, in its annual budget statement to the Maneaba.⁸⁴

The recurrent budget estimate for the 2009 year was A\$88.9m. With an estimated revenue of A\$62.9m, this left a deficit of A\$26.3m, which the government of Kiribati intended to balance through a draw-down on the RERF.⁸⁵ Major estimated revenue sources included: import duties of \$19.8m; income tax of \$11.6m; and fishing licence fees of \$24m.⁸⁶ The development budget estimate was forecast at A\$81.9m, of which donors were expected to contribute A\$55m. The

⁸² The Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund [RERF] fund, Tong noted, was “established specifically to equalise Government budget in the event that revenues do not match expenditures.” Tong, A. 10/12/2007. Policy Statement (Draft v3, 6 Dec 2007) presented by *Te Beretitenti* to the Second Meeting of the 9th Parliament, Ambo, South Tarawa, Kiribati (para 12). Note: Tong’s claim on the purpose of the RERF is in contrast to the claimed rationale made in the 1970 G&E Colony Plan, which advised that the RERF was a capital source primarily for investment purposes; and that, whilst primarily the RERF would be invested overseas, could be drawn down for LOCAL investment should the prospective returns warrant its use rather than to support or balance recurrent expenditure which is implied in this statement – see Ministry of Overseas Development. 1970. *Gilbert and Ellice Colonies Development Plan*, 15.

⁸³ Tong, A. 10/12/2007. Policy Statement (Draft v3, 6 Dec 2007) presented by *Te Beretitenti* to the Second Meeting of the 9th Parliament, Ambo South Tarawa, Kiribati (para 12).

⁸⁴ The 2008 Plan was crafted in April 2008. The Republic of Kiribati uses the Australian dollar. The budget operates on a calendar year and is released at the end of the year: the 2009 Budget indicates [revised] revenue in 2008 of \$61.524m. and expenditure of \$89910m. with the deficit of \$28,386m. largely covered by drawn down from the RERF of \$25,000m.

⁸⁵ The 2017 Report on the RERF lists the drawdowns on the RERF by year and by presidential term. Tong’s presidency drew down significantly on the RERF, although not quite as heavily as his predecessor. However, in the final two years of Tong’s presidency, the increase in revenue from fishing licences under the VDS meant that the Government of Kiribati contributed significantly to the RERF. The last contribution noted on the Government of Kiribati website was dated 2017; at that point, no fishing revenue after 2017 had been listed publicly. There were expectations in the 2016 budget announcement that agreements with DWFN were not secure. See Republic of Kiribati. 2017. *Fishing License Revenues in Kiribati*. Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource Development and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

⁸⁶ Over half of the forecast recurrent expenditure was dedicated to public sector salaries and related payments.

deficit of A\$26m, “would need to be secured in subsequent years.”⁸⁷ The Government’s forecast contribution to the development budget was A\$30,000.

*Aid flows from Australia to Kiribati, 2008 and 2009*⁸⁸

In 2008 and 2009, Australia was Kiribati’s largest donor.⁸⁹ In 2008-09, Australia’s contribution to Kiribati’s development financing through grant-aid was A\$9.68m, of Kiribati’s total development finance of \$1.99b. In 2009-2010 Australia contributed A\$12.91m to Kiribati’s development financing through grant-aid, of Kiribati’s total development finance of \$2.44b.⁹⁰

10.2.6 Global and Regional agreements:

Referencing “the spirit” of the Port Moresby Declaration signed a year earlier,⁹¹ the Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development formally affirmed the significance of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and its counterpart, the Accra Agenda for Action (2008)⁹² in Australia’s bilateral aid arrangements with Kiribati. This was the first time that the Rudd and Tong governments had formally agreed on the global aid effectiveness reforms in their bilateral arrangements.⁹³ This commitment reinforced Kiribati’s endorsement of the

⁸⁷ Government of Kiribati. 2009. *2009 Budget*.

⁸⁸ Australia offered ODA according to the July-June financial year whereas Kiribati operated its accounts on a calendar year. Comparisons between government and Australian estimates are not like for like.

⁸⁹ This claim refers to grant aid listed as ODA under the OECD definition as identified by the Pacific Aid Map. Other donors of note include: New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan ADB EU and World Bank; with Canada, SPREP, SPC, IMG, FFA and UN agencies, inc UNDP and UNFPA and WHO. See The Lowy Institute, The Pacific Aid Map.

⁹⁰ In 2009-2010, Australia contributed A\$12.91m to the government of Kiribati development expenditure, followed by grants from Taiwan A\$10.61m and Japan A\$8.71m of a total A\$43.47m ODA and total development finance of A\$2.44b; in 2008-09, Australia contributed \$9.68m, Japan \$9.15m and EU A\$7.41m of a total ODA spend of A\$32.2m and total development finance spend of A\$1.99b The next largest donors [all grants, no loans] to Kiribati in 2009 were: Taiwan: \$10.61m; Japan \$8.71m; NZ \$6.83m; EU: \$2.15m. Other donors of significance included: GEF, India, South Korea, Canada, GAVI, UK and USA. Source: The Lowy Institute Pacific Aid Map.

⁹¹ Prime Minister of Australia. 6/3/2008. *Port Moresby Declaration*. Press Release. Parliament of Australia.

⁹² The vision and principles would also, the Agreement explained, ensure mutual accountability for results in accord with the MDGs, the Pacific Plan and the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation.

⁹³ Kiribati is not formally listed as an adherent to the Paris Declaration or Accra Agenda by the OECD. One interviewee indicated that Kiribati was not present in Paris or Accra but forwarded a letter of adherence later.

Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles at the PICS-Partners meeting two years earlier;⁹⁴ and was, in turn, re-affirmed when Kiribati's Special envoy endorsed the Forum Compact in Cairns, in August 2009.

The Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development and the Forum Compact agreed during 2009 outlined the arrangements for navigating aid relations between the two countries. They became the primary policy vehicles for promoting the global idea of Ownership in Kiribati.

Having confirmed the arrival of the global idea of Ownership in the aid arrangements between Kiribati and Australia, I turn next to examine how global policy became local practice. My first step was to examine whether the government of Kiribati implemented the strategies of Ownership in accord with the Compact [and the Paris Declaration before it]; and then, to ascertain whether implementation was attributable to the global idea of Ownership.

10.3 Implementing Ownership:

First, I identified whether the government had implemented aid coordination practices in accord with the global idea of Ownership. I compared implementation of the strategies of Ownership, as nominated by the measures laid out by the Paris Declaration, with Ostrom's four criteria for a transition in Ownership.⁹⁵ The findings are summarised in the matrix in Table 10.2, with a summary below. [See Appendix 10.1-Table 10.2 Implementing Global "Best

⁹⁴ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2007. Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles.

⁹⁵ I drew on interviews with the senior policy advisors in the central agencies of government who were responsible for implementing these strategies, as well as political leaders and civil society; and, supplemented these with related policy reports. This represented over 23 senior policy advisors across the central agencies. Representatives from the Office of the President and the Ministry of Fisheries were unavailable.

Practice” in Kiribati and Appendix 10.2 Analysing “Best Practice” in Kiribati.]

10.3.1 Implementing Aid Coordination Practices

The Government of Kiribati appeared to satisfy all four of Ostrom’s criteria for a transition in Ownership, as defined by their implementation of the measures set by the Paris Declaration and which both the Compact⁹⁶ and the first Partnership arrangement⁹⁷ with Australia re-affirmed.

Between 2008-2018, the Tong and Maamau Governments produced and implemented three, four-year national development strategies which identified development priorities.⁹⁸ These strategies demonstrated evidence of consultation, within government and, to varying degrees, across civil society, the private sector and the communities on the outer islands. Annual recurrent budgets were presented to the Maneaba for their authorisation, in accord with legislative obligations. The annual development budgets were often provided in the briefing papers for the members’ information. The Government’s senior policy advisors regularly met, at national and sectoral levels, for formal “dialogues”, or Development Partner Fora, with donor representatives from Australia and other bilateral and multilateral agencies, to coordinate, align development priorities and assess resource allocations to meet those priorities. Each national development plan included a monitoring framework, of variable

⁹⁶ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2009. Forum Communiqué: 40th Pacific Islands Forum, Cairns Australia 5-6/08/2009. Including Annex B: Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific. PIFS(09)12.

⁹⁷ Governments of Australia and Kiribati, 27 January 2009, *Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development*, Port Moresby, signed by PM Kevin Rudd and President Anote Tong. This first Partnership arrangement was extended in 2012 under the Rudd Government; and replaced in 2015 under the Abbott-Turnbull Governments.

⁹⁸ The Government of Kiribati changed from 5-year planning cycles to 4-year planning cycles in 2003, to align with the government’s usual term in office. See: Government of Kiribati. 2003. *Kiribati National Development Plan 2004-2007*. While the Tong Government was responsible for drafting all three national development plans between 2008-2019, the 2016-2019 Plan was revised, then released and implemented under President Maamau’s first government.

quality; performance assessments of progress were undertaken at mid-term or prior to crafting the successor plan, also deemed of variable quality.⁹⁹ Assessments and reviews of some individual sector programs were also undertaken.

In addition to fulfilling the specific measures deemed by the Paris Declaration to satisfy Ostrom's criteria for a transition to Ownership, the Government of Kiribati undertook additional measures which supported improved aid coordination. This included a capacity strengthening program to support public sector reform [including public financial management reform];¹⁰⁰ regular processes to authorise development priorities and resource allocations through the Cabinet's Development Coordination Committee of [CDCC]; and crafting the Government's Development Cooperation Policy [DCP].¹⁰¹

But there was one area of truly spectacular change which intersected with Ostrom's second criteria on the contribution of resources to development; although the origins of this spectacular change seemed to lie well outside the technocratic measures of aid coordination and management practices identified by the Compact or the Paris Declaration.

The government moved from a persistent estimated budget deficit in 2008 to a consistent,

⁹⁹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2013. *Forum Compact Peer Review Countries Progress Report, Pacific Peer Review: Countries Take Action!* 2013; Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. October 2010. *Peer review of the Republic of Kiribati*, Cairns Compact for Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific; Republic of Kiribati. 2016. *Kiribati – Monitoring Profile*, for the Second Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation; Republic of Kiribati. 2018. *Kiribati - Voluntary Report* for the 2018 Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation.

¹⁰⁰ Governments of Australia and Kiribati. 27/1/2009. *Australia-Kiribati Partnership for Development*, signed by PM Kevin Rudd and President Anote Tong during Forum Leaders Special Meeting in Port Moresby. Government of Kiribati. 2008. *Kiribati Development Plan 2008-2011*; Government of Kiribati. 2012. *Kiribati Development Plan 2012-2015*; Government of Kiribati. 2016. *Kiribati Development Plan 2016-2019*.

¹⁰¹ Government of Kiribati. November 2015. *Development Cooperation Policy*. Ministry Finance and Economic Development, Kiribati.

even if sometimes minor, estimated budget surplus by 2018.¹⁰² The size of the budget also increased significantly over this period. The government experienced a significant increase in revenue from the new arrangements for fishing licence fees introduced by the Parties to the Nauru Agreement [PNA] under the Vessel Day Scheme [VDS].¹⁰³

Although Kiribati had generated revenue through licence fees for several decades prior, after 2010, the PNA established a new way of calculating the fees to be charged to the DWFNs, through the VDS.¹⁰⁴ This change worked to the advantage of the nine tuna-resourced Pacific countries who composed the PNA, including Kiribati.¹⁰⁵ Kiribati first saw significant benefits flow in 2013: estimated revenue in 2013 was double that of 2009; in 2014, it was four times as much; and in 2015, a staggering seven times as much. While revenue dipped in 2016, [revealing the market’s volatility] it remained high by historical standards. Estimates for 2017 were more modest: only five times that generated in 2009. In 2017, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development [MFED] reported that the government collected A\$29.1m in total revenue from fishing licence and transshipment fees in 2009; and in 2015, revenue peaked at A\$207.1m – a 612% increase in four years.¹⁰⁶

While Australia was one of the donors who contributed a small measure of support to

¹⁰² The recurrent deficit was usually leveraged through a draw down from the RERF [the original intention of establishing the wealth fund - and controversially agreed as the intent when the British left.]

¹⁰³ Republic of Kiribati. December 2017. *Fishing Licence Revenues in Kiribati: 2017 Report*. See also: Table 3: RERF Valuations, Deposits and Drawdowns (1978-2021 July) in Kiribati Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. August 2021. *Report on Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund (RERF) 31 March 2021-31 July 2021*, Report submitted to the 5th meeting of the 12th *Maneaba ni Maungatabu*, held 16th August 2021 to 27th August 2021:10

¹⁰⁴ Aqorau, T. 2019. *Fishing for Success: Lessons in Pacific Regionalism*.

¹⁰⁵ Aqorau, T. 2019. *Fishing for Success: Lessons in Pacific Regionalism*.

¹⁰⁶ See Republic of Kiribati. December 2017. *Fishing Licence Revenues in Kiribati: 2017 Report*:3. The Government of Kiribati budget papers for 2017-2019 identified estimated revenue for the fishing licence fees, the 2017 report confirmed total fishing revenue between 2007-2016. See Appendix 10.2 Best Practice in Kiribati, *Table 1: Total Fishing Revenue (Excl. Development Funds), Kiribati, 2007-2016* for more details.

Kiribati's fisheries through its aid expenditure, this spectacular growth in revenue came directly from the changes under a commercial venture established, very deliberately, without support from the donors.¹⁰⁷

The Government of Kiribati had implemented the strategies of Ownership identified by the Paris Declaration and asserted as the foundation of the regional agreement, the Forum Compact. It also undertook additional measures to strengthen coordination and consultation. But, the only area of significant change lay in revenue growth outside the aid sphere – which facilitated government's contributions to its recurrent and development budget, as well as its reserve funds. [See Appendix 10.2 for details] Yet, despite clear evidence of implementation, there were questions about the relevance of the idea of Ownership at the foundation of the Compact. While reports indicated the quality of implementation was variable,¹⁰⁸ more significantly, the data generated in my interviews raised substantive questions about the relevance of the measures - and the global idea of Ownership - to the political and policy leadership in their pursuit of development for Kiribati.

10.3.2 Attributing Change in Aid Coordination Practices to the Global Idea of Ownership

Few policy advisors within the Government attributed their adherence to the strategies for coordinating aid - and their pursuit of good aid relations - to the influence of the global idea

¹⁰⁷ Aqorau, T. 2019. *Fishing for Success: Lessons in Pacific Regionalism*.

¹⁰⁸ These included: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2013. *Pacific Peer Review: Countries Take Action! 2013 Forum Compact Peer Review: Countries Progress Report*; Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. October 2010. *Peer Review of the Republic of Kiribati, Cairns Compact for Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific*; Republic of Kiribati. October 2016. *Kiribati – Monitoring Profile, Second Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*; Republic of Kiribati. 2018. *Kiribati - Voluntary Report, 2018 Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*.

of Ownership; or to the corresponding policy vehicle, the Forum Compact [or the Paris Declaration before it], which had, officially, brought the global idea of Ownership to Kiribati.

Limited knowledge of the global idea of Ownership or its policy vehicles

Apart from the few senior Government policy advisors long-engaged in foreign and regional affairs or finance, few interviewees revealed more than a passing knowledge of the Compact or the global idea of Ownership asserted as its foundational, organising logic.¹⁰⁹ Even amongst those working in the National Economic Planning Office [NEPO],¹¹⁰ the Government office responsible for overseeing implementation of the strategies of Ownership, there seemed to be only a limited familiarity with either the Compact or the global idea of Ownership.¹¹¹ While the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) was acknowledged by several key advisors, few demonstrated a strong familiarity with it or referred to it as a source of guidance in dealings with donors. Of those few who were familiar with either the Paris Declaration, or the global idea of Ownership, one senior advisor admitted, there were few followers.

National strategies and the obligation to listen

One senior advisor claimed that Ownership, as asserted by the Paris Declaration, “did exist” in Kiribati,¹¹² offering the national development plans as evidence. Despite his argument for

¹⁰⁹ I identified six policy advisors [out of 23 policy advisors interviewed] who demonstrated some knowledge of the Compact; the depth of familiarity varied across the group, only one could identify a concrete example of the Compact’s influence. But that influence attributed successful negotiations with the donors to better access to decision-makers because of the authority the Compact carried under the Rudd government – rather than to the merits of the global idea of Ownership at the foundation of the Compact’s policy logic.

¹¹⁰ The National Economic Planning Office (NEPO) is a key office in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development which is responsible for economic management, including economic planning, financial management and donor liaison.

¹¹¹ NEPO staff nominated another colleague as well-versed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness – but that advisor had relocated to another Ministry. I was unable to confirm an interview with the advisor whilst in Tarawa in 2015.

¹¹² Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SN-10112015.

Ownership as a process of collaboration between countries and donors - and where the donors often carried the expertise - he acknowledged that many of his colleagues in the Government's leadership group and even, he suggested, the President, did not really support the global aid effectiveness agenda - and its idea of Ownership. Rather, it was seen as a donor initiative to be tolerated:

I know I have a lot of opposition in the leadership role, at the Secretaries, even the big boss doesn't really [support]... [they say] 'oh, that's donor [thing]...' ¹¹³

Only one other senior policy advisor was familiar enough with the Compact to attribute changes in aid relations to its influence. The advisor attributed a shift in donor priorities and more aid for reconstruction of the road between the airport and wharf as an illustration of successful negotiation arising from more meaningful engagement with more senior decision-makers within the donor agencies who were obliged "to listen" because of the Compact.¹¹⁴ The funding for the road, she said, was a sign of the donors growing confidence in Kiribati financial management and also a sign of changes in aid relations arising from the Compact.¹¹⁵ Since the Compact, she asserted, the donors listen better:

...I have to say though, since the Compact, there has been more alignment in the assistance.... You see the road project? That was what we wanted, we want to upgrade the South Tarawa road, and Australia listened... ¹¹⁶

While the local development fora were useful for sharing information, the same advisor explained, they were not, in reality, an opportunity for decision-making on aid. The Compact generated more opportunities for regional dialogue. This meant that a policy advisor could directly negotiate with the decision-makers from the donor's central headquarters, rather

¹¹³ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-10112015.

¹¹⁴ Confidential Interview-Kiribati- Government-UM-5122015.

¹¹⁵ Confidential Interview-Kiribati- Government-UM-5122015.

¹¹⁶ Confidential Interview-Kiribati- Government-UM-5122015.

than go through local delegates. This meant, the advisor explained, that she was able to persuade Australia to both change their priorities and fund the road - and increase the size of their aid contributions. Australia had also agreed [partly under the influence of the World Bank and other donors who also funded the road] to change the way they transferred aid, channelling funds through budget support, which, under the Government’s Development Cooperation Policy, was the preferred medium.¹¹⁷

Apart from these two instances, however, it seemed that few I-Kiribati policy advisors turned to the global idea of Ownership or the Compact [or the Paris Declaration] for guidance in relation to local aid coordination practices. Yet I-Kiribati policy advisors were delivering the measures of Ownership which aligned with the Paris Declaration, [even if there were questions about quality of implementation]. This paradox left Kiribati open to the claims that implementation of the strategies of Ownership was merely a reflection of “isomorphic mimicry” – that the implementation of the measures of national plans, budgets, dialogues and consultations was simply a reflection of the shape of the global idea of Ownership rather than its substance.¹¹⁸ Or that Kiribati’s endorsement of the global idea of Ownership through their bilateral agreements and the Compact was simply “hollow policy”. I re-analysed the data to explore how the policy advisors explained implementation to address these claims. In accord with the policy change model outlined in Chapter 3, I examined the data for evidence of reflexivity, bargaining and innovation in the reported changes in the behaviours and practices which underwrote Kiribati’s implementation of aid coordination practices which

¹¹⁷ Confidential Interview-Kiribati- Government-UM-5122015.

¹¹⁸ Pritchett L., M. Woolcock and M. Andrews. 2012. *Looking Like a State: Techniques of Persistent Failure in State Capability for Implementation*.

appeared to align with the strategies of Ownership.

10.4 Understanding Change: Reflexivity and Bargaining – and Innovation?

In accord with my model for policy change as outlined in Chapter 3, I expected aid coordination practices characterised by reflexivity and bargaining would indicate acceptance of the policy norms underpinning the global idea of Ownership. This would serve to maintain the status quo in relations between the Government of Kiribati and the donors. Whereas I expected practices characterised by innovation to demonstrate signs of norm contestation: where local norms, drawn from locally-situated knowledge, values and beliefs, would be “in friction with” the [global] policy norms. This norm-contestation would be resolved by innovation - by generating new ways, new practices or institutions, for engaging in aid relations which gave prominence to local values and beliefs, local norms. Innovation, I argued, potentially, signalled a shift in, or re-negotiation of, power relations; and would signify movement towards a transition in Ownership of development.

10.4.1 Strategies of Reflexivity and Bargaining

There was evidence reflexivity: senior policy advisors reflected on their own practices and learnt from their experiences.¹¹⁹ They also bargained, drawing from their own strengths and interests to negotiate mutually satisfactory arrangements with donors. The characteristics of reflexivity were evident more often in the practices associated with dialogue and consultation,

¹¹⁹ The aid coordination practices which produced the various ‘proxy measures’ of Ownership were usually led by the Government’s policy advisors rather than its political leadership. I have drawn, therefore, mostly from the data generated in interviews with senior policy advisors in this section; although complemented by data generated from the political leadership where relevant.

such as the annual Development Partners Fora; while bargaining featured in the practices associated with national strategic planning and budgeting, to prioritise development needs and allocate resources. Often, behaviours demonstrating reflexivity and bargaining were linked: for many, individual learning, whether from experience or education, put them in a better position to bargain, successfully, with donors. But I found little evidence of innovation in aid coordination practices.

Change was acknowledged

While change in aid coordination practices was acknowledged, there was a diversity in views across interviewees. There was not a uniform stance on what changes had occurred in aid practices and why; or how change had influenced aid relations. Several interviewees acknowledged that more meaningful partnerships with donors now existed. But they were unsure “what really triggered the change”.¹²⁰ But others were confident of both the changes and what had contributed to change.

10.4.2 Reflexivity

Learning from experience

Senior policy advisors reflected on their growing confidence in the quality of their dialogue and consultation practices. Their increased confidence benefited both the quality of negotiations in formal dialogues with donors and their personal relations with donor representatives on the ground in Tarawa. These changes had their origins in two areas: policy

¹²⁰ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-BSG-30112015.

advisors' experience on the ground - which generated the hard-won observations that, in the absence of local knowledge and expertise, aid projects were often ineffective; and policy advisors' previous education or employment overseas - which resulted in a deeper understanding and knowledge of donors' worldviews [and motivations].

Learning from [donor] failure – and valuing local knowledge

Several policy advisors spoke of their increasing assertiveness in aid negotiations: they had learnt “to step up and... take leadership...”.¹²¹ They attributed the change in their confidence and assertiveness to their reflections on their experience in dealing with failed or ineffective projects in Kiribati. They recounted their observation that donors had demonstrated that they did not understand the local context nor consult appropriately or adequately to learn about it; and so, aid was often poorly targeted and ineffective. As one senior policy advisor asserted, they had learnt to “take responsibility”¹²² rather than assume the *imatang* [foreigner] was right because they had seen that “the projects... were, you know, a failure”.¹²³ This advisor explained: “if there is any advice that should write this project it’s from us.”¹²⁴

The senior advisor, for example, reflected on their dealings with a multilateral agency on a project intended to improve access to water for children at a local school. At the project launch, the agency proudly displayed the taps and basins. But, when the invited dignitary turned on the taps, to everyone’s dismay, they realised the taps were not connected to a water source:

¹²¹ Confidential Interview, Kiribati-Government-BSG-30112015.

¹²² Confidential Interview, Kiribati-Government-BSG-30112015.

¹²³ Confidential Interview, Kiribati-Government-BSG-30112015.

¹²⁴ Confidential Interview, Kiribati-Government-BSG-30112015.

...it was at that time when we came to realise, you know, this is the problem you know, and sort of, give you a boost to see that it's in your hands to change things, if its not, there will be trouble, we can't go on like this...¹²⁵

The source of the problem, the policy advisor recounted, was that the donor had not discussed the project with the Ministry. The realisation that local knowledge was critical to navigating effective projects gave the policy advisor the confidence to challenge the donors and assert her authority as a source of local knowledge. Donors [or their contracted consultant advisors], the I-Kiribati policy advisor realised, did not hold all the expertise.

Similarly, one of her colleagues explained that her recognition that effective aid came from listening to local knowledge and understanding was why she now insisted to donors that they listen:

...I can't say for sure whether the Cairns Compact has made a difference ...(but) there has been a change, well, I think we've put our foot down...we told our development partners “You listen to us, don't dictate to us...” ...We've learnt from our mistakes, sometimes things, you know, we get all excited about a view that comes in and at the end of the day, the assistance that comes through has not had that major impact because I think we were all going in the wrong direction...¹²⁶

This realisation, several senior policy advisors explained, had led them to reframe the way they negotiated with donors.

Understanding donors better

Some interviewees identified change in the way they negotiated aid relations and attributed this to their individual capacity to translate their personal experiences in education, or employment, often overseas, into a deeper knowledge and understanding of donor

¹²⁵ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-BSG-30112015.

¹²⁶ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

motivations. This had led, they said, to better negotiations with the local donor representatives as a result. They had learnt how to manage donors' expectations better. This meant it was easier to build or maintain good personal relations. It was also easier to bargain with donors for better alignment with of aid with national priorities.

Understanding donor motivations also meant that I-Kiribati policy advisors negotiated more assertively. As one senior policy advisor explained, understanding what motivated donors had strengthened her resolve to insist that the donors listen to local perspectives. Once she realised that donors had to be accountable for the effectiveness of their aid to their own constituents, this became a point of a leverage she drew on to argue for local knowledge and more open dialogue, focused on problem solving, with donors:

...our partners, you know, Australia and New Zealand, they also have to be accountable to their public so if they keep coming back to their Government saying "Oh you know, health and health and health..." and they [their Government] will say, "Well, you did this, and you did that and what happened...?" So we learned by, you know, if I can call it, mistakes or whatever, that these funds, you know we have to be accountable to the Australian people for it and ... If, you know, the Australian taxpayer is suddenly saying, "We don't want it, it's been going there and that same area, why isn't it [changing]... what's happening, nothing's happening?" That's where we have said, "We really need to talk and to really understand an issue because we keep pouring money here and nothing's happening, we may be putting it in the wrong area..."¹²⁷

This advisor asserted that relations with donors were improving, although there remained room for the donors to listen better:

...I think we are managing it (relations with donors) much better as we go, go along... putting our foot down and saying, this is our issues. The last development forum which I chaired, I told them, "I don't want any of you to come and present to us, we already know what you doing, but you come and listen to what we think, there are the still gaps in our development path...They weren't too happy about it, they kept you know, going round me..."¹²⁸

As these examples illustrate, I-Kiribati advisors engaged reflexively on their dealings with

¹²⁷ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

¹²⁸ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

donors and their own practices. Ironically, despite the questions about the relevance of the Compact [and the global idea of Ownership at its foundation], I-Kiribati policy advisors indicated, through their reflexivity, their acceptance of the legitimacy of policy norms of effectiveness and efficiency in how aid is used to facilitate development priorities. They had learnt to draw from locally-situated knowledge and experience to change their own practices – and influence relations with donors. This generated confidence and enhanced their bargaining with donors. And it ensured aid continued to flow as the measures were delivered – and good relations maintained. They did not attribute this, however, to the influence of the global idea of Ownership, but to their own skills and experiences.

10.4.3 Bargaining

While one senior policy advisor, (as discussed earlier) cited Australia’s decision to fund the wharf-airport road as evidence of how regional fora stimulated their capacity to bargain through the ready access to the decision-makers in donor agencies, a more common mechanism for bargaining was evidenced by the practice of delegation of tasks to consultants and technical advisors. Policy advisors observed that key areas of aid coordination were outside their expertise, particularly in areas of financial management and strategic planning. The deployment of delegation as a bargaining strategy ensured that donor conditions [and expectations] were met - and that aid flows continued, even increased. And good relations were maintained.

The Government of Kiribati delegated responsibility for several areas of management to expatriate advisors and consultants who then assumed responsibility for ensuring the

measures of Ownership were produced. This included outsourcing:

- a) leadership of economic planning and financial management;¹²⁹
- b) leadership of the writing of the national development plans in 2012 and 2016.

These consultants were made responsible for producing several of the measures nominated under the global idea of Ownership: the national development plans and the annual budget [and supporting financial management practices] were the most prominent.

Delegation produced results – the milestones were delivered. But there was ambivalence about its underlying merits. An external advisor to Kiribati's Compact Peer Review noted that delegation to external advisors reduced the opportunity for – and undermined the strengths of - promoting local expertise. Senior policy advisors within Kiribati offered a range of views - some inconsistent - on both the merits and the practice of delegation of financial management and national planning.

Delegation and financial management:

A significant example of delegation as a successful bargaining - and compliance - strategy lay in the delegation of responsibility for the Government's economic and financial management. Effective and efficient economic planning and financial management was a key intent behind the strategies of Ownership – and a key concern for donors in relation to Kiribati.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ The Director of the National Economic Planning Office [NEPO] was an external consultant for the duration of the Compact. The Pacific Technical Assistance Mechanism [PACTAM] was established in 2006 to respond to small scale urgent or emerging development needs in Pacific countries. It provided human resources and equipment aligned to the priorities of the Australian government and Pacific countries. David, R. and R. Moloney. February 2012. *The Pacific Technical Assistance Mechanism (PACTAM) Final Independent Progress Report*.

¹³⁰ See for example, the World Bank Governance Indicators on Kiribati; the GPEDC monitoring reports submitted by the Republic of Kiribati; the Compact Peer Reviews undertaken by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (and others); and the ADB Kiribati Social and Economic Reports 2008 and 2011.

The government outsourced leadership of economic planning, financial management and donor liaison, appointing a consultant as the Director of NEPO.¹³¹ This role was responsible for ensuring delivery of several of the measures of Ownership: the national development plans; the annual budgets; the performance assessment frameworks; and coordination on these issues, across ministries and with the donors.

The government’s bargaining paid off: according to the Minister for Finance, improvements to the Government’s economic planning and financial management over the period of the Director’s incumbency were a key reason that the World Bank and ADB agreed to additional funds for the road between the airport and the wharf on Tarawa¹³² – despite predictions that Tarawa would be swamped by rising seas from climate change within 50 years.¹³³ The Banks also advocated with their donor-peers to gain their support for the road’s re-construction, particularly Australia and Taiwan. However, not everyone was convinced that the road was a ‘win’ for Kiribati. There were concerns about the quality of the road and the equity of employment practices. The road’s construction, one interviewee claimed, was characterised by exploitative labour practices and prohibitive maintenance costs, asserting potholes already littered the unfinished road. He held fears that the road represented one more project which would simply build dependence on aid, not reduce it.¹³⁴

¹³¹ See Government of Kiribati Ministry of Finance and Economic Development Webpage.

¹³² Government of Kiribati. 2016. *2016 Budget. {ministers speech}*

¹³³ Although, as noted earlier, one of his advisors attributed the turn-around to their skilled negotiation and advocacy at regional meetings [particularly in relation to Australia’s turn-about]

¹³⁴ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-SS-22112015.

Delegation: strategic planning

The Government of Kiribati inherited a legacy of administrative practices from the British colonial administration – most prominently, the practices which underpinned management of the grants of aid under the UK Colonial and Welfare Act and development planning.¹³⁵

Between independence in 1979 and 2019, the Government of Kiribati produced 13 national development plans.¹³⁶ These plans were often [although not always] crafted under the guidance of “expert” technical assistance, funded by a donor, and from outside Kiribati.¹³⁷ By the time the Compact was endorsed, the Government of Kiribati had instituted a process whereby individual ministries produced individual operational [and or business] plans which were compiled, usually by an expatriate “expert” technical advisor, into an overarching national development plan.¹³⁸

But delegation of the national development planning process presented contradictions. While national development plans were routinely produced - and served to trigger the release of aid flows from donors - not all, even at senior levels, were convinced of the value of the planning for Kiribati’s development aspirations. As President Tong commented, almost ruefully, to his key policy advisors and donors at the community consultations to develop the 2012 KDP [consultations which were funded by Australia]:

The purpose of this planning? It’s not our way in our culture. We wait for things to happen; but a Government must have a development plan...[and] it is important we do this in partnership with the community...¹³⁹

¹³⁵ MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*.

¹³⁶ See Appendix 10.3. Kiribati National Development Plans.

¹³⁷ Apart from 2008 and again [coincidentally, due to COVID] in 2020, the plans indicated that a technical advisor was contracted to lead the crafting of nearly all national development plans since independence.

¹³⁸ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

¹³⁹ Tong, A. 2011. National Development Plan and Climate Change. A recording of a workshop held in Tarawa on 16th-20th May 2011 in *#8 Kiribati Reitake Series* produced by Australian Aid: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

In practice, the plans emerged more often as useful bargaining tools rather than valued instruments of reflexive policy practice. There were two key issues: whether local leadership, authorship and consultation [and how much] was necessary to ensure local engagement and meaning; and whether the plans set priorities – or followed them, especially when the economic situation had changed so little over time.

Delegation – local leadership, authorship and consultation

In 2008, the Minister for Finance and Economic Development proudly declared that “local” policy advisors led the compilation of the national plan.¹⁴⁰ The local advisors, the Plans explained, drew from the individual Ministry plans, aided by extensive consultations across the Ministries in Tarawa, civil society, the private sector and the communities across the outer islands.

Curiously, while senior I-Kiribati policy advisors acknowledged the importance of writing your own strategic plans, - and claimed a shift in past practices of delegation – there was confusion about the link between operational and strategic plans. Only two national development plans, in 2008 and again in 2020, indicated that they were led and written by local I-Kiribati personnel. Otherwise, all the national development plans produced since independence appear to have been crafted by an external technical advisor under contract to the government of Kiribati, and funded by one or other donors [or sometimes, directly contracted

¹⁴⁰ See Minister’s Foreword in the 2008 Kiribati Development Plan: “For the very first time the compilation and formation of this plan has been nationally drive with our own local consultants, local officials, and the community at large...” in Government of Kiribati. 2008. *Kiribati Development Plan 2008-2011*. In comparison, the Ministers Foreword in the 2012 Kiribati Development Plan noted the financial support from AusAID and TA by the UN in the preparation and completion of this document. In 2016: the introduction noted that NEPO “was ably assisted by TA from the UN ESCAP and PRIF... assisted by ministry plans, consultation with the ministries, civil society and private sector.” In Government of Kiribati. 2016. *Kiribati Development Plan 2016-2019*:2.

by the donor]:

...these [the national development plans] are processes that are put in place for quite a while, but usually, we've had consultants come in and do our strategic plans, now it's our own individual Secretaries who are actually on top of it and working on it... and that's a reflection of increased ownership in the process... if other people set your strategic plans, sometimes, you don't really understand it, you don't value it and... know whether you are actually following it. But once you actually doing it, you can track it and you can monitor it ... and you can sort of, you know, feel you've achieved parts of it or it not, you can understand where the hurdle is, so you can sort of then help guide where the [development] assistance goes...that's been something I've observed for quite a while now, our own local people being more involved, being the ones who are the reporters and writers of the strategic plan...¹⁴¹

In 2012 and 2016, however, the Government reverted to past practices: expatriate technical advisors were engaged with the assistance of donor agencies to lead the national planning process. While the 2012 KDP was crafted through extensive consultation across the islands, consultations were limited for the 2016 KDP due to the “excessive” cost.¹⁴²

One senior policy advisor, acknowledging that the national development plans were more often coordinated and written by expatriate advisors, claimed that consultation with the government and wider community was sufficient to counteract the risk of misplaced or undue influence by an external advisor. Consultation, he argued, ensured that “the mind” of I-Kiribati shapes the development plans, even if they are written by external advisors.¹⁴³

But one of his counterparts asserted that the question of who wrote the national development plans, mattered for relevance, effectiveness and accountability. She argued:

...If other people set your strategic plans, sometimes, you don't really understand it, you don't value it ...[or]...know whether you are actually following it.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015. The interviewee explained that while each individual department constructed their own operational plans, the government secured Technical Assistance from the UN and other bilateral funded agencies, such as PRIF, to draft the NATIONAL plans.

¹⁴² Government of Kiribati. May 2012. *Kiribati National Development Plan 2012-2015*; and Government of Kiribati. 2016. *Kiribati Development Plan 2016-2019*.

¹⁴³ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SN-10112015.

¹⁴⁴ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

The conundrum was unresolved. The plans were a key performance measure in arrangements with the donors, including Australia. Delegation ensured the competent delivery of these key measures - and triggered aid flows.

Delegation - and Priorities:

The core development priorities identified in the three national plans under the Compact’s duration remained essentially the same – as they had, throughout the decades since independence. For some, this was a question of pragmatics; but for others, it indicated the size of the task of development. But it also suggests that the plans were more a bargaining tool and compliance measure than an instrument of learning and change.

Pragmatism played a valuable role in the way I-Kiribati policy advisors successfully bargained with donors. The plans were key instruments in this bargaining. Several interviewees observed that it was easy to find priorities which donors could align with, when everything was a priority. It was strategic to accept the donor’s interests in one area in order to secure resources to support I-Kiribati interests in other “priority” areas.¹⁴⁵

As policy advisor explained, negotiating priorities was a continuing balance. Sometimes, compromise and trade-offs were the only way to reach a deal, given there were always limits on funding. There was no point “butting heads”.¹⁴⁶ As the advisor continued:

...There are a lot of linkages in what you do, and that’s, I think, a key aspect of ...aid coordination, aid effectiveness and... the overall Government operation. ...you have to take the views of the, the

¹⁴⁵ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

¹⁴⁶ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

partners...why do you want to, you know, butt heads when that is, that is their priority and they are willing to help us...and they have, in that sense, [such as] in the education program...**but even then**, they are also open to your other priorities, not necessarily closing the door to other priorities but its...how you align that priority with their priority...there are spin-offs....there are also trade-offs....you have limited funding so you need to understand that ... there are positive and negative impact of whatever you do...¹⁴⁷

Rather, the way to achieve the bigger goal was to understand where donors were coming from, to take incremental steps and build the pathway, step by step: “pick the low-lying fruit”, she explained. Australia’s priority to support education was one such example.

...what we do now is, you know, pick the low-lying fruit... because you never know... you pick the low lying fruit and its spin-off effect is you actually address the bigger issue... if you try and address the bigger issue without looking at the all the little blocks, you may never be able to address that bigger issue...¹⁴⁸

These views reflected a pragmatism around doing what was possible, even if it was unclear where this might lead; rather than holding out for something that might not work at all. But, she reiterated, as others did, most believed that Kiribati’s development priorities would not change until Kiribati’s economic situation changed:

...in reality, these things don’t change too much, ...like, our Kiribati Development Plan from the previous four years and this year, the priorities haven’t changed much because, you know... life goes on, it’s not as if there’s a major, major change, it’s not as if our economic development has sort of, you know, drastically changed from the previous four years...basically, everything is relatively the same... ¹⁴⁹

It was a pragmatic decision to delegate responsibility for the plans. On the whole, the plans were seen as a bargaining tool - a tool to satisfy donor conditions - rather than an opportunity for reflexivity or innovation. Planning was a legacy of historical aid relations – and an expectation under the bilateral partnership agreement. Delegation of national planning was a familiar legacy of past practices in dealing with the *imatang*. Delegating a compliance measure

¹⁴⁷ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

¹⁴⁸ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

¹⁴⁹ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

to an external advisor [who was also funded by the donor to deliver the task] was a pragmatic and non-threatening way to deal with donors' expectations that the conditions of aid would be met. As one interviewee explained, disrupting - and reversing - the legacy of historical relations was a slow process of constant and conscious negotiation:

...I think for so long we've...been listening to ...the donor do the work for us and deliver things for us, because in Kiribati we have a culture of...what the *imatang* says is correct and it's the right way... and then, I guess, with getting education... and coming back, sort of, really, wake you up and say "No, it's us that need to change...i-Kiribati, we can't rely on everyone else because they are not always right." ...from a time when people tell us what to do, to a time when we are taking responsibility and saying "No, this will not work with Kiribati, that may be your priority not ours." I think we are slowly moving into that...now, they say, "Can we sit down and talk, we'll need your views on this..."¹⁵⁰

Good relations

Despite the adoption of delegation as a key strategy to deliver key outcomes agreed with the donors, when it came to good relations, Kiribati's policy advisors engaged reflexively and bargained with nuance. They drew on locally-situated knowledge to assert their priorities and create better outcomes for i-Kiribati. But while this suggested an acceptance of the legitimacy of the strategies of Ownership, it seemed that the adoption of these strategies could more plausibly be explained as an accident of historical legacy and a willingness to maintain good donor relations than as a validation of the Government of Kiribati's acceptance of the global idea of Ownership - irrespective of the agreement reached in Cairns [or Paris].

For many of those interviewed, their expectations were to influence the alignment of aid with I-Kiribati priorities through better dialogue and good relations. They sought to maintain the status quo in aid relations, but do it better through bringing the local knowledge to the table. Donors' expectations were met; and aid continued to flow. But, it seemed, there was little

¹⁵⁰ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-BTG-30112015.

interest in innovation in aid relations. There were no signs of the contestation, of that friction across local and global [policy] norms that might suggest a shift in, a re-negotiation of, power by Kiribati's policy advisors [or their political leadership] towards the exercise of Ownership of development. Relations remained framed by the shape of the status quo. Performance of the measures laid out by Paris and reaffirmed by the Compact remained the standard [or conditions] by which aid relations were measured and maintained, either through reflexivity or bargaining [especially through delegation to consultants] despite the evidence of individual participation which drew on locally situated knowledge [as advocated by Ostrom]. Participation was negotiated with a view to maintaining good relations and ensuring aid flows - rather than the assertion of Ownership of aid for development.

However, there was a further twist in my research puzzle, in Kiribati. While my analysis thus far could argue that the maintenance of good relations and compliance with the measures of Paris Declaration might indicate a straightforward illustration of isomorphic mimicry, this conclusion was inconsistent with reports in other arenas of development in Kiribati. President Tong's global and regional advocacy and leadership on fish licence fees, under the Parties to the Nauru Arrangements; and the recognition of his leadership as a "global champion" on climate change, contradicted the inference that I-Kiribati political leadership and policy advisors simply followed form rather than substance. In these arenas, Kiribati's political leaders and policy advisors demonstrated political leadership and advocacy: to secure economic benefits from the fish in Kiribati's territorial waters; and to ensure their survival in the face of a changing climate. But these pursuits were conducted largely outside the orbit of the Compact [or Paris Declaration] or the global idea of Ownership at their heart.

To understand this contradiction, I needed to go beyond the global idea of Ownership proposed by Ostrom *et al* and the Paris Declaration, to examine what Ownership meant for the local political leadership and policy advisors in Kiribati. In the next part of the story of Kiribati, I examine the local significance attributed to Ownership to understand why I-Kiribati seemed uninterested in “owning” aid – yet were actively leading in other arenas of development.

Chapter 11 Kiribati: “Sovereign... Over the Fish...”¹

11.1 Introduction

The first part of story in Kiribati suggested that I-Kiribati were interested in neither the global idea of Ownership despite the apparent implementation of the strategies of Ownership. Yet, there was a contradiction that puzzled: Kiribati’s political leadership and policy advisors had demonstrated leadership and advocacy in other arenas of development. President Tong had been acclaimed as a “global champion” of advocacy on climate change; and Kiribati was actively pursuing commercialisation of its fish under a unique arrangement, through the Parties to the Nauru Agreement. Next, I examined the local significance attributed to Ownership to understand why I-Kiribati seemed uninterested in “owning” aid – yet were willing to actively lead in other arenas of development.

11.2 The Significance of Ownership – for I-Kiribati

I invited interviewees to discuss what the idea of Ownership of under the Compact, or the Paris Declaration before it, represented for them. Two threads emerged from these discussions: the first was a broader conversation about the effectiveness of aid in achieving development; and the second was about identity, what it meant to be a “true I-Kiribati”. Ownership of development, I realised, was significant for Kiribati’s political leadership and policy advisors; but it was not to be found in the “road map” laid out by global idea of Ownership affirmed by the Compact [and the Paris Declaration prior].² For I-Kiribati, the

¹ Confidential interview-Kiribati Government-SS-10112015.

² See Chapter 2 Conceptualising Ownership: Unpacking the Policy Logic and Chapter 3 A Conceptual Framework: Understanding Policy Change, particularly Goldstein et al’s explanation of an idea as a “road map” which organises and sequences behaviours and practices.

concept of Ownership of development emerged from a very different sense of connection, across history, identity and place.

11.2.1 Values and Beliefs about Ownership, Aid and Development

The significance attributed to the idea of ownership differed between political leaders and policy advisors. But they shared a common belief: that personal responsibility and economic self-reliance were necessary for genuine Ownership of development. Good relations with donors was necessary, until fishing was able to be converted into meaningful revenue. But aid was not the answer to Kiribati's development challenges. The path to development, they all agreed, lay in exploiting the ocean resources over which they held sovereignty: the fish; not aid.

Political leaders' views

For political leaders, the concept of Ownership was entwined with aspirations for political and economic independence. Ownership was both the means and the outcome of the economic self-reliance which gave legitimacy to political independence. Economic self-reliance enabled a country to deter others from dictating terms simply because they held greater economic power. Economic self-reliance, "standing on your own two feet,"³ was integral to the autonomy as an I-Kiribati. Economic self-reliance meant one could uphold one's responsibilities according to I-Kiribati moral values, while maintaining and engendering respect for the standards of the international community.

³ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

What Ownership is: "You are the master of that, you control it..."

Ownership, one elder statesman and long-term Member of Parliament explained is "when you own something, you are the master of that, you control it".⁴ Ownership, he asserted, entailed self-reliance and self-sufficiency. It was another way of describing the "true economic independence" that comes from making decisions about your own future, with your own resources, and without being "pushed around by some other country":

...Yes, well, political independence, no problem I think we have it...sometimes influenced, sometimes you know, pushed from behind, or pushed from the side. But economic independence is far more important, I think, when people are able to move on, and do things with economic power, as families, as individuals, as a country - not being dictated by some other countries to make a turn when they don't want to turn...so that's to me the economic independence is something we are looking for, self-reliant is another way of putting it.... There are true economic independence when Kiribati can make a decision about its future with the resource it has without having to be pushed around by some other country saying, "No no, that's not the right way." It's right, if it is right according to the eyes of the Kiribati people and according to the international standards, international morals... the economic independence we are far from achieving and that I think is the priority we must continue to focus on that.....yes, the concept of ownership, when you own something you are the master of that, you control it, right, so ownership is another way of looking at it...independence, ownership...they are inter-related in my view.⁵

Another elder statesman described the way to achieve Ownership of development. One needed "a clear full map" outlining one's purpose and the means to generate one's own income, he asserted. Generating your own income was crucial to ensure the capacity to make independent decisions rather than under the influence of donors. Economic self-reliance ensured one could protect one's autonomy. The fish, he offered, held the prospect of self-reliance:

...You cannot have ownership ... without a clear statement of what you want to achieve for this country. When you don't have that clear full map as it were, of where you want to go, then you are very likely, very easy to persuade you to go that way and the most likely people do to that are the donors because the donors have the money and if you don't have a clear way where you want to go, then they can persuade [you]...sometimes you change the policy along the way and that can happen if you are not really committed to it... but when [you have] the policy, the commitment, then you will own the process of development... I would like to think we are acting that way...we are beginning to see some positive changes in our ability to run our own things because the key to that is earning our

⁴ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-SS-22112015.

⁵ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-SS-22112015.

own income, because, all these things [aid, development, priorities, the forum] are important as well, but you can never avoid, at the end of the day, having to say, “How are we going to protect ourselves? How are we going to run our affairs, if the income, the money income is not there? ...without that we really cannot hope to aspire for our things materially...as I see it... [the focus] is really on fisheries development...that is where the obvious advantages are ...⁶

Policies - and commitment - were too easily diverted by others’ influence, if one relied on others [such as donors] for the resources required to pursue one’s vision for development.⁷

Policy advisors’ views

While the political leadership sought to assert authority over their path to development, for those charged with the task of implementing the strategies of Ownership in accord with Kiribati’s commitment to the Compact in Cairns, the path to development was more fluid. Until Kiribati was earning its own income, from its own resources, these policy advisors carried the responsibility of ensuring services were maintained – and improved, to meet the needs of a growing population.⁸ Given the Government’s historically limited revenue, that meant that aid must continue to flow - which meant maintaining good relations with the donors. For the policy advisors, responsible for negotiating the course between their leaders’ certainty and good relations with the donors, the idea of Ownership promoted by the Compact represented varied challenges.

Some amongst the senior Government policy advisors claimed that Ownership was exercised in Kiribati. But how it was exercised, and to what ends, differed. Others simply rejected the

⁶ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-JU-16112015.

⁷ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-JU-16112015.

⁸ In 2010, the population of Kiribati was estimated at 103,058 with half of the population, 50,182 residing in Tarawa. The Report advises a current population of 119,438, with final analysis of the 2020 Census pending. Government of Kiribati and Secretariat of the Pacific Community. 2013. *Kiribati 2010 Census*. Vol 2: Analytical report.

global idea of Ownership: aid, they asserted, was owned by the donors. And that was how it was. The best option was to make the most of it.

Alignment with Paris: Ownership as influence

Only one senior policy advisor of all those I interviewed drew on the global idea of Ownership as promoted by the Compact [and the Paris Declaration before it]. He associated Ownership unhesitatingly with the national development plans. He argued that, even if, for example, national development plans were crafted with the assistance of external technical advisors, the plans were still owned by I-Kiribati because they reflected and captured "the mind," of the local people, the intentions and priorities of I-Kiribati. Ownership, he said, was about whose thinking guides the process of development planning:

Country ownership...it does exist here, it does exist because our national plans...though there were some technical TA that helped in the formulation of the national plans, but its purely from the local people eh, its ah, the process is ... the development of the national policy is 100% driven by the mind of the i-Kiribati...so we own that and given that we want donors to ...[we tell donors, this is] where you can put your money, this is what we want...I haven't seen a lot of programs that funded by the donors that are not really not consistent with the national plans...but the idea is ours...⁹

Drawing on the World Bank metaphor, he asserted that now countries "sat" in the driver's seat while donors sat in the passenger seat.¹⁰ But while his use of the metaphor referenced the global messaging on Ownership promoted by donors, his interpretation of their message was suggested donors still dominated decisions, and rightly so. Countries, he said, should be "in the driver's seat".¹¹ However, I-Kiribati would continue to listen to donors, he said. Often, the donor will know what's best for Kiribati:

⁹ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SN-10112015.

¹⁰ As noted previously, this metaphor was famously observed by James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, who declared that "ownership would put countries in the driving seat." Wolfensohn, J. 21/1/1999. A Proposal for A Comprehensive Development Framework.

¹¹ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SN-10112015.

...I told my staff...[ownership] it's about the process that we do things but it doesn't really prevent the donors to tell us what's best for us...in fact....that concept of country ownership eh ...if a donor come up with a totally new ideas, ...(and) it's not included in the national plan, but I think if we do see it's a very important program too...I was proposing we do accept that, as long as it does really address [the problem]....of course, that could be seen as donor-driven thing, but for me, that's part of ownership....¹²

From the driver's seat, he explained, even if a donor told Kiribati which direction to take, Kiribati could decide at what pace to take the route:

...before we used to say, that we, the country, drive the car, in the driver's seat and the donor sit in the passenger seat, but now I think that we should be sitting at the front but I still drive the car... but at least we still can see...that's donor [say], "left there", but I still drive and I turn to my own pace...¹³

Ownership as personal responsibility for contributing

Others of his colleagues took a more individual and personal stance on what constituted Ownership of development. Ownership, one senior policy advisor explained, was "what you make of it".¹⁴

...if you don't contribute, you don't speak up, you don't get anything,...ownership is what you make of it... you have to speak up at the time and if you don't speak up and a decision is made, and you are part of that decision, you can't say afterwards, 'No that's not mine, I wasn't part of it, that decision, its wrong.' Everybody was part of that decision...¹⁵

Scepticism

For some policy advisors, there was scepticism about the authenticity of the claims of a mutual alignment of interests asserted by the global idea of Ownership. Often, one policy advisor explained, donors were more interested in disbursing funds [and usually quickly] to promote their own personal benefit rather than to achieve results on the ground:

...I still see donors competing against themselves...they sort of just want to get the project funds dispersed ...for the sake of their job, no? ... not caring much what's the results, that what I see...¹⁶

¹² Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SN-10112015.

¹³ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SN-10112015.

¹⁴ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-UM-05122015.

¹⁵ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-UM-05122015.

¹⁶ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-11112015.

Aid, its not ours – and so, you don't care

At the heart of the scepticism about Ownership, however, was a critical admission: few policy advisors believed that they exercised any control over aid flows, "in reality". As one of the most senior advisors in government, who engaged at senior levels with donors across the region, explained:

...It's the reality, whoever supply the funds, they dictate how the funds are to be dispersed.¹⁷

Another said it simply did not matter whether aid was used effectively and efficiently, because it was "public" money. As this senior policy advisor, previously responsible for managing Government finances, asserted: because I-Kiribati did not control the aid, because it did not belong to I- Kiribati, he managing aid "responsibly" did not matter.¹⁸

He explained: when it's "your own money" you are going to use it properly. But when it is not your money, "you don't care as much" how you use it.¹⁹ Despite claims that aid flows were tied to performance, he said, "aid is always available."²⁰ Donors continued to offer aid. So who would not take aid "when its offered," he challenged, rather than draw on your own reserves?²¹ He recalled a meeting with aid advisors from New Zealand, when he was in the Ministry for Finance:

..One time, we had a meeting with New Zealand (who said), "Now, you are still depending on aid, you have your own (reserve) fund... how long will you be depending on aid?... [and] I said, "When are you going to stop giving us aid?...Why not receive it, take it when its offered? I won't take it when it's not there, I will have (use) my reserve fund... because aid is always available, this is the problem...there's a difference, because, this, your own fund, you going to make sure you use it properly, utilise it better than...you do with grant funding... if it's just a grant fund, just spend it and don't really care as much as your do with your own reserve fund..."²²

¹⁷ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-UM-05122015.

¹⁸ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-11112015.

¹⁹ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-11112015.

²⁰ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-11112015.

²¹ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-11112015.

²² Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-11112015.

He drew an analogy with the Government-supplied house in which he and his family lived as part of his conditions of employment with the Government, to explain this seeming paradox. “Owning” aid, he said, was a bit like the house he lived in. His home was a Government-provided house, and so, he explained, “it’s not totally mine” and he did not feel responsible for its maintenance. He didn’t “really care” about the results. Pursuing the analogy, he explained, he didn’t own the house – and he didn’t own the aid:

...like me, it’s a foreign house, it’s not totally mine, I don’t care if I don’t really look after it ...I’m not really caring what the result is... because aid is a grant... Government money, grants, the same, because it’s not mine... it’s for the public... [and so] I don’t really care ...[like with] this house.... you don’t have the ownership...maybe the ownership is different... the money or the grant is not my own money, its taxpayers’ money, somewhere...²³

It was certainly better to take aid when it was offered, he explained, than to draw down on your reserves, the trust fund. This, he declared, was a typical I-Kiribati trait, to keep your own resources, those you do control, in reserve. Saving for tomorrow was a sign of a good and wise I-Kiribati.²⁴

Aid: a symbol of friendship - or dependency

While aid might offer the benefit of supporting infrastructure development, senior leaders saw it primarily as a symbol of friendship - and a useful bargaining tool amongst “friends”. In supporting investment, aid could help build reciprocal relations and demonstrate friendship.

As a senior statesman and member of the *Maneaba* explained:

“Aid was supposed to be... used to create infrastructure, basic infrastructure.... communication, transportation, those things, industries. We need those. People out there are keen to help... our relationships with other countries... so when you are receiving them you are kind of being friendly, they are being friendly with you, being friendly with them helps create a nice networks of friends in the international world right.....(but) my... view about aid then and now, has not changed. You see, aid is a tool from good people outside there that we must use to enable us to be, to be strong and to

²³ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-11112015.

²⁴ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-11112015.

be able to move on with less of it in the future, right or with none of it in the future you see? ...you know, you pick and choose too, aid is a kind of a, a symbol of friendship. So there are those friends out there you are very familiar with, you are comfortable with, when they come you more than welcome and you know that in some ways you can also reciprocate, I believe in it being that kind of tool to help... the developing country like Kiribati move forward... being able to do better next time. Also being able to have good friends out there that can reciprocate with in other ways...²⁵

But even while aid might be viewed by some as a symbol of friendship, no one saw aid as a long-term pathway to development. Aid was a tool to become strong enough, as a country, to build a future without aid. When aid created dependency, it was a problem. Each time an aid project ignored local needs and capacity, then it built dependency. As the same elder statesman continued:

(aid dependence is ...)...when we are asking, see Australia, to come assist us (with) classroom construction, and then there are certain friends, come, create and provide pictures and things: "this is the design" – and (then) they design something that we cannot maintain, that is you know, that is not within the capability of a country... then that is not going to make us less dependent in the future, ...its built, and then after five, six, seven, eight years, we have to call for aid again, to fix it because we don't have the capability to service that because the design and what have you is not within [the capability of the country]....²⁶

Ownership, the interviews revealed, entailed legitimate authority and jurisdiction over a resource. And thus, the pathway to development ensured exercising mastery, or sovereignty, over a resource which one legitimately had jurisdiction. Exercise over one's legitimate sovereign resource generated the genuine economic self-reliance which gave legitimacy to political independence.

While I-Kiribati attitudes to the Ownership of aid - and aid relations - were ambivalent and conditional, there was no ambiguity "in the mind" of the I-Kiribati about who owned the fish or their significance for development. This was where Kiribati's priorities for exercising

²⁵ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-SS-22112015.

²⁶ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-SS-22112015.

Ownership of development lay. Overwhelmingly, both political leaders and policy advisors agreed that the pathway to development lay in securing an alternative source of revenue. A resource over which I-Kiribati unambiguously exercised mastery and control:

...we want to exercise our sovereign right...over the fish...²⁷

11.2.2 Ownership of the Fish

All interviewees strongly asserted ownership over the fish - and the right to access the potential of other ocean-wealth - as the pathway to achieve Kiribati's development aspirations. The fish were seen either as a means to support subsistence livelihoods to put food on the table for the family; or as a resource for the benefit of the whole country, through deals on licence fees, negotiated, increasingly, under the umbrella of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement [PNA].

The exchange was clear and dignified. Ownership, or sovereignty over the oceans, was unambiguous: the tuna and other fish swam in Kiribati's 3.5km² Exclusive Economic Zone [EEZ] and this clearly belonged to the I-Kiribati.²⁸ Kiribati was willing to grant others access to the fish that swam in their 3.5m^{km2} of ocean-territory in exchange for a fair share of market value.²⁹

While it was important to ensure the ocean's resources remained sustainable, the right to

²⁷ Confidential interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-10112015.

²⁸ See UNCLOS Webpage.

²⁹ President Tong at the 2005 UNGA High Level Plenary Meeting endorsed the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, particularly its recommendations that: "...resource owners should participate in fisheries activities in order to achieve better economic returns and to enhance their role in resource management: distant water fishing nations should negotiate access agreements with the developing coastal States on a basis that is equitable and sustainable; and distant water nations should increase progressively the participation of coastal States in fisheries activities, including the processing of catching within the territory of the resource owners, thereby creating employment and further contributing to the sustainable development of developing coastal states." Tong, A. 16/9/2005. Statement by the President of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA. 60th session 8th Plenary Meeting. A/60/PV.8:9.

rewards was unambiguous. With the advent of the PNA arrangements,³⁰ there was growing optimism amongst Kiribati's political leadership and policy advisors that the fish would finally, bring its rewards:

...[the focus] is really on fisheries development ...and things are happening so far, for the last three years.³¹

11.2.3 The Evolving Puzzle

I began my interrogation of the local significance of Ownership with a conundrum: the strategies of Ownership were implemented and the measures were delivered. Yet, I found an ambivalence around the relevance of the global idea of Ownership for I-Kiribati. For I-Kiribati, ownership, represented the exercise of a legitimate mastery or sovereignty over a resource. That legitimate authority did not extend to aid. Few in Kiribati believed they controlled aid. It belonged, legitimately, to the donor. Aid was not viewed as a pathway to development. Rather, I-Kiribati would rather rely on the resource over which they knew they exercised legitimate authority: the ocean's wealth, its fish. This left an ambivalence about the relationship between aid, relations with donors and development that continued to puzzle.

I turned again to the data. This time, I examined the historical archives of development planning and aid relations, in light of the transcripts of interviews. My intention was to understand the origins of contemporary aid relations in Kiribati and the influence of I-Kiribati identity, to better understand the ambivalence that seemed to imbue aid – and aid relations.

³⁰ Aqorau, T. 2019. *Fishing for Success: Lessons in Pacific Regionalism*.

³¹ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-JU-16112015. See Appendix 10.2 Analysis: Implementing "Best Practice" In Ownership in Kiribati, which describes the increase in Government revenue under the VDS between 2013 and 2017 in more detail.

I re-visited the earlier discussion in the *Maneaba* on how critical economic self-reliance was to I-Kiribati's political independence – and sense of autonomy and survival.

11.3 The Story: Autonomy, Self Sufficiency and Survival

More often, when I spoke to interviewees, it was family, fish, the sea and land – particularly the home island – bound together by Christianity and the meeting place of the village *maneaba*, that held allegiances for “a true I-Kiribati”. Connection and relationships, across people and place, were key. As one advisor explained, the I-Kiribati identity was shaped by the connection between the people, the sea and their islands, between “the environment and us, as ocean people”.³²

11.3.1 A “True I-Kiribati”

The I-Kiribati respect for the dignity of autonomy and self-sufficiency draws from a deep, strongly-woven connection across sea, island and family.³³ A “true I-Kiribati” knew his or her role and responsibilities in the family, and in the *maneaba*, according to designated relations.³⁴

³² Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-BTG-30112015.

³³ Heer, J. 2010. *Kiribati: The President's Dilemma* Interview with President Anote Tong and directed by James Heer.

³⁴ Itaia, M. 1992. Rebirth: Te Mauri, Te Raoi ao te Tabomoa, Mauna Itaia, in A. Talu, et al. *Kiribati Aspects of History*, 121-128. Note: I-Kiribati scholars report variations in the traditions between the North and South Tarawa islands of the Gilbert group, which were the most populated islands and where the British, then the independent republic, established the Government and commercial centre of Tarawa. This text, published by local authors on the eve of independence for the purpose of asserting a local voice on the “history” of the new republic, gives prominence to the *kaainga* as the primary Gilbertese social grouping and the basis of the organisation of the *maneaba* or meeting house. The *kaainga* was constituted by several extended *te utu* or families, who would have authority over an area of land; in the north, the text says, most *kaainga* would share the one *maneaba* whereas in the southern islands, the *kaainga* did not have a *maneaba* of its own but rights to a *boti* or sitting place in a district *maneaba*. Leadership of the *kaainga* was held by the eldest male, known as the *batua*; he was able to reprimand, or expel any who went against accepted standards of behaviour [most lived with their father's *kaainga* so if expelled would return to their mother's *kaainga*]. The *batua* organised the distribution of work and regulated affairs within the *kaainga*, and represented the *kaainga* in relations with other *kaainga* across the islands. In Talu, A. et al. 1992. *Kiribati Aspects of History*, 12-14. A second local text, authored a decade later, explained it slightly differently: in the north, it explains, the political traditions were led primarily by a chiefly system; while in the south, the *unimane* or elders council held authority: and the *maneaba* was the place where the *te utu* [families] gathered to discuss matters of social political and economic significance. Mason, L (ed). 1985. *Kiribati: A Changing Atoll Culture*, 5.

In more recent times, many I-Kiribati also acknowledged their contribution as a Christian.³⁵ In such an environment, a "true I-Kiribati," stands on their own two feet to look after their family. When necessary, strength comes through co-operation with others to face - or celebrate - the elements, to deal with the cycles of drought and famine and the challenge to survive in a finely balanced environment.

One of the elder statesmen whom I interviewed summarised the characteristics of a "true I-Kiribati". He reflected on respect for the dignity of autonomy and self-sufficiency, reflecting the values of self-reliance, thrift and pragmatism - and ultimately, of survival:

...an I-Kiribati person is a very self-reliant person, a person who believes that he, that he or she, should be able to meet its own needs, on a day to day basis. An I-Kiribati believes in having a family that he or she can look after well. A family that can develop, that can educate ...(and) ...meet the needs of the children. I-Kiribati feels proud, always proud, a very proud person of what he or she can do, or what he or she is like as a person... they are taught to ... stand on their own two feet. To also care and share. There's a lot of that as a family.... [they are] strong, but their strength also depends on the cooperation... they know that they need to work together. In the village they need to work together to build the huge *maneaba* where they can come ...have feast, functions, and talk about common affairs, deal with common problems. Come up with common solutions. That's the Kiribati way, very communal people. But they're strong as individuals, they need to be strong. They need to face the elements. The elements here are quite tough. Living on an island like this requires you to be up every morning and be sure you are always there to face the elements. You go out in the sea, you go out in the bush, you got to survive. I-Kiribati are good survivors. Even when things are difficult, Kiribati people enjoy that, enjoy surviving through difficult times. That's what they, the joy they get out of life is when they are able to succeed over the many challenges, the great challenges they face from a very limited environment...I have the typical Kiribati thinking about reserve. Like the reserve fish, reserve toddy, we keep it, I come from the south of Kiribati, which is very prone to droughts, so we think it is good wisdom to always leave something behind, something happen today or tomorrow or the day after... so we always save. The northern Kiribati is a bit different because they are plenty, every day, rainy and fertile... they don't have to stock up food and things for the bad times... but I do that. That's my way of thinking and going into... [discussions of government]... I'm a true I-Kiribati in spirit and in blood and in culture. Born that way, raised that way, but I also want to be part of the world... That's growing out, not the other way round: strength from inside outwards.³⁶

But overwhelmingly, a "true I-Kiribati" knew that while strength comes from within, to live life is to recognise one's vulnerability: amongst the scattered atoll-islands and vast oceans, life -

³⁵ Mason, L (ed). 1985. *Kiribati: A Changing Atoll Culture*.

³⁶ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-SS-22112015.

and survival - was not taken for granted. Cooperation and trust were essential to survival.

As the different conversations unfolded, I realised that the older I-Kiribati still recalled relations with their British colonisers poorly. The relations had been marked by a disrespect which left its mark on the I-Kiribati. The rupture in relations generated by the British departure still resonated in contemporary relations with the *imatang* – including the donors.

11.3.2 Independence: Abandonment and Distrust

Trust was a premium that the British did not feel obliged to honour in their dealings with the Gilbert Islands Colony. They had arrived without an invitation and left the same way - once they, and the pastoralists of Australia and New Zealand, had made their fortunes from Banaba's phosphate.³⁷

As the [then] Government of the Gilbert Islands explained as they approached independence in 1979, the British seafarer who claimed their islands in the name of the Queen Victoria in 1982, Captain Davis, did not seek the agreement of the Gilbertese inhabiting Tungaru. Despite his claims of consultation with the islands' people, he came, as the pre-independence government observed drily, with a gunboat – and he consulted the European traders, not the

³⁷ The British Phosphate Commission [BPC] formed by the Governments of Australia, Britain and New Zealand, managed extraction of phosphate from Christmas Island, Nauru and Banaba from 1920 -1981. Australia built much of its wealth on the back of the phosphate: Australia's soils were "notoriously" low in phosphorous and agriculture was Australia's economic mainstay in the mid-20th century: but it needed cheap fertiliser. Australian scientists enhanced the phosphate from Banaba [and Nauru and Christmas islands] to create superphosphate, which, combined with subterranean clover, facilitated wool production across the country. (See Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering. n.d. Technology in Australia 1788-1988: The Australian Chemical Industry: Fertilisers, 603.) As Byerlee reports: "The adoption of superphosphate was a critical factor in developing productive and sustainable farming systems in Australia, although at the expense of Pacific islands who prior to WW2 received token benefits and were ultimately left with a highly degraded landscape." See Byerlee, D. 2021. The Super State: The Political Economy of Phosphate Fertilizer Use in South Australia, 1880-1940.

people of Tungaru:

...It was matter of superior force. When you arrive with a gunboat and make a proclamation, people are unlikely to object...Capt. Davis consulted with European traders not with the Gilbertese...no mention is made of the agreement of the people. It was not a treaty. There were no local signatories. The fact is that we found ourselves being administered by the British whether we liked it or not...on reflection we might be fair enough to admit that it brought some improvement...³⁸

Ironically, indicating the pragmatism of "a true I-Kiribati," the pre-independence Government reflected, nearly 90 years later, that it was reasonable to acknowledge that Captain Davis' unsolicited (and likely false) proclamation had brought some benefits.

The British left the same way they arrived: without being invited to do so by the I-Kiribati. As the new Republic's first *te Beretitenti*, Ieremai Tabai, explained, the Gilbert Islands Colony had not sought independence. The British were eager to leave, explained President Tabai, following the "fashion" of the time:

... the whole process (of independence) was helped by the attitude of the British Government who were very keen to call it a day. They said it was no longer fashionable to have colonies and their role was to get us organised and ready to be on our own.....really, our masters were keen to leave us at any time...the British decided that phosphate mining would end in 1979, so on independence day we lost our main sources of income and since then its affected the level of services we can provide.... We accepted that, but it is very hard...³⁹

Britain's decision to leave the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony had been impelled more by the "wind of change" across the Empire⁴⁰ and the imminent exhaustion of the phosphate on Banaba, rather than consideration for I-Kiribati wishes.⁴¹ Independence was granted in 1979.

³⁸ Government of the Gilbert Islands. 1977. *Ocean Island - Some Facts the Banabans Ignore, issued on behalf of the Government of the Gilbert Islands*. As the pamphlet observed: "...To anyone who knows how long it takes to secure consensus in a *maneaba*, it is obvious that it would have [been] impossible for Capt. Davis...to have secured willing acquiescence to a British protectorate from sixteen widely dispersed islands between 27 May and 12 June, particularly when some of them were actually at war with one another."

³⁹ Tabai, I. 2012. Interview with President Ieremia Tabai of Kiribati, in I. Johnstone and M. Powles [eds]. 2012. *New Flags Flying: Pacific Leadership*, 188-192.

⁴⁰ MacDonald, B. 2001. *Cinderellas of the Empire: Towards a history of Kiribati and Tuvalu*, 221.

⁴¹ Republic of Kiribati. 1979. *Kiribati National Development Plan 1979-1982*; Mooring, G. and D. Hollos, J. Inman, J. Keigwin, G. McRobie. May 1968. *A Socio-Economic Survey of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands*, "The Mooring Report", Commissioned by the Ministry of Overseas Development May 1968 London.

When Britain's Queen Elizabeth assented to the Kiribati Order of Independence,⁴² the people of Kiribati lost the security and confidence of protection under the world's [then] largest and most powerful patron, as well as access to the revenue that had secured one of the highest standards of living in the Pacific.⁴³ It was the task of the young, new Zealand-educated President Tabai and his colleagues to rebuild confidence and lead the new Republic to the economic self-reliance that gave power to political independence. The new Government of the Republic of Kiribati was responsible for reconciling the challenge of the growing, increasingly urban and young population's expectations of high living standards – as experienced under the British and the phosphate profits – while identifying an alternative source of revenue [and the skills and capacity] to support those expectations.⁴⁴

Kiribati lost its main sources of income: the phosphate – which offered revenue in the form of taxes and the remittances from the employment of between 600-700 Gilbertese; and assured access to the British Colonial Development and Welfare grants. The mine's exhaustion was forecast a decade before the British left: and higher volumes were mined in the last few years to ensure the British Phosphate Company [BPC] gained the maximum value from the mine.⁴⁵ When the British left, only the tailings remained on Banaba for the new Republic's Government to sift through. That left the grants - aid - as the only option for negotiation. President Tabai and his new Government realised that there was little point debating the loss of the phosphate revenue: Britain considered it had honoured its obligations through topping-

⁴² The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council. 26 June 1979. The Kiribati Independence Order 1979: No.179 Pacific Islands. London.

⁴³ United Nations Department of Political Affairs Trusteeship and Decolonisation. 1979. Decolonisation: Issue on Kiribati (Gilbert Islands) No.15, July 1979.

⁴⁴ Government of Kiribati. 1979. *Kiribati National Development Plan 1979-1982*.

⁴⁵ Mooring, G. et al. May 1968. *A Socio-Economic Survey of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands*, "The Mooring Report".

up the RERF in the final years of its administration. But Tabai and his colleagues persevered, despite their reluctance to take aid. They secured additional aid in the form of the Independence Settlement Agreement: an agreement to fund recurrent services [for another five years, with an option to renegotiate] as well as ongoing development aid.

While aid [from Britain and others] was accepted by President Tabai and his Government until an alternative source of revenue was found, it was always seen as a stop-gap, “an interim measure”.⁴⁶ Tabai recalled his Government’s decision to reject British [recurrent] aid in post-independence Kiribati in advance of the negotiated schedule:

...I strongly believe independence must be accompanied by economic independence and so we gave up, ahead of schedule, the aid Britain had promised to us over a five-year period. We weren’t economically independent then, but we wanted to show we were on the way to doing things for ourselves.⁴⁷

What President Tabai and the new Republic sought was economic independence, alongside its new political independence. As true I-Kiribati, they wanted the dignity that comes from exercising autonomy and self-sufficiency. They sought the “economic power” that comes from leveraging a living from exploiting one’s own resources, without recourse to others’ authority or conditions. Despite the grand gesture made by Tabai and his Government, Kiribati was soon registered by the UN as an LDC. It has remained heavily dependent on aid since.⁴⁸

The dependency on aid - and the distrust of those who offered it - was exacerbated by the

⁴⁶ Tabai, I. 2012. Interview with President Ieremia Tabai of Kiribati, in I. Johnstone and M. Powles, [Eds], *New Flags Flying: Pacific Leadership*, 188-193.

⁴⁷ Tabai, I. 2012. Interview with President Ieremia Tabai of Kiribati, in I. Johnstone and M. Powles [eds]. 2012. *New Flags Flying: Pacific Leadership*, 193.

⁴⁸ Pryke J. 17/9/2013. Rising Aid Dependency in the Pacific. DevPolicy Blog; Dornan, M. and J. Pryke. September 2017. Foreign Aid to the Pacific: Trends and Developments in the Twenty-First Century: Foreign Aid to the Pacific. *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* 4(3):386-404.

decades of failure to commercialise the ocean's resources for global markets - especially, the "obvious" source, the fish. In the first national development plan produced during the transition to independence, the ocean's resources - especially the fish - were nominated as the resource capable of resolving the development task assigned at independence.⁴⁹ Commercialisation of the fish remained a key platform for development across the decades. As interviewees acknowledged,

...the priorities...haven't changed much because, you know, life goes on. It's not as if there's a major change, it's not as if our economic development has sort of, you know, drastically changed from the previous four years... basically, everything is relatively the same...⁵⁰

Aid funds were dedicated to supported fisheries management and related programs.⁵¹ In the fifty years following independence, no aid-funded initiatives successfully facilitated the commercialisation of the fish and other ocean resources in a way which secured the future of Kiribati. There were small successes.⁵² But Kiribati failed to secure the kinds of deals or the volume of revenue capable of delivering the development and the level of services which the growing population of I-Kiribati needed, or desired.⁵³

Increasingly, I-Kiribati saw the profits of its "abundant resource" going primarily to the Distant

⁴⁹ Government of Kiribati. 1979. *Kiribati National Development Plan 1979-1982*.

⁵⁰ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

⁵¹ Appendix 10.3 Kiribati National Development Plans.

⁵² For example, the 1989 Fisheries Division Annual report notes success in training, fish processing and marketing, fish farming; but challenges in experimental fishing and seaweed harvesting and research collaboration – the major source of revenue - licensing of foreign fishing vessels – reflected bilateral access agreements with Japan [pole and line and longline fleets] and Korea [longline fleets]; USA [purse seine fleet]; and American Samoa [longline fleet]. Revenue in 1989 was nearly \$3m – 62% higher than the previous year. Government of Kiribati. 1989. *Annual Report*. Ministry of Natural Resources Development: Fisheries Division.

⁵³ "Kiribati has a large exclusive economic zone that has an abundant fisheries resource. Those resources are presently being harvested by vessels from distant-water fishing nations under license. However, the return from these licensing arrangement is negligible, at only around 5 percent of the landed value of the catch. Naturally, we would like to see greater returns from that resource." Tong, A., 28/9/2004 Statement by President of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA. 59th Session 14th Plenary Meeting. A/59/PV.14:3.

Water Fishing Nations [DWFNs], not to people of Kiribati.⁵⁴ The arrangements with the DWFNs were, the President asserted, neither equitable for his people, nor sustainable for the fish stocks. As President Tong told his colleagues at the UN:

...we would like to see greater returns from this resource. Our ability to achieve sustainable economic development depends on it...distant water fishing nations should negotiate access agreements with developing coastal states on a basis that is **equitable and sustainable**...⁵⁵

In the absence of a secure and sufficient alternative revenue source, Kiribati remained economically vulnerable – and reliant on aid. But I-Kiribati's ongoing experience of aid since independence was an ongoing story of disappointment and dependence, rather than independence and optimism.

aid has to be, you know, ...to increase our independence...rather than the other way round, rather than to increase our dependence...⁵⁶

In 2009, Kiribati not only remained listed as one of four Pacific countries assigned the status of least developed country, it argued at the UN to remain so, even though it had repeatedly met two of the criteria for graduation.⁵⁷ This remained the situation in 2015 [and 2018], when ECOSOC again deferred Kiribati's graduation from LDC status, at Kiribati's request.⁵⁸ Without

⁵⁴ President Tong noted in his address to the UNGA: "However, the return from the licencing arrangements are negligible at only around 5% of the landed value of the catch. Naturally, we would like to see greater returns from this resource. Our ability to achieve sustainable economic development depends on it. ...we encourage flag states of these fishing interests to encourage their industries to explore the mutual benefits to be gained from collaboration with resource owners in establishing on-shore facilities that will add value to the commodity...". Tong, A. 28/9/2004 Statement by President of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA. 59th Session 14th Plenary Meeting. A/59/PV.14.

⁵⁵ Tong, A. 16/9/2005. Statement by the President of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA. 60th session 8th Plenary Meeting. A/60/PV.8:9.

⁵⁶ Confidential interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-JU-16112015.

⁵⁷ The President and his government argued on two grounds: that a special economic vulnerability arose for SIDS such as Kiribati due to external shocks [such as the GFC] which brought rising world food and fuel prices; and their specific environmental vulnerability, due to climate change and extreme weather, should be accounted. Tong argued, alongside several other small states, for a rule change to the graduation criteria.

⁵⁸ Tong, A. 29/1/2015. *H.E. Beretitenti* Anote Tong's Statement (On Possibility of Kiribati Graduation from Least Developed Country Status) to the Expert Group of the Committee for Development Policy; The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kiribati. 2nd February 2018, Statement of H.E. Teburoro Tito, Permanent Representative of Kiribati to the UN Expert Meeting Group, UN New York; Teburoro T. 2/3/2018. Statement to the Committee for Development Policy regarding Kiribati's graduation from LDC status by the Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Kiribati to the UN.

a viable alternative revenue source, the benefits of LDC status remained persuasive for the successive governments, despite the contradictions it posed for a national identity premised on the dignity of self-sufficiency and autonomy.

This tension which framed Kiribati's approach to aid and development: on one hand, a general distrust of and dependence on aid, a revenue source subject to the caprice of outsiders and outside I-Kiribati legitimate control and authority. On the other, the inability to exercise their legitimate authority over the oceans - and particularly, the fish - through negotiating more equitable and sustainable arrangements with the DWFNs.

Nearly four decades on from independence, the question was, as one interviewee put it, how to turn "the development journey" around:

...the Government has been saying, this is development for us in Kiribati, this is our major resource. We don't have oil. We don't have copper, like other countries in the Pacific you know, its nothing. Its just fisheries and of course, people... So how do we start from fisheries, so we can, you know, get whatever benefits from it? Turn to our people and build their capacities and address issues, unemployment and others, that would really turn around the development journey...?⁵⁹

The IPCC report in 2007 made that task imperative.⁶⁰ Anote Tong was President in 2007. It was his responsibility for turning the development journey around. It was not yet the tipping point – but it was a turning point for President Tong and Kiribati.

⁵⁹ Confidential interview-Kiribati-Government-BSG-30112015.

⁶⁰ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). 2007. Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report. In R.K Pachauri, and A. Reisinger (eds). Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report.

11.4 The Turning Point: The 4th IPCC Report (2007)

In 2003, when President Tong’s government assumed office, the Kiribati economy was not performing well.⁶¹ The global uncertainty following the 9/11 terrorism event in New York, compounded by an absence of private investment, meant that the domestic economy continued to depend largely on Government expenditure, financed largely by aid.⁶² Tong promised “to ensure the equitable distribution of development benefits to the people of Kiribati according to the principle of good governance.”⁶³ Amongst his government’s key priorities,⁶⁴ were three of note: maximising sustainable income from Kiribati’s marine resources “and other sovereignty-based rents”; consideration of “practical measures” to assist communities adapt to climate change; and securing stable flows of development aid through “economic diplomacy”.⁶⁵ These priorities were not much changed since independence in 1979.⁶⁶ But the 4th International Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] report changed that. After 2007, the priorities were more critical and more urgent; and President Tong led the corresponding shift in Kiribati’s approach to development – and its international relations.⁶⁷

⁶¹ Republic of Kiribati. 2003. *Kiribati National Development Plan 2004-2007: Enhancing Growth and Ensuring Equitable Distribution*: 3.

⁶² Kiribati’s revenue base lay largely in the exploitation of its natural resources through fishing licence fees, which had reached record levels; seafarers remittances and the trust fund. In 2001 fishing licence fees had generated revenue of \$47m, Republic of Kiribati. 2003. *Kiribati National Development Plan 2004-2007: Enhancing Growth and Ensuring Equitable Distribution*.

⁶³ Republic of Kiribati. 2003. *Kiribati National Development Plan 2004-2007: Enhancing Growth and Ensuring Equitable Distribution*, foreword.

⁶⁴ The six key policy priorities included: economic growth; fair distribution; more efficient public sector performance; equipping people to manage change; conservation of physical assets; and the sustainable use of financial reserves. Republic of Kiribati. 2003. *Kiribati National Development Plan 2004-2007: Enhancing Growth and Ensuring Equitable Distribution*, 12-13.

⁶⁵ Republic of Kiribati. 2003. *Kiribati National Development Plan 2004-2007: Enhancing Growth and Ensuring Equitable Distribution*, 12-13. It also laid out the intention to explore the feasibility of “re-mining” Banaba and monitor developments in seabed mining.

⁶⁶ Republic of Kiribati. 1979. *Kiribati National Development Plan 1979-1982*.

⁶⁷ A shift that wasn’t substantively reflected in the national development plan documentation until 2012.

The threat

The 2007 IPCC Report's findings, President Tong explained, gave him "sleepless nights".⁶⁸ The report confirmed that climate change was the result of human activity. If its projections were accurate, sea levels would rise so rapidly that the islands of Kiribati would drown within 50-100 years; a much shorter time period and more definitive outcome than previously projected.⁶⁹ It was, Tong recognised, an existential threat for Kiribati.⁷⁰ The impact of the changing climate would be felt, not sometime in the distant future, but within his lifetime; and it would have grave implications for his grandchildren:

...What we are facing with the threat of climate change is really the challenge to our very survival. What we are as a people...and, the question that we continue to ask ourselves: what is to become of our children? How will they continue to live? ...What will become of them without that link with the land and the spirits - and how do we deal with it?⁷¹

The recognition of the urgency and potential impact of this threat shaped the President's decisions and subsequent actions. As President, Tong held a moral responsibility to ensure the survival of his people, their islands and their culture. This, I argued, is where President Tong demonstrated the leadership and responsibility for equitable development to ensure I-Kiribati could survive. This was the point where Tong sought to broker, or disrupt, the power in the relationships – with donors and with others. As Tong explained:

"... in order to be a leader... you've got to take steps which, sometimes, nobody else is willing to do."⁷²

⁶⁸ Heer, J. 2010. *Kiribati: The President's Dilemma* Interview with President Anote Tong and directed by James Heer. Uploaded to YouTube 25 May 2011.

⁶⁹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). 2007. *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report*. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report. In R.K Pachauri, and A. Reisinger (eds). Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report.

⁷⁰ Tong, A. 22/9/2008. *Green conversations: President Anote Tong*.

⁷¹ Tong, A. 2016. *A Country Being destroyed by Climate Change: Kiribati*. Interview with Ricky Kej.

⁷² Tong, A. 2016. *A Country Being destroyed by Climate Change: Kiribati*. Interview with Ricky Kej.

11.4.1 *The Clear Map*

As demanded of a true I-Kiribati leader, President Tong laid out a clear map. As one of Tong's fellow leaders had declared, the key to development lay with the national leader, who must lay out a clear map for the country to follow. It was, he explained, natural to struggle, but a leader must take the hard decisions:

...It is natural that the small island states will continue to struggle, but the key to the development of each nation is at the door of national leaders. They have to take the hard decisions...in this world, you do not have permanent friends, just permanent interests...we know we have to be on our own and do what we can afford. When I first came to parliament, the words I used a lot were self-reliance, I still believe in it... ⁷³

President Tong initiated two campaigns, on fish and climate change, asserting Kiribati's relevance in the world as a large ocean state, rather than small and vulnerable. As Tong argued at a public forum in Fiji:

...though we may be small island states, we are large ocean states and with a great deal more relevance in international affairs than we realised...for a long time, we have been branded as 'small islands developing states' since we emerged into the global stage as independent and sovereign states. Our mindset and our visions of ourselves and our world has been influenced by this doctrine. More often than not, we see a world where developed countries will continue to dominate global politics and economics, whether we have a say in it or not. How much longer must we continue to remain pacific? Our very survival is in question... we have no choice but to engage even more aggressively internationally because the key to our survival will depend on whether international action is taken on climate change or not...our strength is in our solidarity. We can and must continue to work together to influence world opinion on these issues because they matter to us...⁷⁴

He asserted a moral framework of interdependency which recalibrated the salience of I-Kiribati norms of self-sufficiency and autonomy, alongside those of contribution and cooperation, with calls to hold the wealthy countries, the donors, to account for their behaviour. He proposed a new premise to the partnerships with Kiribati's peers in the PNA

⁷³ Confidential interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-JU-16112015.

⁷⁴ Tong, A. 9/10/2012. Keynote Address by the President of Kiribati on the Launch of the Pacific International Relations Forum, on behalf of the School for Government, Development and International Affairs USP, Suva Fiji.

and with their commercial partners in the tuna industry, the DWFNs; and to Kiribati's "development partners. He did this in two ways:

- 1) First, Kiribati, in partnership with the eight other PNA countries, exploited the resource they legitimately owned; and asserted the right to benefit equitably from the fish in their arrangements with both their peers in the PNA and their commercial partners, the DWFNs.
- 2) Second, President Tong aimed to hold the wealthy countries who were also donors to account for the effect of THEIR behaviours on his people's right to survive. He wanted those who held the greatest responsibility for global carbon emissions to act to reduce them.

11.4.2 A Moral Framework

The central principle which underpinned the two campaigns was Tong's assertion of the right to be acknowledged by others, including the wealthy donors, as relevant – affirming Kiribati's right not only to continue to enjoy their world, but to survive.⁷⁵ His pivot towards partnership with the PNA and advocacy on climate change were, I argue, innovations in the moral framework which underpinned the broader domains of development. As President Tong recalibrated I-Kiribati identity as a large ocean state, he laid out an alternative moral framework for development partnerships.

"The whole ecosystems hang in the balance - ecosystems that provide us with the air we breathe, the water we drink and much of the food we eat. It is time to view our global development in a whole new way. It is time to change business as usual. Indeed a **paradigm shift and transformational development approaches** are necessary, starting from within our own national and moving out to regional and international multilateral processes and partnerships."⁷⁶

⁷⁵ As Tong said, "It's nice to be relevant." Tong, A. 9/10/2012. Keynote Address by the President of Kiribati on the Launch of the Pacific International Relations Forum, on behalf of the School for Government, Development and International Affairs.

⁷⁶ Tong, A. 26/9/2014, Statement by the President and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA, 69th session 13th Plenary meeting, New York. A/69/PV.13:26.

In doing so Tong also held donors to account for a moral framework which purportedly was at the heart of the rules-based multilateral order. an assertion that interdependency of states means that cooperation and collaboration - and contribution - are preferred strategies for engagement. These were strategies which aligned with I-Kiribati moral codes and drew directly from I-Kiribati identity. As he told his peers in the UNGA, nearly a decade later, there was an explicit moral premise to cooperation and collaboration. The age-old test of resilience and strength as a community, in Kiribati, he explained, was defined by the well-being of its weakest member:

...In my country, even before the advent of climate change, the atoll environment was indeed harsh. Life on the low-lying atolls island has always been difficult. We have always worked on the principle of **working together as part of a community** on the premise that there will be some challenges that **are larger than us and will need collaboration**. The age-old test of our resilience and **our strength as a community** is defined by the well-being of the weakest member of our community....⁷⁷

There was a place in international relations, he argued, for compassion and equity for those who are vulnerable.

11.5 The Campaigns

11.5.1 The Fish

The first campaign was the commercial exploitation of the fish that swam in Kiribati’s ocean-territories. It was led primarily by the President’s ministerial colleagues and policy advisors in the Ministry of Natural Resources.⁷⁸ This entailed the establishment of new kinds of partnership with Kiribati’s peers in the PNA; and with the commercial “partners” the DWFNs.

⁷⁷ Tong, A. 26/9/2014, Statement by the President and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA, 69th session 13th Plenary meeting, New York. A/69/PV.13: 29.

⁷⁸ Aquorau T., 2019, *Fishing for Success*, describes the leadership of several I-Kiribati ministers as Chairs of the PNA, including the meeting in Niue that determined the approach to the Secretariat; as well as in compiling several policy papers on the proposed PNA structure and operations.

It also entailed shifts within Kiribati's own approach to how it managed its fisheries – and partnerships.

The formation of the PNA in the early 1980s reflected the conflicting interests in the approach to management of the Pacific oceans: the interests of sustainable resource management versus those of creating commercial opportunities from the vast tuna-resources.⁷⁹ The latter was a key rationale behind the establishment of the PNA.⁸⁰ The PNA was a regional alliance of nine Pacific countries which aimed to reap greater economic returns from exploitation of the fish in their territorial seas. This sat squarely in Kiribati's aspirations for development.

Between 2008 and 2010, Kiribati's political leadership and policy advisors in the Ministry of Natural Resources were deep in negotiations with their regional counterparts to establish the secretariat for the Parties to the Nauru Agreement [PNA].⁸¹ Once the Marshall islands offered a base for their secretariat, the members specifically instructed the secretariat that the venture must be a self-sustaining enterprise. The PNA was to be a self-sustaining economic enterprise, funded from [future] profits. Not from aid.

President Tong came to negotiations with a clear map for the kind of change Kiribati sought. He had long argued at the UN for the opportunity to “achieve more...without development assistance”.⁸² There was scope, he asserted, for better collaboration between the DWFNs and

⁷⁹ Fry, G. and S Tarte. 2019. *The New Pacific Diplomacy*.

⁸⁰ Aqorau, T. 2019. *Fishing for Success: Lessons in Pacific Regionalism*.

⁸¹ Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency 11/5/2009 Outcomes from PNA Officials Meeting; Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) 25/2/2010 First Presidential Summit. Koror Palau. PNA News; PNA. 22/4/2010. PNA Office Launched. Majuro RMI. PNA News.

⁸² Tong, A. 28/9/2004 Statement by President of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA. 59th Session 14th Plenary Meeting. A/59/PV.14.

the owners of one of the world's most "abundant fisheries resource,"⁸³ for more sustainable and equitable development. Partnerships, he countered, must move beyond aid, through better collaboration built on fairness and equity, if the small island states were to genuinely benefit from their resources.⁸⁴

The PNA represented that opportunity. President Tong declared at the members' Presidential summit in 2010, that the PNA was an opportunity to establish different partnerships: partnerships which acknowledged equity, a fair share of the economic returns of the [shared and common] tuna fish within their sovereign waters. The key to forging these new partnerships, Tong elaborated at the PNA's presidential summit in 2010, was that members' insist that the DWFNs recognise - and agree to the legitimacy - of the PNA countries' aspirations to maximise the economic benefits of their common-resource. As Tong explained the re-orientation to his peers at the summit:

Firstly, we need to exert greater control over our resource. This will require greater cooperation in how we manage our waters, including the pockets of high seas that exist between us; Secondly, we need to ensure the sustainability of the tuna resources in our waters. Failure to do so would be detrimental to our collective efforts; Thirdly, the structure of our relationship with our partners must change. We cannot continue with licensing arrangements forever. Our partners must recognise our aspirations to maximise our benefits from the resource and we invite them to enter into new arrangements with us that will allow that to happen. If there is a need to provide our partners with an incentive to cooperate, consideration could be given to implementing, for example, a condition that we be given the first right to add value to tuna caught in our waters; and finally, but perhaps more importantly, we need to collaborate as a cohesive unit that promotes our collective interests. For the record, Kiribati strongly endorses the efforts we are now taking to sustainably harvest our tuna resources so it is there to serve our future generations. We would like to see these efforts result in, among other things, higher returns from the tuna fisheries, increased participation in the fishing industry at all levels and a concerted drive to effectively manage fishing capacity issues by our partners so as to reinforce our own national efforts.⁸⁵

⁸³ Tong, A. 28/9/2004 Statement by President of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA. 59th Session 14th Plenary Meeting. A/59/PV.14.

⁸⁴ "Where is the equity and fairness...? We need to relook at and restructure the nature of private and public partnership in industries like fisheries. A more equitable partnership that is based on mutual respect, good-will, fairness and accountability will go a long way in providing an enabling environment for sustainable development to take place." Tong, A. 26/9/2014, Statement by the President and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kiribati to the UNGA, 69th session 13th Plenary meeting, New York. A/69/PV.13: 26.

⁸⁵ His Excellency Beretitenti Anote Tong, 25/2/2010, Statement at PNA Presidential Summit, Koror, Palau, cited in Aqorau, T. 2019. *Fishing for Success: Lessons in Pacific Regionalism*, 42.

The PNA partnerships produced the desired results: by 2013, Kiribati [alongside the other 8 PNA member-countries] was collecting revenue in amounts that neither Kiribati - nor the region - had ever seen before in its contemporary experience of deep-sea fishing. As discussed in the preceding chapter, by 2017, the government of Kiribati, was contributing significant resources to its annual national budget; and equally significantly, to rejuvenate its reserve trust fund, the fund established by the British with the last of the phosphate profits as they left Kiribati to fend for itself.

The innovation: norm contestation

Even as an early member of the Pacific Islands Forum, Kiribati had always negotiated the balance between regional cooperation and national interests carefully. While respecting regional cooperation, Kiribati's political leaders had always asserted the primacy of its national interest - and its national responsibilities.⁸⁶

The PNA offered the opportunity for effective collective problem solving. The innovative new legal instrument of the VDS enabled the Pacific countries to exercise greater control in negotiations over their shared resource, one of the world's largest sources of tuna. The strength of collective negotiations gave the Kiribati a stronger platform from which to engage with the DWFNs – and a new, more equitable, basis for their economic partnership. It shifted the balance of power in the negotiations with their fishing partners over access to fish. While the new legal instrument of the VDS was a technical innovation, the equally critical

⁸⁶ Ieremia Tabai, Secretary-General, South Pacific Forum, speaking at the Opening Address at of the 1992 PIC Partners Meeting, In South Pacific Forum Secretariat. 1992. The Pacific Islands Countries-Development Partners Meeting, 9-12 March 1992, Suva, Fiji. Meeting Papers (92)MP.20.

"innovation" lay in President Tong and his colleagues' willingness to recalibrate national and regional boundaries – sustained in the past by I-Kiribati respect for norms of autonomy and self-sufficiency - to form new kinds of partnerships based on cooperation with their regional peers and with the DWFNs. Kiribati pursued, in effect, ownership of development in the interests of a greater aspiration: to ensure structural equity in relation to the one resource which I-Kiribati were confident they exercised genuine ownership – and sovereignty.

11.5.2 Climate advocacy

The second campaign on climate advocacy was led directly by President Tong. President Tong reflected in his experience, bargained and innovated, to find ways to persuade the wealthy donor countries to change their behaviours. There were five primary strategies:

- The promotion of marine protection zones, specifically the Phoenix Islands Protection area; and its counterpart policy framework, the Oceanscape policy, and first presented at the Forum in 2009. Both were developed in collaboration with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature [IUCN]
- Media advocacy that garnered world attention: in addition to frequently speaking at global events Tong created media opportunities to highlight the responsibility for global emissions and the [absence] of action on climate change. One famous advocacy entailed travelling to the Arctic with Greenpeace, the International environmental NGO, to draw a moral equivalence between the world's concern over the risk posed by climate change to the polar bears – and the absence of compassion for the situation

facing I-Kiribat: “My people are the polar bears of the Pacific” Tong asserted.⁸⁷

- The purchase of an island from Fiji – designated as a contribution to identifying alternative solutions to the impact of climate change on Kiribati. It was ambiguous, however, whether the intention behind the purchase was to secure a potential refuge from rising seas or establish an alternative location on which to grow food.
- Establishing the Coalition of Atoll Nations on Climate Change [CANCC] Tong and his peers called for a moratorium on new coal mines.

The Bargain: our gift, the marine zone

Each element of the strategy reflected Tong’s offer to “bargain” with the wealthy countries who were responsible for the emissions which threatened his country and his people. His intent, Tong explained, was to create a moral obligation in relations between Kiribati and the rich countries - the donors. If Kiribati offered the world such a gift, the world – and its donors - Tong proposed, might, in return, reduce their emissions so Kiribati could survive. Or, if it was too late to stop the sea rising, then the world might at least offer the I-Kiribati refuge, with dignity, as their islands sank below the waves and became uninhabitable. Tong argued that immediate action was imperative.

For example, the marine zone was an explicit bargaining point with the donors in relation to climate change. It was, Tong said, Kiribati’s contribution to the world – in return for the rich countries’ action on climate change. The zones offered, Tong proposed, an exchange of mutual benefit: the opportunity to protect the wild oceans of the world; and in return, he

⁸⁷ Tong, A. 23/9/2014. Kiribati president: My people are the polar bears of the Pacific. *Climate Home News*.

hoped to encourage others to permit I-Kiribati to migrate with dignity, in a planned orderly manner, rather than as refugees responding to crisis. It was an arrangement, Tong proposed, which would benefit all.

The Migration Program: our contribution

While President Tong engaged in a high-level bargaining for mitigation not only adaptation with international agencies and other states on climate change and marine reserves, his policy advisors negotiated with the Australian aid program to engage programs to address/on adaptation: the Migration with Dignity Program.

Tong argued that I-Kiribati were willing to do their part: they were willing, he asserted, to learn the skills of benefit to other countries' industries. His policy advisors negotiated several pilot training and labor programs with Australia, first with the Rudd-Gillard governments, which were later consolidated under the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison governments.⁸⁸ They encompassed several programs around labor mobility, including seasonal workers to countries such as New Zealand and [northern] Australia; the KANI, the Kiribati nursing program, a training program in Australia.

The innovation: a different kind of partnership

For President Tong, the existential threat posed by climate change carried moral force. It compelled Tong to recalibrate familiar I-Kiribati norms, which respected the dignity of

⁸⁸ These included the KANI, the Kiribati-Australia nursing initiative established in 2006 and subsequently disbanded by Australia in 2012; and the microstate visa, part of the North Australia White Paper, in 2008, which expanded into the seasonal worker program in 2012 and more recently, became part of the Pacific Labor Mobility Program.

autonomy and self-sufficiency, in the greater interest of Kiribati's survival. He re-interpreted norms which maintained boundaries and balanced them with the obligation to contribute and cooperate in times of demand, or crisis. In reframing Kiribati as a large ocean state, Tong redefined Kiribati's interests beyond those usually contained by national borders, with a respect for autonomy and self-sufficiency, in accord with the unstated terms of their national identity as small, vulnerable - and effectively, irrelevant.

Instead, Tong sought to redefine "the rules of the game" between Kiribati and the powerful donor-countries who were also, often, the greater emitters of the carbon that put his people and his country at risk. Rather than show gratitude to these more powerful and "generous" donor-countries, as expected of a small and vulnerable island state, Tong demanded instead that these countries take responsibility for their behaviours and act to reduce their emissions. The rich countries, Tong asserted, had a moral obligation to change their behaviour.

11.6 The Exercise of Ownership

Kiribati, Tong argued, as a large ocean state, was an equal with other states, in the region and in the global order. Tong demanded that Kiribati be recognised and respected, and capable of asserting its interests in the global sphere - rather than small and vulnerable. He sought to turn perceptions of I-Kiribati identity around, at home as well as across the Pacific and in donor countries. In both campaigns, President Tong offered an alternative basis for partnership: he called for a re-interpretation of the obligations of interdependency through cooperation and collaboration. He proposed new partnerships based on equity and shared responsibility. As equals, Tong asserted Kiribati's right to equity and fairness in its dealings with others:

- c) Within the region, Kiribati had a right to a more equitable and sustainable share of the value of their fisheries in their partnerships with the DWFNs. This entailed new kinds of partnerships with its regional peers, as well as different kinds of arrangements with the DWFNs.
- d) Globally, Tong asserted an interdependency between all states, large and small. He argued that all states shared a moral responsibility, as part of their common humanity, for ensuring their behaviours did not impact on other country's well-being. In particular, Tong argued, the wealthy donor-countries must acknowledge their behaviours in contributing to, and thus, responsibility for mitigating, global emissions.
- e) Finally, President Tong asserted the responsibility of all to contribute, to work collectively on the basis of their shared humanity, to mitigate the impact of climate change. While Kiribati sought to hold others to account for their behaviours, Kiribati would also contribute its share to resolving the challenges they all faced, President Tong assured the world.

Tong's "clear map" for Kiribati's survival was grounded in the "true I-Kiribati" values and beliefs which balanced respect for the dignity of self-sufficiency and autonomy with the recognition of interdependency between states, which demanded contribution and cooperation. But he led new ground for Kiribati, in renegotiating these norms in practice with both Kiribati's regional peers as well as its donors. This generated tension, within Kiribati as well as with the wealthy countries – including Kiribati's most consistent and largest aid donor, Australia. In reframing Kiribati's national identity from small and vulnerable to relevant, as a large ocean state, Tong reasserted the balance in negotiations that affected Kiribati's

development, outside aid. Tong laid out a moral framework which sought to reframe the rules of engagement for relations in development, beyond aid. In doing so, I argue, President Tong and his government side-stepped the development paradigm laid out by the global idea of Ownership and its assumptions. His intentions were motivated, he declared, not only by economic development – but by “our survival”.⁸⁹

11.7 The Influence on the Partnership with Australia

The innovations deployed by Kiribati, I argue, reflect a different understanding of power in the aid – and development – partnerships. There was no attempt at a re-negotiation of power in the [domestic] aid relationship – and so, there was no attempt to effect a transition in Ownership of aid interventions to maximise the aid partnership for Kiribati’s development in accord with the global idea of Ownership.

While President Tong engaged in advocacy on climate change, and his colleagues in Ministry of Natural Resources successfully pursued sovereignty over the fish through the PNA, his government’s policy advisors ensured they maintained good personal relations with the donors. They bargained and reflected, asserting the significance of local knowledge in negotiations when needed – and delegating where necessary - to ensure aid flows continued.

Under Tong’s leadership, Kiribati’s policy advisors maintained the status quo with donors: programmes were delivered although sometimes the quality could be better; aid remained

⁸⁹ Tong, A. 2016. A Country Being destroyed by Climate Change: Kiribati. Interview with Ricky Kej.

relatively stable, with some increases over the decade; and the measures of Ownership were consistently satisfied, more or less, with the assistance of technical advisors in key areas.⁹⁰ Key bilateral agreements on aid were renegotiated.⁹¹ Senior policy advisors retained direct control and engagement in dialogues and consultations with the donors to ensure personal relations were sound. And they ensured, even if through delegation of key responsibilities, that their government delivered the requisite performance measures expected under their agreement with Australia, and in accord with the Compact. Compliance with the measures ensured that Kiribati maintained the status quo in relations with their donors, including Australia. And relations between the policy advisors and their donor counterparts remained much the same as before the Compact [or the Paris Declaration]. As noted earlier, relations were respectful, civil, constructive and engaged. This was reflected in the performance reports produced by Australia each year.⁹²

Australia continued to offer support through its aid program for Kiribati's efforts to maximise the fish, through support to the national development strategy, as it had for some time. Both the Rudd and Bishop aid regime supported Kiribati with its labor migration policy through successive governments. But outside the direct orbit of aid relations, the partnership with Australia was not so optimistic.

⁹⁰ See for example, the Government of Australia (AusAID/DFAT), Australian Aid Program Performance reports for the partnership with Kiribati between 2009-2017: Annual Partners Report 2009; Annual Program Performance Report 2011; Aid Programme Performance Report 2012-2013; Aid Program Performance Report 2013-14 and Aid Program Performance Report 2016-17.

⁹¹ Australian Government (DFAT). 2016. *Kiribati Aid Investment Plan 2015/16-2018/19*; The Australia-Kiribati Partnership Arrangement 2016-19 was signed by the High Commissioner to Kiribati and his government counterpart, the Government of Kiribati Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Immigration, in September 2018.

⁹² See for example, the Government of Australia (AusAID/DFAT) Australian Aid Program performance reports for the partnership with Kiribati between 2009-2017: Annual Partners Report 2009; Annual Program Performance Report 2011; Aid Programme Performance Report 2012-2013; Aid Program Performance Report 2013-14 and Aid Program Performance Report 2016-17.

While Australia, under the Rudd/Gillard governments had prioritised climate change in their partnership arrangements with Kiribati, the Abbott/Bishop regime was more muted. There was some support for adaptation in the bilateral arrangements. However, it became clear that Prime Minister Abbott, Australia was reluctant to go further, as evidenced by Abbott's stance at the 2015 Forum Leaders' summit. Coal, Abbott assured his Pacific peers, was fundamental to Australia national and economic interests. Australia saw no need to change.⁹³

It was a refusal which Australia's political leadership, under Abbott, managed with disrespect and disregard [as witnessed by private jokes about water lapping at the door⁹⁴]. A disrespect that was noticed by Australia's Pacific peers.⁹⁵

While Abbott's replacement, Prime Minister Turnbull was more supportive on the need to address the threat posed by climate change, he was only able to offer his Pacific peers an acknowledgement of the need for a "step-change" in Australia's engagement in the Pacific, before he too was usurped.⁹⁶

⁹³ Milman, O. 9/92015. Pacific Leaders voice frustration over Australia's position on Climate change. *The Guardian*; Kerin, J. 10/9/2015. Tony Abbott rebuffs Pacific leaders' coal ban call. *Financial Review*. Tlozek, E. 11/9/2015. Tony Abbott faces down Pacific island nations' calls for tougher action on climate change. *ABC News*.

⁹⁴ Medhora, S. 11/9/2015. Peter Dutton Jokes with Tony Abbott about Rising Sea Levels in Pacific nations. *The Guardian*.

⁹⁵ *RNZ News* 12/9/2015. Kiribati's Tong Slams Dutton over joke.

⁹⁶ Australia (Turnbull) announced a step-change in relations with the Pacific at the 2016 at the 47th Pacific Islands Forum; a shift later confirmed in the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper. Turnbull followed up at the 2017 Forum leaders meeting in Apia with a range of measures to support the step-change, including: "stronger partnership for economic growth...for security [and]... stronger relationships between our people." See Dobell, G. 7/9/2020. Happy Fourth Birthday, Pacific Step up. *The Strategist*, APSI. A new Pacific Labour Scheme was one of the programs supporting the announcement. The Step-Change became a StepUp when PM Morrison announced: "Australia would take our engagement to a new level, launching a 'new chapter in relations with our Pacific family.'" Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. September 2019. Stepping Up Australia's Engagement with our Pacific Family.

11.8 Conclusion

Over the last two Chapters, I have examined a story with two threads: the first, my starting point, the story of the global idea of Ownership and its influence on development partnership with Australia; and woven through that, the second story of how Kiribati side-stepped the global idea of Ownership to pursue its ownership of development according to its “rules of the game”.

My examination of the policy’s logic which underpinned the global idea of Ownership by the government of Kiribati revealed it was not a significant factor driving change in local aid coordination practices in Kiribati, the first step claimed by the logic. Few policy advisors were familiar with the Compact, nor the Paris Declaration, and the global idea of Ownership at its heart. As I examined both the attribution of change and the characteristics of the behaviors deployed in aid coordination [as reported by political leadership and policy advisors and related policy text] I found behaviours of reflexivity and bargaining, but no signs of innovation in aid.

Policy advisors attributed change to their personal experience, their education or employment, sometimes overseas, sometimes on the ground in Kiribati. These changes were more often reflected in their ability to negotiated with the donors, such as the development fora and other policy dialogue. But for the most part, a large part of the “bargaining” related to the engagement of technical and advisors who worked with I-Kiribati to ensure key measures under the Compact [and the global idea of Ownership} were delivered to ensure aid flows. While some of this could be attributed to simply technical capacity – or its absence,

there was also an underlying sense of disinterest in asserting ownership of aid. Kiribati implemented the nominated practices of ownership, but there was little evidence of the contestation in norms which indicated, I argued, a transition to ownership of aid for development.

As I explored further to understand this apparent disinterest, I found that few policy advisors expected to 'own' aid. It did not belong to I-Kiribati; and nor did I-Kiribati expect to own aid. Ownership, for I-Kiribati, reflected the unambiguous mastery over a resources that legitimately belonged to a person. Ownership was linked to economic self-reliance, which was essential for political independence. This was not the case with aid. Aid, it was accepted, was legitimately "owned" by the donors. This meant, however that claims to effective development lay through the assertion of sovereignty over Kiribati's resources, such as the fish in Kiribati's 3.5m^{km2} of ocean territory.

Puzzled as to what this ambiguity meant for aid relations, I examined the Kiribati's development archives and related text. Two threads emerged: a story of I-kiribati as autonomous and self sufficient, shaped by the journey of survival in a tough environment; and the story of historic relations with *imatang* clouded by the sense of betrayal and abandonment: the British had arrived and left uninvited – and departed with the resources which had brought a high standard of living. The offer of aid, in the Kiribati experience was an interim measure – it could be, just like the phosphate, withdrawn at the whim of the *imatang*. Rather, it was in the ownership of one's own resources, the fish, that opportunities for development lay. But Kiribati had struggled over the decades since independence to

transform its ownership of the fish into an economically viable resource.

Compelled by the revelations of the 2007 IPPC report, President Tong took a different turn: asserting the relevance of Kiribati as a large ocean state, he asserted the full meaning of interdependency which underpins the multilateral rules-based order – and called on the wealthy countries to account for their behaviours. Tong demanded compassion – and equity. There was no attempt by Kiribati to exercise ownership of aid; but there were dedicated efforts to exercise ownership of development. Kiribati maintained relations with Australia through aid; seeking – and gaining - support for education training and labour mobility programs, in particular. All of these were initiated with the intention of migrating with dignity, when the now-inevitable rise in sea levels, happened.

Whilst Tong was successful in achieving influence, through the partnership with the PNA [and the DWFNs] in exercising their legitimate ownership over the fish, he was not as successful in his attempts to establish a new kind of partnership with the donors on climate change. Australia, in particular, rejected calls for changes in its behaviours. Its economy relied on coal, the Australian government claimed. Similarly, at home, Tong failed to bring his domestic constituents on board. As a new government emerged, it turned to god to protect them, and reprioritised its development agenda in favour of support to the outer islands, better services across the country and the promotion of tourist ventures. While adaptation measures were supported, the urgency and threat of climate change was downplayed.

Kiribati’s President Tong drew on local norms as a “true I-Kiribati”. His negotiations with his

regional peers, and the wealthy donor-countries, demonstrated I-Kiribati respect for autonomy and self-sufficiency, premised on a recognition of relevance. This respect sought a recognition of the accountability demanded of interdependence for each other's behaviours, for contribution and collaboration, to assert a new moral framework in its relations with Kiribati's regional peers and with the wealthy-donor countries. The two campaigns in relation to fish and to climate change reflected the assertion of local norms, locally situated knowledge, indicating a movement towards the exercise of ownership – but it was an ownership over development according to I-Kiribati rules for engagement, rather than under the global idea of Ownership promoted by the Compact, or its predecessor, the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness. Kiribati instead, maintained good relations in their aid partnership with Australia, through reflexivity and bargaining. Aid was a complement, always an interim measure, not the path to development.

Chapter 12 Conclusion: In the Driver's Seat?

12.1 Introduction

My research has sought to understand how a policy leads change by examining how the global idea of Ownership influenced development partnerships in the Pacific. The idea of Ownership was at the heart of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness – a policy agreed in 2005 by over 100 countries, donors and international development organisations. The “road map” laid out by the strategies under the idea of Ownership was at the core of the policy’s logic, its theory of how change happens. My research tested this logic by examining how the idea of Ownership influenced development partnerships in two Pacific countries: Samoa and Kiribati. Essentially, my research has looked at how an idea at the heart of a global consensus reached in Paris influenced aid policy practices in the central government agencies of Apia and Tarawa – and the consequent development partnerships with Australia, their largest and most consistent donor.

My research proposition

I began my research with a simple proposition: that the way we see the world varies according to our sense of identity, place and connection. This, I assert, is the basis of our power: the source of our capacity and desire to influence others’ and our own, place with the world. This influences how a policy is designed, implemented and its success evaluated.

It was a point well-made by one of the Pacific’s elder statesmen, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, in his first speech to the United Nations General Assembly, a week after Fiji’s admission in 1970:

....The broad concepts we look for are effective government, education and social justice...it is for the United Nations to set the standards...but the setting of standards must not assume that there are

universal solutions to problems in all parts of the world... as with other colonial powers...(British) policy has been based on their concepts, their values and their patterns of behaviour. They have not always shown due regards to the feelings, custom and way of life of the people. There has been superiority and... arrogance... too much direction and too little opportunity for participation...¹

As Ratu Mara observed, those who must live with a policy can hold different values, customs and beliefs to those who crafted the policy. This means, I argue, that, particularly in light of the asymmetrical relations which characterise aid and development, we must understand the assumptions, the values and beliefs that shape a policy's design – and inform its implicit and explicit rules and practices, the norms and institutions, which lay out the standards for measuring success – if we are to understand and assess the effectiveness, or otherwise, of aid policy in development.

My research has illustrated this argument through a case study of the Forum Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination, in operation between 2009 and 2017. The Compact was agreed by the Pacific Forum Leaders in Cairns in August 2009. The Compact was the regional counterpoint to the Paris Declaration. It reaffirmed the principles laid out by the Paris Declaration – including the centrality of the idea of Ownership. Samoa, Kiribati and Australia were amongst the 13 Forum member countries and seven regional donors who endorsed the Compact at the Forum Leaders' meeting in Cairns in 2009. Less than a decade later, in 2017, the Forum Leaders endorsed the Pacific Road Map on the Sustainable Development at their annual meeting in Apia.² Following the findings of the independent evaluation of the Compact, the Pacific Road Map incorporated a “renewed approach” to

¹ Mara, K. 26/10/1970. Address by the Prime Minister of Fiji on the 25th Anniversary Commemorative Session, General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. In K.Mara, *The Pacific Way: A Memoir* 237-242.

² Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2017. *Forum Communiqué*. 48th Pacific Islands Forum, held Apia, Samoa, 5-8 September 2017. PIFS(17)10.

sustainable development, including several innovations introduced by the Pacific countries under the Compact's mandate.³

In this concluding Chapter, I discuss my overall findings. First, I review the key steps in framing the research approach and the issues which shaped the parameters of my research. Then I trace the evolution of my understanding of the puzzle - the mismatch between rhetoric of the global idea of Ownership and its practice - which led to my research questions. I briefly touch on the conceptual origins of the idea of Ownership, within the hallways and meetings rooms of the World Bank, the OECD, and the UN; and, in Chapter 6, I follow Ownership's evolution, across the oceans, via Paris, to the Pacific. Then, turning to the two national sites in the case study, Samoa and Kiribati, I briefly discuss my findings: I explain how I applied my analytical model; and the consequent deliberations in each site. This brings me to the discussion of whether the idea of Ownership at the heart of the Paris Declaration – and its regional counterpart, the Pacific's Forum Compact - represented policy failure, or development success: Did the global idea of Ownership “put countries in the driver's seat,” as promised?

12.2 Framing Ownership

In the first four chapters, I framed the research parameters for the idea of Ownership in the Paris Declaration. I began with the question of ‘How do you research an idea?’ This involved, in the Introduction, scoping the puzzle – the mismatch between rhetoric and practice. First, I

³ In particular, the Pacific Road Map on Sustainable Development incorporated the peer reviews, south-south cooperation and regional reporting – initiatives introduced by the countries and or the Forum's Secretariat and finessed under the Compact's mandate. See: Brien, D., R. Jauncey and J. Winter. 30/11/2017. Findings of the Independent Review of the Forum (Cairns) Compact.

identified how the Paris Declaration described Ownership. Ownership, the Declaration said, was the effective leadership over development policies and strategies.⁴ Second, I identified how Ownership was measured. There were several linked strategies of Ownership, and these were reflected in the corresponding five elements of the “proxy” measures [underlined below]:

- a) A national strategic plan, reflecting agreement - through consultation and coordination across government, civil society and private sector - on development priorities;
- b) aligned to a national budget – which allocated resources – authorised by parliament; and
- c) assessed, through a performance framework, which monitored and evaluated how resources would achieve results [or not].

The proxy measures and their underlying strategies assumed agreement on “global” policy norms, the building blocks for change in local practices or institutions. These were as follows:

- a) The national development strategy, the result of consultation and coordination across government, civil society and private sector, was assumed to demonstrate the norms of *political commitment, responsibility and leadership, inclusion and participation*.
- b) The annual budget, authorised by the relevant national parliament, was assumed to demonstrate the norms of *effectiveness and efficiency, and political commitment*.

⁴ OECD. 2008. Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and Accra Agenda for Action (2008), describes Ownership as: “Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies and coordinate development actions.”

- c) Similarly, the performance framework, intended to show how government and others would monitor how resources achieved results, also reinforced norms of *effectiveness and efficiency*.
- d) Finally, the processes of consultation and coordination were assumed to endorse norms of *inclusion and political commitment*.

Together, these three elements - the definition, strategies and measures of Ownership, underpinned by the “agreed” norms - delineated the policy’s logic, or theory of change.

The idea of “Ownership” under the Paris Declaration effectively laid out a “road map” for change: When countries’ “exercised ownership” of development through better aid coordination [demonstrated by production of the proxy measures], they demonstrated their political will and leadership; which in turn, would generate the donors’ trust in the countries’ commitment to use aid more effectively and efficiently – and lead to more effective partnerships because the partners would be guided by an agreed development plan. Better partnerships, both donors and countries agreed, would result in more effective development outcomes. And results would be demonstrated – and measured - through the performance frameworks. Production of these measures, particularly the national development strategy, would trigger aid flows. Aid flows that the countries invariably, relied upon to enact their development aspirations. The idea of “Ownership,” the Declaration made clear, was the first and essential step to making aid - and ensuing partnerships between donors and aid-receiving countries - more effective.

But the rhetoric of Paris didn't accord with my years of experience in development practice. There were too many times when people described themselves as caught, between a rock and a hard place; too many times their experiences with aid programs left them feeling a failure.

This unease was validated by the debates in the literature on Ownership in aid effectiveness and the broader politics of aid. Three key issues shaped my research inquiries:

- a) Meaning: the debate around what "Ownership" actually meant, which differed for different audiences;
- b) Context – with questions around how a global agreement made sense across scale, in different local contexts; and
- c) The effect of the asymmetry in power relations between donors and aid receiving countries.

My examination of these debates in the literature generated, for me, the question of whether the claimed consensus on the Paris Declaration and in Cairns, and the idea of Ownership at its foundation, more accurately represented compromise – or coercion?

12.2.1 Constructing a Conceptual Framework

To explore this further, in Chapter 3, I canvassed what we know in the literature about how an idea drives change - a shift in power - through policy? I looked at four key areas of literature. Effectively, the literature revealed that the Paris Declaration laid out an institutional model for policy change. This model reflected, as Goldstein and Keohane describe, a construct of Ownership whose "ideational power" lay in its capacity to a model where norms are deemed to influence and shape institutions - the collective behaviours and practices or

systems - to achieve a desired goal. The global idea of Ownership offered a “road-map” - to organise and sequence the steps in the pathway for change.

In its turn, the road map's policy logic drew from the theories of the Nobel Prize-winning economist, Elinor Ostrom and her team. Aid and development, Ostrom and her team asserted, was beset by perverse incentives. Foremost amongst these was the Samaritan's Dilemma. Donors, Ostrom claimed, gave aid because they were altruistic. But, echoing the actions of the Good Samaritan in Luke's Gospel, the Dilemma claimed that the act of giving aid represented a moral hazard for donors and beneficiaries. Dependency, according to Ostrom, revealed a breakdown in local norms and institutions which generated an incapacity in the recipient - recipients did not take responsibility for their situation but, instead, relied on the donor. Giving aid, the argument ran, risked creating dependency in the aid-receiving country, which would choose to rely on aid in the future rather than take responsibility for their situation.⁵ It was a moral hazard, Ostrom argued, that could be redressed through local participation to ensure local knowledge informed the design resourcing, operation, and conclusion of the aid intervention. Participation – bringing locally situated knowledge into the design and delivery of aid interventions - would encourage aid beneficiaries to take responsibility for their situation. And in the process, rebuild dysfunctional norms and institutions, with support from donors. Locally situated knowledge, Ostrom proposed, would create the conditions for a transition in Ownership of aid interventions, from donors to aid beneficiaries. This transition in Ownership would ensure more effective use of aid – and more effective development.

⁵ An related but underlying theme, which was not foregrounded, was the moral hazard that dependency produced for the donor: the environment of dependency contributed to the donor's suffering, because donors missed the opportunity to enhance their own moral virtue in the failure of their 'generosity' to generate self-responsibility in the recipient.

I drew on the proxy measures, designated as “best practice” by the Paris Declaration, and Ostrom’s four criteria, to construct an analytical tool for assessing the implementation of the “official” strategies of Ownership – and to map the norms that shaped the envisaged change. While this tool reflected the road map – and explanation - for how change should happen under the policy, however, it did not explain why change would occur.

As noted earlier, the critique of Ownership in the literature on aid effectiveness had generated questions about meaning, context and power. The matrix offered a means for analysing implementation of the idea of Ownership according to the policy’s “road map” and logic.

I wanted to be able to compare implementation with ‘the gap’ that accounted for the critiques of Ownership in relation to meaning, context and power. I turned to the literature to develop an alternative analytical model for examining policy change which accounted for these critiques. These were the literatures on ideational change; policy diffusion, transfer and learning; and norm contestation. I then considered the policy change literature in light of the literature on the asymmetry in power relations between donors and SIDS – the literature on power and vulnerability.

12.2.2 Ideational change

I traced the lineage on the power of an idea as envisaged by the Paris Declaration to Goldstein and Keohane’s seminal work on the influence of ideas in foreign policy.⁶ These respected

⁶ Goldstein, J. and R.O.Keohane (eds). 1995. *Ideas & Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*.

scholars argue that the power of an idea lies in its capacity to structure and organise the steps for change. This envisaged the power of an idea as an organisational instrument: a question of laying out tasks over time. Hence, the function of Ownership in the Paris Declaration as a “road-map” for change.

But, in light of the critique which argued that the idea of Ownership lost influence and status because its meaning, and hence its authority, was ambiguous. I wanted to understand whether other scholars might understand the function and influence of an idea on change through policy differently. As an interpretivist scholar, I was looking for an understanding of the influence of an idea as a relational concept, rather than an instrumental transaction. I turned to the ideational change scholars, such as Campbell, Parsons, Beland, Carstensen and others. While there were variations in how they conceived the power of an idea, their scholarship led me to think of the significance of an idea as a motivation for change, rather than through its organisational function as a road-map for action. These scholars argued that an idea's power to lead or create change was tied to the interaction between the idea and its adherents. It was the dynamic, the alignment or interaction of an idea with its [potential] adherents' values and beliefs, that mattered. This offered a more fluid and dynamic - and relational - understanding of the way an idea could influence change. In this light, together with the ambiguity revealed by the literature around “the meaning” of Ownership, I decided to examine the metaphors and rhetoric used by local policy advisors and political leaders to discern the local significance, the values and beliefs, which they attributed to the idea of ownership. I hoped this would indicate the norms which underwrote the observable and self-

reported collective behaviours, or practices, associated with “implementing Ownership” in local settings.

But while this framing would help me attribute or explain meaning in context, it didn’t address the question of the asymmetry in power between donors and the small island developing states.

12.2.3 Policy translation

This is where I turned to the literature on policy diffusion, transfer and learning. After much peregrination between the literature and the field, I settled on the concept of policy translation. Policy translation builds on the earlier concepts of policy transfer and learning proposed by Dolowitz and Marsh [and others] by emphasising the shift in, or renegotiation of, power for the successful translation of policy from one setting to another.

Moving between the literature and the fieldwork, I identified the characteristics of reflexivity [learning by experience] and bargaining [asserting strategies interests in negotiation], as indicators of policy acceptance in the “policy-receiving” setting. But there was a gap in the policy translation model about what behaviours might signify a re-negotiation of power between donors and countries.⁷ And this was one of the critical aims in the Paris Declaration

⁷ Observing power simply, as Haugaard describes [drawing from Russell and Dahl] as the capacity to influence – and the resources [in various means] available to reinforce that capacity.

[and the argument for Ownership made by Ostrom and her team]: the Declaration claimed to seek a rebalance of power in relations between donors and aid-receiving governments.⁸

After much searching – and the insights of fieldwork in Samoa – I stumbled upon the concept of innovation: observing those moments in interactions between the representatives of countries and donors which revealed the “friction” generated by norm contestation. After observing innovation in aid practices in Samoa, I realised that innovation reflected the salience of *local* norms emerging through contestation, rather than the dominance of global policy norms, as Acharya emphasises.⁹ The salience of these “local” norms, I posited, was motivated by the local significance attributed to ownership. The salience of local norms was instrumental to the crafting of new policy practices, practices which sought to resolve old problems by embedding practices in local norms. Such innovation, I posited, indicated a shift, or re-negotiation, in power in relations between the country and the donor.

While the first matrix [Table 3.1 Appendix 3.1] would facilitate an assessment of whether the strategies of Ownership had been implemented in accord with the policy, I drew from the literature on policy change¹⁰ to construct an analytical framework through which to test the policy's logic, that is, its theory for why change happens. This framework is captured in Diagram 3.1: Analytical Model for Policy Change [Appendix 3.2].

⁸ OECD. 2009. What The Reports Are Saying. In *Development Cooperation Report 2009, OECD Journal on Development* 10(1):69-88.

⁹ Acharya, A. 2009. *Whose Ideas Matter? Agency and Power in Asian Regionalism*. Similarly, Merry's vernacularisation framing also emphasises the function/presumption of global norms [in the human rights gender equality frame] overwhelming [bad] local norms – as they “should”. Merry, S.E. 2006a. *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice*. Merry, S.E. 17/03/2015. Ethnography of the Global [podcast], in *Regulatory Institutions Network Key Thinkers Series*.

¹⁰ This included several sub-fields of policy analysis literature: the policy learning, diffusion, transfer and translation literature; the scholarship on ideational change and norm contestation.

This analysis led me to the following overarching research question: How did the idea of Ownership influence development partnerships in the Pacific? Did Ownership “put countries in the driver’s seat”, as the World Bank promised it would?

There were three sub-questions which guided the generation and analysis of data:

- a) Did aid coordination practices change?
- b) Did this change represent the exercise of Ownership?
- c) Did the exercise of Ownership by countries lead to more effective development partnerships with Australia, one of the region’s largest donors?

12.2.4 Research Design and Methodology:

With this frame for my research, I moved, in Chapter 4, into the Research Design and Methodology, where I chose the methods and tools of interpretive policy analysis to untangle, in Geertz’s words, the “webs of significance” around the idea of Ownership.¹¹ I drew on interpretive policy analysis methods and ethnographic techniques to generate and analyse data. This included:

- a) semi-structured interviews [formal and informal] with over 100 policy advisors and political leaders; and field-observation of related workshops and meetings across five policy sites: Apia, in Samoa; Tarawa, in Kiribati; Suva, in Fiji; Canberra, in Australia and the UN headquarters in New York;
- b) analysis of related policy text: materials again collected during fieldwork or through online archival investigations; and

¹¹ Geertz, C. 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*.

- c) historical inquiry, including archival investigation and analysis, of hard copy documents and online archival material at the Forum Secretariat in Fiji and other local archives and universities in the Pacific sites and Canberra; and, especially in the COVID-years, through the websites of the UN, the OECD and the World Bank; as well as government and other relevant websites across each policy community.

I also drew from my extensive personal experience in aid and development which, I realised, acted sometimes as more a barrier than a guide.

The research process was an iterative process, of trial, error and discovery, over time. Three key points emerged which shaped the course of my analysis and findings. First, my attention expanded from a singular focus on the policy translation model - and within that, on identifying an “authoritative” broker who facilitated the requisite shift in power - to draw from the literature on ideational change and norm contestation in my search for ways to identify and understand when, how and why, power “shifts” in relations. Second, the geographic focus of my inquiries changed: I first considered several case-study sites across the Pacific and Australia, which, over time, I narrowed down to Kiribati and Samoa. And third: As I moved through fieldwork, the significance of history in relations between donors and each country became apparent through conversations and interviews in each site. Increasingly, I questioned the accuracy of identifying the Paris Declaration as the starting point for the idea of Ownership. And correspondingly, I realised that the history of aid relations in each site was crucial to understanding contemporary partnerships.

My growing awareness of the significance of history led directly to Chapters 5 and 6 where I examined the “construction” of the idea of Ownership, a process which pre-empted its arrival in Paris, and its onward travel to the Pacific.

12.3 Constructing Ownership:

In Chapter 5, I trawled the historical archives to reveal the origins and evolution of the idea of ownership in aid and development policy and practice. Starting with America’s proposal for the Marshall Plan in 1947, I examined the archives for the “seeds” from which the idea of Ownership had emerged. I pursued its evolution through the World Bank’s debates, through the 1970-1990s, to its adoption by the OECD and by the UN in the late 90s, to arrive in Paris in 2005. My key interest was in tracing who brought the idea to the negotiation table in Paris – and why?

What I found in the archives was a history of debates centred on competing “rights”.¹² The aid-receiving countries asserted the right to determine their own development path, a right grounded in norms of equity and equality. Underlying this assertion was an argument situated in the shadow of historical relations: the argument that colonial powers had, for too long, exploited “developing” countries’ resources to the donor countries’ advantage – and

¹² The Pearson Commission, *Partners in Development*, summed up the debates – and assertion of competing rights – in the report of their inquiry into aid published in 1969. Although McNamara outlined how the World Bank would address the issues in his speech in 1973, debates between “developing” countries, including the SIDS, and donors, continued through in the UNGA over the subsequent four decades. In the 1990s, the World Bank’s stance was joined by the OECD, and then, the UN agencies; their common position led to the proposition for Ownership which emerged in the Paris Declaration in 2005. Commission on International Development (The Pearson Commission). 1970. *Partners in Development*, Report of the Commission on International Development to the World Bank. See Chapter 5 The Global Idea of Ownership for details.

reparation was required. The countries demanded that their political independence – and aspirations for economic self-reliance – be respected.

In the alternative, the donors asserted the right to know how their aid was used: a right grounded in norms of accountability, responsibility, effectiveness and efficiency. For donors, this assertion was located in two related arguments: first, that aid-countries' governments lacked the political commitment and will to establish the "sound policies and institutions" necessary for economic growth – and development; and second, that donor-governments were obliged to be accountable to their own taxpayers whose hard-earned taxes enabled the aid to flow.

It was Robert McNamara, then-President of the World Bank in 1973, who proposed a resolution to his board of governors at their annual meeting in Nairobi.¹³ The aid-receiving countries, he proposed, would show their political commitment to using aid well by crafting national development plans which identified how aid would support "sound policies and institutions."¹⁴ They would craft these plans with donor-funded technical assistance to ensure that the "sound policies and institutions" that built economic growth - and development - were integral to those plans. As a consequence, the plans, once approved by donors, would trigger aid flows. McNamara's resolution was the origin of the donors' [political] push for the Paris Declaration's idea – and strategies - of Ownership.

¹³ McNamara, R.S. 24/9/1973. "The Nairobi Speech," Address by the President of the World Bank to the Board of Governors, Kenya.

¹⁴ After McNamara's speech, research in the aid and development sector focused on establishing the link between aid, policies and institutions and growth: - and "sound policies and institutions" became a shorthand for the aid and development strategy which framed these discussions. See for example: Burnside, C. and D. Dollar. 2000. Aid, Policies and Growth; and a critique: Easterly W., R. Levine and D. Roodman. 2004, Aid Policies and growth: Comment. *The American Economic Review* 94(3):774-780.

As a result of these findings, I reframed my language to distinguish the idea in the Paris Declaration as the global idea [or ideal] of Ownership of development.

I then moved, in Chapter 6, to examine how that global idea travelled from Paris to the Pacific. I was looking, particularly, in the archives, for insights into how the history of relations between donors and countries in the Pacific might influence contemporary relations, and partnerships. Most critically, I wanted to understand the role of the Forum and its Secretariat in shaping aid relations over time. As briefly touched on earlier, the policy translation literature advises that the translation of policy from setting A to setting B entails the services of a broker who facilitates a policy's movement between settings A and B. I sifted through the archives, seeking signs of a "broker" for Ownership in the region. The Forum leaders in Cairns in 2009 had assigned oversight of the Compact's implementation to their Secretariat. The Secretariat seemed a likely nominee for such a role.

The Forum leaders had, in the early days of independence, sought to establish the argument of "mutual exchange for mutual benefit" in relations between the former colonial powers, now donors and their now-independent peers, the Pacific states.¹⁵ While the Pacific states had accepted aid as necessary, they saw it as an interim measure. The Pacific states considered economic self-reliance necessary to give authenticity to their newly-acquired political independence.

¹⁵ Pacific Islands Development Program. 1980. *Proceedings of the Pacific Islands Conference: Development the Pacific Way*.

But by the time Ownership officially arrived in the Pacific region under the guise of the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles,¹⁶ the region had developed a reputation as one of the most aid reliant in the world.¹⁷ More effective aid – and better aid coordination – had been a critical issue in relations between the Pacific countries and the donors who began to flock to the region, for more than a decade.¹⁸ The archives revealed that Forum Secretariat acted more often as a conduit and mediator in relations between the Pacific countries and donors,¹⁹ rather than a norm-setter – the role encouraged by the Morauta Report, in 2013.²⁰ In light of this, I re-aligned my attention – and my research – from the region to the countries: I was still looking for the place where the shift in power that represented “successful” policy translation, was negotiated.

My search took me, in the suite of Chapters 8 through to 11, to the two national sites: of Samoa and Kiribati, where I explored how a global policy became local practice. It was in the national sites that I found both the brokers – and the shift in power, the point where change happened. But change entailed a re-interpretation of the global idea of Ownership through an engagement with locally situated knowledge.

¹⁶ The terminology of Ownership first appears in the minutes of the Forum PICS Partners meetings in late 1990s. Those Pacific countries in Paris in 2005 were considered to have endorsed the Declaration by virtue of their presence. Others later adhered to the Paris Declaration in writing. The Forum leaders endorsed aid effectiveness at the 2006 annual leaders meeting in Auckland. The Forum Officials and donors endorsed Ownership through the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles at their annual meeting in Koror in 2007; but it was another two years before the Pacific leaders endorsed the principles of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda as the foundation of the Forum Compact at their annual meeting in Cairns in 2009.

¹⁷ See Chapter 6 From Paris to the Pacific: Ownership in the Region.

¹⁸ Many bilateral donors such as Australia and New Zealand had become donors soon after countries gained independence, usually combining aid and trade relations; and often subsuming roles once occupied by the region's colonial predecessors, such as Britain, Germany and France. Similarly, the UN had been present in several countries soon after independence, in large part because of their engagement in the mandated territories; in the 1990s, the multilateral agencies increasingly developed a presence in the region: including the World Bank, the OECD, the UN and the ADB.

¹⁹ I drew primarily from the minutes of the PICS-Partners meetings convened between 1991 and 2014; as well as records of participation in global fora, Forum reports and reviews compiled during the period.

²⁰ Morauta, M., P.N. Simi, R. Killion, P. Bazeley and N. Poletti. *Pacific Plan Review 2013 Report to Pacific Leaders Volume 1 and 2, “The Morauta Review”*.

12.4 Implementing Ownership

The research process in the national sites:

My overarching research question asked how the idea of Ownership influenced more effective partnerships for development in the Pacific. In the national sites, I began my analysis of the implementation of Ownership in accord with the policy's prescribed criteria and proxy measures, as outlined in Table 2.1. above. In light of my preliminary findings on implementation, I then tested the policy's logic in each site, as outlined by the analytical framework depicted in Table 2.2. As fieldwork unfolded, I expanded the initial set of questions to add three sub-questions to question 1. These are included below, at *a. b. and c.*:

- 1) Did aid coordination practices change?
 - a) Was this change attributed to the global idea of Ownership?*
 - b) If not, what was the local significance attributed to the idea of Ownership?*
 - c) How did the local significance attributed to Ownership influence change?*
- 2) Did this change represent the exercise of Ownership?
- 3) Did the exercise of ownership lead to more effective partnerships with Australia, as their largest donor?

My initial findings indicated whether and how the strategies of Ownership were implemented. But they did not explain **why** policy change occurred - or not; nor did they offer an explanation of the significance, or power, of the relationship between participation, local knowledge and "Ownership". They were unable to offer an explanation of why change might have occurred; whether the situation reflected the isomorphic mimicry ascribed by Pritchett *et al* to much

institutional transfer in development; or something else. I turned to the analytical model to interrogate the data further, exploring why policy change occurred in one setting but not in another - and whether the idea of Ownership was significant in that change.

Through this model, I analysed the relationship between the strategies ascribed to the [global] idea of Ownership, and the local values and beliefs, and corresponding norms, which underpinned local understandings of Ownership and local policy practices and processes of aid coordination. First, I identified the local rhetoric and metaphors associated with Ownership to understand the values and beliefs and norms represented by Ownership in each sites [in accord with the ideational change literature]; then I identified related practices and processes, which signified reflexivity and bargaining [in accord with the policy translation literature]. These behaviours and processes were indicators, I argued, of policy acceptance and legitimacy. They signified the local policy actors' willingness to learn from experience and negotiate, to find space for compromise based on the assertion of mutual interests. I argue that these practices allowed local policy actors to build credibility with donors and maintain the status quo in relations; and to keep the aid flowing. I then examined practices and processes which were considered innovative: new ways of addressing old problems [after reflecting on the experience in Samoa]. These innovations, I argue, signified a shift in, or re-negotiation of, power between local and donor policy actors to effect a transition in Ownership. Innovation, I realised, brought local values, beliefs and norms more assertively to the forefront of aid relations as they shaped and informed new practices and broke old moulds, old patterns of interaction. A shift in old patterns of relating indicated a shift in the

balance of power, as local policy actors asserted the salience of their values and beliefs and norms, to re-interpret the “global” policy institutions as locally-situated practices.

12.4.1 Findings

All three Forum members, Kiribati, Samoa and Australia, endorsed the Forum Compact in Cairns in 2009. But Samoa and Kiribati each made different choices, grounded in local values and beliefs, in locally-situated knowledge, in the way they engaged with the global idea of Ownership [or not]. Initially, Australia embraced each country’s choices. But ultimately, with the replacement of the Rudd/Gillard governments by the Abbott/Bishop and subsequently, Turnbull/Bishop, regimes, Australia countered the locally-grounded exercise of Ownership with an insistence on the norms which underpinned the global idea of Ownership. Ironically, despite the origins of the global idea of Ownership in Ostrom’s proposition for the significance of *local participation* and *locally-situated knowledge*, the exercise of Ownership in each country was only welcomed by Australia when that local participation adhered to the global norms laid out by the Paris Declaration.

And, while the Forum Secretariat performed the role of conduit and mediation between the Pacific states and Australia as a key donor, my findings suggest that it was local policy actors in each national setting who emerged as the authoritative “brokers”. In one setting, this was the senior political leadership, supported by a cohort of policy advisors; and in the other, the foremost political leader who advocated a moral interdependency beyond national boundaries. These local policy actors exercised the authority of leadership to “broker” and re-negotiate power to exercise ownership of their development.

12.4.2 Implementing Ownership in Samoa:

First, I analysed whether aid coordination practices were implemented; and if so, what had changed in aid coordination practices in Samoa after the Forum Compact was agreed. While there was internal discussion about specific areas for improvement, there was no debate about implementation. Samoa was clearly and deliberately pursuing all the nominated strategies of Ownership.

But when I explored whether this change was attributable to the global idea of Ownership in the Forum Compact [and the Paris Declaration before it], key policy advisors demurred. When the Compact was agreed, they explained, Samoa was already implementing the changes indicated by the Paris “road-map”. Samoa had initiated changes in the way aid was coordinated – and development planned – with the support of various public sector reform initiatives, more than a decade earlier [with donor-support from New Zealand and Australia]. Neither the Paris Declaration, nor the Compact, Samoa’s policy advisors insisted, was a driver for change.

Puzzled by Samoa’s claims of the irrelevance of Paris and the Compact in the face of seeming dedication to the strategies of Ownership – and a change process instituted well before Paris was agreed, let alone the Compact, I turned to the question of what significance the idea of Ownership held for Samoa’s policy advisors and political leadership.

The local significance of Ownership:

Ownership was significant to Samoa's policy advisors. But it wasn't the global idea of Ownership that motivated them. Instead, Samoa's policy advisors explained, they saw an opportunity in the language offered by the global idea of Ownership – an opportunity to promote their aspirations, their values and beliefs about partnership, in accord with strategic directions which Samoa had established in the early 1990s.

As one leading policy advisor explained, ownership would ensure Samoa was able to set its own directions: "...it's good to be seen that you are leading the process and that you own the process. Otherwise, you can be tossed around... be at the mercy of what particularly the donors would like... we were very much at their mercy because there was no dialogue...".²¹

While another senior policy advisor explained why ownership would make a difference: "You want ownership...if you start allowing people to impose their views on you... you practically say 'Well, game over!'...we're looking for a mutuality... an understanding of our culture, our environment.."²² Samoa's policy advisors, backed by their political leadership, sought a mutuality, a shared, and respectful, understanding of culture and environment, in their partnerships with donors.

History matters

As the conversations unfolded, I realised that the history of relations was critical to Samoa's aspirations for a mutuality in its relations with donors. The archival records of development planning since independence in 1962 showed a history of disrespect and paternalism in

²¹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015.

²² Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

relations between those who wrote the plans – more often, consultants engaged by one or other donors – and those who lived with their consequence. The local traditions and customs of *Fa'a Samoa* [the Samoan Way], and in particular, of *Fa'a Matai* [the Chiefly Way and the governance pillar of *Fa'a Samoa*] were identified across the development plans and reports as an impediment to the economic growth which generated development.

The tipping point for Samoa's political leadership came when Samoa faced another financial crisis in the early 1980s: the government was unable to pay for the fuel sitting on the ships in Apia's harbor – and their people needed fuel to cook their rice. The Government of Samoa approached the donors for help: while Australia and New Zealand sympathised, they advised Samoa to accept the IMF's conditions. In return for another bailout, Samoa was compelled to accept an austerity program. It was a humiliation not readily forgotten by many in the government, even years later.

In the early 1990s, with the emergence of Prime Minister Tuila'epa and a supporting cohort of dedicated peers in the public sector, Samoa decided on a change in direction. They formed a common vision for their country's development. They accepted the World Bank's neoliberal policies to promote economic growth; and the "sound" management practices of the new public management approaches promoted by New Zealand and Australia. But they grounded the 1996 economic development Strategy for Samoa in the village – and the heartland of *Fa'a Samoa*.

By the time the Paris Declaration became the foundation of the Compact in Cairns, Samoa was already engaged in substantial change across their public sector – including routinely implementing the practices nominated by the global idea of Ownership. But, I argue, as happened in the churches and in Samoa’s Constitution, the subtle threads of *Fa’a Samoa* [and *Fa’a Matai*] influenced and shaped the way the public sector operated, even while policy advisors engaged constructively with the donors’ policies – and accompanying norms and institutions.

The exercise of Ownership

When the Compact was endorsed in 2009, Samoa’s policy advisors accepted most of the strategies proposed under the policy. They were already doing it. But they also cast a critical, if diplomatic, eye over other elements.

Samoa’s policy advisors reflected and bargained – and, critically, they innovated. In their innovations of policy tools and practices, they asserted, I argue, the primacy of local norms reflecting the local significance attributed to ownership over those of the global policy norms which underpinned the global idea of Ownership. There were two key examples. The first was the Partnerships Policy, which laid out the differing roles and responsibilities, and preferred practices and mechanisms for aid delivery between the government of Samoa and donors. In doing so, the policy instrument endorsed the global policy norms of leadership and responsibility which adhered to the global idea of Ownership. But more significantly, I argue, the policy instrument gave equal [or greater] prominence to local norms of leadership and

responsibility associated with the principles of *Fa'a Matai*: norms of dignity, service, authority, unity [or balance] and contribution.

Similarly, with the second example of the Compact Peer Reviews and South-South exchanges. Through these mechanisms, Samoa's policy advisors asserted the primacy of Samoan – and Pasifika – expertise and local knowledge. They insisted on the participation of Samoan and Pasifika expertise in evaluation processes as peers with the donors, rather than as logisticians or “local” advisors. And they identified a way to share that expertise with younger policy professionals across the Pacific through the exchange program. Samoa's policy advisors asserted the equality of Samoan expertise and knowledge with that of donors.

These innovations offered opportunities for building a mutuality in understanding of culture and environment, between Samoa and the donors. But they did so by bringing the norms of relationality under *Fa'a Samoa* – and its governance pillar, *Fa'a Matai* – to the fore in policy practices. They represented, I argue, the re-negotiation or shift in power that constituted the exercise of ownership of development within the aid effectiveness paradigm by Samoa.

12.4.3 The Partnership with Australia

Australia, under the Rudd government, responded optimistically in the first instance, to Samoa's assertion of Ownership. The Partnership Policy, for example, “re-set relations,” in the partnership, the Australians claimed under the Rudd/Gillard governments. But as Australia changed governments, moving into the Abbott/Bishop, and later, the Turnbull/Bishop regimes, the balance in relations shifted again. Assessments of the partnership increasingly

reflected the dominance of norms of accountability, effectiveness and efficiency in the relationship, rather than the quality of relations, rather than the mutuality in understanding of “our culture, our environment” sought by Samoa.²³

Despite the shift reflected in negotiations over the performance of the aid partnership, Samoa maintained good relations with Australia: it remained, after all, a long and important history. Donor-aid remained an integral complement to the remittances and local industries that help maintain Samoa’s economy. But Samoa also pursued alternatives: development approaches had failed the Pacific for too long.

While Australia, under Bishop’s leadership as Foreign Minister, focused on a “re-set” in relations according to Australia’s priorities for “economic diplomacy”, Samoa had already turned to their regional peers at the Forum and to their multilateral relations at the UN to strengthen the foundations for partnerships based on mutuality and understanding. Samoa articulated this through their leadership and engagement in several regional and global policy initiatives: the Pacific Road Map on the Sustainable Development (2017), which notably, incorporated several innovations introduced by Samoa under the Compact; the declaration of “the Blue Pacific” at the Apia Forum Leaders meeting in 2017, which redefined the development narrative for the region; and, following the International Conference on SIDS hosted by Samoa in 2014, through the SAMOA Pathway, which triggered the establishment of the UN SIDS Partnership Framework which sought to reframe the mechanisms and approaches for partnerships between donors and SIDS.

²³ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015.

But Australia continued to misread relations in the broader Pacific, including Samoa. The release of Australia's white paper on foreign policy, which, Tuila'epa declared, seemed to privilege the Indo over the Pacific, was the final straw. In one of his last acts as Chair of the Pacific Forum, Prime Minister Tuila'epa told Australia's foreign policy community what the Pacific thought of the state of relations. At the Lowy Institute in Sydney, Tuila'epa expressed his disappointment with Australia. In particular, he denounced the Pacific traditional partners for the pretence of

...interest in the form of strategic manipulation... the reluctance to engage in open discussions ...and share information...the patronising nuance in believing that Pacific nations did not know what they were doing...[and their] strategic neglect".²⁴

Yet, while the Pacific - and Samoa - continued to seek, Tuila'epa affirmed, "genuine and durable" partnerships, it did so "premised on understanding, friendship, mutual benefit and a collective ambition to achieve sustainable results."²⁵ The Pacific, Tuila'epa asserted, remained "resolute" in its determination, to assert both its interests and its values as the Blue Pacific continent, despite other countries' efforts to reshape "the global rules and institutions".²⁶

12.4.4 Implementing Ownership in Kiribati

Kiribati too, delivered on the proxy measures of Ownership, even if some questioned the underlying quality and substance. My interviews revealed that policy advisors undertook their responsibilities with dedication: they reflected and bargained – and where necessary,

²⁴ Malielegaoi, T. S. 30/8/2018. Pacific Perspectives on the New Strategic Landscape. Address by Hon Prime Minister of Samoa and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, The Lowy Institute, Sydney Australia.

²⁵ Malielegaoi, T. S. 30/8/2018. Pacific Perspectives on the New Strategic Landscape. Address by Hon Prime Minister of Samoa and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, The Lowy Institute, Sydney Australia.

²⁶ Malielegaoi, T. S. 30/8/2018. Pacific Perspectives on the New Strategic Landscape. Address by Hon Prime Minister of Samoa and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, The Lowy Institute, Sydney Australia.

delegated tasks [such as financial management and strategic planning] that required additional expertise to consultants funded by the Australian aid program.

But, as in Samoa, there was a twist in the apparent implementation of the global idea of Ownership in Kiribati. Very few policy advisors or political leaders were familiar with the global idea of Ownership – or their supporting policy vehicles, the Forum Compact and Paris Declaration. One of the few policy advisors who cited the Paris Declaration observed that none of his peers in the executive believed in the aid effectiveness agenda: “it was a donor thing.”²⁷ So, I turned again, to explore the local significance attributed to ownership – and its relevance to aid and development.

The significance of Ownership

There was a diversity of views: some policy advisors thought of ownership as a matter of taking personal responsibility for speaking up, especially when aid projects failed due to the absence of local knowledge in their design or implementation. But few identified with the global idea of Ownership in aid relations.

Instead, aid was regarded with ambivalence. It was both not trusted and an obligation: but it belonged, quite clearly, to the donors. At the end of the day, said one, “it’s the donor who decides where funds go”.²⁸ While another asserted, “aid... it’s not mine...why not take it when its free...?”²⁹ But aid was not the pathway to development. Many feared that aid created

²⁷ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-10112015.

²⁸ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-UM-05122015.

²⁹ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-11112015.

dependency, inhering obligations that were difficult to reconcile with the I-Kiribati sense of identity, place and connection.

I-Kiribati are, as one policy advisor explained, integrally connected to the ocean, at one with their environment. This environment shaped I-Kiribati: a true I-Kiribati was hardy and resilient. Engaging in the life of the community was a question of knowing one's place in relation to others, of reconciling balance in the ebb and flow of connections. Accepting aid from outsiders, from the *imatang* [foreigners] then, was a tough place to be for a true I-Kiribati, who, explained one senior political leader, is a person who "stands on their own two feet", who contributes and cooperates across family and other relationships when needed, yet expects to be self-sufficient and autonomous.³⁰

It was in this sense of identity, connection and place where history became relevant in understanding the contemporary ambivalence towards aid: I-Kiribati had been subject to the capriciousness of *imatang* since the British had arrived, unannounced, in 1892 and declared the islands, known to the locals as Tungaru, as theirs. The British claimed the agreement of the people who inhabited the island chain, even though, as everyone knew, there was "a gunboat in the harbor".³¹

This was the pattern. The British left nearly a century later, the same way they arrived: uninvited. By the time the British departed in 1979, the new Republic of Kiribati held the last

³⁰ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

³¹ Government of the Gilbert Islands. 1977. Ocean Island - Some Facts the Banabans Ignore, Issued on behalf of the Government of the Gilbert Islands.

of the phosphate royalties in the trust fund – but the phosphate from the mine on Banaba was exhausted. The Republic’s new government faced the challenge of identifying an alternative source of revenue to support the needs - and expectations – of a growing population for increasing services in education and health that the government no longer had the means to fund. Aid was accepted, reluctantly, as an interim measure.

But aid is no longer an “interim” measure. Kiribati was registered as an LDC in 1986 – and continues to rely on aid. In 2009 and again in 2018, the Government of Kiribati argued [despite the increasing revenue from the fishing licence fees] against graduation from its status as an LDC on the grounds that Kiribati remained too vulnerable to climate change. The ambivalence around aid – reflecting a history of betrayal and abandonment, and the failure of reliance, mixed with gratitude and hope - filters Kiribati’ engagement with the *imatang*, with donors, still.

But, amidst this ambivalence, there were other and different conversations about ownership. In these conversations, ownership was linked to political independence and economic self-reliance as a true I-Kiribati.

In these conversations, ownership represented the exercise of legitimate authority or mastery over a resource. It was more like unambiguous sovereignty. In these conversations, I-Kiribati asserted their sovereignty over the fish and other marine resources in the oceans that were their home. This was, unambiguously, the preferred pathway to development.

The exercise of Ownership

It was in this arena, I argue, that Kiribati demonstrated leadership and responsibility, as a true I-Kiribati was obliged to, for effective and equitable development to ensure I-Kiribati could survive. This was where I-Kiribati exercised Ownership by their rules. Kiribati asserted authority and sovereignty over the fish that swam in their 3.5m^{sqKm} of ocean-territory.

In the wake of the 2007 IPCC Report, President Tong led two campaigns, on fish and climate change. He asserted Kiribati's relevance in the world as a large ocean state, rather than small and vulnerable. He asserted the right of I-Kiribati to be acknowledged by others, including the wealthy donors, as relevant – affirming I-Kiribati's right, not only to continue to enjoy their world, but to survive.

President Tong asserted a moral framework of interdependency which reflected the salience of I-Kiribati norms of self-sufficiency and autonomy, alongside those of contribution and cooperation. He did this in two ways. First, Kiribati exploited the resource they legitimately owned, asserting the right to benefit equitably from the fish through the establishment of innovative partnerships – and new instruments, in the new fishing licencing arrangements under the Vessel Day Scheme [VDS] - under the Parties to the Nauru Agreement. Second, President Tong held the wealthy countries - who were also donors - to account for the effect of their behaviours. He asked the wealthy countries to take responsibility for producing - and mitigating - the increasing greenhouse emissions which threatened his people's livelihoods, their culture and their right to survive.

While Kiribati reaped the rewards on the fish, there was less success in achieving the kind of change President Tong sought from the wealthy countries on climate change, including its long-standing and significant donor, Australia. Domestically, support for Tong's advocacy on climate change was ambivalent. Some simply did not want to leave their islands. Some hesitated to believe the science. Others trusted, instead, that their god would not permit another great flood.

12.4.5 The Partnership with Australia

As for the consequence of Kiribati's choices on "Ownership" in their partnership with Australia, I argue that Kiribati simply side-stepped the "global" idea of Ownership. Kiribati's policy advisors maintained good personal relations with the donor representatives. They asserted the significance of local knowledge in negotiations when needed - and delegated where necessary - to ensure aid flows continued.

Australia continued to support Kiribati's efforts to commercialise their fish, through support to the national development strategy, as it always had.

But Kiribati was no longer relying solely on Australia's [or other donors'] aid for support to commercialise their fish. Kiribati had taken a new path to establish the structural equity it had long sought in its dealings with the Distant Water Fishing Nations [DWFNs]. In establishing a new kind of collaboration with its regional peers and new partners, the other eight PNA members, Kiribati innovated. They found a new way to resolve old problems. Kiribati, working in a new kind of collaboration with its peers, deliberately stepped outside aid to establish the

new PNA secretariat and implement a new instrument to manage fish licencing, the VDS. It was a success: the revenue generated by the VDS fees in 2017 surpassed the [estimated] total aid received by Kiribati from all donors that year.

More importantly, under the new kind of partnership with their peers in the PNA and with the DWFNs, Kiribati had established a mechanism to achieve the structural equity it had always sought in its relations with *imatang*. The PNA arrangements fulfilled, as Dame Meg Taylor explained, a “shared vision to assert great control of their fisheries so they could receive a bigger and fairer share of their resources”.³² It was an innovation that recognised the salience of local norms around collaboration and contribution.

But the campaign on climate change was less successful for Kiribati: while Australia supported Kiribati with its labour migration policy through successive governments, the Abbott/Bishop regime was reluctant to compromise on what it saw as Australia's national interests – and a national economy reliant on coal. It was a reluctance which Australia's political leadership under Abbott, managed with disrespect and disregard. The reports of several Australian Ministers joking about the prospect of water “lapping at the doors” of their Pacific counterparts, just days after the 2015 Pacific Regional Forum Leaders had failed to agree on the urgency of the 1.5° limit in global warming, [largely because of Australia's positioning], rapidly circulated through the region. It signalled a disrespect that was noticed by Australia's Pacific peers. As President Tong observed, Australia's Immigration Minister, Peter Dutton,

³² Taylor, M. 11/11/2019. Griffith Asia Lecture 2019 – Delivered by Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum. Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia.

should “search his own soul... it shows a sense of moral irresponsibility quite unbecoming of any leadership in any capacity.”³³ Tong continued, reflecting on the broader state of relations: “As long as there is this kind of attitude, this kind of arrogance in any position of leadership, we will continue to have a lot of tension.”³⁴

President Tong had sought to resolve the imbalance in his state’s relations with the wealthy countries and donors by asserting the relevance of Kiribati as a large ocean state – and seek a reversal of donor-recipient roles by inviting the wealthy donors to account for their behaviours. But he was unable to persuade the wealthy donors to change their behaviours. While Australia was willing to offer aid to support labour mobility, through training and education, Kiribati was unable to re-negotiate the power in their relations. Australia, alongside other donors, were unwilling to compromise their national interests for the survival of Kiribati.

12.5 Transition to Ownership

The changing policy environment

In September 2017, the Forum Leaders met in Apia to announce the Blue Pacific – and reframe the narrative for development in the region. Two months later, the Forum’s Secretary General accepted the findings of the independent evaluation of the Compact. In its place, the Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development (2017) adopted the “best practices” of the Compact

³³ Glenday, J. and A. Henderson. 12/9/2015. Kiribati President Lashes Peter Dutton for ‘Vulgar’ Joke about Rising Sea Levels in Pacific, Urges Action on Climate Change. *ABC News*.

³⁴ Glenday, J. and A. Henderson. 12/9/2015. Kiribati President Lashes Peter Dutton for ‘Vulgar’ Joke about Rising Sea Levels in Pacific, Urges Action on Climate Change. *ABC News*.

and folded “national Ownership” under its wings.³⁵ Globally, Ownership had been embedded as one of four principles for effective development under the GPEDC after the 2011 HLFAE in Busan; and in 2015, Ownership was integrated as component of Goal 17, “the partnership goal” of the SDGs.

Did the global idea of Ownership put countries in the driver's seat?

Policymaking is political.³⁶ My research has pursued a simple proposition: that the way we see the world varies according to our sense of identity, place and connection. And this influences how a policy is designed, implemented and its success evaluated. Clearly, if the evolution of a policy is shaped by values and beliefs which in turn shape norms and form the building blocks of institutions, this means that the interpretation of a policy can vary according to our respective sense of identity, place and connection - even when there are claims of a global consensus.

This opens the challenge, I suggest, when we talk of policy change, of ensuring that a policy which claims global consensus, we understand that compromise may sit beneath consensus. Without the understanding of the nuance which shapes consensus, a policy may become a tool of coercion or compliance, particularly when contemporary [and historical] relations between parties are marked by an asymmetry in power.

³⁵ Brien, D. R. Jauncey and J. Winter. 30/11/ 2017. Findings of the Independent Review: Forum Compact Report-Final. Many of the practices which promoted Pasifika expertise, such as the peer reviews, south-south attachments and capacity strengthening on aid practices and reporting, were merged into one regional-wide effort complemented by voluntary national reporting to the UN under the Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development, endorsed by Forum Leaders at their annual meeting in Apia in 2017.

³⁶ Stone, D. 1997. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*.

In this thesis, I examined how a global idea agreed in Paris, reconvened in Cairns, shaped local practice in the government offices and parliaments of Apia and Tarawa. I explained the logic which underpinned the policy. I explained the institutional theory which underpinned the policy's logic.

But when I examined the implementation of the global idea of Ownership in two Pacific countries, I found that in both countries, change was grounded in local understandings and motivations around ownership of development – not the global idea laid out by the Paris Declaration and re-affirmed through the Pacific's Forum Compact.

Change was motivated by local aspirations and desires for the dignity of equity and equality – more than in pursuit of effective and efficient aid. Samoa sought a mutuality and understanding in relations, an equality with donors; while Kiribati asserted sovereign control over their fish in pursuit of equity and economic self-reliance. Neither country was averse to effective and efficient use of aid. But they did want the “genuine and durable” partnerships necessary for effective development: the kind of partnerships that emerged from a shift in the power balance in relations.

My contribution to the critique of aid policy in the Pacific – and globally

I conclude that the global idea of Ownership was premised on flawed assumptions about donor altruism and aid-recipient capacity. This meant that the policy logic underpinning the global idea of Ownership was constrained by several limitations which influenced the policy's relevance – and effectiveness - as an instrument of development change in the Pacific.

Ostrom's argument held that donors are motivated by generosity and altruism: and that donor dominance over aid-receiving governments was almost an accidental consequence of donor goodwill whereas it is clear that donors can act from strategic interests, seeking to influence and control geo-politic and geo-economic relationships through aid relations. Not only does the literature show us this, but we can go directly to Rudd's own words, when he was advocating to become Australia's 26th prime minister. As Rudd explained in an interview on an Australian current affairs broadcast, investing more aid in the Pacific was "the right thing to do [because] poverty is a global evil, a regional evil..."³⁷ But, Rudd added, Australia also had to remain strategically engaged in the region:

...if we fail to act effectively [to reduce poverty]... we're going to see a long-term drift in Australia's strategic standing right across the region...it's not just an arc of instability, but it becomes a vehicle through which what was once an area in which we were the principal power, we become supplanted over time by other powers from beyond the region...³⁸

Similarly, countries, as the case study sites illustrate, also act from their strategic interests seeking to influence geo-politic and geo-economic relationships through aid relations.

Ostrom and her team's theory was also flawed in its assumptions of recipient capacity and motivation. First, they assumed aid dependency was symptomatic of incapacity – and indicated 'broken' or dysfunctional norms and institutions. Second, Ostrom and her colleagues assumed that aid receiving governments were passive recipients of the donor's largesse. But the case study sites illustrate these assumptions were flawed: Both Samoa and Kiribati demonstrated the strength of local moral codes; they asserted the validity of local moral

³⁷ Rudd K. 4/7/2007. Rudd Urges Foreign Policy Re-think to Counter Instability. Tony Jones interviewing Kevin Rudd on *ABC Lateline*.

³⁸ Rudd K. 4/7/2007. Rudd Urges Foreign Policy Re-think to Counter Instability. Tony Jones interviewing Kevin Rudd on *ABC Lateline*.

frameworks and proposed alternative institutions. Both countries asserted a significance to an idea of ownership which was grounded in locally-situated values and beliefs – and norms and practices; a significance which drew from a sense of identity, of history, connection and place.

The answer to the question of whether the story of ownership in Samoa and Kiribati demonstrates policy failure or development success lies, as Ratu Mara asserted to the UN in 1970, in whose standards the story is measured against. The setting of standards, as Ratu Mara argued at the UNGA, “must not assume that there are universal solutions to all problems in all parts of the world.”³⁹

There was, I argue, both policy failure and development success. The practices of Ownership designated by the Paris Declaration and the foundation of the Compact were implemented. These practices continue to be endorsed by the region’s Forum Leaders through the Pacific Road Map on the Sustainable Development.⁴⁰ Several of the innovations promoted under Samoa’s leadership – such as the insistence on Pasifika expertise and south-south cooperation – are prominent amongst those practices.

But the exercise of ownership in both countries, according to their rules, also signalled development success. It also shows where to look to consolidate opportunities. The new paradigm for effective development promoted under the Pacific Road Map - and reflecting

³⁹ Mara, K. 26/10/1970. Address by the Prime Minister of Fiji on the 25th Anniversary Commemorative Session, General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. In K.Mara, *The Pacific Way: A Memoir*, University of Hawai’i. 237-242.

⁴⁰ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). 2017. Forum Communique. 48th Pacific Islands Forum, held Apia Samoa, 5-8 September 2017. PIFS(17)10.

the Blue Pacific narrative - asks not only for genuine and durable partners, but for mutually accountable and inclusive partnerships.

But despite the exercise of ownership according to locally situated knowledge [ironically, in accord with Ostrom], Australia refused to concede the driver's seat to the countries. After an initial embrace, Australia re-asserted the dominance of the global policy norms: preferencing norms of accountability, effectiveness and efficiency over relational norms of mutuality, understanding, interdependence and equity.

I argue that we need a new metaphor for aid relations. Neither the promise of driver's seats nor the dilemma of the good Samaritan reflects the state of aid relations in the Blue Pacific. Countries were already confident of their authority when Jim Wolfensohn promised countries they would be "sitting in the "driver's seat". But as the case-study in Samoa illustrates, Samoa knew the source of its authority lay in the village, and in *Fa'a Samoa*. While Samoa acknowledged, in compromise, its need for technical skills, it also wanted respect as equals, "despite that aid reliance", from its partner-donor, Australia. Similarly, Kiribati was confident of its sovereignty over its island-atolls and ocean territory: but it wanted to balance its political independence with economic self-reliance. And in the process, re-calibrate relations through equity in its partnership with its PNA-peers and the DWFNs. Equating Ownership with putting countries in the driver's seat was an empty metaphor. It did not respond to the locally-situated knowledge from which innovation – and the exercise of ownership, emerged. Ironically, it assumed only countries needed to change – and relations entail a dynamic between entities,

rather than solo enterprises. The metaphor wasn't a big enough vision to imagine the Blue Pacific's call for collective action as equals with donor-partners.

Similarly, the Samaritan's Dilemma carried too many flawed assumptions. The exercise of ownership in Kiribati and Samoa – and Australia's ambivalent response - illustrates that the donor has a role to play in recognising and acknowledging the significance and salience of local norms in negotiations over aid, rather than assume the primacy of "global" norms.

The competing rights acknowledged by Pearson and McNamara in 1973- the right to equity vs the right to accountability - remain a tension at the heart of aid relations. But the stories of ownership in these two countries, Kiribati and Samoa, show that Small Island Developing States continue to find ways to assert their relevance, to seek a mutuality through understanding and to hold donor countries to account – to pursue mutually accountable and inclusive partnerships.

These stories of ownership show that the invitation to share power at the table has to be an ongoing and respectful negotiation, rather than assumed or asserted, simply because one brings the aid and the other receives it. Australia has a role to play in recognising the operation of power at the negotiation table. Australia has the opportunity to choose, as a subscriber to the rules-based order of multilateralism, as a good international citizen and a "decent" member of the Pacific family, to share power.⁴¹

⁴¹ Evans, G. 2022. Good international Citizenship: the Case for Decency.

The universal assumptions made by global agreements risk undermining local norms and institutions [or gains already underway], if we continue to assume that consensus reached in global fora is not threaded with compromise. For global consensus to translate into constructive local policy practice, there needs to be another conversation, perhaps a series of conversations. These conversations must recognise and uncover the compromise which consensus may mask: unpacking the policy and its assumptions. Rather than assume that global agreements can simply be replicated across contexts, these conversations must introduce the nuance of context – of power and history - and reintegrate local values and beliefs to ensure the successful translation of global consensus back to local settings. Otherwise, we risk the prospect of compliance, or coercion, shaping aid relations. And neither, I argue, is a good basis for the successful, mutually accountable and inclusive partnerships, which both Pacific countries and Australia, have agreed are necessary for effective development.

My Contribution to the literature on policy change

The policy change literature has a role to play in helping understand how global consensus becomes local policy practice – or not. There are several ways in which I think this research might contribute to strengthening the literature in relation to better understanding how context influences policy outcomes. This relates to the propositions for policy translation, norm contestation, history and context.

Stone [and others] have offered a model for policy translation which demanded attention to the shift in power when policy moves from one setting to another. The model identified the

characteristics of reflexivity and bargaining as part of policy translation. But, Stone also proposed that the policy translation model could be complemented by the addition of other elements. My experience in Samoa, in particular, revealed that the policy translation model was silent on how we can “see” power in other contexts. The problem I faced, to paraphrase Finnemore and Sikkink’s famous question on norms, was how do we know “power” when we see it?

To identify the operation of power that was grounded in local values and beliefs, my model for policy analysis brought three additional considerations to the analysis of policy change.

Drawing on the policy translation model, I added:

- a) The analysis of rhetoric and metaphor to reveal the values and beliefs underlying an idea and likely to inform norms around an idea;
- b) I identified the characteristic of innovation – a new way of resolving old problems – as indicative of that friction in norms which indicated a shift in power;
- c) I also paid especial attention to which norms seemed salient at the point of friction – drawing from and expanding Acharya’s concept of norm contestation to consider how local norms come to the fore in the contestation between global and local norms rather than assuming the pre-eminence of global norms [in contrast to Acharya’s work on norm contestation and Merry’s work on vernacularisation].

These refinements to the policy translation model need to be tested in other domains.

Understanding context

At the heart of the Ownership-ownership conversation is the recognition of power imbalance between donors and Pacific countries. But when the mainstream literature, such as that produced by the OECD, discusses the vulnerability of the SIDs, it often talks about economics and geography, about risk and probabilities. Yet, context – and power - is shaped equally by history and its stories of hope, of dreams and emotions:

- It's the stories of gunboats in the harbour; of fuel, unpaid, sitting on the boats while people go hungry: of writing a cheque knowing it will bounce while counting the days' grace until someone realises.
- It's the stories of phosphate exhausted – and fish yet to be caught.
- It's the stories of gratitude to a donor for their "generosity" – and the weight and indignity of the obligation of reliance.

My examination of the influence of Ownership in Samoa and Kiribati demonstrates that contemporary partnerships reveal historic relations – and critique of contemporary policy must appreciate the significance of historical context to understand contemporary policy change, or not.

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Appendices

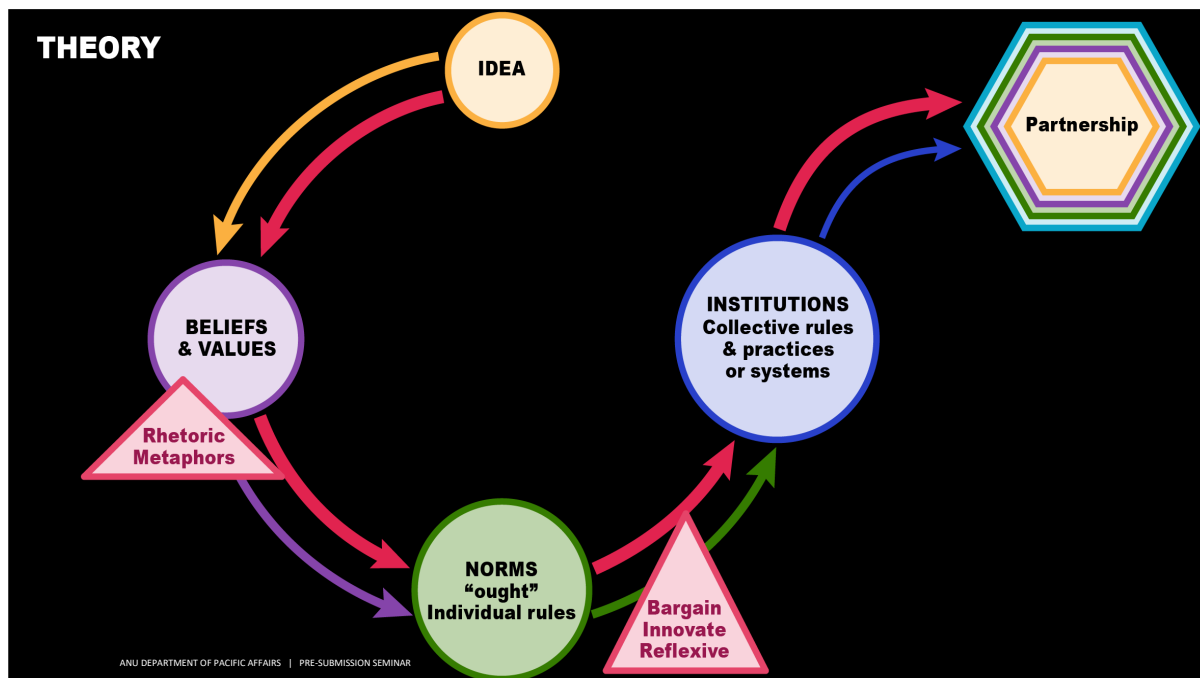
Appendix 3.1 Best Practice in Ownership

Table 3.1: Implementing “Best Practice” in Ownership

Criteria for Ownership [Ostrom et al]	'Best practice' for Ownership of Development [Paris/Accra]		
Beneficiary Participation	Proxy measures	Purpose	'Global' norms
Identification of Needs	National Development Strategy	Demonstration of Countries' Leadership of Development Agenda through Inclusive Consultation for Agreement on Development Priorities	Leadership through Responsibility and Prioritisation Effectiveness and Efficiency
Contributing Resources To The Solution	Annual Budget Medium Term Expenditure Framework	Coordination of Resources in Dialogue with Donors Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs supported by Resources and Authorised By Parliament	Effectiveness and Efficiency
Enjoying, Or Consuming The Benefits	National Development Strategy Performance Framework	Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs through Inclusive Participation of Government, Civil Society Private Sector	Effectiveness and Efficiency
Deciding When The Need Has Been Met, When It's Over	Performance Framework	Generate Data, Assess and Report Progress on Results	Accountability

Appendix 3.2 Analytical Model For Policy Change

Diagram 3.1 Analytical Model for Policy Change



Appendix 3.3 Research Questions

My research questions evolved over time as the focus of my research shifted from regional to national sites and I revised my analytical model for policy change. Initially, my core question asked:

- a. How did the idea of Ownership at the heart of the Paris declaration - and by extension, the foundation of the Forum Compact - influence development partnerships in the Pacific: Did Ownership “put Pacific countries in the driver’s seat” of their development, as promised by the World Bank and OECD?
- b. And if not, why not...? What was the role of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat as a broker of Ownership?

I broke the core research question into several sub-questions:

- a. What was the meaning attributed to the idea of Ownership by political leaders and policymakers operating in the Pacific?
- b. Did the practice of Ownership – represented by implementation and use of the various designated policy tools and instruments and strategies for improved aid coordination – contribute to the expected policy change/outcomes, that is, more effective development partnerships:
 - i. Were the designated policy tools and instruments utilised?
 - ii. Did change happen – who for, what kind, and how?
- c. What is the significance of these findings for:
 - iii. Development partnerships in the Pacific?

iv. Aid and development policymaking in the Pacific?

When, as outlined in Chapter 4 in more detail, I re-focussed my inquiries on the national sites, I put the question of a regional broker to one side, leaving my core question:

- a) How did the idea of Ownership at the heart of the Paris declaration - and by extension, the foundation of the Forum Compact - influence development partnerships in the Pacific: Did Ownership “put Pacific countries in the driver’s seat” of their development, as promised by the World Bank and OECD?
- b) And if not, why not...?

I refined the sub-questions which guided the generation and analysis of data:

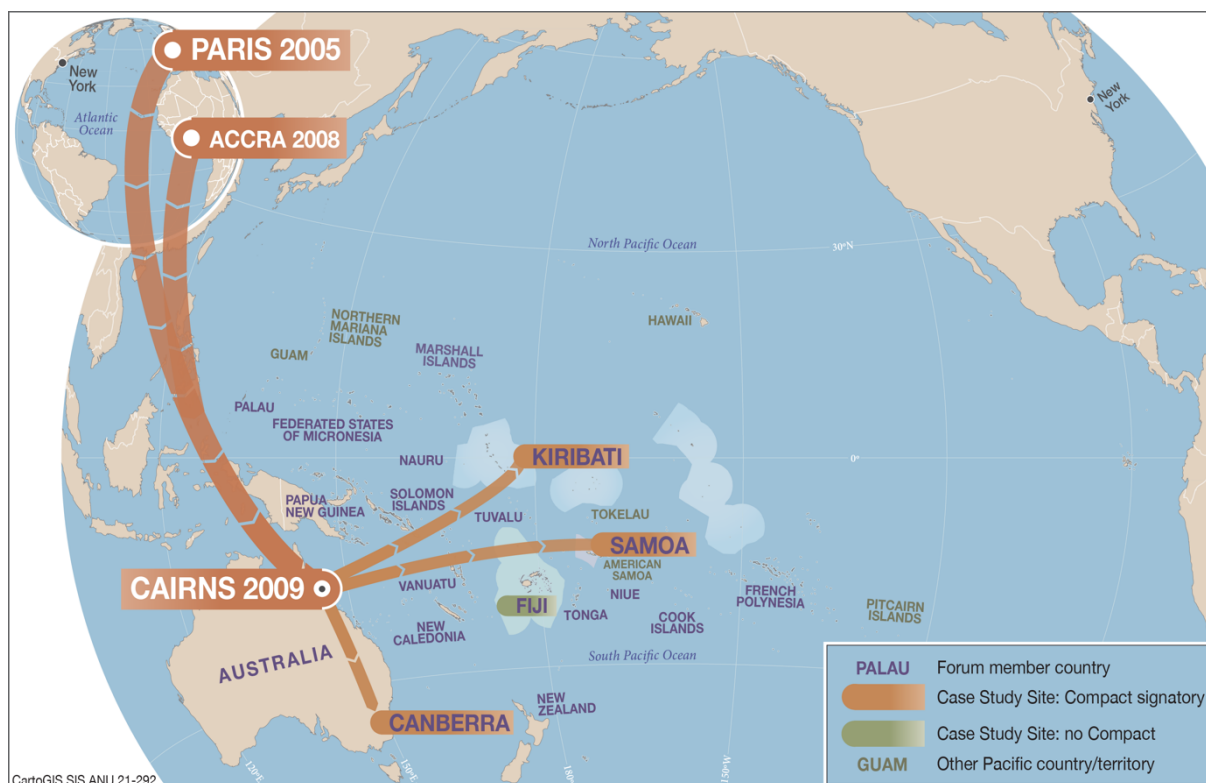
- a) Did aid coordination practices change?
- b) Did this change represent the exercise Ownership?
- c) Did the exercise of Ownership by countries lead to more effective development partnerships with Australia, one of the region’s largest donors?

As I moved between fieldwork in the national sites and desk work, I began my analysis by determining whether the government had implemented the strategies of Ownership in accord with the policy’s prescribed criteria and proxy measures, as outlined in Table 3.1. In light of my preliminary findings on implementation, I then tested the policy’s logic in each site, as outlined by the analytical framework depicted in Diagram 3.1. As fieldwork and analysis unfolded, I expanded the initial set of questions to add three further sub-questions. These are noted below, at 1 *a. b.* and *c.*:

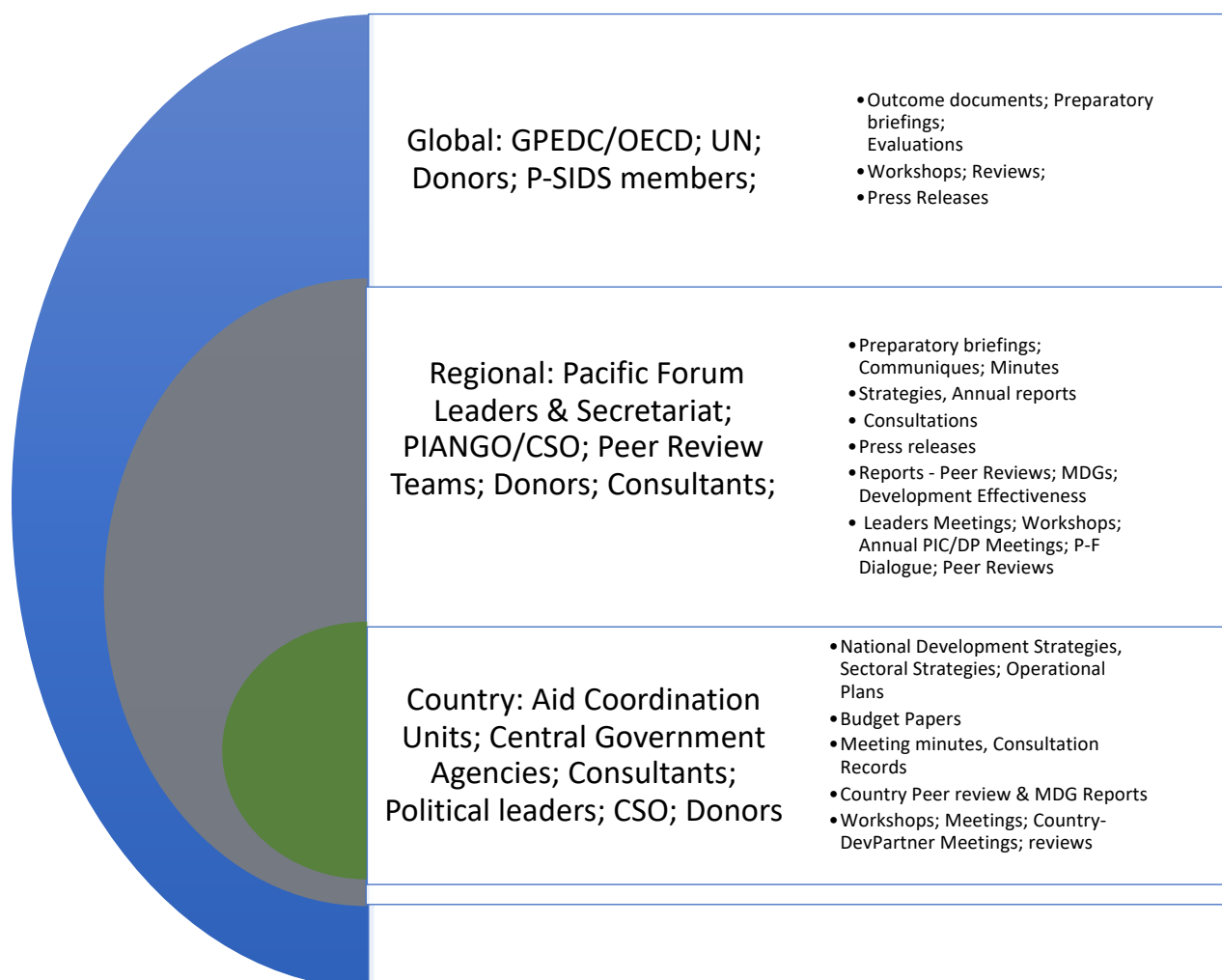
- 4) Did aid coordination practices change?
 - a) Was this change attributed to the global idea of Ownership?*

- b) If not, what was the local significance attributed to the idea of Ownership?*
 - c) How did the local significance attributed to Ownership influence change in aid coordination practices?*
- 5) Did this change represent the exercise of Ownership?
 - 6) Did the exercise of ownership lead to more effective development partnerships with Australia, as their largest donor?

Appendix 4.1 Policy Pathway and Sites



Appendix 4.2 Scoping the Policy Sources [Identifying the Policy Communities across Scale by Artefacts]



Appendix 4.3 Policy Communities: Interviews

	Global	Regional	Australia	Kiribati	Samoa	Fiji	Total
Formal	3	11	5	21	16	10	66
Background	5	12	4	8	8	8	44
total	7	23	9	29	24	18	
Grand							110

Confidential interviews [cited interviews only]

Country	Policy Community	Source	Code	Date
Kiribati	Government		SS	11112015
	Government	--	BSG	30112015
	Government	--	SS	04112015
	Government	--	UM	05122015
	Government	--	SN	10112015
	Maneaba	--	SS	22112015
	Maneaba	--	JU	16112015
	Government		SS	10112015

Site	Policy Community	Source	Code	Date
Samoa	Consultant	--	IQ	06052015
	Government	--	OT	28012015
	Government	--	OT	30012015
	Consultant	--	LW	19052015

Referenced [not cited]

Site	Policy Community	Source	Code	Date
Australia	Donor [former AusAID]	--	TD	06052016
Australia	Donor [former AusAID]		SD	08022019

Site	Policy Community	Source	Code	Date
Fiji	Regional Organisation	--	BT	09062015
Fiji	Diplomatic Community	--	BJ	24042015

Appendix 4.4 Research Participant Information Sheet

Research Participant Information Sheet

Project Title: Advocating “Country Ownership”: Exploring the Role of Pacific Regional Organisations in facilitating “Country Ownership” under the Forum Compact

Researcher: You are invited to participate in the above research project, which is being conducted by **Ms. Suzanne O’Neill** (PhD Candidate) and Dr. Stewart Firth (Supervisor) of the State Society and Governance in Melanesia Program in the School of International Political and Strategic Studies at the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia. This research forms the basis of Ms O’Neill’s PhD Thesis. The ethical aspects of the research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee.

General Outline of the Project:

Description and Methodology: The aim of the research is to explore the role of Pacific regional organisations in the facilitation of “country ownership” under the global aid and development effectiveness reforms, represented in the Pacific by the adoption of the Forum Compact and its subsequent implementation. The research intends to explore how successful policy change in aid and development effectiveness evolves in the Pacific – and in doing so, consider how regional organisations balance collective regional interests while acknowledging country sovereignty. The research will draw on interpretive policy analysis, using qualitative and ethnographic methods: interviews, document analysis and participant observation.

Participants: The research will engage with participants across five different ‘interpretive communities’: regional organisations; bilateral and multilateral development agencies; country representatives from government and civil society; global and regional aid effectiveness advisors; and individual consultants.

Use of Data: The expected findings from this research will enhance knowledge of how Pacific regional organisations, as ‘brokers’, interpret global policy to the regional and country level and vice versa. In so doing, the research will provide insight into public policy-making and implementation in three ways:

- 1) It will provide an empirically grounded narrative of how regional organisations see their role in representing and advocating the interests of their member states. This is of significance in the unfolding debate about a new regional ‘aid architecture’ and broader regional re-positioning.
- 2) It will add a Pacific perspective to the body of knowledge of aid and development policy and practice, of benefit to development policymakers at global, regional and country levels. This will illuminate development policy and practice in light of the changing global context, the emergence of south-south partnerships and emergent shifts in the policy frames of some key donors in the Pacific.
- 3) It will add a new dimension to the academic conversation of how policy transfer - or translation - happens through political, social and cultural networks across the Pacific.

Feedback: During the course of the research, at least two public seminars will be conducted at ANU, in accord with the APA scholarship program. In addition, informal ‘update’ seminars will be conducted at the end of fieldwork in country, or with organisations, as requested. If feasible, seminars may also be offered through the USP or other appropriate location. Once the thesis is completed, a summary of the findings will be provided to you or your organisation. A copy of the complete thesis can also be provided, at your request. It is also possible that results from this research will be presented at regional meetings, academic conferences, published in academic journals or as a book.

Participant Involvement: Please be advised that your participation in this research is voluntary. You may choose to withdraw from the research, or withdraw any statement you have made. You are welcome to do so without prejudice up until the time when the work is prepared for publication. If this happens, Ms O’Neill will reach agreement with you about what you would like me to do with any material you may have already provided. Should you agree to participate, you would be asked to contribute through an interview at a time and place convenient to you. The interview would involve questions regarding your professional role in, and your perceptions of, the events and discussions leading up to the adoption of the Paris Principles, and/or, subsequently, the Forum Compact and its implementation across the Pacific. The time you give to the interview is at your discretion and could be anywhere between 1-2 hours or more. If necessary, a follow-up interview can also be arranged.

Confidentiality: With your permission, the interview will be recorded. In this type of research, it is usual to protect the names and identity of people who contribute information. In this case, Ms O’Neill would identify you in the thesis or associated articles by a general description of your position (e.g. “an official in a regional organisation”) and remove any contextual details that might reveal your identity. Ms O’Neill would protect your confidentiality and privacy as far as possible and to the fullest extent possible within the limits of the law: your name, contact details and the recording of your interview(s) would be kept in a password-protected digital folder and any transcript of interview secured in a locked cabinet (or a locked briefcase, when travelling). **Alternatively**, you may decide that confidentiality is not important for you. In this case, Ms O’Neill would take all reasonable steps to ensure any information you provide is attributed respectfully and as accurately as possible. All material you provide will be kept securely, and only available to the researcher. Should you wish to review any quotations attributed to you in the thesis, and/or any related published articles, you may do so. You may also, during your interview, choose to indicate that some comments are made “off the record”. You will be invited to note your decision about your privacy and confidentiality in the attached consent form prior to interview. Although all reasonable steps would be taken to ensure your confidentiality and privacy (except where you indicate this is not important to you), you should note that, given the nature of the development networks across the Pacific, it may be still possible for someone to identify you.

Data Storage: Ms O’Neill will keep the original records and files secure in a password-protected digital folder and any transcripts will be secured in a locked cabinet (or briefcase, when travelling). These files will be kept for at least 5 years following publication of the research. At the appropriate point, following review, all data, except any deemed to be of

archival significance, will be destroyed in line with University policy. Should the review reveal any material of archival significance, this material will be offered to the ANU Library.

Queries and Concerns: Should you require further information or have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact either Ms. Suzanne O'Neill, suzanne.oneill@anu.edu.au or Dr. Stewart Firth, stewart.firth@anu.edu.au. Should you have concerns about the conduct of the research, please contact the Ethics Manager, The ANU Human Research Ethics Committee, The Australian National University, at Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au. Associate Professor Greg Fry, Associate Professor in the School of Government, Development and International Affairs, at the Laucala Campus, USP has been identified as an independent contact based in the Pacific. He may be contacted by email on gregory.fry@usp.ac.fj should you have any questions about how the research project is undertaken.

Next steps: If you would like to participate in this research, please indicate that you have read and understood this information by signing the attached consent form and returning it by email or in person, to Ms. O'Neill at suzanne.oneill@anu.edu.au. Ms. O'Neill will then arrange a mutually convenient time and place for interview.

Appendix 4.5 List of Conferences Papers Delivered

Understanding Country Ownership in the Pacific, Development Policy Centre, Pacific Update, USP, Fiji, July 2019

Country Ownership from Paris to the Pacific - Travelling or Translating: the Intersection of Ideas, Power and Policy in Local Contexts, Paper presented in Panel T01 Public policy process theories, Public Policy Process Transfer: Power, Unconventional Agents, Directions and Translations, 4th international Conference on Public Policy Montreal 26-28 June, 2019

Country Ownership from Paris to the Pacific - Travelling or Translating: At the Crossroads of Ownership and Accountability: Ideas Values and Partnerships, Paper presented in Panel T02 Comparative Public Policy, Policy Ideas and Instrument Constituencies: Regulatory Policymaking at the Crossroads of Domestic and International Levels 4th international Conference on Public Policy Montreal 26-28 June 2019

Understanding “Country Ownership” of Aid and Development in the Pacific [Kiribati], Paper presented at the Panel on Spheres of Interpretation 1: Framing and Representation - The Political Work of Discourse and Visualisation, Conference on the Interpretation of Global Politics, SPIR, Canberra, Australia, 2-3 November 2017

The intersection of identity and scale in the negotiation of policy on aid and development in the Pacific: the role of the broker in the (re-)construction of the Pacific region, in Panel 21: Constructing Policy Crafting Space: Critical Perspectives on Policy and Space, 11th Interpretive Policy Analysis Conference, 5-7 July 2016, University of Hull, England

In Their Own Space: The intersection of identity and scale in the negotiation of policy on aid and development in the Pacific: the role of the broker in the (re-)construction of the Pacific region, Panel 2: Constructing Policy Crafting Space – the Region, Pacific Islands Political Studies Association Conference, 13 July 2016, Niue

Policy Transfer or Policy Translation: Understanding Policymaking on Aid and Development in Samoa, Paper presented at the Panel on The Contextual Turn in Policy Sciences: Reconciling Design and Implementation, 10th Interpretive Policy Analysis Conference, Lille, France, 7-9th July 2015

Challenges in Applying the Interpretive Turn: Interviewing Interpretively, Paper presented at the Methodology Workshop, Interpretive Policy Analysis, 10th Interpretive Policy Analysis Conference, Lille, France, 7-9th July 2015

Proposed:

Doctoral feedback seminars: Fiji, Kiribati and Samoa, October-December 2023

Appendix 5.1 Global Timeline of International Development Events

Year	Event/Declaration	Lead	Outcome
1942?	Atlantic Conference	USA& UK	
1945	Bretton Woods Conference	USA & Allies	Bretton Woods Institutions inc UN
1947	Marshall's Harvard Speech	USA	Marshall Plan
1949	Truman's 2 nd Inauguration Speech	USA	4Point Plan
1960	1 st UN Development Decade	UN	
1969	Pearson Commission	World Bank	Partners in Development Report
1970	1 st UN Development Decade		1 st International Development Strategy
1972	Stockholm Environment and Development Conference	UN	
1973	McNamara's "Nairobi Speech" to World Bank Board of Governors	World Bank	Rural Re-orientation & Absolute Poverty
1980	3 rd UN Development Decade	UN	
1981	1st UN Conference on Least Developed Countries [LDCs]		The Substantial Programme of Action [PoA]
1990	4 th UN Development Decade	UN	
1991	2nd UN conference on LDCs		The Paris Declaration & PoA for LDCs
1992	Environment & Development 'Earth Summit' Rio de Janeiro	UN	Creation of UNEP
1994	International SIDS Conference Barbados	UN&SIDS	Barbados Programme of Action
1996	Shaping Our Century	OECD	International Development Goals
2000	Millennium Summit	UNGA	Millennium Declaration and MDGs
2001	The 3rd UN Conference on LDCs		The Brussels Declaration & PoA 2001-2011
2002	Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development	UN	Partnership and Ownership
2002	Johannesburg World Summit	UN	
2003	Rome Declaration on Harmonisation	OECD	Harmonisation
2004	Management for Results Marrakech	OECD	Results Agenda
2005	International SIDS Conference Mauritius	UN&SIDS	Review of BPOA
2005	Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness	OECD & WB	Aid Effectiveness - Ownership
2008	Doha Financing for Development Declaration	UN	
2008	Accra Agenda for Action	OECD	Ownership
2011	4th UN Conference on LDCs		The Istanbul PoA & Declaration 2011-2020
2011	Busan	OECD	Global Partnership for Effective Development
2012	Environment and Development Rio+20 Conference	UN	
2014	Mexico	OECD	
2014	International SIDS Conference Samoa	UN&SIDS	SAMOA Pathway
2015	Transforming Our World Summit	UN	Sustainable Development Goals
2016	Nairobi	OECD	
2016	Addis Ababa Financing For Development	UN	

Code: Grey: multilaterals; Red: Financing for Development; Ochre: Aid effectiveness/Development effectiveness; Blue: Small Islands Developing States; Orange: Goals and Strategy; Green: Environment; Light Green: LDCs.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decolonisation_of_Oceania

² <https://www.un.org/en/member-states/>

³ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/about/leadership/members>

⁴ Status at 2016 unless o/w specified, according to DAC list of ODA recipients: reporting for 2018, 2019 and 2020 flows. OECD.org

⁵ First meeting in NZ as South Pacific Forum; and renamed Pacific Islands Forum in 1999/200.

⁶ Fiji was suspended by the Forum from May 2009 due to its failure to hold promised general elections; the suspension was lifted 22 Oct 2014; Fiji Ministers attended forum meetings from 2015 but PM Bainimarama didn't attend until the PIFS leaders meeting until 2019.

Appendix 5.2 Pacific Membership of Regional and Global Entities

Table 5.1 Pacific membership of regional and global entities

Country	Colonial power/s	Sovereignty Status ¹	Pacific Islands Forum	UNGA ²	World Bank ³ [IBRD only]	OECD DAC ⁴ 1948/1961
Australia	United Kingdom	Colony 1850s Dominion 1900s 1931 -Stat. of Westminster: accepted 1942	1971 ⁵	1 Nov 1945	Aug 5 1947	While OECD indicates Australia registered in 1961, DFAT suggests became 'active' 1971
Cook Islands	New Zealand	Free association 1965/92	1971	Would like seat at UN but NZ refuses		na
Fiji	United Kingdom/	4 th June /10 Oct 1970 – Republic	1971 ⁶	13 Oct 1970	28 May 1971	na
French Polynesia	France	Overseas collectivity	2006 A/mber Sept 2016 F/mbr	2013 re-listed w UN as non-self governing territory		na
Kiribati	United Kingdom [protectorate/colony]	12 July 1979 – Republic.	1977	14 Sept 1999	29 Sept 1986	na
Marshall Islands	United States [Compact of Assoc]	21 oct 1986	1987	17 Sept 1991	21 May 1992	na
Micronesia FedS	United States [Compact of Assoc]	3 Nov 1986	1987	17 Sept 1991	24 Jun 1993	na
Nauru	Australia	31 Jan 1968	1971	14 Sept 1999	12 April 2016	na
Niue	New Zealand [Free Associate]	1974/1994	1975	Not a member of UN = free-association w NZ		na
New Caledonia	France	Overseas collectivity	1999 Obsvr, 2006 A/mbr; Sept 2016 F/mber	No - listed as Non self-governing territory 1986		na
New Zealand	United Kingdom	Colony 1856/ SoW accepted 1947	1971	24 Oct 1945	31 August 1961	May 1973
Palau	United States [Compact of Assoc]	1994	1995	15 Dec 1994	16 Dec 1997	na

Country	Colonial power/s	Sovereignty Status ¹	Pacific Islands Forum	UNGA ²	World Bank ³ [IBRD only]	OECD DAC ⁴ 1948/1961
Papua New Guinea	Germany/UK/Australia	16 Sept 1975	1974	10 Oct 1975	9 Oct 1975	na
Samoa	New Zealand [trust]	1 Jan 1962 – Independent state.	1971	15 Dec 1976	28 June 1974	na
Solomon Islands	United Kingdom	7 July 1978	1978	19 Sept 1978	22 Sept 1978	na
Tonga	United Kingdom	Treaty arrangements until 1970	1971	14 Sept 1999	13 Sept 1985	na
Tuvalu	United Kingdom	1 October 1978	1978	5 Sept 2000	24 June 2010	na
Vanuatu	UK/France	30 July 1980	1980	15 Sept 1981	28 Sept 1981	na
Tokelau			2005 Obsvr; A/Mbr 2014			
Wallis & Futuna						
Canada				9 Nov 1945	27 Dec 1945	
China				24 Oct 1945	27 Dec 1945	
Japan			PALM summits 1999			
France				24 Oct 1945	27 th Dec 1945	1960
Sweden				19 Nov 1946	31 Aug 1951	
Timor Leste			2002 special observer	27 Sept 2002	23 July 2002	
United States				24 Oct 1945	27 Dec 1945	April 1961
United Arab Emir.				9 Dec 1971	22 Sept 1972	Participant
United Kingdom				24 Oct 1945		May 1961
ADB						Observer
PIFS				17 Oct 1994		
UN			2006 Observer			Observer [UNDP]
World Bank						Observer
IMF						Observer

Appendix 6.1 Aid Relations: Independence and Contemporary

Table 6.1: Aid Relations at Independence and Contemporary Major Donors

Date of independence	Forum country	Joined Forum ¹	Joined UN	Colonising power / relations at independence	Grants - top three donors 2009 [loans in brackets]	Grants - top three donors 2018 ² [loans in brackets]
1942	Australia ³	1971	1945	Britain		--
1947	New Zealand	1971	1945	Britain		--
1962	Samoa	1971	1976	NZ	Aust Japan New Zealand [China, IMF, WB]	Aust Japan China [China OPEC WB]
1965/1992	Cook Is.	1971	special status	NZ	Aust NZ China [ADB, China]	NZ China Aust [ADB]
1968	Nauru	1971	1999	Australia	Aust Taiwan Japan	Aust, Green Climate Fund, NZ [Taiwan]
1970	Tonga	1971	1999	Britain	Aust Japan NZ [China]	Aust NZ Japan [ADB, WB]
1970	Fiji	1971	1970	Britain	Japan Aust EU [China]	Aust China NZ [China ADB]
1974/94	Niue	1975	special status	NZ	NZ Aust Eu [0]	NZ Aust Japan [0]
1975	PNG	1974	1975	Australia	Aust, GFATM, EU [ADB, WB]	Aust China Japan [ADB, WB, China]
1978	Solomon Is.	1978	1978	Britain	Aust, NZ, Japan [0]	Aust Japan New Zealand [ADB, WB]

¹ <https://www.forumsec.org/who-we-arePacific-islands-forum/>

² According to the Pacific Aid Map, The Lowy Institute: AUS\$ spent [not committed]: grants [loans].

³ Note: Australia and New Zealand were both colonies of Britain [the United Kingdom]: they went through various forms of increasing self-government from 1850s, culminating in Dominion status in early 1900s. Formally, they accepted full sovereignty under the 1931 Statue of Westminster [UK legislation] in 1942 and 1947, respectively.

Date of independence	Forum country	Joined Forum ¹	Joined UN	Colonising power / relations at independence	Grants - top three donors 2009 [loans in brackets]	Grants - top three donors 2018 ² [loans in brackets]
1978	Tuvalu	1978	2000	Britain	Japan Taiwan Aust [0]	Aust Taiwan NZ
1979	Kiribati	1977	1999	Britain	Aust Taiwan Japan [0]	Aust Japan NZ [adb]
1980	Vanuatu	1980	1980	Britain France	Aust USA NZ [China]	Aust NZ GEF [WB, China Japan]
1986	Marshall Is.	1987	1991	USA	USA Japan Aust [0]	USA, Taiwan japan [0]
1986	FSM	1987	1991	USA	USA China Japan [0]	USA, World Bank, Japan [ADB]
1994	Palau	1995	1994	USA	USA Japan Aust [0]	USA, Japan Aust [ADB]
--	New Caledonia	2016 ⁴	--	France	France ⁵	France
--	French Polynesia	2016 ⁶	--	France	France ⁷	France
--	Tokelau	--- ⁸	--	NZ	NZ	NZ

⁴ Observer 1999, Associate 2006

⁵ Entails \$-transfers

⁶ Observer 2004, Associate 2006

⁷ Entails \$-transfers

⁸ observer 2005/ associate 2014

Appendix 7.1 “Best Practice” Ownership in Samoa

Table 7.1 Best Practice Ownership in Samoa

Criteria for Ownership [Ostrom et al]	‘Best practice’ for Ownership of Development [Paris/Accra]			Samoa
Beneficiary Participation	Measures	Purpose	‘Global’ Norms	Implementation
Identification of Needs	National Development Strategy	Demonstration of Countries’ Leadership of Development Agenda through Inclusive Consultation for Agreement on Development Priorities	Leadership and responsibility Prioritisation Effectiveness and efficiency	Samoa’s Strategy for Development Aid Coordination Committee Cabinet Development Committee *Development Coordination Partnerships Policy [Region: Morauta Report; Pacific RoadMap; Blue Pacific]
Contributing Resources To The Solution	Annual Budget Medium Term Expenditure Framework	Coordination of Resources in Dialogue with Donors Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs supported by Resources and Authorised By Parliament	Effectiveness and efficiency	Annual Budgets Medium Term Economic Framework
Enjoying, Or Consuming The Benefits	National Development Strategy Performance Framework	Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs through Inclusive Participation of Government, Civil Society Private Sector	Effectiveness and efficiency	Capacity Strengthening Initiatives inc Public Sector reforms and Public Financial Management Reforms Programs and Initiatives: Education, Health, Civil Society, Private Sector
Deciding When The Need Has Been Met, When It’s Over	Performance Framework	Generate Data, Assess and Report Progress on Results	Accountability	*PEFA; *Program evaluations; *Compact Peer Reviews; *South-South Exchanges [Region: Morauta Report; Pacific RoadMap; Blue Pacific]

Appendix 7.2 Implementing “Best Practice” Ownership in Samoa

The analysis process

In my first step in the analysis, as outlined in the introduction to the Chapter, I compared the implementation of the strategies of Ownership by Samoa’s political leadership and policy advisors by analysing the data generated in the transcript of interviews and related policy text with Ostrom’s four criteria for the transition to Ownership. This analysis is summarised in the matrix in Table 7.1 below [See Appendix 7.1 for a description of the analysis and results.]

7.2.1 Was there change in aid coordination practices in accord with the global idea of Ownership?

7.2.1.1. Implementing Ownership: Ostrom’s criteria and the Paris strategies of Ownership:

began by aligning Ostrom’s criteria for the transition in Ownership with the corresponding proxy measures identified by the Paris Declaration.¹ These proxy measures represent institutions² - the collective and systematic behaviours or practices which, under the Paris Declaration, were considered to indicate the presence or exercise of a country’s Ownership of its development [see Chapters 2 and 3]. I mapped which practices or institutions were implemented by the Government of Samoa [Samoa] during the time between the Forum leaders endorsement of the Compact and 2016, when I concluded my fieldwork.³ I then identified, in the last column, the questions about the implementation, and whether

¹ List proxy measures again: national development strategy; coordination or consultation mechanisms/authorisation process; national budget and related papers; performance assessment framework.

² According to March and Olsen’s definitions, see Chapter 2.

³ Fieldwork was undertaken in the Pacific region between 2014-2016 across Fiji, Kiribati and Samoa; when home-based, in Canberra, I monitored areas relevant to my research for additional information through personal and professional networks, in social and traditional media, at seminars and conferences across the ANU and other institutions.

implementation of the strategies was attributed to the global idea of Ownership by Samoa's political leadership and policy advisors.

Identifying development needs:

The proxy measure and key policy instrument to indicate development needs identified by the global idea of Ownership was the national development strategy. A national development strategy was qualified by several criteria: it must be supported by inclusive consultation across the private sector, civil society and within government, aligned to the national budget and authorised by Parliament.

National development strategies

Samoa addressed this criterion comprehensively. Between 2008 and 2018, the Economic Policy and Planning Division in Samoa's Ministry of Finance led its departmental colleagues and others in the preparation and delivery of three consecutive national development strategies, known as the Strategy for the Development of Samoa [SDS] in 2008, 2012 and 2016. These national strategies were aligned to annual national budgets and presented to the Parliament for authorisation. The Ministry also initiated sectoral strategies to link to the national strategies in several sectors [climate change, water and infrastructure].

At the time fieldwork was undertaken, the Ministry of Finance acknowledged several areas in need of more rigorous approaches. This included increasing the number of sectors with strategies; strengthening the linkages between the national development strategy and the sectoral strategies; and more inclusive and timely consultation with civil society

organisations.⁴ Although Samoa had some mechanisms in place to consult the private sector and civil society, it wanted to broaden its reach, particularly in those sectors where it was yet to develop sectoral strategies.⁵

When the Compact was endorsed, Samoa was well-regarded for the quality of its national development strategies by its donor-partners.⁶ These strategies were the basis for identifying priorities in the subsequent partnership agreements reached with the Australian government[s] in 2009 and 2016.⁷ The government of Samoa's commitment to planning and delivering national development strategies continued after the Compact concluded.⁸

Authorisation and coordination

Samoa initiated several policy tools and mechanisms to clarify authorisation and encourage coordination within and outside government.

The Ministry of Finance [MoF] established two internal mechanisms for approving development cooperation activities and aid coordination within the government: the Aid Coordination Committee and later, the Cabinet Development Committee. The Aid Coordination Committee is a small group of seven members. Its secretariat is the Aid

⁴ During the Compact's lifespan, sector plans: water and sanitation [2012-16 and 2016-20] and transport [2014-2019] and energy [2017-2020] environment [2017-21] – were initiated: further plans across other sectors have been developed since. A manual on planning was produced in 2009; and a Samoa Monitoring Evaluation reporting Framework SMERF manual in 2015; and the Publix sector investment programme 2015-2018 replaced the PSIP 2013-2016 for a full list of publications see the MOF website: <https://www.mof.gov.ws/services/aid-coordination-debt-management/publications/>

⁵ Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30/6/2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*.

⁶ Government of Australia and Government of Samoa. 19/8/2008. *Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development*.

⁷ Government of Australia and Government of Samoa. 19/8/2008. *Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development*

⁸ Government of Samoa. 2020. *Samoa's Second Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals*. Monitoring Report for the GPEDC.

Coordination Division in the MoF. The ACC's primary responsibility is to examine resource allocation for development activities, and if required, source external funds from donors. It also coordinates the day to day management and reporting of development cooperation programmes through membership of steering committees and liaises with donors.⁹

The CDC, a group of 72 members, appraises, approves and monitors progress of development cooperation programmes proposed by the line ministries. Its secretariat sits in the Economic Planning and Policy division the MOF. The CDC approved all new projects and monitors progress reports with representation from civil society.

Under Samoa protocols, the ACC vetted the national development strategies, all aid funding requests and allocations prior to their presentation to the CDC, who vetted the strategies before presentation to the broader Parliament.¹⁰

The ACC and CDC were established before the Compact [and before Paris] was endorsed. At the time the Compact was agreed the authority of the ACC was well established. Although a small unit, this team was engaged in the major development decisions related to aid and development including policy dialogue and program negotiations with donors and within its own government—including those related to the Compact and its programs. In contrast, while the CDC had been in place prior to the Compact, the Compact offered an opportunity to include the CDC [particularly new members of Parliament] in programs to strengthen their

⁹ The roles and functions of these two committees is noted in the 2008 Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development agreement, Schedule 2; and is also noted in the Government of Samoa's Development Cooperation Policy - Partners in Development Promoting Aid Effectiveness, Ministry of Finance Aid Coordination and Debt Management Division, produced in December 2010.

¹⁰ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015; Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30/6/2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*.

capacity to perform their role under the Compact's ambit.¹¹

Coordination – and Innovation

The third policy instrument for coordination initiated by the Government of Samoa was outward-facing. The *Development Cooperation Policy: Partners in Development Promoting Aid Effectiveness (2010)*, [The Partnerships Policy],¹² was intended by Samoa's policy advisors to be a policy instrument to manage relations between Samoa and donors.

The first draft of this policy in 2007 listed all the donors operating in Samoa and their accompanying funded projects [some 126 projects overall].¹³ It attempted to scope the burden on the small administration of Samoa of dealing with multiple donors and the corresponding burden of their various and complex administrative procedures.

The second version, crafted in 2010 as the Compact's influence was picking up pace across the region, was a more confident document.¹⁴ This iteration clearly defined Samoa's intentions for managing aid relations through partnerships, with a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, and corresponding authority and approval mechanisms, of the Government and donors; and Samoa's desired forms of aid delivery - with a preference for budget support. It also established the procedures and processes for dialogue with donors to manage donor

¹¹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-28012015. Government of Samoa. December 2010. Evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 30/6/2014. *Samoa Forum Compact Peer Review Report*.

¹² Government of Samoa December 2010, Development Cooperation Policy - Partners in Development Promoting Aid Effectiveness, Ministry of Finance Aid Coordination and Debt Management Division. The 2010 policy replaced an earlier policy dating from 2007: Government of Samoa, Partnerships for Development 2007-2009, Ministry of Finance Aid Coordination – Management; the 2007 iteration was essentially a list of existing projects donors and funding.

¹³ Government of Samoa. 2007. Partnerships for Development 2007-2009.

¹⁴ A summary was attached to the first Partnerships for Development arrangement signed between the Rudd government in 2008; then a second standalone version was produced in 2010.

negotiations and ensure Samoa retained control over donor engagement.¹⁵ These included an annual schedule for donor missions to encourage joint analytical practices; and “black-out” periods when donor missions were not encouraged, to better manage the imposition on government administration created by multiple donor missions.

The Partnerships Policy was endorsed by Australia.¹⁶ But despite the policy’s clarity, its objectives were not always met: several donors - including Australia – were reported to not always align with Samoa policy parameters.¹⁷

Contributing resources to the solution [contributions of financial or other resources to development interventions]

The second criterion called for the aid-receiving government to contribute resources – financial or in-kind – to facilitate or implement development interventions. Linked to the preceding criterion, the proxy measure for this was a national budget aligned to the national development strategy and authorised by the national parliament. The national budget resources were to be allocated in coordination with donor funding.

Annual Budgets authorised by Parliament

Again, Samoa demonstrated a positive response to this criterion. The Government identified economic resources and in-kind, such as the time and labour of government employees, to

¹⁵ Government of Samoa. December 2010. Development Cooperation Policy - Partners in Development Promoting Aid Effectiveness

¹⁶ See the Australian Aid Program Partnership Performance Report – Samoa 2010.

¹⁷ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Consultant-IQ-06052015; Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-30012015. Woods B., et al. May 2011. *The Evaluation of the Paris Declaration Final Report Phase 2*; Government of Samoa. 2020. *Samoa’s Second Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals*. Monitoring Report for the GPEDC.

facilitate the implementation of the national strategy – including the policy practices necessary to implement the strategies of Ownership.

The government linked its annual budget to the national strategy through the ACC and CDC processes, as well as the annual presentation to Parliament. Samoa annual budget statements between 2008 and 2018 identify the government's contribution to joint funding of development projects and programmes revealing government contributions to development projects and programmes across the key sectors of health and education, as well as towards those projects and programmes directly associated with the Compact in the areas of governance, particularly public sector reform programs jointly delivered with donor funds. The annual budget statement delivered by the Minister for Finance in 2008-09, for example, identified Samoa's allocations towards programs that were jointly funded by the donors, in education, health and water sectors.¹⁸ Similarly, Samoa's 2017-18 budget statement [the last before the Compact was dissolved] noted the Government's commitment to jointly resource several sectors with their development partners, including education and health, infrastructure and water, communications, climate mitigation and tourism, commerce and agriculture and fisheries.¹⁹ Samoa expected to fund these allocations by generating more revenue through increased taxes and greater productivity through ongoing public sector reforms.²⁰

¹⁸ Hang, N. L., 30/5/2008. Budget Address: 2008-2009, presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Samoa.

¹⁹ Tuioti, S. E. 30/5/2017. Budget Address 2017-2018 presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Samoa.

²⁰ The findings of PEFA review identified the need to improve accounts records and practices on expenditure and linkages.

Enjoying or consuming benefits [participation in capacity building and other development interventions/programs]

The third criterion was intended to reflect the participation and engagement of the beneficiaries of development interventions IN the intervention. This operated at two levels: the benefit of the government’s political leaders and policy advisors of participating IN those interventions directly targeting change in aid coordination practices under the Ownership strategies, either domestically or across the region; and the benefit to those who participated more broadly in development interventions funded under the national development plan, such as, those who benefited from support to the health and education programs.

Domestic capacity strengthening - public sector reforms

Samoa, particularly its public sector and political leadership, participated positively in, or “consumed” the benefits, offered through the suite of strategies associated with the global idea of Ownership under the Compact. As discussed earlier, policy advisors from central and related sectoral agencies actively participated in development and donor policy dialogues, planning and reporting. They also engaged in programs to build the organisational capacity and individual skills to manage these processes.

Samoa’s central government policy advisors pursued consecutive reform programs across the public sector: in public administration, public financial management and performance assessment, during the life of the Compact. Under the Compact’s duration, Samoa promoted rigorous national strategic planning; and began a program to extend planning to the sectors. It also continued processes and practices such as the Public Expenditure and Financial

Assessment review in 2010 and the medium-debt strategy in 2016.²¹

Although external commentators observed a slow-down in the pace of the public service reforms following the two natural disasters in 2009 and 2012,²² the government of Samoa initiated a renewed push for reform in the 2016-SDS.²³

Regional capacity strengthening under the Compact

Samoa's policy advisors were instrumental in initiating a program of training exchanges with other Pacific countries.²⁴ They led South-South training workshops, in collaboration with the Forum Secretariat. These workshops brought together public sector officers from across the Pacific to share "best" practices in aid coordination. These initiatives were adopted by other countries on their return home, for example, Kiribati wrote its Development Cooperation Policy after learning of Samoa's Partnerships Policy during a South-South attachment.

Samoa's development for Samoa:

²¹Government of Samoa and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2014. Samoa Compact Peer Review Report; Government of Samoa. 2020. *Samoa's Second Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals*. Monitoring Report for the GPEDC.

²² ADB. 2015. *Reform Renewed: A Private Sector Assessment for Samoa*. The ADB claimed in 2015 that the economy had stagnated since 2005, and cautioned that the once exemplary reforms had slowed down due to the impact of the global finance crisis, the consecutive natural disasters. For a positive endorsement of the reforms but note of caution in progress since 2008 see also: ADB. 2008. *Samoa Consolidating Reform for Faster Economic Growth*; and, *it is possible the ADB 2015 report's recommendations on land reform stimulated the changes to the land and titles court – triggering, in part, Tuila'epa's removal from office/loss at the elections. Overall the 2015 ADB report encourages alignment with the neoliberal approach: "Samoa's long term prosperity depends on promoting private sector development and limiting the role of the state in the economy." ADB. 2015. *Reform Renewed: A Private Sector Assessment for Samoa*, 49

²³ Tuioti, S. E. 30/5/2017. Budget Address 2017-2018 presented by the Minister of Finance on behalf of the Government of Samoa.

²⁴ Aid Coordination and Debt Management team in the MOF programs.

Outside the capacity strengthening programs for the central agencies of government, Samoans participated in development interventions outlined under the three national development strategies during this period. These encompassed programs across key priority areas: health, education, and support for private sector development and civil society.

Deciding when the need for an intervention is met [performance assessment]

There were two considerations to assessing Samoa's engagement in determining when a development intervention had met identified needs ie whether an intervention was addressing its needs and no longer required. First, consideration of Samoa's participation in domestic reviews and evaluations under the ambit of a development intervention, such as the programs under the national development strategy, had achieved their desired results. Second, consideration of Samoa's participation in determining whether the various global and regional agreements, i.e. the Paris Declaration and the Forum Compact, had produced intended and desired results.

Samoa for Samoa: National Program Evaluations

Samoa's senior government policy advisors participated regularly in evaluations and reviews of their own national development strategies as well as those under the Compact.²⁵ Policy advisors from across the central agencies participated in training in monitoring and evaluation to ensure they could measure the performance of their national development strategy. They produced the Samoa Monitoring and Evaluation Resources Framework [SMERF] in 2014-15,

²⁵ The Government of Samoa participated in regional consultations on harmonisation in the Pacific; Samoa also participated in the 2011 monitoring of progress under the Paris Declaration; Samoa was one of only two Pacific countries [Cook Islands] to participate in the global [and final] evaluation of the implementation of the Paris Declaration. Government of Samoa, December 2010, Country Evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action

amongst other materials.²⁶ Where policy advisors lacked the skills or capacity to lead such reviews, Samoa brought in technical experts, for example, in monitoring and evaluation, to help build those skills in local policy advisors.

Compact Peer Reviews

Policy advisors from Samoa were actively engaged in the Compact Peer Reviews of their own and other Pacific and donor countries [as well as the OECD-DAC Peer review of New Zealand].²⁷ Samoa policy advisors were particularly well-regarded for the quality of their engagement in the Compact peer review process and for initiating the “south-south” training attachments program during the duration of the Compact. Both were acclaimed as innovations, by others within the region and globally.^{28, 29}

Regional Reviews

Senior policy advisors from Samoa were members of the Morauta review of the Pacific Plan, released in 2013. Its recommendations had a significant and lasting impact on the region’s institutional architecture.³⁰

Global Reviews and Evaluations

There was no formal closure to the Paris Declaration and its related agreements. Instead, the global aid effectiveness reforms promoted by the Paris and Accra outcomes morphed into the

²⁶ Government of Samoa Monitoring and Evaluation Resources, Government of Samoa website.

²⁷ OECD DAC. 2015. Peer Review of New Zealand.

²⁸ Government of Samoa and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat 2014, Compact Peer Review Samoa, Report

²⁹ GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011.

³⁰ Morauta, M., P.N. Simi, R. Killion, P. Bazeley and N. Poletti. *Pacific Plan Review 2013 Report to Pacific Leaders Volume 1 and 2, “The Morauta Review”*.

new Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation [GPEDC] following the 4th HLFAE in Busan.³¹ While Samoa had been engaged in regional studies and evaluations related to the Rome and Paris Declarations,³² over the duration of the Compact, Samoa became increasingly engaged in leading discussions at global fora related to the HLFAE.

Samoa's policy advisors represented the region in relation to Compact programs in global fora, including discussing initiatives such as the Compact Peer Reviews at the Busan HLFAE, acclaimed as best practice by all;³³ promoting the Compact through the UN-affiliated International Conference on SIDS, hosted by Samoa in 2014, which generated the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway outcomes; and engaging in follow-up negotiations at the UN to promote the SIDS Partnership Framework, an outcome under the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway.

Samoa actively participated in regional and global reporting on the MDGs and the SDGs – often leading the region's engagement in processes such as developing the regional framework for the Voluntary National Reviews [VNRs] under the new SDGs reporting framework.³⁴ Samoa's policy advisors participated in development committees at the UN, such as the expert working group to set indicators for the SDGs.

Innovation: An insistence on Pasifika expertise in determining program need and results

³¹ GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011.

³² See the Australia-New Zealand Harmonisation Study in 2001; the monitoring and evaluation reports on implementing Paris in 2008 and 2010 [2011].

³³ The Forum Secretariat was engaged in the committee steering the Busan High Level Forum and, afterwards, the Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation. GPEDC. 2012. Busan High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLFAE), Proceedings, 29 November -1 December 2011.

³⁴ Government of Samoa. 2016. *National Voluntary Report 2016*. Monitoring Report for the GPEDC.

The critical issue identified by most interviewees when discussing their participation in reviews and evaluations was Samoa's insistence on supporting local expertise [and experts] across all policy negotiations and programming. Samoa insisted on leading all national review processes, even while willing to compromise by engaging external technical assistance when necessary to support the local leadership. This included for example, leadership of processes such as the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability [PEFA] reviews in 2006 and 2010 undertaken by the Ministry of Finance and leadership of disaster recovery following cyclone Evans in 2012.³⁵ Most significant, however, was the insistence of Samoa's policy advisors that the Forum [and donors] engage Pacific experts as peers [not only logisticians or liaison officers] in regional and domestic evaluation processes, such as the Compact Peer Reviews or national program evaluations.

³⁵ It is particularly illustrated by the shift in leadership of the response to the disasters between the tsunami in 2009 and Cyclone Evans, in 2012. The report following Cyclone Evans reflects a marked, and deliberate, shift in leadership of the response, with Samoa clearly asserting its leading role in coordination of the recovery. See the reports on the response and recovery from tsunami and from Cyclone Evans.

Appendix 7.3 Samoa: National Development Plans

Table 7.3 Western Samoa/Samoa Economic Plans/National Development Strategies and Plans

Dates	Title
1965	Western Samoa Economic Plan for 1965 Parliamentary Paper 1965 No.1, January 1965
1966-70	Western Samoa's Development Programme September 1966
	DP2 1971-74 unable to locate
1975-79	3 rd Five Year Development Plan [DP3] 1975-1979
	DP4 1979-1984 unable to locate
1982 December *GFC 1980-82	Western Samoa Socio-Economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs
	DP5 1985-1987 unable to locate
1986 Geneva	2 nd Round table meeting
	Local round table
1988 October	Western Samoa Socio-economic Situation Development Strategy and Assistance Needs
*Cyclone Gina 1989 *Cyclone Ofa 1990 *Cyclone Val 1991	DP6 1988-1990 unable to locate
1992 -1994	Western Samoa Seventh Development Plan 1992-1994
1996-97	1996-97 Statement of Economic Strategy [sometimes referred to as the 1995 Strategy]
1998-99	1998-99 Statement of Economic Strategy
2000-2002	2000-2002 Statement of Economic Strategy
2002-2004	Samoa Development Strategy 2002-2004: Opportunities for all [aka Statement of Economic Strategy] January 2002
2005-2007	Samoa Development Strategy 2005-2007: Improved quality of life for all: enhancing peoples choices. January 2005
2008-2012 *2008-2998 GFC *2009 Tsunami *2012 Cyclone Evans	Strategy for the development of Samoa 2008-2012: Ensuring Sustainable Economic and Social Program: Improved Quality of Life for All, May 2008
2012-2016	Strategy for the development of Samoa 2012-2016 : Boosting Productivity for Sustainable Development: Improved Quality of Life for All, July 2012
2017-2020 *Yazaki Liquidation	Strategy for the development of Samoa 2016/17 - 2019/20: Accelerating Sustainable Development and Broadening Opportunities for All, Dec 2016

*major natural disasters or economic shocks

Appendix 8.1 Understanding *Fa'a Matai* and *Fa'a Samoa*: A Brief Synthesis of Key Scholars in the literature

There are nuanced differences in the descriptions of *Fa'a Samoa* and *Fa'a Matai* in the literature: Meleisea refers to *Fa'a Samoa* as the political and economic system... “a framework for action based upon the social structure of the *'aiga* and the *nu'u* and the authority of *matai* and *fono*, new practices, ideas and goods could be accepted and incorporated into it [*Fa'a Samoa*] so that either the system remained unchanged in its essentials or else was not perceived to have changed fundamentally...”¹ So'o refers to the matai system as “an encompassing system inside which most, if not all, micro aspects of Samoan society operate and under which all socio-political affairs are controlled. Among the ideals espoused in this system are appreciation and encouragement... of collectivist values, recognition of and respect for high-ranking titles and adherence to traditional procedures and practices.”² So'o concludes: despite tradition and democracy trying to accommodate each other, custom and tradition have been relegated to the periphery – although some aspects of custom and tradition still stand in the way of a fully-fledged and an unhindered democracy flourishing in Samoa. However, he explains,

...custom and tradition have not been extinguished...they are there and will continue to be practised as a way of life in the foreseeable future....Samoans are slowly realising that it is the new reality, that democracy and custom and tradition do not always operate in the same sphere...there has to be a give and take if the two systems are to continue to co-exist until such time as the two have totally merged into one... that is still quite some time away...the mixing of tradition and democracy is another phase in the process of continuous social and political change as old political practices and values which no longer fit current circumstances are discarded for new ones that are more relevant and appropriate....O le fuata ma lona lou [there is a new picking stick for every breadfruit season]³

¹ See Traditional authority, in Meleisea, M. 1987. *The Making of Modern Samoa: Traditional Authority and the Colonial Administration in the Modern History of Western Samoa*, 11;17.

² So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, xi.

³ So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, 153.

Le Tagaloa emphasises the governance role of *Fa'a Matai* and lays out the concepts which guide *Fa'a Matai* in the exercise of their authority through governance of the 'aiga, [family], the nu'u [village] and the fono [district or network of villages]. The challenge which independence brought, Le Tagaloa explains, was to extend those concepts to the whole country: to draw from *Fa'a Matai* to govern the nation, beyond the collectivities of family, village and districts. It was, Le Tagaloa explained, a question of scale.

Samoa is, according to the proverb, "a land where all the positions have been allocated."⁴ The proverb captures the prominence accorded, through *Fa'a Matai*, to relationships of the 'aiga [and the extended family] and nu'u – and the respect to be accorded to their accompanying roles and responsibilities. So'o argues that, while to an outsider, *Fa'a Samoa*,⁵ may appear to be an hierarchical society, it is perhaps more accurate to describe it "where all the positions have been allocated," where all know their place.⁶ All relationships in Samoa are mediated through one's ascribed social rank and political status, derived from one's relationships through family networks, the 'aiga and the related geographical territory and alliances, represented through a network of villages, of one's nu'u, and under the protection of the matai, the family representative whose acquisition of the title relies on both ancestry and consensus.^{7 8}

⁴ So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, 153

⁵ Meleisea, M. 1987. *The Making of Modern Samoa: Traditional Authority and the Colonial Administration in the Modern History of Western Samoa*, 16-17.

⁶ So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, 153-202.

⁷ Traditionally, every family member is entitled to be elected to a matai title. In practice, the acquisition of a chiefly matai title is based on both ancestry and the respect of the 'aiga, or family, to whom the title belongs, and is an acknowledgement of demonstrated service to, and capacity to protect and provide for the extended family. So'o, A. 2008. *Democracy and Custom in Samoa: An Uneasy Alliance*, 19.

⁸ Meleisea, M. 1987. *The Making of Modern Samoa: Traditional Authority and the Colonial Administration in the Modern History of Western Samoa*, 6-7. Traditionally, there is a difference in status between matai titles with some titles [and their corresponding 'aiga and nuu] regarded as of higher rank than others.

Le Tagaloa describes *Fa'a Matai* as a form of social organisation. She argues that there are four concepts of political thought which underpin or shape *Fa'a Matai* in its role of framing the social organisation of the Samoan people and culture. These four concepts are:⁹

- 1) The *inclusive rights of each individual in the community* as a potential heir to a matai title: hence, *Fa'a Matai*, she writes, encourages the values and beliefs of inclusivity and equal opportunity. The critical understanding which shapes the enactment of roles and responsibilities of *matai* and their '*aiga* is shaped by the constitution, or *fa'avae* of the village *fono* or council, which establishes that all groups must work in mutual respect towards the achievement of common goals which benefit the whole community and village.¹⁰
- 2) The second concept is of *the unity and holism of life*: the concept of *aganuu* encompasses the duality of nature and nurture in life, balancing the essence of the natural world and the sum of learned experience. This understanding encourages the *matai* [and others] to look at the whole, not just a part: and therefore, encourages consideration of everyone and everything, rather than polarisation. It is especially intended to guide the *matai* to be inclusive and view things in their wholeness, their entirety and their unity. It seeks to encourage and promote tolerance and social freedom: a *matai* who encourages this practice reaps their own reward, for those who benefit from the *matai*'s inclusive and wholistic consideration [for example, in the distribution of resources, access to land, or in wise decision-making] is

⁹ Note: Several of the national development plans argued that "Samoans" were "incapable" of change.

¹⁰ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. *The Samoan Culture and Government*, 126.

expected, in return, to acknowledge the matai's wisdom and consideration through their service or contribution.¹¹

- 3) The third concept is encompassed by the process of *soalaupule*: this concept encourages *a consultative and inclusive approach to decision-making* which involves ensuring all the relevant people affected by a decision are part of the decision-making. The ensuing agreements are considered more effective because all those responsible for ensuring an agreement is honoured are part of the decision-making process and therefore assume responsibility for its successful implementation.
- 4) The final concept is respect for the capacity to adapt to change and new ideas: It is essential for the integrity of the *Fa'a Matai*, Le Tagaloa wrote, that matai demonstrate their capacity to adapt by remaining open to new ideas – this ensures continuity [and resilience] through change.

Le Tagaloa illustrates the influence of these four concepts of *Fa'a Matai* in her discussion of the integration of western and Samoan and outsider cultures in two examples. The Christian church, Le Tagaloa explains, was introduced into Samoan culture by assigning a place for the church's ministers as *faafeag'aiga*, alongside the *tamatai* [daughters]. This designation emphasised the role of the Church as healers and peacemakers. It assigned the church's ministers the protections, privileges and rights similar to the *tamaitai*. It assigned the Ministers a relationship through which they could be acknowledge and integrated into *Fa'a Samoa*.

¹¹ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. *The Samoan Culture and Government*, 126.

Similarly, Le Tagaloa cites the Constitution of Samoa as another example.¹² The primacy of *Fa'a Matai*, she explains, was illustrated in the process of consultation for, and design of, the Constitution, in several ways. First, she explained, the 'founding fathers', drew on the practices of *soalaupule* to determine the Constitution's formation by insisting that all matters be dealt with in an holistic and unifying way; and second, they sought to ensure continuity through adaptation. First, the membership of the various conventions which drew up the Constitution acknowledged the significance of the paramount and matai titles, and ensured all Samoans were appropriately represented and consulted. Second, the formation of the Government and its institutions were underpinned by the authority of the *Fa'a Matai* and through the practices of *soalaupule*: the operation of the *Fono* [parliament], was established with the understanding that it would draw on *soalaupule* to make its considerations; the declaration of [joint] head[s] of state acknowledged the paramount titles; the endorsement of the criteria of those eligible for election and the electors acknowledged the matai titles [although, later, the right to vote was extended to universal suffrage]¹³ and provisions forbidding the alienation of customary land were acknowledged in the constitution. The very act of creating the Constitution acknowledged the significance – and openness – to ensure continuity through change.¹⁴

¹² The preamble to the Constitution acknowledges the independent state of Samoa's foundation in both "Christian principles and Samoan custom and tradition". See Constitution of the Independent State of Samoa 1960: Constitution Amendment Act (No 2) 1997 No. 15. Samoa.

¹³ Only *matai* may stand for parliament; and although originally only matai could vote, this was amended in 1991 to universal suffrage. See So'o, A. 1993. Universal Suffrage in Western Samoa: the 1991 General Elections. Le Tagaloa presents an extended argument for why *matai* suffrage is equally or even more inclusive and "democratic" than universal suffrage, arguing that the right of all to be an heir – and therefore representative of their *agia* and village - is more inclusive than universal suffrage and the risk that the untried and uninitiated would vote – irrespective of their standing [status] as a leader. Age, she argues, is not a criterion for leadership responsibilities. The proliferation of matai in recent times, she argues, simply reflects the Samoan culture's response to the European-ised decision-making process of balloting. *Fa'a Matai*, she argues is a "perfect manifestation of the will and authority of the people" and therefore "more truly democratic." Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government.

¹⁴ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government.

As Le Tagaloa observes, “What is new in the exercise is the national requirements and considerations.”¹⁵ Le Tagaloa argues that when the “founding fathers” declared, under the Constitution,¹⁶ that the independent state of Samoa was guided by Christian and Samoan custom and tradition, they effectively extended the practices and authority of Fa’a Matai and related conceptual principles beyond the *‘aiga* and the *nu’u* to encompass governance of the whole country. The “founding fathers” gave Samoa’s political leaders and policy advisors a new challenge: to reconcile the two worldviews through giving a national scope to the practices and principles of *Fa’a Matai*, beyond the village but still grounded by the authority of the village.¹⁷

¹⁵ My emphasis. Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. *The Samoan Culture and Government*.

¹⁶ The Constitution of the independent state of Samoa, 1960 [the Constitution was crafted in 1960 following two conventions and came into force on 1 January 1962, when the New Zealand Parliament relinquished its trusteeship/ mandate by law in the NZ parliament; Powles, G. 1961. Constitution Making in Western Samoa. *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 22(3):179–94; and Government of Samoa webpage.

¹⁷ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. *The Samoan Culture and Government*, 126.

Appendix 9.1 Renegotiating “Best Practice” in Samoa: Global and Local Norms

Table 9.1 Samoa: Renegotiating “Best Practice”: Global and Local Norms

Criteria for Ownership [Ostrom et al]	‘Best practice’ for Ownership of Development [Paris/Accra]			Samoa	
Beneficiary Participation	Measures	Purpose	‘Global’ Norms	Innovations	“Local” Norms
Identification of Needs	National Development Strategy	Demonstration of Countries’ Leadership of Development Agenda through Inclusive Consultation for Agreement on Development Priorities	Leadership and responsibility Prioritisation Effectiveness and efficiency	Development Coordination Partnerships Policy [Regional influence: Morauta Report; Pacific RoadMap; Blue Pacific]	Leadership through Respect and Service Consensus Adaptation to Change Inclusive Decision-making Contribution Unity
Contributing Resources To The Solution	Annual Budget Medium Term Expenditure Framework	Coordination of Resources in Dialogue with Donors Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs supported by Resources and Authorised By Parliament	Effectiveness and efficiency		
Enjoying, Or Consuming The Benefits	National Development Strategy Performance Framework	Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs through Inclusive Participation of Government, Civil Society Private Sector	Effectiveness and efficiency		
Deciding When The Need Has Been Met, When It’s Over	Performance Framework	Generate Data, Assess and Report Progress on Results	Accountability	Compact Peer Reviews South-South Exchanges [Region: Morauta Report; Pacific RoadMap; Blue Pacific]	Leadership through Respect and Service Adaptation to Change Continuity through Change

Appendix 9.2 Public Sector Reform: Analysing Public Sector Reform under the Policy Change Model

Appendix 9.2 offers a discussion drawn from the analytical model [see Appendix 3.2] in relation to the public sector changes which represented the major shift in direction taken in 1995, triggered by the financial crisis the preceding decade.

Bargaining and Reflexivity [maintaining the status quo acceptance, even compromise]

Samoa's policy actors consistently demonstrated practices characterised by behaviours of reflexivity and bargaining: they were willing to reflect on past experience, to learning and reshaping future practice. They were willing to bargain: to undertake or accept some practices or outcomes in return for other practices or outcomes. More often, I realised, the examples of reflexivity and bargaining would indicate the influence of norms more closely aligned with the global norms promoted by the global idea of Ownership under the Compact [and Paris]. Reflexivity and bargaining indicated a willingness to accept the legitimacy of incoming policy norms and institutions. It indicated a willingness to compromise, I argue, to build mutual understanding, to build the development partnership.

The instigation of change

In the 1988 report, Samoa identified the imperative for change in who controlled the development agenda – and a change in their relations with donors. It identified four key moves: a shift in the purpose of the strategic plan from a shopping list to a strategic tool for policy and resource negotiation; the need for an internal coordination mechanism to strengthen outward dialogue/negotiation with the donors; capacity strengthening of the

public sector in key areas of planning, management and reporting; and the assertion of the traditional strengths of *Fa'a Samoa* in the vision for the development of Samoa:

But in the mid-80s, that was when I went to Foreign Affairs, because this division (Aid Coordination and Debt Management) was in Foreign Affairs, it was a pretty messy place... it was like being thrown into the den of lions I had no clue, ah, but I learnt very fast that the processes we had were terrible... Ministries were all over the place, scrambling for whatever the donors were giving out to them...I think we were very vulnerable and gullible and at the mercy of the development partners...so I thought to myself, well we had better be organized, otherwise it's going to be a huge task...¹

As the policy advisor quoted here acknowledges, it was “pretty messy” in some of the key ministries when Samoa advocated for change in Geneva in 1988. The government’s processes “were terrible” and Samoa had to get “organised” and fast. Otherwise they would continue to be “at the mercy” of the donors.

For twenty years, the political leaders and policy advisors in Samoa proceeded to make changes in the way its public sector operated – and negotiated with donors – in order to negotiate as equals, with donors, despite that aid reliance. Slowly, over the decades, Samoa’s policy leaders set up the governance framework to address the issues – and strategies – identified in the 1988 report. They did this by reflecting on past experience and bargaining for future possibilities. For example, the national development strategy a critical policy instrument promoted in Samoa’s engagement with the donors since independence as a tool for securing aid was also identified as critical to implementation of the global idea of Ownership.

¹ Confidential Interview-Samoa-Government-OT-30012015.

In the early 90s, Samoa's political leadership and policy advisors set about reframing the purpose of the national strategy to be a tool through which they could exercise greater control over the policy choices and resources available to develop their economy. Samoans reflected on their situation and crafted several mechanisms which turned the strategy into a strategic tool for negotiating with donors, rather than simply "a shopping list":

- a. As discussed earlier, Samoa established the ACC, an internal coordination mechanism which ensured that the government ministries matched project proposals with budgets and with donor opportunities for funds.²

- b. Samoa knew they needed skills if they were to take leadership of their development strategies – and craft a tool which could be a strategic bargaining point, rather than a shopping list. They bargained for the opportunity to learn the skills and capacity to craft such tools under their own leadership, rather than continue to rely on donor-consultants. They participated in intensive workshops in strategic planning and financial management offered by several of the donors.³ They negotiated a series of capacity strengthening programs – including individual education and training in tertiary and other institutions - as part of the public sector reforms. These built specific skills and capacity in development planning, management and budgeting, and performance.⁴

² The ACC was a structure for internal communications and authorisations ensured that everyone within government knew what they were asking for and how to resource it – and it ensured that the government was aware of, and could be accountable for, the funds sought from donors and used to implement the plan.

³ See the workshops in 1990s offered jointly by the World Bank, Australia and the Pacific Forum Secretariat in strategic planning, public sector reform and public financial management.

⁴ There have been three phases of Public Sector Reforms, including Public Financial Management, since the early 1990s.

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- c. They also undertook organisational restructures across the various Ministries [particularly between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance] which supported strategic planning with accompanying shifts in responsibility for financing: Samoa brought all finances under the management of the Ministry of Finance in the early 2000s, establishing legislative and procedural support for performance based budgeting. They established the coordination mechanisms and sectoral strategies to build stronger linkages between national strategies and the individual sectors.
 - d. The policy leaders strategically mapped out their succession plans, training upcoming generations through education and mentoring opportunities, such as participation in global conferences and workshops.

These strategies, instituted during the period of change initiated in the early 1990s, illustrated characteristic behaviours of reflexivity and bargaining. Samoa's political leadership and policy advisors accepted the legitimacy of incoming policy norms promoted by the idea of Ownership under the Compact [and Paris] as they had already made the leap. By the time the global idea of Ownership arrived in the region, Samoa's policy advisors had been influenced by norms and practices of the new public management/good governance paradigms for over a decade. The new public management/good governance paradigms entailed similar norms and practices promoted by the global idea of Ownership promoted under the Compact:⁵ norms and

⁵ See the 2008 Thematic Study of the Paris Declaration for a discussion of the relationship of the Paris Declaration to the Good Governance agenda.

practices which were intended to demonstrate responsibility and leadership in the effective and efficient use of resources

Samoa's policy makers found an alignment between the norms and practices of new public management/good governance with the principles [if not the formal shape of the practices] which shaped *Fa'a Samoa* – and *Fa'a Matai*: acknowledgement of the right [and responsibility] of all to contribute; and respect for the authority, responsibility and dignity of leadership as service, to the family, the village – and the nation through one's position in government. A wise matai, Le Tagaloa advises, allocates resources across those relations which are their responsibility, with fairness and dignity, acknowledging the responsibilities and contributions of all.⁶ Samoa's policy advisors accepted the incoming policy practices because they found equivalence [even if not the same] between these incoming global policy norms and the principles of *Fa'a Matai/Fa'a Samoa*.

Samoa's political leaders and policy advisors made this compromise was made because stable, cohesive and respectful relations kept Samoa and the donors at the negotiating table. For Samoa's policy advisors, accepting the legitimacy of the strategies of Ownership – when they shared commonalities with existing local norms - was a pathway towards a mutuality with donors.

⁶ Le Tagaloa, A. F. 1992. The Samoan Culture and Government.

Appendix 10.1 “Best Practice” Ownership in Kiribati

Table 10.1: Best Practice Ownership in Kiribati

Criteria for Ownership [Ostrom et al]	‘Best practice’ for Ownership of Development [Paris/Accra]		
	Measures	Purpose	‘Global’ norms
Beneficiary Participation			
Identification of Needs	National Development Strategy	Demonstration of Countries’ Leadership of Development Agenda through Inclusive Consultation for Agreement on Development Priorities	Leadership through Responsibility and Prioritisation Effectiveness and Efficiency
Contributing Resources To The Solution	Annual Budget Medium Term Expenditure Framework	Coordination of Resources in Dialogue with Donors Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs supported by Resources and Authorised By Parliament	Effectiveness and Efficiency
Enjoying, Or Consuming The Benefits	National Development Strategy Performance Framework	Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs through Inclusive Participation of Government, Civil Society Private Sector	Effectiveness and Efficiency
Deciding When The Need Has Been Met, When It’s Over	Performance Framework	Generate Data, Assess and Report Progress on Results	Accountability

Table 10.2 Implementing “Best Practice” Ownership in Kiribati

Criteria for Ownership [Ostrom et al]	‘Best practice’ for Ownership of Development [Paris/Accra]			Kiribati
Beneficiary Participation	Measures	Purpose	‘Global’ Norms	Implementation
Identification of Needs	National Development Strategy	Demonstration of Countries’ Leadership of Development Agenda through Inclusive Consultation for Agreement on Development Priorities	Leadership and responsibility Prioritisation Effectiveness and efficiency	Kiribati National Development Strategies 2008-19 [* Consultations] Cabinet/Development Coordination Committee Annual Development Forum *Development Cooperation Policy [2015]
Contributing Resources To The Solution	Annual Budget Medium Term Expenditure Framework	Coordination of Resources in Dialogue with Donors Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs supported by Resources and Authorised By Parliament	Effectiveness and efficiency	Annual Budgets Medium Term Economic Framework RERF Trust Fund *VDS from 2013
Enjoying, Or Consuming The Benefits	National Development Strategy Performance Framework	Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs through Inclusive Participation of Government, Civil Society Private Sector	Effectiveness and efficiency	Public Sector Reforms Programs and Initiatives: Education, Health, Migration with Dignity
Deciding When The Need Has Been Met, When It’s Over	Performance Framework	Generate Data, Assess and Report Progress on Results	Accountability	*Mid-Term Reviews KDPs; PEFA *Compact Peer Reviews; *South-South Exchanges; GPEDC reporting [Region: Pacific RoadMap; Blue Pacific]

Table 10.3 Renegotiating Ownership in Kiribati Local Norms

Criteria for Ownership [Ostrom et al]	'Best practice' for Ownership of Development [Paris/Accra]			Kiribati	
	Measures	Purpose	'Global' Norms	Innovation	"Local" Norms
Identification of Needs	National Development Strategy	Demonstration of Countries' Leadership of Development Agenda through Inclusive Consultation for Agreement on Development Priorities	Leadership and responsibility Prioritisation Effectiveness and efficiency	Advocacy on climate change Fish-PNA OceanScape Policy Marine Protection Zones Migration w Dignity CANCC	Interdependency: Contribution Collaboration Relevance
Contributing Resources To The Solution	Annual Budget Medium Term Expenditure Framework	Coordination of Resources in Dialogue with Donors Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs supported by Resources and Authorised By Parliament	Effectiveness and efficiency	Fish – PNA VDS Revenue Migration w Dignity	Self sufficiency Autonomy Collaboration
Enjoying, Or Consuming The Benefits	National Development Strategy Performance Framework	Translation of NDS Into Results-Oriented Programs through Inclusive Participation of Government, Civil Society and Private Sector	Effectiveness and efficiency	Fish- PNA Migration w Dignity	Self sufficiency Autonomy Contribution and Collaboration
Deciding When The Need Has Been Met, When It's Over	Performance Framework	Generate Data, Assess and Report Progress on Results	Accountability	[*Blue Pacific; Pacific Road Map on SDGs]	

Appendix 10.2 Analysis: Implementing “Best Practice” in Ownership in Kiribati

This Appendix outlines further detail on the comparison of implementation of Ownership in Kiribati with the “best Practices” of Paris Declaration and the four criteria outlined by Ostrom as essential for a transition in Ownership of aid from donors to aid receiving countries. Of particular note is the analysis of performance in relation to Ostrom’s second criteria, Kiribati’s contribution of resources to support aid interventions.

Table 10.2 Implementing Best Practice in Kiribati, summarises my findings on the first step in the analysis. It compares Ostrom’s four criteria for the transition to Ownership with reports [from interviewees and related policy texts] of the implementation of the strategies of Ownership according to the proxy measures laid out by the Paris Declaration and asserted as the foundation of the Forum Compact in Kiribati. In the far-left column, I begin by aligning Ostrom’s criteria for the transition in Ownership with the corresponding proxy measures identified by the Paris Declaration, discussed at the beginning of the Chapter.¹ The proxy measures represent the agreed collective and systematic behaviours - which may also be called practices, or institutions² - which are considered to indicate the presence or exercise of a country’s Ownership of its development [see Chapters 1 and 2]. This comparison maps those practices implemented by the Government of Kiribati [GoK] over the period of the agreement on the Compact, between 2009 and 2016, when I concluded my fieldwork.³ I then identify, in

¹ See the Table 10.1 and 10.2 for details: the proxy ‘output’ measures included: national development strategy; coordination or consultation mechanisms and authorisation process; national budget and related papers; performance assessment framework.

² According to March and Olsen’s definitions, see Chapter 2.

³ Fieldwork was undertaken in the Pacific region between 2014-2016 across Fiji, Kiribati and Samoa; when home-based, in Canberra, I monitored areas relevant to my research for additional information through personal and professional networks,

the last column, the key points of interest - and potential innovations - which arose in the course of field- and desk-work, from my analysis of interviewees transcripts and related policy documents, about the implementation of these practices; and whether their implementation signified the exercise of Ownership.

Identifying development needs and priorities

The global idea of Ownership in the Paris Declaration identified the national development strategy as the key policy instrument and proxy measure which signified the collective prioritisation of development by an aid-receiving country.⁴ The crafting of a national development strategy was qualified by several conditions: it must be supported by inclusive consultation across the private sector, civil society and within government; aligned to the national budget; and authorised by Parliament.⁵ Prioritisation, through consultation and

social and traditional media, seminars and conferences at ANU and other institutions. When the Compact was integrated into the Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development in 2017, several Compact-related initiatives led by the Forum and Australia were postponed, or later cancelled, after the Abbott government assumed power in Australia in 2015 – the Abbott government’s disinterest in programs initiated by the former Australian government was reflected in shifts in funding priorities as well as its language of economic diplomacy. At the same time, the Forum Secretariat, following the recommendations of the Morauta Review of the Pacific Plan, had determined a new strategic direction with consequent organisational changes. With the option of greater flexibility under funding arrangements between Australia and the Forum Secretariat, the Secretary General decided to re-align funding with the new organisational mandate laid out by the Pacific Framework for Regionalism and the Blue Pacific to support the Secretariat’s global obligations to report on the SDGs. Several other programs previously auspiced through the Secretariat, such as the PICS-Partners meetings and related training workshops and the Peer Reviews, lapsed. Australia [and other donors] continued to separately fund PFTAC and UN programs offering technical advisory services in financial management and strategic planning. The reporting responsibilities on aid and development effectiveness, and progress in the internationally agreed Development Goals, previously pursued under the Compact were integrated under the 2017 Pacific Road Map for Sustainable Development.

⁴ There was an additional step in the process of identifying need which was outside the measures pre-ordained by the Paris Declaration: the level of engagement by the government of Kiribati - whether its political leaders or policy advisors - in composing and endorsing the Compact itself. As noted earlier, neither President Tong nor his Vice-President were able to attend the Forum Leaders meeting in Cairns. A Special Envoy attended in their stead, accompanied by another senior colleague. In comparison, Australia’s entourage in Cairns encompassed 69 members, including Australia’s prime minister, several Ministers and an array of diplomats and aid policy advisors. Although the Envoy was not familiar with the proposed Compact, the Envoy was familiar with discussions on aid effectiveness due to engagement in regional meetings prior to the Leaders meeting in Cairns. The Envoy noted that it was the host’s prerogative to initiate proposals; as the guest, the Envoy extended the expected diplomatic courtesy of endorsing the proposal: “It’s the host’s call and we were the guests” the Envoy explained. Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Government-UM-05122015. NOTE: A key distinction between the Compact and the Pacific aid effectiveness principles was that Australia and New Zealand put funds behind the Compact’s implementation. See Chapter 6.

⁵ See Chapters 2, 4 and 5.

authorisation, meant that limited resources could be allocated most efficiently and effectively - and ensured that the Government could be accountable to their own citizens [and donors to their taxpayers] for ensuring resources met needs. The national development plan was a significant proxy measure because agreement on the plan usually triggered the release of donor aid to government.

National Development Plans

Through the duration of the Compact, the Government of Kiribati [GoK] operated under three national development plans. Each was crafted through various processes of consultation; and was accompanied by an annual budget and monitoring arrangements.⁶ In 2009, Kiribati was one year into implementation of the 2008-2011 Kiribati Development Plan [2008 KDP]. Another two plans were prepared by the Government of Kiribati during the lifespan of the Compact: the 2012-2015 Kiribati Development Plan [2012 KDP], released during Tong's second term as President; and, following President Maamau's election in March 2016, the 2016-2019 Kiribati Development Plan [2016 KDP] was released. The Compact was integrated into the Pacific RoadMap on Sustainable Development in 2017, a little over a year into implementation of Kiribati's 2016 KDP.⁷

Authorisation:

Of the three plans, only the 2012 KDP notes explicitly that it was approved by Cabinet. But

⁶ President Tong's first administration took office in 2003; and produced the 2004-2007 national development plan the next year. In all, three plans were implemented by the Government[s] of Kiribati during the Compact's duration. They included the *2008-2011 Kiribati Development Plan* [2008-KDP]; the *2012-2015 Kiribati Development Plan* [2012-KDP]; and the *2016-2019 Kiribati Development Plan* [2016-KDP]. The 2016 Plan was launched by the Maamau Government after he took office in March 2016.

⁷ Government of Kiribati. 2008. *Kiribati National Development Plan 2008-2011*; Government of Kiribati. 2012. *Kiribati National Development Plan 2012-2015*; Government of Kiribati. 2016. *Kiribati National Development Plan 2016-2019*.

neither it, nor the preceding or ensuing plans, indicate that they were approved by the *Maneaba*. All three plans do, however, note their adherence to [or basis in] the current Government's Policy Statement.⁸ But there was little, if any, debate on the priorities adopted in the plans by the *Maneaba*. According to one interviewee, a well-established member of the *Maneaba* and elder statesman, neither the Government's policy statement nor the national development plans are routinely debated by the *Maneaba*:

No, no debate, because it looks like these are executive matters, matters of the executive within the powers of the executive. They just go and announce to parliament, they are not debated. There is no legal requirement to get a sanction from parliament or those things. Money-wise, yes, you want to get money, parliament is the place where you come and get... yes, the budget yeah, (but) those things [such as the decisions of government on the takeover and merger of telecommunications company ATHKL by Fijian companies] are purely executive, within the executive domain...⁹

There was, however, a legislative obligation to present the annual recurrent budget in the *Maneaba*.¹⁰ The Minister for Finance and Economic Development presented the annual budget to support the government's intentions in relation to implementation of each of the three national development plans to the *Maneaba* each year [discussed in detail below].

Development Priorities

The intent of development planning is to "filter" a country's development needs into agreed

⁸ A convention arose during self-government that the Chief Minister would present the Government's Policy Statement to the *Maneaba* at the start of the new term. *Te Berentitenti*, at the opening of Parliament that year declared "...we hold high the principles of democracy and good government...our statement of intent will be developed through the National Development Plan...sector strategic plans... operations plans...a statement of intent not only to guide but ...to be judged against..." Government Policy Statement for 2012, April 2012, p1. The 2008 KDP [1]: "the Government Policy Statement delivered to Parliament during the second session of the 9th Parliament on 10th December 2007 remains the guiding principle for the Kiribati Development Plan." The 2012 KDP [front page-9]: claimed the Plan aligns with the policy statement "to ensure it is consistent with the intent of the government". The 2016 KDP [1]: this plan was "a continuation of its predecessor plan ...with a few adaptations to incorporate the policies of this new government...in line with the TKP *motinnano* (political manifesto)."

⁹ Confidential Interview-Kiribati-Maneaba-SS-22112015.

¹⁰ The usual convention was that the development budget - largely funded through donor grants and loans until the increase in PNA-revenue allowed for government contributions - was provided for the information of the *Maneaba*, rather than their approval. The creation of a development fund in 2017 as part of changes to financial management may have altered this arrangement.

priorities in order to identify the effective and efficient allocation of resources. Nearly all interviewees stated that development priorities in Kiribati had not changed much over the decades. This was reflected in the three national development plans produced and implemented during the Compact's duration by the Tong and Maamau Governments.

The three plans reflected essentially the same two key platforms that had formed the basis of the government of Kiribati's development strategy since independence. The first platform sought to stimulate economic growth through identifying an alternative revenue source to the phosphate. The wealth of resources offered by Kiribati's huge territorial waters were identified as "the obvious" alternative sources of revenue in each plan. Strategies to commercialise the plentiful fish in Kiribati's territorial waters; and to introduce other forms of harvesting or mining the sea's resources; or to establish tourism ventures; were devised. The second platform sought to retain the strength of cultural and social resilience by supporting decentralisation to the outer or "home" islands. Under this platform, the government promoted agricultural activities for export and tourism [copra, coconuts, handicrafts] and improved access to health and education services. These strategies sought to encourage I-Kiribati to remain in the outer islands - and encourage those in urban Tarawa to return to their home islands.

Two complementary programs, which underwrote each of the two core platforms, emerged over the duration of the Compact: increased attention to education, skills and training; and to climate change. Support for international labour migration brought these complementary programmes together.

The Government of Kiribati began to express concern about the issue of climate change in the early 1990s. Kiribati signed the UN Framework on the Convention on Climate Change [UNFCCC] in 1992 at the UN Conference on the Environment [UNCED] in Brazil.¹¹ While the issue of climate change was noted in early national development plans [including the 2008 KDP¹²] it was largely the province of sector plans until the 2012 KDP.¹³ In the 2012 KDP, climate and environment emerged as a major priority for Kiribati's development agenda.¹⁴ Kiribati, the 2012 KDP confirmed, "is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to the effects of global climate change...[which] represent the singular most important long-term challenge for Kiribati."¹⁵ The 2012 KDP identified substantive strategies to address the threat of global warming through adaptation and mitigation, to counteract the vulnerability and "enhance the resilience of" Kiribati.¹⁶

Similarly, the focus on education, skills and training increased between the 2008 and 2016 KDPs. President Tong began advocating for opportunities for international labour migration

¹¹ Kiribati Government. September 1999. Initial Communication under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Ministry of Environment and Social Development, Tarawa Kiribati.

¹² See 2008 KDP:30. By 2008, President Tong was discussing several climate change strategies in public fora, such as the Harvard Green Conversation 2008: this included the creation of marine protection areas in the Phoenix Islands; the migration with dignity strategy; buying an island in Fiji for either food security or relocation; and advocating in the Arctic with the polar bears. But none of these strategies were specifically identified in the 2008 KDP. Lobbying for the Phoenix Island Protection Areas process was underway since 2006 - and the KANI program was underway in 2008. But neither Migration with Dignity nor the Phoenix Islands Protected Areas marine reserve were noted in the 2008 KDP. The 2008 KDP:4-7 did note the KANI initiative, but only in the review, not in forecasts. The absence is curious because the KDPs were key tools and triggers for aligning priorities and funds with the donors.

¹³ For example, in 1993 the GoK produced the first National Environmental Management Strategy with USA assistance; Government of Kiribati. 2007. National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA); Government of Kiribati, 2014. Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (KJIP) 2014-2023; Government of Kiribati. 2018. Kiribati Climate Change Policy; SPC/PIFS/USAID/Australia Aid/GTZ/ADB, January 2019. Kiribati Climate Change and Disaster Risk Finance Assessment, Draft Report.

¹⁴ See 2012 KDP Chapter 7: 41-46: Key Priority Area 4: Environment; The 2012 KDP: 15-43, noted the intent to establish the Phoenix islands Protected Areas marine reserve as a protected site with plans to extend it; and noted the Migration with Dignity strategy in relation to education, skills and training: "the government's long-term strategy for dealing with climate change and migration" in 2012 KDP:12-20; and the 2012 KDP:20. also referenced the APTC.

¹⁵ 2012 KDP:40.

¹⁶ 2012 KDP:40 The formal migration with dignity policy was published in 2015 as the *Kiribati's National Labour Migration Policy*.

for I-Kiribati in discussions with the Howard government during his first term in office. These discussions evolved into a signature mantra, “migration with dignity,” as Tong’s global advocacy on climate change intensified during his second term in office.¹⁷ In 2015, as Tong reached the close of his third term in office, the Government of Kiribati formalised the linkage between climate change and migration through the national labour migration policy.¹⁸ Under the policy, the Government of Kiribati sought to prepare I-Kiribati with a range of skills and qualifications suited to the employment needs of other countries, so that I-Kiribati could evade the threat to their livelihoods and homes posed by climate change by taking up opportunities for international labour migration. Several programs were initiated after 2007 and noted in the 2008 KDP - including nurse training and the seasonal workers pilot program, both in Australia. But other programs which began in 2007, such as access to the Australia Pacific Technical College [APTC], and access to the seasonal workers program were not formally noted until the 2012 KDP. The success of each strategy varied. While funding for the nursing program was abandoned by Australia, both the APTC [now known as the Australia Pacific Training Coalition] and the seasonal workers program [continuing as the Pacific Labor Mobility program] continued throughout the duration of the Compact.

Consultation

There were two levels of consultation in relation to determining the development priorities: consultation with the population of Kiribati to determine priorities for development in order to craft the national plans; and negotiations with the donors to agree on priority areas and their funding allocations under the plans. I turn first to consider the processes for consultation

¹⁷ Tong, A. 2008. The Green conversation. Harvard University.

¹⁸ Government of Kiribati. 2015. Kiribati National Labour Migration Policy.

and leadership to craft the national plans.

Local Leadership and Consultation:

The role of local leadership and consultation with the broader I-Kiribati population were notable issues in the three development plans implemented or crafted during the Compact's duration.

Local leadership of the national development strategy was lauded by the Government in relation to the plans which were crafted immediately before and after the Compact's duration, that is, in the 2008 and 2020 plans.¹⁹ In contrast, responsibility for leading the 2012 and the 2016 strategies - that is, the two plans crafted while the Compact was in operation - was delegated to expatriate technical advisors funded by the multilateral and bilateral aid programs.²⁰

In his foreword to the 2008 KDP, the Minister for Finance made a point of claiming that, "for the very first time, the compilation and formulation of this plan" was based on "extensive consultation" and "nationally driven by our own local consultants, local officials and the community at large", by i-Kiribati.²¹ Preparations for the 2012 KDP, although led by an external

¹⁹ Both the 2008 and 2020 KDPs [before the Compact's endorsement and after the Compact's dissolution] were led by 'local' government policy advisors. Although, the 2020 KDP's local leadership was due, in part, to the COVID regulations and flight cancellations preventing the arrival of external advisors. PACTAM continued to advertise for an expatriate advisor for the Directorship of NEPO for several years - in 2019, 2020, and as recently as 2023 - following the [intended] departure of the expatriate consultant in 2016, a period which encompassed most of the Compact's duration.

²⁰ The 2012 and 2016 KDPs note their reliance on external technical advisors from the United Nations Development Program [UNDP] and from the Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility [PRIF].

²¹ Hon. Natan Teewe, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, in the Foreword, Government of Kiribati. 2008. Kiribati Development Plan 2008-2011: "For the very first time, the compilation and formulation of this plan has been nationally driven with our own local consultants, local officials and the community at large."

advisor, relied on extensive consultations across the outer islands and within Tarawa [as well as with the donor partner, Australia]. A video of the consultations during 2011 noted that the intent was to ensure that priorities for development were appropriately and thoroughly canvassed with as wide a group of stakeholders as possible.²² The video was produced by Australia's aid program.

However, by 2016, a new Minister for Finance in the new Maamau government was lamenting the budget constraints which forced them to limit consultations with stakeholders in preparing the 2016 KDP. The consultation process for the 2012 Plan, he explained, was "comprehensive but costly."²³ Instead, consultations for the 2016 KDP were limited to the centrally-located Ministries and communities of South Tarawa.

Dialogue on priorities and resourcing with donors

The government of Kiribati's policy advisors directly engaged in dialogue and consultation on development priorities with donor representatives, through the local Development Partner Fora [DPF]; and through informal dialogue. Representatives from the government of Kiribati also joined regional fora, such as the annual PICS-Partners meetings [in operation since 1991], which offered the opportunity to discuss development priorities and funding with senior decision-makers in the donor agencies.

The Development Partner Fora [DPF] were formal meetings where ministries met with

²² See: Government of Australia (DFAT) 16-20 May 2011 National Development Plan and Climate Change. 8 Kiribati Reitake Series Australian aid video.

²³ Foreword in Government of Kiribati. 2016. *Kiribati National Development Plan*.

development partners to advocate for support for proposed programs. The first DPF was initiated by the government of Kiribati in 1985.²⁴ When the Compact was agreed in 2009, the DPF were usually scheduled every two years. Four formal meetings were held during the Compact's duration: in 2010,²⁵ 2012, and 2015²⁶ and 2016. As one interviewee acknowledged, often, there had already been discussions between the government and donor representatives before the DPF, and the resolution of most issues was, often, already agreed.²⁷ Individual ministries might also meet at sector level, as well as informally, with donor representatives.

Contributing resources to the solution [contributions of financial or other resources to development interventions]

The second criterion nominated by Ostrom called for the aid-receiving government to contribute resources - financial or in-kind - to facilitate or implement development interventions funded by the donors. Linked to the preceding criterion, the proxy measure for this was a national budget aligned to the national development strategy and authorised by the national parliament. Like the first criterion, it also came with conditions: national resources were to be allocated in coordination with donor-funding. The global aid effectiveness reforms argued that the donors' use of government systems demonstrated the

²⁴ Government of Kiribati. 1987. *Kiribati Development Plan*.

²⁵ Kiribati Development Partners Forum, Department of Foreign affairs and Trade: Australian Aid video, [published 2014] documents 2010 Development Partners Forum, amongst other consultations.

²⁶ Kiribati Development Partners Forum, Department of Foreign affairs and Trade: Australian Aid video, [published 2014] documents 2010 Development Partners Forum, amongst other consultations

²⁷ Confidential interview Kiribati-Government-SS-04112015.

level of confidence a donor held in the integrity of an aid-receiving government's financial management and monitoring systems.

This criterion demonstrated the most substantial changes during the Compact years for the government of Kiribati. Despite reviews in 2010 and 2016 which questioned the quality of the government's resource management and accompanying financial management systems,²⁸ the government financial reports indicate several significant shifts between 2008-2018 in the government's financial situation.²⁹ There were changes in the way finances were managed

²⁸ Asian Development Bank. 2008. *Kiribati: Social and Economic Report 2008*. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2013. *Forum Compact Peer Review Countries Progress Report, Pacific Peer Review: Countries Take Action!* 2013; Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2010. *Peer Review of the Republic of Kiribati*, Cairns Compact for Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific; Republic of Kiribati. 2016. *Kiribati – Monitoring Profile, Second Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*; Republic of Kiribati. 2018. *Kiribati - Voluntary Report: 2018 Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*.

²⁹ This analysis is largely drawn from the ministers' speeches and supporting budget papers between 2008-2018: Given the challenges of comparing financial [including loans and grants] information across donors and government, particularly in retrospect, I looked for evidence of the government's intentions through examining trends in resource contributions made by the Government of Kiribati over the period of the Compact's duration. I have relied largely on the budget papers, particularly the speeches made by the various Ministers' for Finance and Economic Development in their presentations to the Maneaba, between 2008 - 2019³ to map the trends in the Government's contributions to support Kiribati development activities; and identify any corresponding changes of note which impacted on the availability and contribution of government and or donor resources to support Kiribati's priorities for development. I compared these with the data on ODA collated by the Lowy Institutes Pacific Aid Map between 2009 and 2019; and reported data on fish revenue to 2017 and the reserve equalisation fund to 2021 from documents uploaded to the Government of Kiribati website. See Table 7C in Annex 7 for summary of these figures. ² I have compared the figures identified in the Ministers speech to the Maneaba [sourcing the official speeches available from the MFED website] in presenting the government's budget statement with the figures for ODA identified by the Pacific Aid Map: the two are consistently inconsistent. This points to a key reason for the global aid effectiveness reforms. There are several factors underlying inconsistencies in the data: governments and donors categorise - and account for - ODA vs development finances differently; both parties operate on different financial years [calendar vis July-June]; and the timeliness and completeness of information varies. Both parties agree this is the situation even though they may have different propositions for its resolution: the 2009 MFED budget statement, for example, acknowledges that: "It is useful to note the problems associated with development projects, namely the poor recording system for development project expenditures. This arises because the larger projects... have their own accounting systems which are not integrated with the government account system and therefore not get regularly reported like government recurrent expenditures. Likewise, in kind aid... also creates reporting problems because they do not get recorded in the government Development Fund account system." Rather than seek to pin down these inconsistencies [which may be an impossible endurance task when undertaken in retrospect], I have instead, opted to examine the different financial information for trends by comparing the budget speeches in light of the data on ODA provided by the Lowy's institute's Pacific Aid Map [PAM]; the PAM represents substantial and dedicated efforts to map allocations and commitments through multiple verifiable - but primarily donor - sources. It is considered one of the most reliable sources of information on ODA in the Pacific. I also note the PAM's advice that total aid to the Pacific shrunk by 20% between 2011 and 2016. This makes some of the contributions/trends even more note-worthy.³ The annual budget presented is presented at the end of each calendar for the forthcoming year; so for example, the budget presented in December 2008 addressed the 2009 calendar year and so on. I included the 2018 budget speech [which forecasts the budget for the 2019 calendar year] to track the trend in increased revenue due to the increase in fishing licences fees. This increase emerged in 2013; it was captured in the Ministers' budget speech in December 2014 [the budget speeches for 2011 and 2013 were unavailable on the MFED website], and more explicitly identified in the surpluses forecast in the budget from 2016. Source:

within the government; and in the level of revenue produced through access to fishing licences issued by the government. The level of aid offered by the multilateral and bilateral agencies also increased. As a result, both the government's and donors' contributions available to support Kiribati's development agenda changed markedly over the period of the Compact's operation.

There were several significant trends in relation to the government's contribution of resources to support implementation of its development plans. Most of these trends originated during the Tong government administration although in some instances, the benefits emerged more prominently during the first term of the Maamau government.

- a. The government moved from a persistent estimated budget deficit in 2008 to a consistent, even if sometimes minor, estimated budget surplus by 2018.³⁰ The size of the budget also increased significantly over this period.
- b. The government experienced a significant increase in revenue from the new arrangements for fishing licence fees introduced by the Parties to the Nauru Agreement [PNA] under the Vessel Day Scheme [VDS].³¹ Although Kiribati had generated revenue through licence fees for several decades prior, after 2010 the PNA established a new way of calculating the fees to be charged to Distant Water

Murdoch T. 1 December 2014. *Budget Speech 2015*, delivered by the Minister for Finance and Economic Development, Republic of Kiribati on the First Reading the Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2015.

³⁰ The recurrent deficit was usually leveraged through a draw down from the RERF [the original intention of establishing the wealth fund - and controversially agreed as the intent when the British left.]

³¹ See: Republic of Kiribati. December 2017. *Fishing Licence Revenues in Kiribati: 2017 Report*, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource Development and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. See also: Table 3: RERF Valuations, Deposits and Drawdowns (1978-2021 July) p10, in the report submitted to the Maneaba: Kiribati Government: 5th meeting of 12th *Maneaba ni Maungatabu*, 16th August 2021 to 27th August 2021, report prepared by Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, August 2021, Report on Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund (RERF) 31 March 2021-31 July 2021

Fishing Nations [DWFNs], through the Vessel Day Scheme [VDS].³² This change worked to the advantage of the tuna-resourced Pacific countries. Kiribati first saw significant benefits flow in 2013: estimated revenue in 2013 was double that of 2009; in 2014, it was four times as much; and in 2015, a staggering seven times as much. While revenue dipped in 2016, [revealing the market's volatility] it remained high by historical standards. Estimates for 2017 were more modest: only five times that generated in 2009. In 2017, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development [MFED] reported that the government collected A\$29.1m in total revenue from fishing licence and transshipment fees in 2009; and in 2015, revenue peaked at A\$207.1m – a 612% increase in four years. The budget papers for 2017-2019 identified estimated revenue for the fishing licence fees, and the 2017 report confirmed total fishing revenue between 2007-2016, as indicated in the table below:³³

Table 1: Total Fishing Revenue (Excl. Development Funds), Kiribati, 2007-2016 2007

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Nominal AUD millions	25.4	31.2	29.5	41.7	29.1	58.3	89.0	141.6	207.1
2004 Real AUD millions	23.3	27.6	25.5	35.1	23.7	46.6	69.2	108.2	155.7
Nominal USD millions	25.1	27.5	22.0	38.4	30.3	60.6	85.4	127.3	155.8

As a result of the increase in revenue, the Government either reduced, or declined, draw-downs from the trust fund [the Reserve Equalisation Reserve Fund, or RERF] between 2009-

³² Aqorau, T. 2019. *Fishing for Success: Lessons in Pacific Regionalism*.

³³ See Republic of Kiribati. December 2017., *Fishing Licence Revenues in Kiribati: 2017 Report*, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource Development and Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, 3.

2018.³⁴ Additionally, the Government contributed significant sums to the RERF across 2014-2016.³⁵ These were the most significant contributions [in size] to the RERF since 1978.³⁶ Together with changes to the management and structure of investments by the RERF, initiated in 2014, the RERF passed \$1.1b in value in 2019.³⁷

- c. Although the Government had significantly increased its contributions to the recurrent budget by 2018, this did not mean less aid.³⁸ In 2009, total ODA represented the additional equivalent of 48% of the expenditure forecast in the recurrent budget; in 2018, total ODA represented 62% of the expenditure forecast in the recurrent budget.³⁹ Much of the ODA was channelled through budget

³⁴ See Table 3: RERF Valuations, Deposits and Drawdowns (1978-2021 July) p10, in the report submitted to the Maneaba: Kiribati Government: 5th meeting of 12th *Maneaba ni Maungatabu*, 16th August 2021 to 27th August 2021, report prepared by Ministry of Finance and Economic Development [MFED], August 2021, *Report on Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund (RERF)*, 31 March 2021-31 July 2021.

³⁵ GoK contributed funds to the RERF in 1992 and 1999. But after the VDS was introduced, it contributed funds in 2010: A\$5.9m, 2014:A\$10m; 2015:A\$50m and 2016:A\$70m. The report indicates that no additional funds were contributed after 2016. Between 2015 and 2019, there were no funds drawn down; in 2020, funds of A\$40m were drawn down. The report documents the balance in the RERF up till 2021 July. Table produced by the Investment Unit NEPO, MFED. See Table 3: *RERF Valuations, Deposits and Drawdowns (1978-2021 July)* p10, in the report submitted to the Maneaba: Kiribati Government: 5th meeting of 12th *Maneaba ni Maungatabu*, 16th August 2021 to 27th August 2021, report prepared by Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, August 2021, *Report on Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund (RERF)* 31 March 2021-31 July 2021

³⁶ The RERF was valued at \$62,218,000 in 1978. Contributions of \$5m \$5.9m and \$10m each were made on three previous occasions: 1992, 1999 and 2010. Kiribati Government, 5th meeting of the 12th *Maneaba ni Maungatabu*, 16th August 2021 to 27th August 2021, *Report on Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund (RERF)*, 31 March - 31 July 2021, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development [MFED], August 2021.

³⁷ Changes to the RERF management and structure were initiated following a IMF review in 2011 which advised that drawdown levels were unsustainable, risk levels were misaligned and the investments were significantly underperforming. Consequently, the GoK revised the investment strategy, changed the investment portfolio and the management arrangements [including a significant reduction in management fees]. In July 2021, the fund was valued at \$1.3b. Kiribati Government, 5th meeting of the 12th *Maneaba ni Maungatabu*, 16th August 2021 to 27th August 2021, *Report on Revenue Equalisation Reserve Fund (RERF)*, 31 March - 31 July 2021, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, August 2021.

³⁸ The GoK received substantial ODA investments, as loans and grants, between 2014-2018 from the World Bank, ADB, Australia and New Zealand and Taiwan. These investments supported infrastructure. It included projects to rehabilitate the main road between the airport and wharf in south Tarawa; aviation, including the upgrade of the Bonriki international airport; sanitation in South Tarawa; and housing in Bairiki.¹ All of these projects carried a 20-30 year projected investment. See: Murdoch T. 1 December 2014. *Budget Speech 2015*, delivered by the Minister for Finance and Economic Development, Republic of Kiribati on the First Reading the Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2015; Toatua T. MP 2/5/2016. *Budget Speech 2016*. Delivered by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Republic of Kiribati on the First Reading of the Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2016: *Fostering inclusive growth through a more equitable distribution of resources and the broadening on income- generating opportunities*.

³⁹ See: Table 1: *Summary of Recurrent Budget 2007-2009*, and Table 3: *Recurrent and Development Fund Budget* by Ministry 2009 in the *2009 Budget Speech to the Maneaba*, no date, no author, downloaded from GoK MFED webpage; and Table 3 Recurrent and Development budget by Ministry 2018, in Kiribati Government, December 2017, 2018 Budget: No one left behind, presented to the *Maneaba ni Maungatabu* on 5/12/2017, National Economic Planning Office, Ministry of Finance & Economic Development, Bairiki Tarawa.

support.⁴⁰ A similar pattern is reflected in Australia's contribution [though the amounts are more modest]: in 2009, Australian ODA represented the additional equivalent of 14% of the expenditure forecast in the recurrent budget. In 2018, Australian ODA represented 20% of the expenditure forecast in the recurrent budget.⁴¹ The Government's recurrent budget also now included local contributions to the Development Fund. The reported domestic contributions to the Development Fund indicate they were increasingly more substantial: the Government's intended contribution increased from approximately \$30,000 in 2009 to \$49.2m in the 2018 budget forecasts.⁴² The same year, the Government also projected a budget surplus for the fourth year in a row.

Unsurprisingly, in 2016, the incoming Minister for Finance under the new Maamau government reflected a growing confidence and authority in his reports to the Maneaba.⁴³ But

⁴⁰ From 2014, the government received budget support from the World Bank, ADB and New Zealand. This group, later known as the Economic Reform Taskforce [ERT], was joined by Australia and Taiwan in 2018. See Budget papers: *Budget Speech 2015*, delivered on 1 December 2014, on the First Reading the Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2015, by the Hon. Tom Murdoch, MP, Minister for Finance and Economic Development, Republic of Kiribati. *Budget Speech 2018*, Delivered on 5th December 2017 on the first reading of the Appropriation Bill 2018, by the hon. Dr Teuea Toatu MP Minister of Finance and Economic Development Republic of Kiribati: leaving no one behind. According to the Kiribati Development Cooperation Policy, budget support was the government's "preferred medium" because it gave more flexibility and predictability. [GoK, November 2015, Development Cooperation Policy, p8 – Policy posted to GoK website August 2016] The ERT made budget support contingent on implementation of various economic reforms. These reforms included creation of a national fisheries policy for strategic planning and integration fisheries management; SOE reforms to ensure commercial viability [including reforms in SOEs in the shipping and coconut industries and communications]; instigation of a debt management policy; and reforms to the telecommunications sector and taxation reform. Budget support continued after the Compact was dissolved in 2017.

⁴¹ See *Table 1: Summary of Recurrent Budget 2007-2009*, and *Table 3: Recurrent and Development Fund Budget by Ministry 2009* in the *2009 Budget Speech* to the Maneaba, no date, no author, downloaded from GoK MFED webpage; and *Table 3 Recurrent and Development Budget by Ministry 2018*, in GoK, December 2017, *2018 Budget: No one left behind*, as presented to the *Maneaba ni Maungatabu* on 5/12/2017, National Economic Planning Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Bairiki Tarawa. Note: these are forecasts rather than acquittals.

⁴² See *Table 1: Summary of Recurrent Budget 2007-2009*, and *Table 3: Recurrent and Development Fund Budget by Ministry 2009* in the *2009 Budget Speech* to the Maneaba, no date, no author, downloaded from GoK MFED webpage; and *Table 3 Recurrent and Development Budget by Ministry 2018*, in GoK, December 2017, *2018 Budget: No one left behind*, as presented to the *Maneaba ni Maungatabu* on 5/12/2017, National Economic Planning Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Bairiki, Tarawa. Note: these are forecasts rather than acquittals.

⁴³ In announcing that the 2016 budget expenditure remained in surplus, despite additional appropriations during the year, the Minister declared "...this upholds our all-important fiscal policy that we should never live beyond our means. More importantly, not a single cent was ever drawn down from the RERF during the year." The Minister declared the Maamau Government's policy initiatives - free education, an increased copra subsidy, amongst others - a resounding success. So much so, he indicated that the government would explore the feasibility of purchasing [again] its own aircraft and landing craft to

the Minister was also obliged to forecast a drop in revenue - and proposed expenditure - in 2017.⁴⁴ There was a cloud over the reliability of increased revenues under the fishing licence arrangements.⁴⁵ Several factors were in play: uncertainty around arrangements for transshipment; the approaching end of *El Nino* [the cyclical weather pattern whose arrival had led to higher volumes of tuna in Kiribati waters since 2015] which was expected to reduce the number of fishing vessels in Kiribati's territory as tuna moved to other waters; and, the potential withdrawal of the EU fishing fleets from arrangements with Kiribati.⁴⁶ With the uncertainty, the government continued to look to its usual donors for ongoing support.⁴⁷

Enjoying or consuming benefits [participation in capacity building and other development interventions/programs]

The third criterion was intended to reflect the participation and engagement of the beneficiaries of development interventions in the intervention. This operated at two levels: the benefit to the government's political leaders and policy advisors of participating in the capacity strengthening interventions which directly targeted improved aid coordination practices under the Compact; and the benefit to those who participated more broadly in

improve transport between the islands and with the outside world. Toatua T. 8 December 2017 [sic, probably error in date: the content of the speech indicates this is more likely the 8 December 2016] *Budget Speech 2017*, Delivered by the Minister for Finance and Economic Development, Republic of Kiribati on the First Reading of the Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2017: *We Serve We Deliver*.

⁴⁴ Toatua T. 8 December 2017 [sic, probably error in date: the content of the speech indicates this is more likely the 8 December 2016] *Budget Speech 2017*, Delivered by the Minister for Finance and Economic Development, Republic of Kiribati on the First Reading of the Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2017: *We Serve We Deliver*.

⁴⁵ Toatua T. 8 December 2017 [sic, probably error in date: the content of the speech indicates this is more likely the 8 December 2016] *Budget Speech 2017*, Delivered by the Minister for Finance and Economic Development, Republic of Kiribati on the First Reading of the Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2017: *We Serve We Deliver*.

⁴⁶ Toatua T. MP 2/5/2016. *Budget Speech 2016*. Delivered by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Republic of Kiribati on the First Reading of the Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2016: *Fostering inclusive growth through a more equitable distribution of resources and the broadening on income-generating opportunities*.

⁴⁷ In his 2018 budget speech, the Minister attributed the donors' willingness to extend budget support to their "confidence in the government's progress" on economic reforms. See Toatu T. 5/12/2017. *Budget Speech 2018*, Delivered by the Minister for Finance and Economic on the First Reading of the Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2018 Republic of Kiribati.

development interventions funded under the national development plans, such as, across the priorities of economic growth, governance [including public sector reform] and access to health and education programs.⁴⁸

In this section, I focus on the government policy advisors' participation in the capacity strengthening programs related to aid coordination practices; and the government's progress in implementation of the government priorities under the three plans.

Capacity strengthening programs

Under the Australia-Kiribati Partnership arrangement, Australia committed support to Kiribati to strengthen the capacity of its aid coordination practices – key skills and practices encompassed by the public sector reforms identified as priorities in all three national development plans⁴⁹ and designated under the global idea of Ownership.

After the Pacific leaders' endorsed the Compact in 2009, Australia and New Zealand increased funds to several agencies to facilitate the Compact's objectives: the Forum Secretariat, the IMF's Pacific Technical Assistance Centre [PFTAC] and the UN. These agencies offered various capacity building interventions which targeted the skills and capacity to implement the Compact – and deliver the strategies identified by the global idea of Ownership. The training and support encompassed skills and capacity in coordination and consultation, strategic

⁴⁸ This included programs facilitated by the Forum Secretariat, including the PICS-Partners meetings and the Compact Peer Reviews, the Development Effectiveness Reviews and reporting on the global MDGs and SDGs; PFTAC, on financial management; and the UN support for strategic planning. Australia [and New Zealand and the IMF] contributed additional funding to extend these programs under the Compact, particularly during the Rudd-Gillard Governments 2009-2013.

⁴⁹ Each of the three plans identified reforms to the government's public sector management, particularly financial management reforms, as priorities, contributing to stronger economic growth and governance.

planning, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation. Kiribati's policy advisors participated in these programs, domestically and regionally. But peer reviews and self-assessments undertaken between 2010 and 2018 showed that the quality of aid coordination practices varied, across practices and over time.

Peer reviews of Kiribati's capacity to coordinate aid in 2010, and a subsequent update in 2013, found strengths and shortcomings across key practices.⁵⁰ Kiribati was amongst the first of the Forum countries to commit to a Peer Review, one of the central strategies for strengthening development coordination identified by the Compact.⁵¹ The Kiribati Peer Review was undertaken in 2010.⁵² The Peer Review found shortcomings in the quality of the monitoring and evaluation undertaken in association with the KDPs and with the quality of the strategic processes for planning and coordination more generally.⁵³

In 2016, a monitoring review of aid coordination practices submitted to the GPEDC found the government's capacity for dialogue with donors and its medium-term financial planning continued to be strong in 2015 – an improvement on the findings of a review of financial management in 2011.⁵⁴ The same assessment identified improvements in the capacity of the

⁵⁰ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2010. *Peer Review of the Republic of Kiribati*, Cairns Compact for Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific; Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2013. *Forum Compact Peer Review Countries Progress Report, Pacific Peer Review: Countries Take Action!* 2013.

⁵¹ The Peer Reviews assessed, amongst other reforms, a country's progress in implementing the strategies and measures associated with the global idea of Ownership.

⁵² Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2010. *Peer Review of the Republic of Kiribati*, Cairns Compact for Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific.

⁵³ Alongside Tuvalu, Kiribati appears to be one of the few Pacific Forum countries which did not participate in other Pacific Country Peer Reviews. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 10-11 March 2014. *South-South Cooperation in the Pacific: Pacific Islands helping each other through Peer Reviews*, Presentation at the Asia Pacific Consultation on Building Regional Evidence for the First High Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, Seoul.

⁵⁴ Republic of Kiribati. 2016. *Kiribati – Monitoring Profile, Second Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*; Republic of Kiribati. 2018. *Kiribati - Voluntary Report: 2018 Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*. Note: These monitoring reports, self-assessments, assess performance against indicators [or standards] set by the GPEDC.

government's financial management systems [including its financial management strategy] and performance assessment. But policy on aid and development cooperation remained lacking [despite the date indicated on the policy posted to the GoK website]. Similarly, two years later, the 2018 GPEDC monitoring report assessed Kiribati's national plans and performance frameworks as "medium" in quality - compared to its peers; neither its engagement with other stakeholders, especially civil society and the private sector, nor the quality of its public financial management was able to be ranked, as no data was available.⁵⁵ The use of government systems by donors was better than in other SIDS, with strengths in budget execution, reporting and audit - and improvements in the predictability of donor disbursements, using several government systems. While all three national development plans included review processes – including a performance framework - joint assessments of implementation were not regularly undertaken nor was assessment data publicly available, as had been the case in 2016.

There was one initiative developed jointly by the government of Samoa and the Forum Secretariat, the South:South exchange program. Under this program, senior policy advisors from across the Pacific[including Kiribati] travelled to Samoa for several weeks of intensive peer-based learning in the practices of aid coordination - development planning, financial management, monitoring and evaluation. Policy advisors from NEPO visited Samoa in 2015 as part of the south-south exchange. Consequently, NEPO produced a Development Cooperation Policy, following the example set by Samoa.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Republic of Kiribati. 2018. *Kiribati - Voluntary Report: 2018 Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*.

⁵⁶ Government of Kiribati. 2015. *Development Cooperation Policy*. MFED. Tarawa. While the policy is dated November 2015, it was not published on the MFED website until late 2016.

Implementing the national development plans

As discussed earlier, the government's national plans identified largely the same priority platforms across all three plans implemented during the lifespan of the Compact, although several programs varied, with the increase in aid funds and shift in priorities, in the 2012 and 2016 KDPs. the 2018 Voluntary National Review prepared for the UN to report on progress in achieving the SDGs undertook a mid-term review of the 2016 KDP at the same time. Its findings suggested that the 2007 MDG progress report, which concluded mixed outcomes for Kiribati's development, was optimistic in its forecasts nearly a decade earlier.⁵⁷ The 2018 report identified progress, tempered by challenges, in most priorities identified in the 2016 KDP. It found improvements in universal access to education, with increases in school enrolment rates and improvements in basic literacy and numeracy. Employment opportunities had increased, although unemployment rates remained high. While there was success in economic growth, with the fisheries revenue, constraints continued due to the volatility of the national fisheries and the ongoing threat posed by climate change. In health, the under-five and maternal mortality rates remained the highest in the Pacific; malnutrition was common; the prevalence of communicable and non-communicable diseases remained high; access to clean water remained an issue; and tuberculosis remained persistent. Gender-based violence remained an ongoing issue. There was progress in addressing policy frameworks in environment, in relation to fisheries and climate change. The Phoenix islands Protection Area reserve was an effective conservation arrangement, contributing to the

⁵⁷ Republic of Kiribati. 2007. *Millennium Development Goals 2007*. This report noted the likely achievement of aspects of goal 2 on universal primary education [increasing girls school enrolment by 2015], the potential achievement of goals 4 [reducing child mortality], 5 [improving maternal health], 8 and not doing well on goals 1 [eradicating poverty] 3 [gender empowerment] 6 [reducing HIV and TB] or 7 [environmental sustainability] but might achieve goal 8 [partnership for development]. Significantly, data quality and availability was a key issue.

sustainability of tuna and other fisheries. But the pace of climate change remained Kiribati's most serious challenge, despite efforts to adapt [and its advocacy that others mitigate]. The Government of Kiribati, the review advised, continued to seek support from its donor partners to strengthen its technical, financial and institutional capacity to achieve the 2020 KDP – and the SDGs. But crucially, Kiribati had again deferred graduation from its status as an LDC so it could strengthen its economy – particularly the vulnerability generated by climate change.⁵⁸ Although the government's policy advisors participated in most of the capacity strengthening programs offered under the Compact's ambit, especially in the Rudd-Gillard governments, and addressed public sector reform as a priority under the KDPs, outcomes were mixed overall.

Deciding when the need for an intervention is met [performance assessment]

The final criterion addressed beneficiaries' engagement in the decision to end an intervention. Again, there were two frames in considering this criteria: the domestic frame of I-Kiribati engagement in the process of reviews and evaluations laid out by the "hard stuff" of national development plans, such as the reviews of the plans in preparation for successive plans or the performance reviews of the partnership agreements with Australia; and the broader regional frame of I-Kiribati engagement in contributing to decisions on the Compact's operations and conclusion, such as engagement in the PICs-Partners meetings, the annual reports on development progress and the Compact evaluation.

As discussed above in relation to criterion 3, Kiribati's policy advisors were engaged in multiple

⁵⁸ Key messages in, Republic of Kiribati. 2018. *Kiribati - Voluntary Report: 2018 Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*. Toatu, T. 16/7/2018 Statement delivered by the Minister for Finance and Economic Development Republic of Kiribati. High Level Political Forum. New York.

reviews of the capacity of aid coordination practices, and or development progress, between 2008 and 2018. In addition, each national development plans in operation between 2008-2016 identified a review process as part of its preparation for crafting the subsequent plan. In 2016 and again in 2018, the GPEDC reviews confirmed that review practices remained weak, although there were improvements in some areas.⁵⁹ As noted above, the 2018 GPEDC monitoring report assessed Kiribati's national plans and performance frameworks as "medium" in quality; but data on its engagement with stakeholders and the quality of its public financial management was not available.⁶⁰

Kiribati did not formally participate in the independent evaluation commissioned by the Forum Secretariat which led to the dissolution of the Compact in 2017.

⁵⁹ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2013. *Forum Compact Peer Review Countries Progress Report, Pacific Peer Review: Countries Take Action!* 2013; Republic of Kiribati. 2016. *Kiribati – Monitoring Profile, Second Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*; Republic of Kiribati. 2018. *Kiribati - Voluntary Report: 2018 Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation*.

⁶⁰ Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, 2018, *Kiribati - Voluntary Report*, 2018 Monitoring Round of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation

Appendix 10.3 Kiribati National Development Plans

Table 10.4 Kiribati National Development Plans of the Gilbert Islands Colony and the Republic of Kiribati

1946	Ten Year Plan of Reconstruction and Development and Welfare commissioned by HE Maude
1968	<i>A Socio-Economic Survey of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands - "the Mooring Report"</i>
1970-72	Gilbert and Ellice Colonies Development Plan
1973-76 [+77-78 Extension]	Gilbert and Ellice Islands Development Plan 1973-1976 First Annual review
1979-82	Kiribati National Development Plan 1979-82 [1 st KDP by independent state]
1983-86	Kiribati National Development Plan 1983-86 [2 nd KDP since independence]
1987-91	Sixth Kiribati National Development Plan 1987-91 [3 rd KDP since independence]
1992-95	Kiribati National Development Plan 1992-95 [4 th KDP since independence]
1996-99	National Development Plan 1996-99 [5 th KDP since independence]
2000-03	Kiribati National Development Plan 2000-2003 [6 th KDP since independence]
2004-07	National Development Strategy 2004-2007: enhancing growth and enduring equitable distribution Nov 2003 - [7 th KDP since independence]
2008-11	Kiribati National Development Plan 2008-2011: Enhancing Economic Growth for Sustainable Development A vibrant economy for the people of Kiribati [8 th KDP since independence]
2012-15	Kiribati Development Plan 2012-2015: Enhancing economic growth for sustainable development A vibrant economic for the people of Kiribati [9 th KDP since independence]
2016-19	Kiribati Development Plan 2016-19 : towards a better educated healthier more prosperous nation with a higher quality of life [10 th KDP since independence]
2016-2036	<i>Tobwaan Oa Karikirakean Kiribati - Kiribati 20-Year Vision 20 [KV20]</i>
2020-23	Kiribati Development Plan 2020-2023 A wealthy healthy and peaceful nation [11 th KDP]