

## **Human resource development in Samoa – we are what we culture**

*Esekia Solofa* \*

### **Introduction**

The process of development basically seeks to add value to the nation's stock of natural resources. Value is added to a given item of natural resource primarily through the intervention of the human mind. In this way, the person as the embodiment of the mind becomes a key development resource. This *human resource*<sup>1</sup> is the most important of all the development resources. It has the rare capacity of being able to add to its own value as well as the ability to improve the value of other resources. This paper is an inquiry into the nature of human resource development (HRD) in Samoa.

A brief overview is provided of the changing education scene in Samoa and the impact it has had on the nation's human resource development. The idea is to help conceptualise possible explanations for observed changes and trends in the personality of the Samoan human resource. The purpose of the paper is to arouse greater and close interest in the policies and methods of HRD in Samoa, and to generate discussion and ideas that could contribute to the further enhancement and consolidation of the sustainable development of Samoa's natural resources.

### **Underlying themes and definitions**

Every society or social system possesses a culture that helps distinguish it from other such systems. This culture is fundamental to the development of the human resource. An infant born into any community is socialised in the culture of that community, as a natural part of growing up. This socialisation takes place through the process of education<sup>2</sup>, formal and informal. Informal education is seen in the way a child learns to adapt its behaviour to that of others around it, to become a member of a group. Formal education is the intentional, more or less systematic effort to shape the behaviour of the child by bringing elements of culture to its attention. Thus in a broad sense, education may be appropriately regarded as the process by which the culture of a social system is impressed upon the child.

The concept of culture defies a single straight-forward definition. Nevertheless we can talk meaningfully about 'elements of culture'<sup>3</sup>, referring to those symbolic and learned, non-biological aspects of human society by which human behaviour can be distinguished from that of other animals. They include language, custom and convention, knowledge, belief, art, morals and other capabilities and habits acquired by human society. These elements can and do undergo change, allowing us to speak of changes to a culture in an unambiguous way. Changes develop in a culture due to a variety of factors and situations, including the influence of other cultures. The culture of Samoa has experienced many changes since contact was first made with the outside world many years ago.

We referred above to the education process in the context of a child in the formative stages of its development. The process does not end with childhood, however, and education continues

---

\*A.E. Solofa is an Education Consultant and former Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific

into adulthood and beyond. UNESCO has made the point emphatically by prescribing 'Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' as *life-long learning*. The basic notions of formal and informal education remain largely unchanged into adulthood. The main difference is that in adulthood the child learner has been transformed by and through education into a mature learner, but one that is endowed with the unique capacity to affect its own further development, as well as the ability to affect the development of other resources. The learner is now a human resource. Through its capacity to effect self-development, the human resource is also endowed with the ability to empower the education process further, from that of imposing culture on the child learner to one of in addition, reviewing, interrogating and reforming culture by the mature learner. This latter capacity gives a clearer meaning and purpose to the idea of life-long learning. Education has thus shown itself in two phases. Firstly, as a process that seeks to impress or impose culture upon the young learner and, secondly, as an instrument by which the human resource can guide or direct the development of culture and, therefore, of society. The central role of the human resource in the quest for development is now clear.

### **Major influences in shaping the human resource in Samoa**

Many events have influenced Samoan society and its cultural environment over the years, but two will stand out as leaving, perhaps, the most significant impact. One is the arrival of Christianity. The other is the establishment of a formal education system. To help our appreciation of the present status of Samoan culture, therefore, it is proposed to explore how these particular events may have affected its evolution. In doing so, and given the fundamental importance of culture in HRD, it is hoped to gain an insight to the issues and problems of HRD in Samoa and, in the process form an informed basis upon which one might speculate on possible solutions.

### **The church**

Whether divined<sup>4</sup> or contrived the fact is that the Christian Church found privileged accommodation within the structure of traditional Samoan society from the outset. The clergy (i.e. priest, minister, pastor, etc.) were accorded the same high regard as that commanded by chiefly rank in the traditional hierarchy of village authority. This gave them not only much say in regulating the general affairs of village life but also a status which attracted deference and subservience from the community. Before long, the life of the typical Samoan village would revolve around the service of the Church as it set about its business which, primarily, was that of seeking the salvation of the individual soul<sup>5</sup>.

The following examples give only a hint of the tremendous influence of, and contribution by the Church on village life. Family prayers in the morning and evening were the order of the day, and Sunday was devoted to public worship (although some organized also took place on weekdays). Sunday schools taught children about morals and virtuous conduct through bible stories and liturgical tales. Some church denominations had pastor's "schools" as an integral part of their mission in the village, where the children and youth were introduced to mental discipline through literacy and numeracy lessons, and where bible reading exercises helped establish vernacular language skills. The pastor's house was a centre of socialisation for children and the youth, and where many life skills were taught such as general housekeeping, sewing and needlework for girls; and crop planting, preparation and cooking of traditional foods, and others for boys. Village people went to the pastor for counseling and advice on all sorts of things, spiritual and otherwise.

The privileged position taken by the Church within Samoan society in the early days would appear to reflect, to a large extent, the degree of compliance rather than any real commitment, with which the community as a whole “accepted” the Christian God. The acceptance was total if only in the sense that the worship of traditional gods was no longer practised, at least not openly. In an autocratic system which the Samoan village was and (still is), what the people could or could not do was decreed by the traditional ruling hierarchy (the *pule a matai*), and the “will of the people” was simply what the *matai*<sup>6</sup> decided it to be. So when the *matai* decided, for whatever reason, that the community would worship the Christian God and no other gods, it was done and no questions would have been asked about it.

As the community later became deeply evangelised the revered regard accorded the Church would appear to have come closer to displaying the true nature of the relationship man is supposed to have with God, and underlined the manner by which man should pay homage to his God. Whether or not this was the actual situation will take some extensive analysis. In any case, the revered status of the Christian religion has remained in the culture of Samoa. The concern many people have is that this privilege is not exploited for the benefit of the man-made institution of the Church and its agents.

### **The changing education scene**

One cannot really talk about ‘development of the human resource’ without discussing education. Neither can one properly conceive of education other than in the context of building human capacity. The terms ‘education’ and ‘HRD’ as used in this discussion may be regarded synonymous. Moreover, ‘education’ is used here in its broadest sense, incorporating ‘training’ as an aspect of it. It should also be noted that the characterisation made above of education as ‘formal’ or ‘informal’ does not preclude other classifications such as ‘non-formal’, ‘technical’, ‘vocational’, ‘distance’ or ‘continuing’ which, in fact, all fit under one or the other of the generic formal/informal classification.

Since the advent of Christianity and the subsequent institutionalisation of the Church, the next major impetus of change to Samoan society came with the establishment of a formal education system by the New Zealand administration a hundred years after the missionaries arrived. Two case studies are presented below of education, again in the broadest sense of the word, as it operated in Samoa at two different points in time. Case Study I covers a period within the decade running up to Samoa’s attainment of independence in January 1962. Case Study II takes place some thirty odd years later.

### **Case study I**

Mose was 12 years old when he was in the second year class at X School, one of two boarding schools for boys run by the Education Department. He was relieved that he no longer had to endure the derogatory title of ‘new boy’ which cursed every new student that entered X School, including those who entered at higher classes. In the ranked citizenship of the student “village” where the fourth and final year boys were royalty, next only in rank to the prefects who were gods, the ‘new boy’ label designated slavery. The ‘new boy’ was expected to obey every wish of his superiors including whimsical ones (for example, doing a silent *siva* on the spot just to satisfy some boastful senior that he could order it). Mostly, however, it meant doing private chores for them such as washing laundry, cleaning rugby gear, running errands, and being re-delegated duties normally expected of seniors (for example, conducting prayers). He recalled now, a little embarrassed, when about this time the previous year he ran away home and begged his parents not to send him back to X School. The fact that he could now exercise some privilege as an “old” boy didn’t really excite him.

He was already looking ahead to his fourth and final year when he would sit the national Primary School Leaving Examination and hope to qualify for the country's top secondary school.

Mose came to X School from his village's school (*a'oga tulagalua*) where his formal education had started at age five. He recalled that he was in class 'standard 1' when he sat his first screening test for selection to the three government schools (which included X School) that took the best village school pupils from throughout the country. He was in class 'standard 3' when he finally made the selection. He recalled the intensive preparation the three of them who had survived the screening tests to the final examination had to undergo. In the last three weeks before the final examination, they were kept back after school each day to take extra classes in arithmetic, English spelling and composition, social studies, health and nature study, and at weekends they had night classes at the headmaster's house. He didn't mind the extra work. In fact he welcomed it: his parents kept telling him to study hard because if he didn't progress past village school, he would likely end up as a plantation worker or carrying sacks of copra on his back at Nelson's for the rest of his life. Actually he wasn't much scared by what his parents had said because he knew he could go to a mission school like some older boys and girls from his village had done after village school. At X School Mose was puzzled to find himself in 'standard 3' again but accepted it when he found out that most of his classmates had come from 'standard 4' in their village schools. It was the policy for all new entrants to start at the beginning level which, at the time, was 'standard 3'. The school roll had reached just above one hundred in Mose's first year; there were 31 in his class. The teaching staff of eight was made up of five Samoan and three New Zealand teachers. The headmaster came from New Zealand. There was a specialist woodwork teacher, and one of the general subject teachers was a trained musician. The latter trained the school brass band and taught introductory music lessons across the school. The teaching of all subjects except Samoan Language and Culture was done in English. Every student had to take the full complement of subjects offered.

School started at eight o'clock each morning, Monday to Thursday, although the day's activities actually began much earlier for everyone. The wake-up bell rang at six and for the next hour all students would be engaged in weekly rostered duties. They included: tidying up the *fale* (living/sleeping quarters), cleaning the ablution blocks, setting up the classrooms, picking up leaves and tidying up the "village" compound, cutting grass (i.e. clipping the lawns) manually using slashing bush knives, milking the cows, preparing and cooking food & etc. By seven thirty, the students were already showered and headed for the school building. Another round of duties followed after the end of school at 1:30 p.m. From 4 p.m. the students were free to engage in leisure activities or private study. Practice sessions for various sports were organised at this time. Prayers were held at six followed by the evening meal and then private study until "lights out" at 10 p.m.

The duties mentioned above were absolutely necessary. The school had no servants so the students provided all the labour, and often the initiative for ideas needed to maintain the welfare of the school community including the teaching staff and their households. The school kept a cattle farm for the supply of milk and the occasional eat, and planted its own self-sufficient supply of staple food (taro and bananas). Because of the need to maintain the farms, one day a week (Friday) was fully taken up with farm work. Friday evening was 'culture night' where the "village" houses (*aiga*) competed among themselves in traditional singing and entertaining.

Mose was able to maintain contact with his peers and friends in the village during the school holidays, and when he visited home on the third weekend of each month as was the practice of the school. On these visits, by habit of his younger days before he joined X School, he would go to the pastor's house and there met his friends. He was pleased that things hadn't changed much at all, even into his later years at X School. On one of these occasions he found that his friends had left him behind in developing certain individual skills. For example, he had to learn from his friends how to dress a pig for cooking in the traditional stone oven (*umu*). X School had made him an expert in making the *umu* but didn't keep pigs to give him a chance at learning about slaughtering and dressing them. He took delight, however, in showing his friends (and a few young women who were around) how to make a pot of mutton stew - a skill he had perfected after many days of rostered duty as cook for the master who was supervisor of his *aiga*. He noted as he grew a little older that an interest in meeting girls was adding increasingly to his reason for calling at each class for the top academic position. In Mose's final year there was the added challenge for him of getting into the country's best secondary school. A few of his classmates were planning to go into teacher training, some to join the Police Force or the Public Service. Others including his best friend Iona were opting for agricultural education, only recently established as a secondary level programme of X School. Towards the end of the year, close to the time of the national examination, Mose's class was excused from afternoon duties to do extra lessons or self-study. Success was important for the students but even more so for the teachers who knew that their reputation and that of the school's were closely tied up with the pass rate. Mose made it to the top national secondary school, and according to the headmaster's report at the end-of-year prize-giving ceremony, X School retained its excellent academic reputation.

Mose lived at home with his parents and siblings while attending high school. He found that his experience at boarding school stood him in good stead as he and his two brothers, both younger, were at an age when general convention expected them to assume responsibility for the family's food-garden and food preparation. Some years later he would tell the young woman he eventually married that the weight of these responsibilities on him was the reason why his rugby "career" never took off. Maybe there was some truth in it as he did give up rugby when he was about to make the school's 3<sup>rd</sup> XV because he couldn't attend training in the afternoons when he had to be at the plantation or doing other chores. His third year at high school was when Samoa became an independent state. A large contingent from the school presented an item of cultural entertainment at the official celebrations on the first day of January that year. Mose recalled overhearing his father discussing the issue of independence with an uncle at the time of the Plebiscite (referendum) the previous year. His father was saying that the New Zealand administration was doing alright so there was no need to change anything. He remembered thinking that he would have voted for independence if he had had the chance, but he wasn't sure why.

At the end of his third high school year, Mose won a government scholarship to study in New Zealand. On his return a few years later he joined the Public Service where he remained for several years. He is now a member of Parliament - on an independent ticket.

## Case study II

Iona completed his twenty-seventh year as a public servant the same year Tevi, the youngest of his three sons, was doing his last year of high school. Iona had joined the Agriculture Department from the start of his career and for several years now had occupied a senior officer position. His career had peaked and he was becoming increasingly aware that he would be facing retirement in five or six years. The prospect did not please him. In fact, it

only exacerbated his concern and disappointment about the way his sons' education, and future career prospects, appeared to be turning out. Often he found himself brooding over the fact that his efforts at giving his children the opportunities he never had appeared to have failed to produce the expected results.

On this particular evening, a week after the 34<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of Independence, Iona was reviewing the form Tevi had just completed to register for the Pacific Senior School Certificate examination in November. It reminded him again of the disappointments and frustrations he had felt over the failure of his older sons to get government scholarships. He sat Tevi down beside him and once again reminded his son of how important it was for him to do well in the examination. He had high hopes that all his children would excel at school and get government scholarships to study in Australia or New Zealand. Two neighbourhood families like his had sons and daughters overseas on government scholarships, and he felt humiliated every time their fathers talked about them, as they often did, at *toona'i* (Sunday lunch) at the pastor's house. (Actually it was the pastor who was always bringing up the subject – three of his children, a girl and two boys, were overseas on government scholarships). Iona saw in Tevi his last hope of salvaging his family's pride, and he was practically begging as he poured out his frustrations to his son.

His oldest son got to Year 10 in the district junior high but failed to get a transfer to a government college. Iona managed to have him admitted to a mission high school but he dropped out after two years. That was four years earlier. He was now married with a 3-year old daughter. Iona's second son did high school at one of the government colleges and went from there to the pre-university programme at the national university. He failed to get a government scholarship so he applied to the Public Service Commission and got a job as a junior clerk in one of the government departments. This year, his second on the job, he decided to enrol as a part-time student to do a course towards the Certificate in Accounting at the national university.

Iona had bought a quarter-acre lot and built a house in a government subdivision not far from the main town of Apia. He wanted to bring up his young family free of the communal life-style of the extended family in the village, and close to good schools and health services invariably located in Apia and the surrounding areas. In spite of the difficult struggle to meet extended family and church obligations and pay their house loan, Iona and his wife managed to provide some small comforts for their children and put them to school.

As the children were growing up, Iona and his wife often recalled and discussed their own experiences of growing up in the village and felt quite proud that their children did not have to suffer village life. They were pleased that their boys didn't have to cut the lawn with bush knives, go to the bush to cut firewood, plant a crop plantation, or cook food in an *umu*. Freed of labour other than some small household chores and with no responsibilities other than going to school, the children were sure to excel in school in the minds of their parents. Iona was now wondering how things went so wrong for his older sons.

Iona ran into his old pal Mose (from back in their X School days) at a hotel bar in Apia late one afternoon. After a while of updating personal histories, the conversation turned into a discussion of Iona's "failure with his sons" as Mose called it.

"Look at what's been happening," Mose was saying. "What do young people do after school these days? What do you expect when they don't have much responsibility at home? Nothing;

they ride around in the town buses or in their friends' cars listening to loud music, go to the video shops, attend some religious youth group revival meeting or just hang around town," Mose answered his own questions. "Young children get bored easily when they are idle so they search for things to do to fill the time," he continued.

"I think my oldest son's problem was rugby," Iona interrupted. "He played too much rugby and neglected school." He was a good player too, and Iona had always suspected that this was the reason why the mission school enrolled his son.

"Yes, sports, that's a big problem," Mose jumped in, "But especially rugby. Ever since that Rugby World Cup tournament in 1991 it's been every Samoan boy's dream, and his father's too, to make the Manu Samoa. Every village, every school, and every church now all vie to get their boys into the Manu Samoa, and so the whole country is gripped by this rugby craze," he explained. "It'll happen in other sports too," he added.

"Why do you have to drag the church into it?" Iona asked.

"You tell me," his friend asked back. "What do they do at your church's youth group? I'm sure it's no different from what they do at ours," Mose went on. "They seem to spend most of their time on sports, and other times learning strange dances and other entertainment items for fund-raising concerts. Did you know that our pastor manages our village rugby team?" he added nonplussed.

Iona brought the conversation back to the situation of his oldest son who now had a wife and child but still largely dependent on his parents' support. "If only there was another chance to upgrade his education," he wondered aloud.

"You mean send him back to school? Of course you can," Mose was getting impatient with his friend's naivety. "Go and see the USP Centre at Alafua. They offer bridging courses that can eventually raise him to university level courses." He downed his glass with one gulp., "On the other hand, maybe you want to talk to your son about learning some technical skills, like carpentry or plumbing. I don't know if they provide after-hours skills training for out-of-school youth at Polytech but it's worth your while finding out."

The conversation flowed (as did the drinks) into other issues as night fell. Two other X School old boys joined them and the conversation turned to reminiscing about old school days. Suddenly there was a power blackout. Iona took the opportunity to make his exit and said goodbye to his friends. As he turned the pick-up truck into his driveway he felt really happy that he had run into his old friend Mose.

### **Issues in HRD**

The above case studies give a picture of some of the underlying factors and symptoms of change brought about by the establishment of a system of education. They also, in a less direct way, raise a number of issues that are pertinent to the development of the human resource in Samoa (e.g. the role of parents, the church or pastor; sports and HRD, and so on - the reader can find out about these for himself/herself). The case studies say nothing, however, of the vast transformation which has overtaken Samoan society as a result. Samoa is no longer the village-centered rural community of half a century ago, based on subsistence agriculture and enjoying the plentiful resources of the its natural environment. It is now an integrated nation, albeit a developing one, with a growing and increasingly sophisticated

population whose needs are putting natural resources under severe strain. Obviously other developments have also been at work - raising other issues to contend with.

The external exposure of Samoan society which began with evangelisation and formal education has brought individualism into Samoan society. Today, Samoan society may be characterised as having a dualistic character, one ruled by *communalism* on one hand, and by *individualism* on the other. How else can one explain the country's ability to tolerate and adopt western values and still maintain its strong social foundation? Or is it perhaps the case that the country is in transition from the traditional to the modern? Whatever the case, the coexistence of communalism and individualism in Samoan society is undeniable. The evolution of Samoan society has evidently produced a human resource with a personality that embraces both communalism and individualism. It is in the interest of future development that HRD recognise and sustain this personality.

But there are fundamental problems to be faced in any attempt to exploit the duality of communalism and individualism in Samoan society. Firstly, traditional governance (the *fono a matai*<sup>7</sup>) at the village level, the seat of communalism, is run on a strict code which essentially bestows authority on a minority, sometimes one person. Even though some will argue that rulings of the *fono* are arrived at by consensus, more often than not consensus means yielding to traditional rank. Secondly, while *matai* do have access to knowledge and information that could benefit decisions of the *fono* much useful information and advice is kept out with *non-matai*. Thirdly, while the *matai* is, in theory, the representative of the members of his/her family to the *fono*, in practice there is usually no consultation of the family's views on issues for the *fono*. Often the representation is viewed by the *matai* as a personal privilege rather than an obligation to the family. Fourthly (and a very important one), the *non-matai* Samoan is conditioned by custom and tradition to be acquiescent and reticent in his/her relationship with the *matai* or other higher authority.

The above is not a condemnation of the *fono* as an institution of governance, nor is there a suggestion that the *fono* in its current form serves no useful purpose. On the contrary: by its very nature the *fono* is an effective regulator of communal (i.e. collectively owned) goods. For example, many nature/environmental conservation efforts around the country owe their success to sanction by the *fono*. Enforcing societal mores is another important responsibility the *fono* has always handled effectively. Rather, the above listing suggests possible areas that are in need of reform.

Take for example the condition mentioned of being "acquiescent and reticent" on the part of the *non-matai* in his/her relationship with the *matai* or other authority. The condition is sanctioned by tradition generally as 'respect for authority' or in the case of children as 'regard for elders'. Young people are chided for talking to adults, and children are brought up 'to be seen and not heard'. The effect of this conditioning is severe and it shows itself in many guises: the student does not ask questions in the classroom; the untitled man would not challenge his *matai's* bad decisions; the lesser *matai* defers to rank in the *fono*: the *matai* yields to the pastor on church matters; the junior officer would not dispute his/her superiors in the work place; and so on. Exploitation of the reverse relationship by the higher ranking party is equally as great a concern. Many problems encountered in development can be traced to this condition: lack of accountability and transparency, corruption, dependency; lack of initiative and drive, lethargy and inertia to name only few.

Communalism implies the concept of collective ownership. Its counterpart will be referred to here as the 'denial or refusal of direct ownership' which, by extension, also means the denial or refusal of direct ownership of responsibility. The concept is of particular concern in development: without direct ownership of responsibility there is no accountability, and without accountability there is no review, analysis or research and, therefore, no real development. Many of the traditions and customs practised in the name of Samoan culture need to be subjected to close examination and review for their relevance to the present. Such practice as to be found in funerals, installation of *matai*, weddings, opening of meeting houses and consecration of churches all, as a rule, call for the expending of huge quantities of material wealth and consumption goods - the more the better, as if quantity makes up for the lack of quality. The conservation of resources that can result from curbing such extravagant practice is already compelling reason for their review.

### **Towards a resolution of issues**

Some of the issues discussed above would appear to belong more to a discussion of institutional reform than of HRD. However, we can justify discussing them here in the sense that institutional reform cannot be sustained without proper development of the agents of change needed for its execution. That development (i.e. HRD), as we have seen, is achieved through education, formal and informal and life-long, and typically expresses itself through the individual. Samoan society has evolved to accommodate individualism (or at least elements of it) in a culture that remains strongly tied to its communal roots. The development of Samoa has advanced with growing and progressive HRD; at the same time the contributions of 'custom and tradition' have been no less beneficial. A development model based upon a balanced interaction of communalism and individualism would appear to be the right one to follow. Finding that balance will involve the reform of a few traditions. The necessary human resource is available to execute the reforms; the question is how.

One way (and only one of many possible) is for the Church to use its potential (some would say a responsibility) as an agent of social reform. Basically this means putting priority on the welfare of the people (i.e. individual members and families of the congregation) and not on the Church organisation. Given the privileged and authoritative position of the Church the opportunity it has for doing this is enormous. And again there is any number of things that can be done - ranging from opening up meetings of the congregation to include matters of family or village welfare to banning church fundraising trips overseas, from individual counseling to opening up the church buildings as venues for programmes of adult education, workshops or seminars for different village groups (persons who seek the peace and solace of a church for private devotion will have a hard time finding it in Samoa as the churches are normally locked up except on Sundays). Another avenue may be found in encouraging interaction between the village *fono* and civil groups.

The role of the human resource in development is pivotal. Education will remain the central pillar of HRD. In Samoa, HRD needs to find the right balance between communalism and individualism. This can be achieved through appropriate programming and management of education. As the process by which elements of culture are transmitted to the person, education, and thus HRD, becomes not just an instrument of acculturation but, for us, a vital tool for cultural reform. We are what we culture.

### **References**

<sup>1</sup> Used as collective noun

- <sup>2</sup> White, Leslie A. et al, "The Concept and Components of Culture", *Britannica* Vol. 16, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition, p.880
- <sup>3</sup> Abercrombie, Nicholas; Hill, Stephen; Turner, Bryan S. 1988, *Dictionary of Sociology*, Second Edition, Penguin Books, London
- <sup>4</sup> Oral tradition has it that the arrival of Christianity was prophesied by goddess Nafanua as Malietoa's inheritance from heaven
- <sup>5</sup> Marshall W. Baldwin, 1953, *The Mediaeval Church*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York
- <sup>6</sup> A person chosen by each family and bestowed a title (*matai*) signifying a status of family leader. A family will usually have a number of such persons although there is one who is accorded top rank among them.
- <sup>7</sup> The village council whose members are all the village *matai*