ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK TO ENGAGE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL LEADERSHIP IN THE PACIFIC

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an analytical framework to assist the Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) systematically identify and more appropriately support prospective developmental leaders (individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions) to achieve real development change in the Pacific. The report then applies this framework in each of the four countries PLP works (Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa and Tonga) to conduct a baseline assessment of developmental leadership and to identify prospective developmental areas where PLP could provide program support to assist developmental leaders prosecute development change.

The report is divided into three parts. Part 1 considers the nature of developmental leadership, the role of agency and institutions, and factors making for effective developmental leadership in a Pacific context. Part 1 then introduces an analytical framework to locate developmental leaders in the context of the political systems in which they must work to pursue development change. Part 2 of this report applies this framework to each of the countries PLP works in, in the form of country scans that establish a developmental leadership baseline, considers the nature of the political system within which leaders must operate, and identifies development fault lines (fruitful areas where developmental leaders may be able to support significant development change). Part 3 of the report provides some general recommendations on future directions for PLP support.

Part 1: Analytical Framework

The report begins by considering the nature of developmental leadership. It argues that developmental leadership is first and foremost about development change. Development is a transformative process (Leftwich 2006a; 12-13) whereby the existing 'structure and use of wealth and power' is recast in ways which lead to the improved well-being of individuals, groups, coalitions and/or societies. Effective developmental leaders have a clear sense of the development change they want to achieve.

Given that development is about the re-allocation of power and resources, the report argues it must be recognised as a political process. Different development objectives will require and activate different developmental politics. Recognising the nature of politics required to prosecute different development objectives will be important in identifying appropriate developmental leaders best equipped to pursue successfully different development goals.

Effective developmental organizations are those that have strong political capabilities to pursue successful political strategies to achieve development change. The type of political capabilities required from particular developmental organizations will depend on the specific development objective being pursued. Different development objectives will require different political skills depending on the specific political system and the level of support and opposition likely to be generated in response to the development demand.

An important challenge for PLP is to distinguish between potentially more or less effective developmental leaders, and to provide forms of program support that augment the capacity of developmental leaders to work politically to secure development change. To be effective, developmental leaders must: have substantive developmental objectives as their organizational focus (in terms of trying to disrupt/unsettle prevailing distributions of power and resources in support of inclusive growth); recognise the political nature of the development process; and be prospectively politically powerful in that support provided can reasonably be expected to bolster the power of developmental leaders to successfully prosecute a development agenda within the political system.

The report argues that when it is recognised that developmental leadership is fundamentally about the politics of development, understanding how the dynamic process of politics works becomes important in order to situate developmental leaders as part of that process. This requires consideration of the nature of the political system, broadly defined as the formal and informal institutional arrangements that reflect and influence the distribution of political power and the way in which politics happens.

All societies have distinctive political systems which shape political decisions on the exercise and distribution of power and resources in support of development goals. A key challenge for PLP is to clearly understand the political context in which it operates to identify effective developmental leaders and to provide forms of support best suited to engaging with the particular politics arising in a specific political context.

The political system is constituted by formal and informal institutions that provide procedural rules which shape decisions on the use, production and distribution of resources and agents who exercise power within the political system in pursuit of their political objectives. Key things to consider about the political system include who, where and how demands for developmental change be expressed by developmental leaders, the formal and informal institutional pathways that need to be followed to progress claims for developmental change within the system, and where and how opposition to desired development change might arise.

Focusing on the political system in which developmental leaders must operate to pursue development goals allows for the more systematic identification of the types of developmental leadership required at different points of the policy cycle, the nature of developmental coalitions needed to successfully pursue developmental change, and the location and nature of possible blockage points for particular developmental reforms.

Part 2: Country Case Studies

Part 2 of the report uses the analytical framework introduced in part 1 to establish a developmental leadership baseline. Interviews were conducted with a broad range of developmental leadership individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions (see Annex 1), which informed the preparation of country scans. While the scans made country-specific recommendations for future PLP support, some general lessons could also be gleaned.

All Pacific Island country scans highlighted a variety of developmental fault lines within which PLP might fruitfully work to identify and support developmental leaders (individuals, groups, organizations, coalitions). These include common issues around: economic viability and economic reform; ongoing processes of state-building and public administration; processes of social change including around gender, youth and urbanisation; the shifting role of traditional governance systems; and the developmental role of diaspora communities.

While developmental organizations interviewed during the scans differed in the degree to which they could be called developmental (i.e. focused on securing positive, transformative development change), the country scans nevertheless highlighted the important contribution made by PLP in seeding a basic leadership infrastructure in the region. PLP now needs to think carefully about which organizations to continue to support, the changing type of support needed by the more prospectively developmental organizations to assist them to achieve substantive developmental change, and how organizations currently supported could form the basis of more issues-oriented development coalitions.

The country scans considered the degree to which 'rules of the game' provided an enabling infrastructure upon which positive developmental leadership could be supported. While it is a generalisation, it can be said that in Samoa and Tonga, relatively stable formal institutions (public sector, parliament, laws) combined with strong traditional systems provided clearer rules of the game within which developmental leadership plays out. In Solomon Islands and, to a lesser extent, Vanuatu, formal rules were weaker and the role of traditional institutions more ambiguous, providing a more complex institutional environment within which leadership operates.

This institutional context is important in shaping the types of 'games within the rules' that could be played by developmental leaders in each country. The combination of relatively established formal institutions coupled with strong traditional governance systems places a greater premium on evidence-based policy engagement and provides formal institutional entry points for developmental leaders to make developmental claims, although individual relationships and elite networks remain important in progressing reform. In Solomon Islands, weak and fragmented formal institutions and complex traditional governance arrangements place a greater premium on individual agency and personal networks to progress developmental issues. In addition, the more established national policy infrastructures in Samoa and Tonga also allow developmental leaders to adopt a scaled-up development focus i.e. on issues of national development significance. In Solomon Islands, a weak national policy infrastructure places a premium on a more narrow developmental focus on local development issues. The mixed but in some cases impressive reform experience in Vanuatu (e.g. reserved municipal seats for women reforms) shows the significant potential of flexible and opportunistic games to secure significant reforms.

Part 3: Recommendations

In terms of future program support, in some countries continued investments in developmental leadership organizational capacity building should remain an important part of program support.

In all countries, current leadership organizational investments should be leveraged into issues-based forms of support. The specific issues adopted in each country will depend on the development context in each country.

In terms of specific policy actions, the report recommendations are as follows.

PLP Approach

- Invest more in issues-focused political economy analysis to inform an issues-based developmental leadership approach;
- Invest early in building strong relationships with DFAT (and other donors) to help identify specific reform issues where PLP could provide 'cross-cutting' program support regarding coalition building and policy reform.

Issues Engagement

- A stronger focus on development issues identification will allow PLP to think about more targeted coalition building and tailored support.
- Several potentially fertile development issues emerged from the country scan analyses that were common to all partner countries:
  - private sector development and economic reform;
  - regional integration and the deepening of partner country relationships with metropolitan countries, including in the areas of regional labour markets and remittances;
  - democratic deepening, with a focus on helping leaders work within existing democratic spaces;
  - policy capacity-building (supporting institutional infrastructure to underpin informed national policy debates on key development reform issues); and
  - women's leadership: notwithstanding the significant challenges facing women leaders across the region, the country scans identified the potential to achieve significant reforms through an opportunistic, issues-based approach, supported by issues-specific program support.

PART 1

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

This Part sets out an analytical framework to assist the Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) identify and better understand the exercise of developmental leadership in the countries of the Pacific within which it works (Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Samoa and Tonga). The framework seeks to help PLP identify emergent developmental leaders in a Pacific context. This is important to ensure that PLP's support is well targeted to areas where developmental leadership is more likely to be impactful. The report secondly provides a conceptual framework to help PLP think more systematically about the forms of support that can be provided to developmental leaders, and how such support might best be targeted at various stages in the development cycle.

The report is informed by an understanding of developmental leadership as a political process whereby individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions (herein called developmental leaders) engage with the politics of development to secure development outcomes. In this sense the report is interested in developmental agency and the role of developmental leaders in prosecuting change. At the same time, the report recognises that the exercise of developmental leadership is constrained by the context (commonly referred to as institutions and structures) in which developmental leaders operate. Exercising developmental leadership in ways that achieve significant development outcomes will be contingent on the context within which leaders find themselves, the unique opportunities and constraints that different circumstances present, and specific political decisions taken to navigate around obstacles and leverage opportunities. The analytical framework provided seeks to account for developmental leadership as a dynamic process that recognises developmental leadership as an opportunistic, adaptive and contested process.

Leadership in the Pacific manifests in a wide variety of forms in significantly different contexts. There is a wealth of literature on the different types of leadership and the sources of leadership authority, legitimacy and power in the region. This report does not engage with this literature directly, although these factors can be considered in the context of the framework provided. Rather, the framework is intended to provide a set of principles and concepts to assist PLP to systematically assess and engage with developmental leadership across diverse contexts. A key starting point for this report is the assumption that developmental leadership can only be understood in the context of the development problem that leaders are trying to resolve, which will influence the type of leadership and political engagement strategies required if positive development change is to be achieved. In this sense, this report takes an instrumental approach to leadership; the aim is to support instances of developmental leadership that have a greater prospect of changing developmental outcomes.

Focusing on leadership in an instrumental sense, the report does not privilege particular forms of leadership or political regimes. Indeed, the framework is designed to be analytically useful across significantly different country contexts across the Pacific, to enable cross-country comparisons and account for different configurations of informal and formal institutions prevalent in each. It also understands developmental politics in a broad sense and thus can accommodate consideration of a wide variety of leadership forms that exist across the region. Finally, the framework seeks to be relevant to different scales and levels of analysis (i.e. sectoral, institutional, national, sub-national) by focusing on common political processes. The framework seeks to be applicable to significantly differently development objectives ranging from national legislative reform through to small local economic projects.

This report begins with a general acceptance of the importance of understanding development as a political process and the importance of individuals, groups and coalitions or developmental leaders in negotiating and prosecuting this politics to achieve significant development outcomes. It has three parts:

1 Part one begins with a consideration of what developmental leadership is in a general sense, focusing in particular on development as a political challenge and developmental leadership as a form of political engagement. This section also considers developmental leadership as an expression of agency, and those factors that will make for more effective leadership to achieve developmental ends. Concepts introduced in this section will inform the subsequent analytical framework.

2 Part two introduces an analytical framework that locates developmental leadership in a broader political process. This framework is intended to help PLP consider more systematically how developmental leaders must mobilise to secure developmental change. It will be used to inform country context scans undertaken as part two of this project.

3 The report concludes in part three with a consideration of the implications of the analytical framework for the identification of potential developmental leaders.

Once developed, the framework is intended to inform country-level developmental leadership 'scans' – high-level context analysis of PLP partner countries to identify possible leaderships and the contextual constraints and opportunities that may affect the exercise of effective leadership.

DEVELOPMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Developmental leadership can be conceptually ambiguous, making it a difficult concept to base practical program support on. Part of the reason for this is the broad academic lineage of the concept of leadership, with its roots in organizational development and management theory. This strand of leadership studies has tended to focus on the personal traits of leaders and leadership as a heroic endeavour; leaders are individuals who strive to implement difficult strategies. But this approach is not particularly useful for engagement with the challenges of development and the collective action and agency issues involved. A conceptually useful understanding of developmental leadership more helpfully begins with a consideration of the nature of development, recognition of the distinctive politics of development arising from development problems, followed by consideration of the role of leaders in engaging in this politics to secure developmental change. This section will consider each of these in turn.

The Development Challenge

Key points
• Developmental leadership is primarily about development change.
• Development change requires reconfiguring prevailing uses and structures of wealth and power in support of new development goals.
• Developmental leaders are those individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions who explicitly seek to reconfigure prevailing uses and structures of wealth and power in support of new development goals.

Developmental leadership is first and foremost about development change. This report takes as its starting point Leftwich's (2006a; 12-13) approach that development is a transformative process which results in changes in the 'structure and use of wealth and power' to improve the economic, political and social well-being of individuals, groups, coalitions and/or societies. Development is often characterised as a collective action problem whereby 'people or groups with different interests struggle to reach agreement on institutional arrangements, in regard to some political or economic issue, that will be to their mutual benefit, but which will also involve some immediate restraint' (Laws 2013, 9). Development refers not only to material improvements in welfare as a result of economic growth, but also changes in political rights so people can better shape collective decisions about the distribution and allocation of resources.

The distribution of wealth and power in a society is expressed in the combination of formal and informal institutions that make up a political settlement (Dressel and Dinnen 2014). Some political settlements result in combinations of formal and informal institutions that facilitate inclusive pro-poor growth. For example, developed capitalist economies have built formal welfare states reflecting industrial compromises between business and trade unions that provide for minimal welfare standards as a result of economic growth. Other political settlements can marginalize some groups from the benefits of growth and development. Understanding the nature of formal and informal institutions and how they both reflect and shape the allocation of power and resources in a society is an important starting point for considering the politics of development and the ways in which developmental leadership can be understood as the efforts of individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions to reconfigure formal and informal institutions in ways which support more inclusive growth and development.

Given that development is about the re-allocation of power and resources through the recasting of formal and informal institutions, it can be understood to have a distinct politics which 'is about changing not only how resources are used, produced and distributed, but also about how decisions are taken about such changes and about politics which sustain, implement and extend them' (Leftwich 2006, 13). Politics in a developmental sense has a very broad definition which Leftwich (2006c, 10) defines as 'consisting of all the activities of cooperation, conflict and negotiation involved in decisions about the use, production and distribution of resources, whether these activities are formal or informal, public or private, or a mixture of all.'

Given development seeks to re-allocate resources and power, development is likely to be a contested process. Groups in society who stand to lose from development are likely to mobilise to block change and protect existing distributions of resources and power. Most societies have created formal and informal institutions to regulate this political contestation over the use and distribution of power and resources. A key development challenge is to help build institutions which can enable societies to resolve development challenges in peaceful and inclusive ways.

Recognising development as a political process is significant for the construction of an analytical framework because it points to the dynamic nature of developmental change and the commensurate need to recognise developmental leadership in a dynamic sense. The structural and institutional context within which politics is played out will provide developmental leaders and their opponents with opportunities to support or resist change. Successful developmental leadership requires leaders to navigate this politics successfully at various points in the policy cycle as different institutions in the political system come into play.

The politics of development is played out at multiple but related levels. Leftwich (2006a, 10) distinguishes between political contestation focused on the 'rules of the game' and 'games within the rules'. Rules of the game refer to the formal and informal institutional framework within which politics is conducted. In developed countries these rules are substantively agreed and normal politics occurs within accepted boundaries established by the rules. They are generally reflected in formal institutions (e.g. constitutions, laws, parliaments) but also supported by a range of informal institutions which contribute to a political culture in which political contestation is resolved through peaceful means. In this sense developed countries are more institutionally settled, although history points to the long, contested and often violent ways in which societies came to agree on rules. Importantly, acceptance of the rules of the game is usually reflective of a broader consensus on the socio-economic goals of society. Where there is general acceptance of the rules of the game, there is scope for more collaborative politics of development as the differences separating parties are smaller.

Many developing countries have yet to agree on the rules of the game, which can be contentious and a potential source of conflict. Conflict arises over the articulation of rules, but also from the ambiguity created by multiple and oftentimes overlapping and contradictory rules (Leftwich 2006a, 13). Where the rules of the game are not yet agreed, prospects for effective political collaboration to overcome collective action problems diminish.

The second level at which politics occurs is described by Leftwich (2006a, 12) as 'games within the rules'. Given the particular political rules or institutions agreed by society, what political tactics and strategies do different groups deploy to prosecute their development interests? In developed countries, formal political organizations (political parties, business organizations, civil society groups) have been established to play these games and politics occurs in very public and ritualised ways. In developing countries, the lack of clear and stable formal institutional frameworks greatly complicates the way in which games within the rules are played and makes informal institutions more important in the politics of development (corruption, patron-client relationships, and personalised politics). Where informal politics prevails, the politics of development is likely to be more extractive.

Leftwich (2006a, 14) makes the crucial point that what is needed for transformative development is 'not only a set of agreed, consistent and coherent institutional rules of the political game, but rules which encourage and allow a politics of development to gather pace and to be sustained.' If the rules of the game are 'good enough', then a focus on playing games within the rules more effectively may be sufficient to secure development change. Developmental leaders will frequently need to participate in a politics of development which both seeks to change the rules of the game and play games within the rules.

In practical terms, recognising development as first and foremost a political process which can be played out at multiple levels is important when considering developmental leadership and how it might be best supported to secure positive change. For example, development objectives focused on broad social transformation – for example, constitutional or legislative reform to increase women's parliamentary representation – are more likely to require changes to the rules of the game. Such changes may have greater developmental impact but may also involve much greater risks and more overt forms of political activism. Alternatively, more local development objectives – such as helping women establish local businesses – might best be pursued through local political strategies played within existing rules. Such objectives may be more politically achievable but less developmentally impactful.

Agency and developmental leadership

Key points

- Developmental leadership is concerned with the politics of development and the role of agency (individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions) in prosecuting a deliberate development change program.
- Leaders that are developmental are those that consciously and deliberately seek to secure development change by working politically.

Having considered the necessarily disruptive nature of development and the consequently political nature of the development process, we can now turn to the issue of developmental leadership.

Developmental leadership is concerned with the politics of development and the role of agency (individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions) in mobilising politically to secure development change. As defined by the Pacific Leadership Program, 'developmental 'leadership' is a political process, involving the legitimacy, authority and capacity to mobilise people and resources, and to forge coalitions, in the pursuit of positive developmental goals.' The crucial thing is that developmental leaders must be understood as agents that consciously work in political ways to change prevailing distributions of power and resources in support of positive development.

Of particular relevance for the development of an analytical framework is recognition that developmental leadership is a contingent form of agency. Given that developmental leadership is about working politically, any understanding of leadership must be anchored 'in formal and informal structures of power and authority' (Leftwich 2010, 12). Recognition of the contingent nature of developmental leadership is important as this helps us locate developmental leadership as part of a dynamic political process. Leftwich (2006b, 54) emphasises the contingent nature of leadership in a way that moves beyond personalised notions of leadership and thus provides a more helpful basis developing an analytical framework for developmental leadership:

The idea of political will (or commitment) is perhaps best not conceptualised as a virtue, like probity or trust, but rather as an institutional question. It may be better to think of it as a capacity or function, generated by a range of factors which include historical legacies, external and internal 'threat', nationalism, elite consensus about national policy goals and above all that of political power, embedded in and around the institutions of state. In short, though human agency and attributes are fundamental, political will is perhaps best thought of as a mixture of threat and competitive dangers, constraints and opportunities, ideas and interests, in the structure of choices faced by an elite.

The collective nature of developmental problems makes it more useful to think of developmental leaders in collective terms. Developmental organizations are 'formally or informally coordinated vehicles for the promotion or protection of a mix of individual and shared interests and ideas' (Leftwich and Sen 2011, 323). Leftwich and Sen characterise organizations as 'players within the rules' (p.324). Organizations can be distinguished by the nature of their internal rules and internal authority, hierarchy and command systems. 'Like institutions, organizations can be formal or informal and may operate within, across or outside economic, political or social institutional arrangements' (Leftwich and Sen 2011, 323). Organizations are arguably one of the most important ways in which agency is expressed politically.

A more encompassing mechanism through which developmental leadership is expressed is through developmental coalitions. Developmental coalitions are 'individuals, groups or organizations that come together to achieve social, political or economic goals that they would not be able to achieve on their own' (Leftwich and Laws 2012, 2). Developmental coalitions take on many forms and purposes, reflecting the different development objectives they seek to secure. This includes legislative, electoral, 'event', protest, advocacy, policy, reform, growth and distributional coalitions. Distinguishing between the different types of coalitions is significant because it points to the need for a nuanced understanding of the distinctive politics of development that will be engaged by each: '[c]oalitions emerge, form, organize, and act to pursue very different goals in very different institutional and political contexts and in response to very different challenges or opportunities' (Leftwich and Laws 2012, 2-3).

For the purposes of this report, no judgments are made about the specific nature of leadership in a Pacific context. This is because the analytical framework introduced in part three approaches leadership in terms of an effective capacity to mobilise politically in pursuit of specific development objectives. As such, the framework does not privilege particular forms of leadership that exist in the Pacific (McLeod 2007), but thinks in a contingent sense about which political resources developmental leaders will need to mobilise to achieve a particular development change given the existing formal and informal structures of power. Understanding the many sources of authority and legitimacy that structure the political system is important for the analytical framework insofar as this will determine the nature of developmental coalitions required to prosecute a development change program, and the political strategies they need to deploy. The next section considers some criteria against which politically effective agents of development change might be identified and assessed.

Identifying Effective Developmental Leaders

Key points

- Developmental leadership is a contingent form of agency; effective leadership can only be understood in terms of the institutions and structures it needs to operate within.
- Effective developmental leaders will be those that have the political capacity to pursue a developmental program within a given political system.
- In considering which developmental leaders to work with, PLP should consider individuals, groups, organizations or coalitions that are politically influential or prospectively influential (i.e. whose political capacity could be built following well-focused support).
- The type of support provided for developmental leaders should be assessed in terms of augmenting their political power to secure development change.

Given its limited resources, a key challenge for PLP is to make discerning decisions about which developmental leaders to support. This will require judgments about the development problem at hand, the politics activated in seeking to progress development reforms, and the capability of the individuals or groups seeking to secure change. This section deals with this last dimension, with a view to providing some criteria to assist PLP to refine its choices. It focuses on developmental organizations and coalitions given their central importance to developmental change and the fact that organizations and coalitions are a principal focus of donor support.

Thinking of developmental leadership in contingent terms requires one to think more concretely about leadership as a capacity to mobilise resources and power in ways which can purposively reconfigure extant power structures. Effective leaders will be those that have the right capabilities to engage in the politics of development in ways which will result in positive development change.

What are the characteristics by which we might identify potentially effective developmental leaders? In our view, two threshold criteria exist. The most important is that developmental leaders (individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions) have a substantive developmental mandate or interest/s at their core in terms of trying to secure actual developmental change through the re-allocation of power and resources. One of the reasons why donor support for developmental leadership has in some cases struggled is because organizations supported haven't been particularly developmental or prospectively powerful. Too many organizations supported by donors are well intentioned but are only superficially developmental and politically disconnected. For example, PLP's 2011 Leadership Mapping Exercise in Solomon Islands (Pollard 2011) lists almost every organization in the country but does not differentiate those that are substantively or potentially developmentally influential. A key challenge for PLP is to avoid supporting artificial coalitions that have little prospect for prosecuting a decisive transformation program.

This is not to criticise the efforts of a wide range of civil society groups, but merely to point out that some organizations are better placed to prosecute a development agenda.

Developmental leaders must also be decisively politically powerful but must be prospectively politically capable. A key role for PLP is to help build the political capacity of organizations so they can achieve change. This is a threshold judgment PLP must make in deciding which organizations to support. How might we judge the actual or prospective political capabilities of developmental leaders? The following list is not exhaustive but is designed to assist PLP to think systematically about who might be supported:

Organizational focus: It is not sufficient that developmental groups are well intentioned and have a general interest in developmental change. Effective developmental organizations must have a substantive developmental focus giving rise to a specific reform program that can be supported. In other words, organizations must be seeking to re-cast the distribution of power and resources to effect positive developmental change. An important question arises in regard to advocacy groups seeking to change social norms. For example, are civil society groups calling for a reduction in violence against women developmental leaders? Certainly, but to the extent that such campaigns focus on general advocacy, are they best supported by other forms of donor support rather than developmental leadership programs?

Organizational legitimacy: given that developmental organizations need to work politically to prosecute reform agendas, developmental leaders must be sufficiently embedded in society so they can make legitimate – accepted, credible and politically persuasive – developmental claims. Developmental organizations must therefore be sufficiently inclusive that they can make legitimate claims on a political settlement. This requires that organizations include the right members to be credible. Organizational legitimacy can be built over time as emergent groups begin to engage constructively with development issues and gain credibility and public respect.

Organizational capacity: Political capacity refers to the administrative, organizational, professional, negotiating and diplomatic skills which organizations can deploy in support of a sustained and strategic development strategy (Leftwich and Sen 201, 333). Building organizational capacity is obviously one of the most tangible ways in which prospective developmental leaders can be supported to become organizationally effective. But capacity for developmental leadership requires a specific form of capacity building. For example, general organizational capacity building linked to abstract systems strengthening may be less important than technical capacity building focused on specific reform issues, so organizations can become more politically critical in the reform space they are working in. For example, NGO strengthening programs that seek to build general financial management and strategic planning capabilities might constitute a marginal form of developmental leadership support, but support centred on building organizational campaigning and policy advocacy capabilities would be more obviously developmental.

Table 1   **Identifying effective developmental leaders**

Organizational Criteria	Threshold Questions	Organizational Assessment	PLP Support Options
Organizational Focus	• Is the organization focused on a development problem? • If so what? • Is it technically sound? • Is it politically feasible?		Analysis of the development context and political system?
Organizational Legitimacy		Is the developmental coalition comprised of the right people/organizations to credibly pursue the development problem Is it representative? Does it have the right members?	Consideration of coalition members relative to the development problem and politics activated Technical support to build knowledge of the development problem to support credible policy engagement
Organizational Power		Does the organization include the right mix of members to be able to make effective development demands?	Analysis of the political process within which development change must be pursued Support with the identification of prospective developmental coalition members
Organizational Capacity		Does the organization have the political capacity to pursue change?	Supplement political skills that: Campaigning support knowledge of institutional context and policy process political context mapping identification of appropriate political modalities
Organizational Cohesion		Can the organization sustain a focused campaign over time?	

Organizational power: Given developmental leadership is about seeking to recast prevailing distributions of power and resources in support of positive development, aspiring developmental organizations must be able to exercise sufficient power to have developmental claims heard and to counter anticipated oppositions. There are many sources of power, but developmentally effective groups must think in terms of acquiring and deploying the right kind of power relative to the developmental problem at hand. Certain groups hold power naturally, such as business organizations, governments and trade unions. Other groups, such as civil society groups, may have to work harder to secure power (for example, through well targeted public campaigns which mobilise public opinion). Important to developmental leadership is the collective nature of power – individual groups can augment their power through the careful construction of coalitions. The composition of coalitions may have to change over time as the passage of a development issue through the political system requires new forms of power and capability. It is important to note that in developing countries, organizationally powerful groups 'are likely to come not from the poor but from different sections of what Khan (2005, 21) calls the 'intermediate' classes such as the emerging urban middle classes and the petty-bourgeoisie.

Organizational cohesion: Effective political mobilisation requires in the first instance unity of purpose. Leftwich and Sen (2001, 332) note that 'weak, divided or fragmented organizations mean that some interests will be side-lined in the political processes which shape, implement, monitor and reform institutions.' PLP should look for organizations that have organizational structures which can provide a realistic foundation for effective organization. Cohesion is particularly important for developmental coalitions which have to maintain unity of purpose across a potentially broad-fronted and organizationally diverse group.

The above criteria are provided to help PLP identify prospectively effective organizations warranting program support. PLP support should be understood in terms of it supplementing the power of developmental organizations to build their political capacity so they can be more effective to achieve specific development objectives. The above criteria could also be used to think more systematically about specific support modalities to build particular dimensions of organizational capacity. Table 1 seeks to link particular forms of support with various effectiveness dimensions raised above.

Three practical implications arise from the above analysis in terms of identifying effective developmental organizations to support:

1   Mapping exercises seeking to identify prospective developmental organizations to support should place a premium on identifying organizations that are, or are prospectively, politically influential. This requires greater consideration of the organizational basis of this influence relative to the development problem at hand (Leftwich and Wheeler 2011, 34). Mapping exercises need to go beyond identification of developmental organizations, but to consider what organizations are politically engaged and influential or potentially influential in a specific context.

2   Threshold decisions must be made in terms of which organizations to support, based on the deficit between the development objective and the power of the developmental organization seeking to secure a change. Understanding the nature of power deficits relative to developmental objectives will provide a basis for more nuanced consideration of specific types of program support that could be provided to developmental organizations. Working with developmental organizations that are already influential will of course increase prospects for success. In such instances bespoke and more technical forms of support may be required. It will be more challenging for PLP to support development change where developmental organizations are institutionally weak and lack deep power.

3   Technical support for developmental leaders focused on general capacity building will not in itself overcome underlying organizational powerlessness. Capacity building should be focused on strengthening an organization's ability to acquire and exercise power in pursuit of specific developmental objectives. Effective support for developmental leaders will likely be multifaceted and include well-targeted strategies to bolster organizational capacity and support to help organizations mobilise politically including through selective coalition building with a view to assembling developmentally decisive influence over a development problem.

Implications for the analytical framework

Recognising developmental leadership as a necessarily political activity with a distinctive politics requires a more political understanding of agency. Consideration must be given to capacity of agents (individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions) to support positive change to extant structures and institutions. Effective developmental leaders will be those that are politically powerful in the sense they can achieve changes in the distribution of power and resources to achieve their developmental goals. It is not enough that well-meaning agents come together to publicly demand change. Developmental leadership requires sober assessments about where developmental leaders are located in particular political structures, the power they command and their capacity to deploy it in decisive ways.

Sober assessments about the developmental effectiveness of leaders will be important in the type of support provided and, at a more basic level, whether organizations are sufficiently developmental to warrant sustained support in the first place. For example, a group may have developmental potential but lack power in its own right to effect change. Here, program efforts might focus on supporting the formation of the right type of coalition which contains the right combination of power for it to exercise influential development claims in the political system. Alternatively, a group may have an insufficiently clear or concrete development goal to warrant substantive engagement. An important question for PLP is whether well-intentioned national leadership councils are sufficiently focused on securing specific development change to warrant program support?

What does this mean for the development of an analytical framework to explain the exercise of developmental leadership? First, the developmental objective of developmental leadership is a crucial starting point when considering how to support developmental leaders. Leadership is developmental to the degree that it is purposeful and works to change prevailing allocations of power and resources to secure tangible development outcomes. Leadership is not developmental if it merely seeks to bring together well-intentioned social groups.

Second, different development problems will entail distinctive developmental politics. Ambitious development reforms may require changing the rules of the game so will be more contentious and difficult to support, but potentially have much greater development impact. Conversely, less ambitious development goals may be realised by playing games within the rules more effectively, but have less significant development impacts in terms of effecting change on a broad social level. Program decisions must be made about whether the politics required of a development goal is achievable or appropriate for donors to support.

Third, developmental leadership must be understood primarily as a political activity; the way in which agents engage with and seek to shape the politics of development to transform development. Effective developmental leaders (individuals or organizations) will be those that can engage in the politics of development in an authoritative, legitimate and ultimately persuasive manner. Such leaders are also able to mobilise resources necessary to claim new configurations of resources and power. Developmental leaders themselves must have recognised the political nature of the development objective they wish to achieve.

Fourth, the conflictual nature of development means that leadership – and donor efforts to encourage it – can be contentious. This is particularly significant in developing contexts where the problem of under-development likely reflects the historical legacies of inequitable allocations of power and resources. Efforts to support transformative developmental change will entail significant risks for donors because by definition effective developmental leaders pursuing such change will antagonise beneficiaries of prevailing power allocations.

Fifth, given developmental leadership is about how agents engage politically to prosecute a development reform agenda, an analytical framework must account for the political process and situate developmental leaders within it. Successful developmental leadership will require agents to develop political strategies and tactics to prosecute their reform interests. Depending on the nature of the development problem at hand, including its level of ambition and potential disruptiveness, different forms of leadership will be required at different points of the development policy cycle.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

When it is recognised that developmental leadership is fundamentally about the politics of development and the capacity of certain leaders, groups and coalitions (agents) to exercise political power in ways which will recast prevailing distributions of power and resources in developmentally beneficial ways, then understanding how the dynamic process of politics works becomes important in order to situate developmental leaders within that dynamic process. This requires consideration of the nature of the political system, broadly defined as the formal and informal institutional arrangements that reflect and influence the distribution of political power and the way in which politics happens.

The political system is constituted by institutions which provide procedural rules which shape decisions on the use, production and distribution of resources (Leftwich 2006c, 11-12). It 'needs to be understood as operating in its own environment which is constituted by the economic, social, cultural and ideological systems in its national, regional and international context' (Leftwich 2006c, 12). All human societies have political systems for determining development priorities. Political systems are most recognisable in advanced capitalist societies where they are characterised by high levels of political formalisation and specialization. But traditional societies also have political systems to determine decisions about production and distribution. The key issue is that political systems are comprised of formal and informal institutions and understanding development change processes and possibilities for developmental leadership will require a clear understanding of the nature of these institutions in a specific context and the opportunities for working within and around them afforded to developmental leaders.

The following section seeks to provide a practical analytical framework[1] to help understand developmental leadership drivers of change by focusing on the operation of the political system within which developmental leaders must work. It draws heavily on the work of Adrian Leftwich and does not purport to be an original approach or model. We consider the framework provided is conceptually useful for PLP because it allows us to locate agents within a dynamic political context and thus responds to the definition of development as a political activity. By focusing on how change can be achieved within political systems, the framework will also enable comparative consideration of 'the impact and interaction of both formal and informal sources and forms of power and influence, and it also provides a framework for identifying where and how they are deployed' (Leftwich 2006c, 17) across the Pacific region.

Elements and functioning of the political system

The political system is best understood 'as a set of processes determined by the interaction of formal and informal institutions' (Leftwich 2006c, 14-15). The interaction of these institutions provides a structure for agents to pursue political objectives and also frame the possibilities for action. A key part of any baseline assessment for the developmental leadership program is to clarify the institutional and procedural parameters of the political system in the countries in which PLP works and where developmental leaders are located within it. The following framework (Diagram 1) sets out the core building blocks of any political system to support PLP's conceptual thinking about the nature of political systems across the region.

Demands, influences and oppositions: These are most simply understood as the developmental claims and counterclaims made by different agents in the system. Agents can include any individual, group or organization outside state institutions and formal positions of power (political parties, unions, businesses, religious groups, patrons), but also those within the state (decision-making elites including politicians and civil servants who are also potential developmental leaders. For this report, developmental leaders enter the political system here. Demands can include calls for the rules of the game to be changed, or for the way in which existing rules are applied to change the allocation of costs and benefits in the system.

Demands made by developmental leaders are likely to be met with opposition from those who will be affected by the demands. The critical thing is to consider who is making demands: 'the way in which influences, demands and oppositions are expressed and channelled is an important element in the anatomy of power and politics in any society and hence absolutely central to understanding the drivers and blockers of change.' (Leftwich 2006c, 21). Influences are more abstract (e.g. donor expectations around good governance, social movement expectations, traditional expectations, changing middle class values).

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1 Note: This framework draws heavily on the work of Adrian Leftwich (2006a,b,c) and does not purport to be an original concept.

Environment: This refers to the political context and encompasses socio-economic, cultural, ideological and political cultural factors (Leftwich 2006c, 19). It encapsulates domestic and international components. Consideration of the environment within which the political system is couched is important from a developmental leadership perspective as it allows us to think about where potential agents may be emerging (e.g. new social groups, new middle classes, prospective coalition members). As put by Leftwich (2006c, 19): 'the structural features of the economic, social and cultural environment are not important simply as backdrop, but need to be understood in order that we may trace the provenance, and potential provenance, of groups, social movements and political agencies whose salience, relative power and political interaction shape the political process and political system.'

Legitimacy: Referring to the general level of acceptance of the rules of the game, the degree of legitimacy in the political system will impact on the nature of the politics of development surrounding a political issue, subsequent political mobilisation strategies and options. Leftwich distinguishes between geographical (acceptance of sovereign boundaries), constitutional (acceptance of formal and informal rules of the game) and political legitimacy (that rules are fairly and properly applied). Where the rules are contentious, development issues are likely to be more politically contentious and prospects for exercising moderate yet influential developmental leadership more limited.

Gatekeepers: occupy key positions in the political system enabling them to 'allow or deny access of people, ideas, demands and influences' (Leftwich 2006c, 14). Gatekeepers seek to control access of demanders to policy makers. Classic gatekeepers include patrons, big men and political bosses. A key challenge for developmental leaders is to identify gatekeepers and consider effective political strategies for engaging or bypassing them.

Modes: Modes refers to the means and methods by which demands and oppositions are expressed. Internal modes include voting and public campaigns, public debates, media campaigns, strikes, riots, rebellion. External modes include donor conditionalities, international investment requirements). PLP is well placed to help developmental leaders identify appropriate modes to make their developmental claims through.
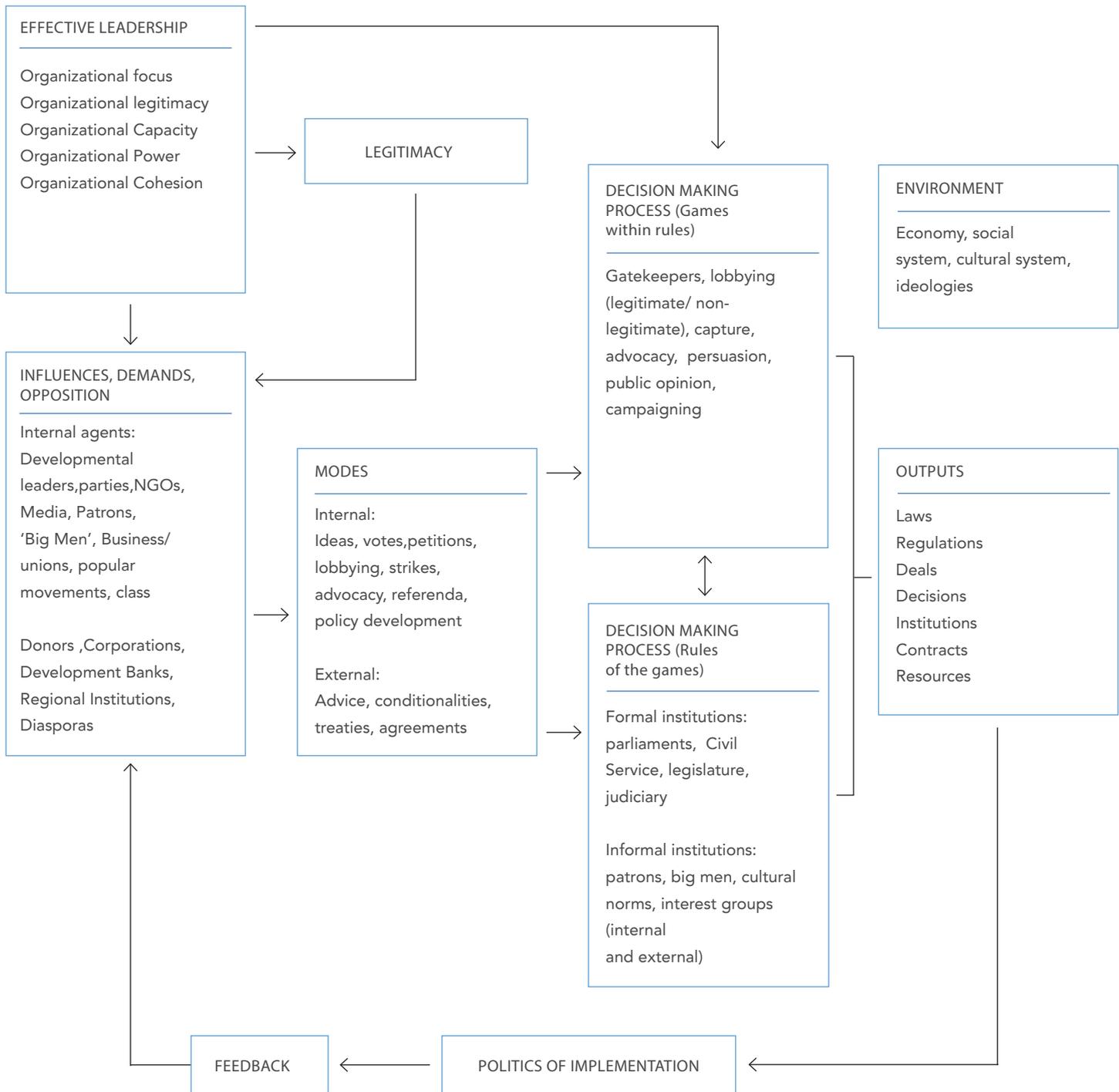
Decision-making: This is the point within the political system in which development demands and oppositions are reconciled, leading to tangible development outputs. Understanding the nature of policy contestation will require careful analysis of the formal and informal institutions which come into play and how these structure political negotiations over development issues. Key considerations here include the specific policy process activated and the entry points this provides for demanders and oppositions at various points in the cycle. The relative power brought to bear by demanders and opposers to developmental claims is also relevant. Power is relational in that it is can only be understood in terms of opposing sources of power. It is also contingent in that the types of power mobilized by demanders must be considered in the context of the development change being pursued.

Outputs: Decisions made in the political system are called outputs and feed back into the wider social, economic and political environment. If implemented, decisions are developmental to the degree they unsettle prevailing distributions of power and resources and give rise to new outputs. By re-allocating power and resources, outputs can impact on the legitimacy and/or support of the system and thus change the dynamic of the political system.

Feedback: Feedback is `the process whereby oppositions and demanders are reconfigured following implementation of a developmental decision. Inclusive development can result in growing constituencies for further change, changing the politics of development and providing further opportunities and momentum for additional reform. Alternatively, developmental change can intensify opposition as those who might lose from change mobilise to prevent it.

The framework presented above is intended to assist with the identification and analysis of development as a political process, including the location and role of developmental leaders as participants in that process (Leftwich 2006c, 36). The framework is designed to be regime and ideologically neutral in that it can be applied to a variety of different political approaches and work in political contexts marked by varying degrees of political formality and complexity. As a dynamic framework, it can assist in the identification of different developmental agents at different points in the development process, and also helps locate and identify prospective members of developmental coalitions. At the same time, the framework also requires consideration of where possible blockage points for particular developmental reforms may exist. It allows for comparative analysis across countries/systems/sectors because it focuses on the process by which power is exercised rather than the structural characteristics of different political systems. The following section considers how the framework can be applied to the Pacific context within which PLP works.

DIAGRAM 1   THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Organizational focus
Organizational legitimacy
Organizational Capacity
Organizational Power
Organizational Cohesion

LEGITIMACY

DECISION MAKING PROCESS (Games within rules)

Gatekeepers, lobbying (legitimate/ non-legitimate), capture, advocacy, persuasion, public opinion, campaigning

ENVIRONMENT

Economy, social system, cultural system, ideologies

INFLUENCES, DEMANDS, OPPOSITION

Internal agents:
Developmental leaders,parties,NGOs, Media, Patrons, 'Big Men', Business/unions, popular movements, class

Donors ,Corporations, Development Banks, Regional Institutions, Diasporas

MODES

Internal:
Ideas, votes,petitions, lobbying, strikes, advocacy, referenda, policy development

External:
Advice, conditionalities, treaties, agreements

OUTPUTS

Laws
Regulations
Deals
Decisions
Institutions
Contracts
Resources

DECISION MAKING PROCESS (Rules of the games)

Formal institutions: parliaments, Civil Service, legislature, judiciary

Informal institutions: patrons, big men, cultural norms, interest groups (internal and external)

FEEDBACK

POLITICS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Using the framework to identify opportunities for developmental leadership

Key points

- Think about the development objective to clarify the politics of development that will be activated.
- Think about the political system (i.e. the rules of the game and game within the rules) which sets the rules and processes that development leaders will need to work within to secure development change.
- Think about what developmental leaders are best placed to navigate their way through this political system to make effective claims on the reconstitution of power and resources.
- Think about support that can be provided to development leaders to augment their capacity to work effectively in the political system.

The central implication of the above framework for developmental leadership analysis is the requirement that one focuses on identifying influential developmental leaders who relative to the political system in which they need to operate to secure a specific developmental change. The framework is helpful because it helps locate developmental leaders in a dynamic framework and points to various aspects of the political process which need to be considered in terms of prosecuting a successful development strategy. Developmental leaders, and the donors who support them, need to think of obstacles which may prevent the exercise of effective leadership, and the entry points for developmental leaders to enter the political system to exercise and progress developmental demands.

Crucially, identifying strong candidates (developmental leaders) to support requires a systematic assessment of the development problem at hand (the change objective reflected concretely as outputs), consideration of the form of politics (reforming 'rules of the game' or playing 'games within the rules') the distinct characteristics of the political system in which prosecution of the development problem must occur, and an assessment of the agents who must be involved in prosecuting the political program.

The framework suggests starting from the position of agency and proceeding through the political system, but for the purposes of context analysis of the development problem one could equally work back from the development outcome (output) to think about the obstacles that will need to be navigated, to end up with a picture of a possible coalition of developmental agents who may be best placed to prosecute a politically astute and effective developmental reform program.

Theoretically, any coalitions of interests could be supported to raise developmental demands in the political system. The key point of the framework is to consider whether these demands are likely to be heard and how they may be supported or blocked as they work their way through the system.

Artificial demands will be easily ignored or quashed by more established interests.

The framework requires a broad assessment of the overall context or environment as a starting point. This point in the analytical process will be important in identifying emerging developmental leaders and more fertile opportunities for focusing PLP support. Given that development is a disruptive process, a key entry-level consideration should be to identify environmental areas which are experiencing change (e.g. structural economic disruption such as the decline of logging and the growth of mining in Solomon Islands; cultural change driven by diaspora communities, urbanisation, and the growth of social media). In such contexts extant distributions of power and resources will be under strain. At the same time, it is more likely such areas will include developmental claimants or emerging constituencies for change that will likely form the basis of effective developmental coalitions.

Finally, the framework accommodates the role of donors as significant developmental actors in their own right and how they relate to the political system. This includes most obviously donors in their role as external agents in traditional donor roles. It should also be recognised that donors may increasingly be understood as internal agents in some Pacific countries in which donors have come to play a key role in the co-production of basic governance functions (e.g. Solomon Islands and RAMSI).

PART 2

COUNTRY SCANS

Solomon Islands Developmental Leadership Country Scan

Country context

Solomon Islands faces significant development challenges and constitutes one of the most challenging development contexts in the Pacific. Solomon Islands continues to suffer from the legacies of the 'tensions' which affected the country from 1998 to 2003. While stability has been restored with the considerable support of the international community, the country remains fragile and many of the root causes of the conflict have yet to be addressed.

Solomon Islands development challenges are numerous. As summarised by the World Bank (2012: i): 'Youth unemployment, thin capacity, enclave developments, perceived spatial inequalities, a fluid political environment, and rapid social change all present challenges to the resilience of Solomon Islands' young governance institutions.' These challenges are compounded by Solomon Islands' limited economic options for poverty-reducing economic growth. Solomon Islands' economy will be dependent on smallholder agricultural, the public sector and high aid flows[2] for the foreseeable future (Haque 2014).

Gender inequality is a serious issue in Solomon Islands (World Bank 2013, 5-6). This is reflected in lower rates of participation in education, women's health and formal labour market participation. Gender based violence is significant, with a survey by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in 2009 finding some two thirds of women have suffered from some form of violence (SPC 2009). Women's capacity to exercise developmental leadership is constrained by the effect of traditional systems and the roles assigned to women. According to the World Bank (2013, 6): 'While women have historically played important roles within the family and community and in dispute resolution during the tension, participation in formal institutions and employment is low.'

Prospects for developmental leadership in Solomon Islands are further complicated by the poor governance environment. The Solomon Islands state is fragile and has limited reach outside of Honiara, making delivery of effective services difficult. Governance and accountability institutions are weak, meaning the state remains disconnected and unresponsive to community needs. Corruption and the growth of discretionary funding mechanisms such as on-budget Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) has institutionalised localised and personal development models at the expense of the central (and provincial) government which is being hollowed out.[3]

Solomon Islands has very fragile hard (transport, communications and public sector) and soft (national identity, strong civic culture) infrastructure to support collective action on a national scale. The country's geographical, ethnic and cultural fragmentation poses significant challenges for collective action. The perpetually weak post-colonial state has been unable to construct a strong sense of national identity. The political community in Solomon Islands is highly fragmented, orientated towards local ethnic and village-based identities. Traditional chiefly structures and the big man system, which have always had a localised frame, are under increasing pressure as effective governance mechanisms in Solomon Islands undergo profound economic, social and political transitions. For example, the impact of logging on local political economies has compromised the chiefly system undermining its contribution to local stability. Political fragmentation limits the utility of the concept of nation and national interest as a mobilising factor, undermining prospects for collective action and channelling leadership into local and highly personalised avenues.

Collectively these factors give rise to a highly constrained development environment in which prospective developmental leaders find themselves. Without a national political infrastructure capable of supporting national level policy discussions (e.g. effective national political parties, and a responsive national government that can reach across territorial Solomon Islands), it is difficult to scale up leadership aspirations to address fundamental structural challenges impeding long term development in Solomon Islands. Development is understood in very localised terms (village, provincial) and development strategies are extractive (accessing limited state resources for local consumption, rather than investing in national growth and development through centralised management of rents (the accrual of national taxation revenue and other government income sources in order to fund state services). While Solomon Islanders have consistently proved themselves to be highly resilient at a personal and local level, the country finds itself in a developmental cul de sac, unable to shift onto a long-term development trajectory which would allow the country to respond positively to its development challenges. Instead, the country is tenuously holding on, with significant donor support preventing it from backsliding precipitously.

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2 Haque (2013, p.170 says aid flows can reasonably be expected to remain at around 30 per cent of GDP for the long-term.
3 According to Craig and Porter (2014, p.20): 'CDFs, initiated in 1996, had by 2012 grown in total to approximately SBD245m – see Table 1. In value, they exceed grants to province governments (SBD44.7m) by a factor of six, and compare with the total SIG outlay on primary education (salaries, fixed costs and discretionary) of SBD187.6m.'

Development fault lines

Solomon Islands' principal development fault lines are:

Economic change: Solomon Islands is undergoing profound economic transitions as the logging economy declines and natural resources are exhausted. Some 50,000 people of a workforce of around 250,000 are employed in formal employment and the country is unable to generate sufficient employment for the more than 7,500 young people who enter the labour market every year (one in six currently find formal work) (Close 2012; World Bank 2012). Limited employment opportunities place major strains on the social fabric and fuel social tensions. World Bank (2012) analysis notes the continued importance to Solomon Islands of smallholder agriculture and mining, while recognising their limited potential to drive large scale economic development. Prospects for significant private sector development are limited given Solomon Islands circumstances, including isolation, geographic fragmentation and small scale, making business costly and scale economies difficult to realise, although more could be done to support local private sector development. Supporting Solomon Islands to engage with emerging regional labour market opportunities over the long term represents an important opportunity, but will require considerable investment in vocational training and education to ensure benefits are maximised. Donor support and public sector employment will remain key drivers of the Solomon Islands' economy. Maximising the benefits extracted from Solomon Islands' limited economic opportunities, and helping nudge the country into a more beneficial and regionally focused economic development trajectory, remain important challenges.

Governance: The country faces major governance challenges limiting its ability to implement growth-enhancing policy reforms. Linked with this there are significant structural impediments to growth and stability. Weak accountability mechanisms, a complex electoral environment and corruption undermine government responsiveness to citizens and the collective action problems facing the country. State-building – the need to stabilise and strengthen core state institutions – remains an ongoing imperative following RAMSI's transition. Poor public administration is a major challenge. Unresolved issues around the role of provincial government and the broader constitutional underpinnings of the Solomon Islands state continue to further undermine public administration and political stability. Improving the quality of public administration is vitally important to Solomon Islands' future development prospects.

Social change: Solomon Islands is experiencing rapid social change which is deeply unsettling and potentially destabilising. Urbanisation and the growth of informal settlements in Honiara, high population growth rates, the breakdown of traditional chiefly and big man structures, and high levels of domestic violence complicate prospects for social cohesion and collective action. Building local social capital, especially in Honiara, remains a significant challenge.

Peace and reconciliation: Eleven years after the tensions, Solomon Islands remains a fragile post-conflict state. RAMSI played an important role in stabilising the country and restoring security, but did not have a reconciliation and peace-building mandate. The Solomon Islands Government has been reluctant to play an active role in leading a reconciliation process, refusing to officially release the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and submitted in 2012. The 2014 floods in Honiara precipitated riots and feed into a longstanding pessimism in the community that the root causes of the conflict have yet to be addressed and RAMSI transition has activated community concerns and that conflict could re-emerge.

Aid dependence: Another major development challenge is managing Solomon Islands' aid dependency. Solomon Islands is one of the most aid dependent countries in the world, with aid equivalent to around 35 per cent of GDP. High aid dependency partly reflects the legacy of the RAMSI intervention, which instituted an expensive state-building model, but also Solomon Islands' limited alternative economic development prospects. The World Bank predicts that Solomon Islands will continue to be highly aid dependent for the long-term future (Haque 2013). High aid support creates moral hazards, taking pressures off Solomon Islands leaders to deal with reform challenges facing the country. At the same time, Solomon Islands is highly permissive of donors who have been granted significant latitude to co-produce sovereignty (help the Solomon Islands Government provide basic state services and guarantee security) in the country. A key challenge facing the country is to agree on a long-term development bargain with donors so that high aid support can be provided in a way which nudges the country on a more positive development trajectory.[4]

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4 Currently, Solomon Islands bilateral 'aid bargain' with Australia is reflected in the Solomon Islands-Australia Partnership for Development. This is based on the Paris principles and notions of partnership (see Barbara 2014). Given the high level of aid support provided to Solomon Islands by Australia, questions exist about the political agreement that Solomon Islands and Australia might reach for the long-term provision of significant aid, in terms of Solomon Islands reform commitments and, conversely, Australian commitments to open up labour market access etc. Issues around the overarching development bargain are a sensitive matter and a matter for government-to-government discussions.

Agency and developmental leadership

There is a national level leadership deficit in Solomon Islands, complicating options for PLP support. Solomon Islands does not have effective national political parties and the national parliament does not function as a forum for considering policy issues and progressing reform. Politics is strongly centrifugal with political actors focusing their political activities and attentions on local constituencies rather than looking up to engage with national collective action problems. Elites participate in politics to access state resources which they then use for local consumption and to reward followers. National political leadership is fluid and unstable, with high turnover of parliamentary representatives and formal political leaders. Governing coalitions within parliament are unstable, require high maintenance over the course of a parliament, and provide an unstable basis for strategic government and policy development. There are no governance traditions of ruling in the national interest to motivate and legitimise strong national government. Working with developmental leaders in this space is difficult and by necessity must be opportunistic.

Consistent with this, leadership infrastructure in Solomon Islands is fragmented. There are a wide variety of civil society groups, but they tend to be focused on localised development issues. Some, such as Transparency Solomon Islands, have a national development policy frame, but struggle to gain traction. There are vibrant development leaders at the individual level, some of whom have formed energetic local leadership organizations working to progress development issues. Groups like Youth at Work and the Young Women's Parliamentary Group represent genuinely vibrant attempts to achieve development change.

Youth@Work

Youth@Work is a dynamic and impressive program focused on supporting young people to gain formal employment. A program facilitated by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in Solomon Islands, it has helped more than 800 young people improve their chances of gaining employment. It aims to address high youth unemployment and the shortage of job opportunities in Solomon Islands. It has had significant outcomes with around 30 per cent of interns being retained as formal employees.

Youth@Work has a dynamic leadership. While this is impressive, Youth@Work also faces challenges as a development organization. It has a strong project focus (on placing young people in jobs) but lacks capacity or inclination to think on a larger scale about issues associated with employment and education. It has not engaged with broader policy debates around vocational training, access to education opportunities, quality of education, or regional labour market issues.

Despite its formal partnership with the Ministry of National Reconciliation, Unity and Peace, it does not appear that it has used this relationship to engage with larger structural issues related to work and the economy which significantly impact on young people's employment prospects. On one level this is not an issue as the organization is making a significant contribution for the young people with which it works. However, a question remains about whether the organization is developmental (i.e. seeking to change deeper structures) to warrant program support.

A key question is if Youth@Work's project focus could form a basis for wider policy engagement, and whether the organization might form the basis of a broader development coalition focused on issues of youth employment, education and social cohesion.

Yet very few local development organizations have a developmental outlook that goes beyond their immediate and local priorities. Local leaders struggle to scale up their developmental objectives and efforts due to the lack of structural supports – for example, a clear national policy infrastructure with which to engage – and connections to government. In our discussions, it was notable that many groups did not appear to have thought systematically about working with and through government to achieve large scale change. From a local organizational perspective, this may constitute a sensible strategy given the instability of national politics. But it also means that local organizations are potentially missing out on developmental opportunities. Many groups appeared uncertain of how the formal policy process works and how it might be engaged with.

Solomon Islands does have a notable group of worldly individual leaders. Many individuals in Solomon Islands have lived and studied overseas and have strong connections to regional metropolitan countries including Australia. However, unlike the Polynesian countries with whom PLP works, Solomon Islands does not have a large diaspora which could play an influential role in shaping national politics. It remains to be seen if the cumulative overseas experiences of young Solomon Islanders who have lived and studied abroad will coalesce into a more nationally-focused development elite. On the face of it, cosmopolitan leaders returning from overseas appear to be quickly implicated in local the political economy and struggle to exert positive influences.

Donors themselves are an important part of the political settlement in Solomon Islands and have in their own right a leadership role. However, donors have been reluctant to recognise this and have not thought explicitly about how they might better use their leadership influence to support positive, long-term development change. To date, donors have tended to consider their influence in passive terms, through a partnership lens, which vests significant importance on the exercise of strong national leadership within Solomon Islands to guide development priorities. Nevertheless, through RAMSI, donors have exercised considerable de facto influence in the country. However donors choose to exercise their influence in a situation of long-term and high aid dependence remains an important, open question in the context of an evolving post-RAMSI aid environment. However, donors should be recognised as a key leadership group in their own right which PLP will need to work closely with.

PLP has been making important investments in local leadership through their current suite of activities. SIDT, SIWIBA, Youth at Work and Leadership Solomon Islands are all impressive organizations in their own way operating in difficult development contexts. However, important questions remain about the developmental focus of these groups. Many worthwhile activities are being supported but they are generally small scale and project-based (i.e. helping women establish businesses or finding jobs for young people). Few of the groups appear to be working in a developmental sense (i.e. seeking to progress transformational change), by engaging with the broader structural reform and national public policy issues facing Solomon Islands, nor do they appear to have thought about national collective action approaches as a complement to their specific sectoral or project approaches. This introspective, project frame means that the groups have struggled to articulate a broader development vision, or to think in terms of collective mobilisation as part of a broader, more ambitious development coalition.

There is merit in PLP continuing to support project-focused groups in what is a difficult development environment. The deep development challenges facing Solomon Islands means this may be the most sensible program strategy. There are strong grounds for PLP continuing to invest in leadership organizations and to build a leadership infrastructure in a country in which this is poorly lacking. However, a challenge for PLP will be to build on the investments made to date and direct them towards more developmental issues-based engagement. PLP should think carefully about how it could support local leadership groups to begin to take a broader, collective action focus, including working in developmental coalitions to progress substantive issues.

There are other leaders within Solomon Islands that PLP has not yet engaged with but may be worthy of consideration. For example, given the importance of the public service as a governance bulwark in an otherwise unstable political environment (the public service is politicised and compromised in various ways but is also one of the more enduring sources of political stability in the country). Building stronger and issues-based ties with donors to include them in broader change coalitions will also be important given the fundamental role of donors in supporting development and governance in Solomon Islands.

A development-focused approach to leadership in Solomon Islands that begins with a clear development imperative will help guide future support and inclusion of a diverse range of prospective leaders not otherwise encompassed in the generic leadership groups currently supported. For example, if an education issue (e.g. participation in regional labour markets) was adopted, there are a broad range of education stakeholders who could be creatively brought into a developmental coalition.

Young Women's Parliamentary Group

The Young Women's Parliamentary Group (YWPG) was established in mid-2011, supported by the UNDP Parliamentary Strengthening Project. Formation of the group was motivated by the limited participation of women in formal politics. The group now has 40 members, with the Prime Minister and Speaker of Parliament its patrons. Several of YWPG's members have worked in the National Parliament Office and have a strong understanding of parliamentary institutions. While the group has a range of organizational priorities, particularly significant for PLP is its focus on practical development issues through its city bus campaign. The group is working to improve the regulation of public transport (provided through small scale minibus operators), bus fares and routes. This is ostensibly a local issue but also a potentially significant one with the capacity to greatly improve the welfare and quality of life of Honiara residents, including many in urban settlements. What is notable about the YWPG is its clear development issue orientation, and also the range of political strategies it has deployed to build momentum behind the issue of bus routes and public transport.

Drawing on its membership's deep knowledge of the parliamentary system and formal policy process, it sought to build political momentum behind the issue, with a view to forcing policy makers to respond. This has included circulating a public petition which attracted over 5,000 signatures, a radio-based public awareness campaign and holding public forums on the issue. The group then successfully called for the establishment of a special select committee to consider the issue, which has now issued a report. It remains to be seen if parliament will now act on the report and implement policies to improve public transportation. However, YWPG's strong issues focus, coupled with its strategic focus on working within the political system, and developing specific campaign strategies to build momentum for their issue within the system, constitutes an excellent example of effective developmental leadership.

Political system

Rules of the game: Solomon Islands has weak formal rules of the game, making the political system complex to navigate and complicating prospects for strategic developmental leadership. On the face of it, parliamentary democracy is well established (i.e. broadly accepted by all in society as legitimate) but parliament operates in compromised ways, such that it does not provide a solid framework for decision-making or a clear focus for developmental leaders to pitch their development strategies. The operation of parliament is undermined by the absence of coherent, national political parties as a basis for the aggregation of national interests and collective action. While the National Parliament Office is a regional exemplar and one of the best institutions in the country, in the absence of political will it is limited in its capacity to support strategic policy making. Having legislation passed is a major impediment to the progression of structural reform and the parliament remains the greatest institutional impediment to significant change. The growth of CDF's is skewing public resourcing away from the more accountable Solomon Islands state into more personalised and ambiguous forms.

In the context of weak formal institutions, informal institutions become important in framing decision-making processes and constitute an essential part of the political system within which developmental leaders must operate. Clientelism and money politics form a core part of the political dynamic in Solomon Islands. Political participation is motivated by the desire to access valued state resources and the need to reward political supporters through the distribution of material rewards. The significant growth in CDFs – a formal discretionary expenditure mechanism that vests spending authority at a personal political level – is consolidating a localised political model and further hollowing out the formal state.

Donors and the aid system are also fundamental in shaping the rules of the game. While the Solomon Islands state is weak and public administration systems very fragile, and policy processes opaque, ad hoc and frequently informal, donors work with the Solomon Islands Government to strengthen basic administrative systems and development policy frameworks. These provide structures for policy engagement within which development leaders can work.

Games within the Rules: With formal institutions weak and informal institutions central to the political economy of the Solomon Islands, games within the rules are played out according to two very distinct logics. On the one hand, within those parts of the Solomon Islands state heavily subsidised by donors through the co-production of services, games within the rules occur in quite recognisable, formal policy ways. While public administration and policy systems are weak and frequently opaque, were donor influences are strong there are greater opportunities for policy engagement based on evidence, lobbying and rational persuasion, although donor support for particular policy issues may be decisive in securing Solomon Islands Government approval.

On the other hand, there is a personalised and intimate element to local politics, in which individual and local wantok connections are important in shaping political decisions and resource flows. This is the space of corruption and inexplicable decision-making, but also provides opportunities for direct lobbying and personal persuasion. Understanding these networks and this distinctive local politics is fundamental to identifying leverage points and assembling effective development coalitions.

Tensions between these two logics complicate greatly prospects for policy engagement. Efforts to shape formal policies may result in good public policies being adopted by the government, but these may have little impact on the group as public officials pursue informal agendas and priorities. A salient and greatly complicating factor in Solomon Islands in terms of seeking to exercise political influence to shape policy outcomes is the existence of isomorphic mimicry, whereby on one level local elites are careful to respond to donor expectations about good governance and appropriate development, while undermining and avoiding formal policy commitments by an informal politics.

In this context, it is difficult for a program like PLP to effectively engage or work within the political system in pursuit of development reform. Suffice to say, PLP must pay close attention to the personalised underpinning of local politics and the importance of connected networks as a key part of the decision-making process in the country.

Developmental leadership opportunities

The personalised and localised nature of politics, and the weakness of the formal political system, greatly complicates prospects for PLP to find entry-points to support effective developmental leadership. Successful examples of developmental leadership in Solomon Islands have been notable for their small scale and disconnect from the formal state. Developmental leaders appear, consciously or unconsciously, to eschew engagement on national development issues and seek to carve out developmental niches in which they can avoid engaging with formal politics. Based on this rather despondent local development context, the following recommendations are offered as possible areas for forward PLP engagement in Solomon Islands.

Continue to invest in local organizations that have a strong issues focus

Given the significant structural impediments to a nationally-focused developmental leadership, continued investments in leadership organizations would appear to be a sensible part of PLP's suite of activities. PLP should, however, be careful to direct support to organizations that have a strong development issue focus. Youth at Work would appear to be a stand-out example of a development program with a strong – or at least potentially strong – developmental orientation, providing on the ground activities (job placement) in an effective way, in a development issue area of national importance and thus potentially scalable (youth employment). On the other hand, and on the basis of very superficial discussions, SIWIBA would appear to be organizations struggling to think developmentally, instead pursuing project-based approaches to local development issues.

While PLP should continue to support investment in organizational leadership capacity, it should consider ways to shift the focus of organization specific support where possible around national collective action problems. PLP should consider options for supporting developmental organizations to 'look up' as well as down in terms of the development challenge around specific issues. For example, while youth unemployment is arguably the most significant development challenge, more could presumably be done to build a broad-based developmental coalition around labour market opportunities and education that includes civil society groups but also education and training organizations, donors and the private sector.

One clear leadership gap which PLP is well placed to support is the limited national policy infrastructure. PLP could look to provide support for a national policy institute, possibly based in the new Solomon Islands National University that could work closely with the private sector, donors and select civil society groups to engage with national collective action development challenges.

There is no shortage of substantive developmental issues facing Solomon Islands as it goes through a period of significant transition. The following issues are offered as potential forward-looking areas for developmental leadership support, although it should be noted that all of these are very challenging and potentially sensitive development issues.

Youth, education, training and work: As mentioned above, youth unemployment constitutes a major development problem and a significant social risk with potential to spark renewed violence. It is notable that many children of the tensions are now reaching adulthood. High population growth rates will compound unemployment issues. The World Bank notes that improving local skills and education will be important to Solomon Islands' maximisation of limited economic opportunities in the future, including benefiting from future regional labour market opportunities in the mid to long term. PLP is already supporting good work in this area but the focus of support has been organization more than issue based. There is scope to broaden PLP's work to take an issues-based approach focused on improving the quality of and access to vocational and educational institutions, and improving transition pathways for young people (i.e. how might a child growing up in a remote village transition through to tertiary education). While there is some debate in Solomon Islands on education issues (scholarship corruption is a particular focus) it is not clear how youth have contributed to policy discussions. Equipping youth groups to engage with national education and training issues may help improve the quality of education. There would also be significant scope to work with donors (NZ MFAT and DFAT) who are committed to education and the private sector who have an interest in investments in vocational skills and training.

Education and leadership: While this is an outlier issue and extremely sensitive, if PLP is feeling ambitious there may be scope for it to work on the very specific issues of an elite school. Developmental leadership research has noted the importance of elite schools for building a nationally focused developmental elite. The potential of an elite school has been offered by some commentators in a Solomon Islands context (Fukuyama 2008). PLP may be able to sponsor a specific debate in Solomon Islands on the potential for an elite national school. It is significant that DFAT is currently reviewing its policy approach in Solomon Islands and may be interested in sponsoring more radical policy options.

Public sector reform: The fragile nature of the post-conflict state in Solomon Islands constitutes a major development impediment. Donors have devoted significant support to the public sector reform, including through RAMSI's Machinery of Government Program and the post-RAMSI Australian bilateral aid program. Good public administration is important to Solomon Islands development future. PLP is potentially well-placed to provide bespoke and complementary support in the area of public sector leadership. The Public Service Commission has been increasingly exercising its authority as public sector employer to incentivise improved public administration amongst senior public servants, and to discipline poor administration. The PSC Chair noted that a large cohort of senior public servants will retire this year. There may be significant opportunities to work with the PSC to provide targeted leadership support for the new permanent secretary cohort, including around national development issues and the role of the public service as a key development actor in the country.

Economic reform and private sector development: There is a wide economic reform agenda in Solomon Islands which lends itself to coalition-based advocacy and leadership engagement. Issues around the cost of doing business, including the high cost of utilities, access to land, banking and access to skilled labour all provide clear entry points around which a developmental leadership engagement strategy can be built. Support for this area lines strongly with the Australian Government's aid program focus on economic growth. Economic reform issues are likely to have a broad constituency of supporters, although do abut with difficult issues around land ownership, corruption

Urbanisation and land: Land and urbanisation remain two fundamental development issues that both the Solomon Islands Government and donors have found difficult to engage with. Rather than approaching land as a rural and economic issue, there may be opportunities to consider public amenity and local economic use of available land. PLP may be well placed to support creative, community-level engagement on the issue, possibly using youth, employment and social integration as entry points (i.e. around the theme of utilising land effectively for job creation).

As an issue, this would be very sensitive (perhaps too sensitive for PLP) but also lends itself to a broad development coalition (churches, local government informal settlements, private sector, donors). There is a considerable body of research around the role of urban growth coalitions and their role in driving positive processes of urban change which may be of interest to PLP in identifying urban entry points.

Developmental leadership as a cross-cutting issue

Given the high degree of permissiveness granted to donors in Solomon Islands, PLP should place particular priority on building strong links with the donor community to identify specific priority development reforms donors are seeking to progress. PLP could then work with donors to develop a political engagement strategy including support for issues-related development coalitions. The dearth of naturally forming coalitions is noted here as a challenge to the program. PLP should offer itself as a cross-cutting specialist (similar to gender and capacity building) in the area of political engagement, providing complementary support to technical policy reforms being developed by donors. Economic reform would be one area in particular which lends itself to clear political engagement as reforms need to pass through discernible, albeit opaque and unstable, policy processes including cabinet and parliament. Subject to donor discussions, PLP might be well placed to support a sensitive national discussion on the role of CDFs and the broader developmental implications of discretionary funding.

Tonga Developmental Leadership Country Scan

Country context

Developmentally, Tonga is one of the strongest performing Pacific Islands countries. Absolute poverty in Tonga is limited, health and education outcomes generally strong, and progress against the MDGs good (World Bank 2010), although 'persistent gender inequalities remain in the area of leadership, legislation (particularly laws relating to land, divorce and property), violence against women and employment' (Ferguson et.al 2011:41). Tonga remains one of only seven countries that have not yet ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW),[5] and it remains the case that women are not allowed to inherit land in Tonga (IFC 2011:vii).

Tonga enjoys almost universal literacy, high school enrolments, and free primary education, but school quality is a challenge. Tonga also enjoys relatively good health outcomes, although non-communicable diseases are becoming a major problem. According to the World Bank (2010; 2): 'The challenge for Tonga is to maintain achievements, with anecdotal reports of declining educational outcomes despite strong enrolments, and a rapid increase in lifestyle diseases such as obesity and diabetes' (see also PLP 2014).

Despite its positive development record, Tonga faces challenges to long-term growth and stability. As a small and isolated island economy, Tonga's economic geography imposes high costs on it, making it vulnerable to economic shocks. Tonga is also heavily dependent on external resourcing to maintain its relatively high living standards, including remittance flows, aid and, to a lesser extent, tourism revenues. Economic vulnerability requires Tonga to make the most of its limited resources, giving rise to long-term economic reform imperatives. Tonga has shown a propensity to undertake growth enhancing economic reforms, such as its accession to the World Trade Organization in 2007 and reform of its telecommunications sector in the early 2000s which has seen mobile phone access increase from 6 to over 60 per cent. But Tonga still faces a range of difficult structural reform challenges including land, business costs, and labour market quality (education and training) issues.

Tonga's great strength, but also a clear challenge, is its hierarchical and collective social structure. Political stability afforded by the monarchy, complemented by the strong role played by the churches and village-level governance structures, has provided a basis for relatively effective government and has underwritten the country's developmental performance. This provides Tonga with an important social infrastructure from which to engage with its development challenges. At the same time, these traditional structures are under stress, and can impose an inherent conservatism over the society, limiting the way it engages with emerging development issues. Tongan society is changing as it integrates with the modern world, and Tonga's relationship with its diaspora, including the growing middle class diaspora, is challenging and potentially unsettling. School-based violence and youth gangs are a growing problem. The country faces significant challenges in managing processes of social change in peaceful and productive ways.

Tonga's democratic reform process represents a response to these challenges. Electoral reforms implemented in 2009 provide for a parliament of 26 members, comprised of 17 members elected through universal suffrage, 9 chosen from the pool of 33 hereditary nobles – all of whom are men (Ferguson et.al 2011:43). While elections in 2010 under the new system were peaceful and deemed free and fair, Tonga is still coming to terms with democratic liberalisation and has some way to go in terms of building strong democratic institutions and an open political culture. Democratic stakeholders including civil society groups, the private sector and the nobility are struggling to reconcile the opportunities provided by a more liberal democratic environment with the challenges of respecting traditional social structures and relationships. Democratic liberalisation has been an unsettling experience for many and not provided the obvious entry points for developmental leaders.

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5 See http://www.womenstreaty.org/index.php/about-cedaw/cedaw-at-a-glance

Development fault lines

Tonga's significant development fault lines include:

Consolidating democracy: Tonga is experiencing a significant period of transition, including economic and social change, which is placing strains on its existing political settlement. Democratic reform can be understood as a response to this transition. Constitutional and electoral reform has opened the way for greater democratic voice and accountability but democratic institutions are fragile and popular commitment to and understanding of democracy tentative. Support for the gradual consolidation of democratic reforms constitutes an important development challenge, albeit one with potentially profound positive, implications for Tonga's long-term development future.

Supporting positive social change: School and community-based violence is an increasing challenge in Tonga. Managing processes of urbanisation, diaspora relationships and issues around youth unemployment will be important to ensuring processes of transition are channelled in productive ways.

Economic Reform: Making the most of Tonga's constrained economic opportunities will be important to the maintenance of high living standards over the long term. Tonga will need to support continuing microeconomic reforms to facilitate the emergence of new industries and enterprises (recognising the general economic constraints imposed on private sector development due to scale and isolation). The issue of seabed mining is a delicate one but also a presumably fertile development issue requiring broad social dialogue to ensure it does not become a source of significant social conflict and supports inclusive economic development. At the structural level, Tonga has had some notable economic reform successes but the reform process appears incremental and ad hoc. In contrast to Samoa where the titled elite matai have a generally clear commitment to long-term economic reform, evidence of strategic elite commitment to a long-term national development agenda is patchier. Nurturing this commitment remains an important priority.

Regional integration: Tonga is already deeply integrated in regional economies and societies, both through its diaspora and through donor relationships. Enhancing the quality of two-way relationships between Tonga and its regional partners and diaspora communities will be important to maximising development benefits arising from these relationships. Important questions exist regarding the institutional basis upon which Tonga's regional engagement is based. Does Tonga have a suite of national institutions which allow it to maximise the benefits it obtains from its regional relationships? Are there institutional structures in place which allow Tonga to benefit from the experiences and capital of its diaspora?

Agency and developmental leadership

The quality of leadership in Tonga, and the capacity of leaders to work developmentally, appears mixed. On the one hand, Tonga has strong traditional leadership structures which exert a powerful influence on the nature of politics and prospects for developmental change. The nobility exerts a powerful influence within Tonga and can be an important driver of change. Tonga also has an established and competent civil society infrastructure reflected in a broad range of social groups comprised of high quality individuals. The relatively cohesive and structured nature of society means such groups are potentially well positioned to progress a broad-fronted development agenda.

On the other hand, questions remain about the developmental ambition of Tongan leaders. While many of the civil society and private sector groups we met with do have a developmental focus, for many their level of developmental ambition appeared tempered by concerns about disrupting traditional hierarchies. There appeared to be an inherent conservatism in the developmental outlooks of many of the Tongan leaders we met, who were careful not to offend Tongan cultural traditions. This is understandable and important to social stability in Tonga, but has the effect of limiting the range of developmental issues that can appear on a reform agenda, and the general prospects for developmental transformation. This appears to undermine the willingness of some developmental leaders to work in a political manner to prosecute their reform priorities. At the very least, it means developmental leaders feel like they must be very careful, subtle and creative in the ways they work to put developmental issues on the agenda. We were struck, for example, by the degree of importance attached to the Tonga National Leadership Code (see text box), which on its face appears as a very passive and limited development initiative but which many interlocutors imbued with a symbolic significance and, in the way nobles participated in its development, as a significant change. It remains to be seen if this code will spawn actual development change.

Tonga National Leadership Code

The Tongan National Leadership Development Forum (TNLDF) is a coalition comprising eminent Tongan leaders (nobility and key sectors). TNLDF has developed a Tongan National Leadership Code, following a process of extensive public consultations. The Code is short and defines the role and responsibilities of leaders, ostensibly providing a basis for Tongan leaders to be held to account.

Most interlocutors described the Code as an important development and particularly significant in terms of bringing Tongan elites in touch with their communities and raising awareness of community expectations. We acknowledge the importance of this process and its potential for changing the political culture of Tonga and responsiveness of Tongan leaders to the community (the basis of a new social contract).

However, we are sceptical that of itself the Code will lead to positive development change. There is a risk that development of the Code is seen as a safe way of supporting change, without it leading to tangible development outcomes. Indeed, TNLDF's decision to focus on the development of the Code may confirm the inherent conservatism of the development environment in Tonga.

As a developmental leadership objective, the Code points to the contradictions between efforts to support positive development change, and legitimate concerns about the risks of developmental efforts as they unsettle the status quo. This encapsulates the challenges facing PLP as it works to support positive change in a conservative development environment.

A key challenge for PLP will be to build on the momentum created with the development of the Code, through the identification of positive but sufficiently developmental issues with which leaders can be engaged in broader reform debates.

Broader transitions in Tonga – economic, political, social and cultural – are giving rise to new social groups and prospective leaders which are under-represented in current leadership organizations. This includes the overseas tertiary educated, academics, business owners and financiers. Tonga has a consolidating middle class with potentially distinctive social perspectives and developmental priorities, but little is known about their developmental and political orientations. Tonga also has an emerging and surprisingly vocal and diverse national media with political affinities straddling the spectrum. A key developmental group not clearly represented in discussions was the Tongan diaspora, who has a crucial yet indirect and apparently unrepresented influence in Tonga. Little is known about these groups and whether they are cohering into developmentally progressive groups and constituencies. From our consultations they may have more ambiguous relationships with traditional Tongan social structures and therefore be more creative champions of developmental innovation and reform. While supporting these emerging groups poses some political risks, PLP should consider carefully the degree to which existing leadership organizations represent these groups, or whether there is scope to look beyond the existing leadership cadre to engage these groups around specific developmental issues.

The underlying conservatism of Tongan social structures poses a challenge for PLP which seeks to work constructively with local developmental leaders but also wants to support significant developmental change. PLP has made important investments in key leadership groups such as Tongan National Leadership Development Forum (TNLDF) and Tongan National Youth Council (TNYC). However, questions remain about whether such groups are sufficiently focused on key development issues to warrant significant future support. It would seem timely now to shift the balance of support away from basic organizational sponsorship and capacity building to issues-based support (i.e. technical policy assessments around specific development issues) and to think of how to use existing leadership groups as developmental beach-heads for the construction of broader change coalitions.

Political system

Rules of the Game: Tonga has a relatively clear set of formal and informal institutions which govern political behaviour and provide clear parameters within which developmental leadership strategies may be formulated. While Tonga is undergoing a process of democratic reform and consolidation, the democratic institutions nevertheless provide a frame for political engagement and, theoretically, entry points for developmental leaders to shape policy and reform. The country also enjoys functional state institutions, which have demonstrated their capacity to prosecute significant reform agendas. Policy processes within this institutional framework are not always clear, but do provide a basis for considered policy engagement.

These formal institutions are situated within a strong and hierarchical informal institutional framework which reinforces and legitimises the formal institutions. Formal democratic institutions are legitimated by the monarchy and nobility, which plays an important role in stabilising the institutional framework and shaping Tongan political culture and participatory norms. While the role of the monarchy lends stability to the system and ensures stable rules, as will be discussed below, this arguably comes at a cost in terms of institutionally flexibility and responsiveness. The role of the monarchy and traditional governance systems are complemented by the churches, which play an important role in reinforcing the social structure.

While Tonga's formal and informal rules of the game have proven relatively stable and enduring – Tonga has been a constitutional monarchy since 1845 – the system is nevertheless facing significant pressures to adapt. Riots in 2006 culminated in a process of democratic reform in 2009, managed largely by the monarchy and nobility. Tongan elites are attempting to reform the political system incrementally but it remains to be seen if formal institutional changes have sufficiently responded to community claims to coalesce around an enduring, new political settlement.

Tupou Tertiary Institute

The Tupou Tertiary Institute (TTI) provides an interesting model of how PLP may support an issues-based development approach in the area of education and labour market transitions. TTI grew from the Free Wesleyan Church (FWC) Tupou High School, which was established in 1963. In the 1990s, FWC undertook fundraising in Tongatapu and Australia, New Zealand and the United States, which it then used to support the establishment of TTI. Inaugurated in 2004, it provides New Zealand accredited diploma courses (including business management, information and communication technology, architectural and construction technology and teacher education) to Tongan students. Its courses are in high demand and appears to have significant success in supporting positive labour market transitions in Tonga for young people.

As an example of the potential and importance of tertiary education and training as a developmental issue, there are several interesting issues which may provide a model for PLP engagement. TTI appears to provide an interesting institutional expression of the importance of working with diasporas (the diaspora presumably played a key role in fundraising), and creating institutional structures through which the Tongan diaspora can contribute to local development outcomes.

With a focus on New Zealand accreditation standards, TTI provides an interesting way to tangibly engage with issues around education quality, which is a significant issue in Tonga. Capitalising on Tonga's close links with metropolitan centres to benchmark institutions and improve quality may be a powerful way for improving institutional performance).

Finally, the high demand for TTI courses suggests the organization could form the basis of an instrumental but nationally relevant development coalition focused on labour market transitions (from school to tertiary to employment) and the importance of investing in quality education institutions

Games within the rules: While there are relatively stable formal and informal institutions setting clear rules within which leaders can operate, at the level of politics, prospects for developmental leadership by playing growth-enhancing 'games within the rules' seem constrained. The power of the monarchy and weight of tradition and culture provides structures upon which developmental leaders can devise development strategies, but also place significant constraints on the conduct of politics, and the capacity of developmental leaders to make developmental innovative claims on the system. This underpins a very exclusive political settlement and limits prospects for forward-looking and responsive engagement with development problems.

A key feature of developmental politics in Tonga is obtaining sponsorship of specific elites who can patronise reforms. Nobles in particular have a key role as champions of reform, and developmental strategies pursued by developmental organizations rely heavily on convincing nobles to act as reform sponsors. Recent history suggests this can be a powerful path to reform, as in the case of telecommunications and democratic reforms which ultimately depended on the nobility for their adoption and implementation. At the same time, the mediating role of the nobility acts to limit the range of reform issues deemed legitimate and which can be placed on the policy agenda. We were struck – admittedly based on one week's observations – by the degree to which civil society groups appeared to self-censor in terms of their development ambitions. This dynamic results in an inherent developmental conservatism which constrains the forms of developmental leadership PLP can support.

More research is required on the development interests of the Tongan elite and how this effects the identification of development priorities and the types of games within the rules that can be played. The Tongan nobility, for example, benefit greatly from current political settlement and the economic and political benefits it bestows on them. At the same time, the economic and social sustainability of Tonga's political settlement is under increasing strain and the country's elite have interests – reflected in the notable reform developments including democratic change – in modifying institutional arrangements.   Understanding more about the political economy of elite interests will be important for assessing how elite self-interests may be harnessed (working with the grain) to pursue growth-enhancing and inclusive economic reforms to the broad benefit of the Tongan populace. At the same time, little is known about the games played by the Tongan diaspora within Tonga. While the Tongan diaspora is recognised as an important national resource, little is known about how it relates to and engages with the political system in Tonga and whether it deliberately seeks to influence politics for specific development outcomes.

The most perplexing issue regarding games within the rules in Tonga relates to the apparent ambiguity of the Tongan population to democracy and the opportunities for political engagement provided by an opening democratic system. On the one hand, there appears to be broad, popular support for democratic liberalisation. On the other, there appears to be genuine concern about the potential for political instability and disruption as the community experiments with emerging freedoms. Many groups expressed concern at the pace of democratic change, and many seemed hesitant to test democratic entry points. How democratic change is altering the rules of the game is a very live and open point, but also one PLP needs to better understand to clarify development entry points afforded by democratic reform.

Developmental leadership opportunities

Based on the previous analysis, we have identified several options for supporting developmental leadership:

Investing in different developmental leaders

PLP has sponsored the consolidation of what might be called generic developmental leadership organizations which are contributing in their own way to a more sophisticated national discussion on development issues in Tonga. This is evidenced in the debate around the national leadership code which many interlocutors believe is helping make the Tongan elite more responsive to community development concerns. This is significant and has provided a basis for developmental leadership in Tonga. However, it may be said that the groups are too generic to decisively engage with more concrete development and reform agendas in a substantive way and which might lead to tangible developmental outcomes.

The conservatism of the development environment in Tonga means there is continued merits in PLP's continued investment in generic leadership at Tonga. Providing space for leaders to convene and discuss development issues is important. PLP has a role to play in sustaining a civil society network which has broader benefits for DFAT and the aid program.

Nevertheless, PLP must make decisions on the degree to which this is sufficient for the program, and the extent to which it wants to encourage the existing leadership infrastructure it has invested in to push some developmental boundaries. One way PLP can do this in a safer but potentially more impactful way is to take an issues-based approach. It may be timely for PLP to think about shifting the focus of its investments in generic leadership capacity with a view to linking organizational support to specific issues, or at least groups working in more fertile developmental areas. If PLP choses the right issues, it may be possible to work along the grain of Tonga's distinctive political economy to support positive change. There is considerable potential for supporting leadership organizations with a sectoral focus to identify more targeted reform priorities (see point 2 below). An obvious area would be working with a broad range of stakeholders to support the consolidation of a high quality tertiary education sector, given the importance of regional labour market participation to Tonga's development future.

PLP should also think carefully about how to engage with under-represented groups currently marginalised in the political settlement. A key group occupying a vital development fault line is the diaspora. Largely recognised as a source of national income in Tonga, the diaspora also constitutes an amazing national resource in terms of expertise, potential entrepreneurialism and social capital. We are not aware of any institutional structures which facilitate effective engagement and inclusion with the diaspora. PLP should undertake diagnostic work about the role of the diaspora, its development priorities (and the degree to which it looks back to Tonga) and how it relates to, and engages with, the political system. There may be scope for PLP to invest in a leadership organization that responds to development issues of concern to the diaspora and their Tongan communities. At a simple level this could be around remittance institutions and issues with transferring money. But it might also include issues around education and training, maintenance of social ties across borders etc.

Testing the development limits through careful issue selection

PLP has devoted significant resources to supporting generic leadership organizations. It is not always clear these organizations have a strong development issues focus. While Tonga faces a broad range of development challenges, it will be important for PLP to choose development issues which enjoy broad national consensus and thus provide a relatively safe basis for policy engagement.

Education and training: The most obvious is education – and in particular the ability of the education sector to provide quality vocational training and support youth engagement with regional labour market opportunities. The Tupou Tertiary Institute (TTI) provided an excellent example of an organization attempting to improve the quality of its vocational training and the relevance of its courses, including by ensuring its courses were accredited in New Zealand. This has potentially significant implications in terms of contributing to youth labour market transitions, both domestically and regionally. With an eye on international education standards and benchmarking, TTI's approach also potentially can contribute to local debates on education quality and improving local education institutions. PLP could engage more substantively and systematically with the tertiary vocational training and education sector, and look for ways to engage in broader debates on education quality in Tonga. This issue has several dimensions (resourcing, regulatory, capacity building) and would appear well placed as a basis for supporting a sectoral development coalition debating an issue of national relevance. PLP could presumably support a broad-fronted reform coalition encompassing the private sector, youth, government and donors all with different interests in a high quality tertiary education sector.

Economic reform and market development: Supporting the private sector to capitalise on emerging business opportunities, and/or to address specific microeconomic/structural reforms imposing economic costs on business, may be another area where PLP could provide very specific and potentially high impact support. Discussions with the Tongan Chamber of Commerce and Industries, the Tongan Development Bank and other economic and business stakeholders pointed to the serious economic challenges facing the country – some of a national scale, some sectoral and some at the business level – and the need for a concerted reform program.

Reform issues should be distinguished between national level reforms – taxes, business licensing arrangements, labour market reform – and micro or industry sector reforms. PLP should work with the private sector to identify significant structural reform issues and then provide more specific diagnostic support (i.e. technical analysis of reform issues, costs and policy recommendations).

Noting that these reform issues are difficult and long-term, PLP could then work to build reform coalitions around these specific issues, which should include donors interested in sponsoring growth-enhancing economic reforms. While PLP has already provided support to the Chamber of Commerce and other groups, there appears a need for PLP to now help these groups mobilise around a growth-enhancing reform agenda.

Urbanisation and social change: We were struck by the common concern expressed by most interlocutors on issues around youth violence and gangs, and reintegration issues around returning youth diaspora. PLP already works with the TNYC, with a focus on livelihoods issues and youth leadership. Issues around youth and social integration can be engaged with on a number of fronts, including urbanisation and social inclusion issues, which broaden the focus around youth jobs and provide potential entry points for a broader community coalition. PLP could think about how to complement the current framing of youth around livelihoods to include a broader social inclusion frame and making urban spaces work.

Help consolidate the democratic rules of the game

Consolidating Tonga's liberalising democracy and helping citizens engage with it in positive ways to support development change is a significant challenge, but also a great opportunity. Should the promise of democratic reform fail to be realised through responsive government, there is a risk of future political instability. PLP is well placed to collaborate with the private sector, civil society groups and government to progress development issues through parliament in ways which build local confidence in, and reinforce the constructive potential, of democracy and the capacity of democratic institutions to facilitate positive change. With its focus on developmental coalitions, PLP is also well positioned to complement more orthodox forms of donor democratic governance support centred on individual and organizational capacity building (parliamentary strengthening, political party strengthening, candidate training) to think about how democratic spaces might be uses to facilitate collective national discussions about public policy issues.

Samoa Developmental Leadership Country Scan

Country context

Samoa faces development challenges associated with its smallness and remoteness. Samoa has limited natural resources, a narrow economic base, and is economically isolated in terms of distance from major markets (primarily Australia and New Zealand. The World Bank (2012) notes that these structural characteristics place 'speed limits' on growth, making the country vulnerable to economic shocks.

Samoa is on track to meet key Millennium Development Goals (World Bank 2012, 2), especially in the areas of health and education. Gender is less clear with school attendance good but workforce representation less than 40 per cent of the MDG target. Compared with other Pacific Island Countries, Samoa has a good representation of women in senior public sector positions, with women accounting for 20 per cent of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and 50% of Assistant CEOs. Almost half of all women have experienced domestic violence in some form (World Bank 2012, 2).

The Samoan Government has a clear development strategy focused on strengthening economic resilience and supporting inclusive growth through increased productive sector investment. Tourism, telecommunications and regional economic integration remain key economic priorities.

Samoa is governed reasonably well and has strong and effective institutions. Samoa is considered among the best performing Pacific economies (Duituturaga 2011, 95). An economic reform undertaken since the mid-1990s has underwritten the country's economic success. Samoa benefits greatly from remittance flows provided by its large diaspora; the structured nature and scale of labour migration arrangements make a major contribution to the economy and constitute an important source of economic vitality.

Samoa is noteworthy for its relative political stability and the stability of its political institutions. Samoa won independence in 1962, inheriting a Westminster-style parliamentary democracy. Samoa's parliament is comprised of 49 members, all of whom must be matai (Samoan chiefs). Parliamentary terms are for five years. The Prime Minister is chosen by Parliament to lead a twelve-person cabinet. All other Government MPs hold appointments as associate ministers, which means there are no government backbenchers.

Samoan political culture is notable for its strong personality basis and a top down leadership style that limits vibrant opposition. The current government, led by Prime Minister Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi, has been in office since November 1998. The Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP), which has governed Samoa since 1982 and has 37 of the 49 parliamentary seats. The opposition Tautua Samoa Party holds the remaining 12 seats.

Samoa is a highly cohesive and structured society embedded in a strong traditional culture known as Fa'a Samoa (the Samoan way). The Samoan way sets out clear obligations an individual owes to family, community and church and underwrites a strong sense of national identity (Duituturaga 2011, 98). The Samoan way finds its strongest institutional expression in the role of chiefs. Each Samoan family group nominates traditional chiefs (matai) to represent them in village councils (fono). Matai hold land titles and are eligible to run for parliament. 'Samoan cultural tradition hinges on reciprocal obligations between extended family members and between the Matai and their people' (Duituturaga 2011, 98).

Development fault lines

Samoa's principle development issues centre on four broad areas: economic restructuring and reform to underpin long-term economic growth; managing inevitable processes of social change including youth and gender; responding to environmental change; and facilitating peaceful political change.

Economic Change: Samoa has a good record of proactively managing economic reform to support long-term growth and development. There was broad recognition of the long-term economic challenges facing Samoa. Samoa has enjoyed prudent economic management since the 1990s but faces structural challenges. Microeconomic reform issues include reducing the heavy reliance on imported fuel, addressing the downturn in tourism and manufacturing by broadening the economic base, and reducing the scale of the public sector in the economy. Economic challenges include reducing business cost structures, reducing the scale of public involvement in the economy, and ensuring the remittance economy contributes to broader processes of economic diversification and local entrepreneurialism.

Social change: The strength of Samoan tradition and culture is highlighted as an unquestionable strength but there is evidence such systems are facing challenges, particularly as the country deepens its integration with regional metropolitan powers and becomes more deeply embedded in regional networks. Understanding how processes of economic modernization and social change are placing pressures on traditional systems, and the capacity of those systems to adapt, will be important to identifying opportunities for developmental leadership in the future. We understand there are particular social issues around urbanization, crime and political disenfranchisement, including of returned diaspora in Apia and that deference towards the views held by matai and strong community sanctions against those who are seen to challenge matai authority sometimes hold back innovation and change. Indeed one long term CEO lamented that 'there are other voices out there but they struggle to be heard'.

Environment: Samoa is still recovering from major environmental shocks including the 2009 tsunami. Samoa's high vulnerability will challenge its capacity to grow and development. Climate change and the intensification of environmental pressures will place new challenges on Samoa's political settlement and require tailored governance.

Political change: The longevity of the HRPP government and key individuals is giving rise to disquiet (Duituturaga 2011, 109) and raises important questions about processes of political change and political inclusivity. Recent major reforms such as the switch from driving on the right hand side of the road to the left and the introduction of reserved seats for women were notable for their top-down implementation and caused considerable public angst. Questions exist about inclusive development and the capacity of local political communities and villages in the context of an exclusive political settlement based on elite matai interests. Similar questions regard the nature of strains on the traditional system including political inclusion of returned diaspora communities. Supporting inclusive political participation will be important in ensuring Samoa's capacity to navigate the above development challenges in peaceful and stable ways.

Agency and developmental leadership

Samoa already has a strong leadership class, evidenced in the strength of the matai system and the longevity of the country's political leadership. The matai system undergirds a strong elite class straddling the political and business classes and broader civil society. This enables a high degree of elite cooperation and is generally supportive of collective action. Importantly, the matai system has proven adaptable, with increasing numbers of women being awarded titles to reflect and underpin access to elite decision-making circles. Strong connections between the political and bureaucratic classes have been particularly important in driving purposeful reform and development initiatives.

There is a well-established leadership infrastructure in Samoa. This is reflected in the high quality civil society groups including church, business and NGOs, the strong and effective public service and the dominant political party. Leadership groups generally have good capacity but less established groups continue to face resourcing challenges. Several civil society representatives SSGM met with noted ongoing resource constraints as an important impediment to future activities.

For its part, the Pacific Leadership Program has made important investments in developing and building leadership infrastructure. Its focus on private sector leadership (Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry, SCCI), Leadership Samoa (LS) and the Samoa National Youth Council (SNYC) appear to have helped improve the basis for developmental leadership in the country. Discussions with leaders from government and civil society suggested Samoan leaders have a strong sense of working politically within the political system, drawing on elite links to progress policy issues. Indeed it was reported that groups and coalitions without the requisite political links to progress an issue would co-opt members with such links.

Less clear is the degree to which those outside elite circles can exercise leadership to make developmental claims. All of the individuals SSGM met with were urban-based elite matai, albeit with strong links to rural communities from which they come. More research will be required to understand the political economy of villages and the inter-relationships between titled and untitled individuals within a village context. A key developmental leadership opportunity would appear to lie in supporting greater engagement of marginalized groups to work within the prevailing decision-making structures to advance development goals. There is some evidence that marginalized groups such as the non-matai are successfully using the courts to collectively challenge adverse decisions in relation to the ownership of and access to land. There was also evidence, however, of strong community sanctions against those who were seen to challenge matai authority. Sanctions include fines of food and money that are distributed amongst village council Matai.

Leadership Samoa

Leadership Samoa was established by Alumni of the Emerging Pacific Leadership Dialogue. It is actively working to change the traditional definition of leadership and to broaden the constituency of Samoan Leaders. Many of its members are returned diaspora (including scholarship holders) and a good number have political aspirations. They see the forums Leadership Samoa convenes are providing the skills or 'weaponry' to enter formal politics. As well as seeking to broaden local notions of leadership the group has been active in advocating for stronger gender equity.

Another group of note, but beyond the scope of this scan, was the large Samoan diaspora and their engagement with politics and development issues in Samoa. The diaspora's contribution to Samoan development through remittances forms a key part of the country's political economy and has underpinned its relative economic prosperity. Less clear is the diaspora's contribution to local politics and its capacity to exercise leadership. That said, the Samoan diaspora does appear to be actively engaged in local politics by proxy, exercising influence on political debates through family connections based on their financial claims. We were also made aware, however, of tensions around the use of remittances, with it being asserted that the diaspora community often wants to see remittances spent on local development while those in receipt of remittances often deploy the funds gained to broader social and cultural activities.

Less clear is the capacity of returning diaspora to engage with politics and operate in political spaces. For sure there are notable examples of returning diaspora exercising leadership and being appointed to key roles. Taulapapa Brenda Heather–Latu, Samoa's former Attorney General and now the British Honorary Consul to Samoa is one such example. She grew up and was educated in New Zealand, and at the 35 as a single and untitled woman was appointed as Samoa's first female Attorney General

A more fulsome engagement of the diaspora is challenged by expectations of local service. Supporting the effective engagement of the diaspora in local development debates would appear an important and potentially fruitful avenue for future PLP engagement. The diaspora brings resources, regional networks and fresh perspectives to bear and has much to offer to support Samoa in responding innovatively to its development challenges.

A key gap in the scans lies in the role of Samoan churches and their approach to development issues. The churches play a key role in Samoan life and have access to considerable resources. But most interlocutors noted the inherent conservatism of church groups.

Political system

Rules of the game: Samoa has strong and clear formal and informal rules of the game. Formal rules include state institutions such as the parliament and public service. There are clear policy processes whereby political decisions are translated effectively through formal institutions to be implemented. Samoa enjoys an independent judiciary and laws and policies are generally implemented. The strong state in Samoa provides a clear institutional framework within which developmental leaders can work to prosecute development goals. The effectiveness of Samoa's formal institutions is reflected in the Government's sustained and incremental implementation, over a period of several decades, of a deliberate national development and economic reform program, which has underpinned the country's enviable economic development record.

Formal state institutions are complemented by strong informal institutions which exert a powerful influence on decision-making and politics. As already observed, traditional institutional structures such as the matai system and village-based governance constitute a powerful local political system. Connections between the formal state and village-based governance, mediated by matai, underpin the legitimacy and penetration of the Samoan state into local communities.

The proven effectiveness and success of the formal state, coupled with the legitimacy and enduring importance of Samoan cultural institutions, provides a clear institutional framework within which developmental leaders must navigate.

Games within the Rules: While there are strong formal institutional parameters setting rules of the game within which decisions are made, politics itself is played out in distinctive ways with significant implications for development leadership. The matai system vests particular power in a specific group of elites who frame and resolve developmental problems within a consensual and insider politics.

Women in Leadership Advocacy

The Women in Leadership and Advocacy (WinLA) Group was established in 2010. The forum, which is chaired by the Honourable Fiame Mataafa, Minister for Justice and Courts, comprises all current and past women Parliamentarians and female Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) from across the public sector.

The group, which meets quarterly, was originally founded with a view to champion health promotion in the country but its remit has continued to expand to include broader issues including education reform and the development of women's leadership in both the public and private sectors. For example in 2012 the group championed awareness concerning the new Education Act 2009, which provides for zero tolerance around corporal punishment in schools, after the media exposed several high profile cases of teachers abusing students through the exercise of corporal punishment.

More recently they have successfully lobbied to increase teacher salaries. In their own time the CEO of the Public Service Commission and the CEO of Education undertook a survey and conducted further research which formed the basis of an evidence-based report, which was presented to the Minister three times before action was forthcoming.

Developmental leadership is expressed primarily through a core leadership group placing particular importance on consensus and unity. This vests particular importance in political leaders and has resulted in an increasingly top-down and almost authoritarian political culture. Notions of the deep-rooted and timeless nature of Samoan culture are used to limit dissent and channel conflict into constructive directions (Duituturaga 2011, 98). Previous reform processes reflect the dominance and leadership of a small group of legitimate individuals able to work within the system to impose informed policy decisions. This style of policy-making has placed a premium on ex poste consultation and rationalization, limiting the scope of civil society engagement in reform processes. NGOs seeking to influence political decision-making need to engage through similar insider channels as senior civil servants and politicians; that is they need to work through people with connections to the Prime Ministers and other key Ministers.

The exclusive nature of the Samoan political settlement limits the range of techniques available to developmental leaders to prosecute reform agendas. Public campaigning and external campaigns struggle to cut through gatekeeper barriers and strong internal networks. Conversely, constructive insider engagement with policy issues, including through bringing technical knowledge to bear on state sanctioned development priorities, have reasonable prospects of gaining traction within policy circles. Lobbying key decision makers has proven a particularly effective strategy. For example, Samoa's introduction of temporary special measures involved the Prime Minister personally committing to the measure and then forcing it through the system.

The combination of clear and well-delineated rules of the game, and a strong, top-down 'games within the rules' culture, provides a clear decision-making framework within which developmental leaders can target development campaigns. Less certain is the capacity of the system to respond and accommodate legitimate external claims.

Development leadership opportunities

Based on the previous analysis, we have identified several options for supporting developmental leadership in Samoa.

1 Use existing leadership infrastructure to prosecute targeted reforms
PLP has invested in strengthening key leadership infrastructure that is well positioned to work within the existing rules of the game to prosecute developmental reform agendas. The Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Leadership Samoa in particular appear to be well placed to support effective developmental initiatives. PLP should think of these existing leadership organizations as coalition hubs around which it can bring in new individuals, groups and organizations, subject to the development issue at hand (see below).

2 Invest in new leadership organizations to cover gaps
As the above report has observed, there are several development fault lines in Samoa for which there is not a clear leadership infrastructure. PLP could usefully consider investing in some more bespoke leadership organizations oriented towards engaging with key issues such as urbanization, social change and diaspora links. PLP could investigate supporting an urban growth coalition to manage processes of urbanization, social change and diaspora reintegration in Apia, for example.

More broadly, PLP should do further research to consider how to engage with those individuals currently excluded from the matai-dominated political settlement. This would appear a significant omission and a major development risk for Samoa over the long term. A key issue would appear to be in the expression of diaspora interests and the way in which these could be harnessed in support of positive, inclusive change.

Several interviewees mentioned how the diaspora expresses political influence through their families and the fono system and so are already incorporated into the political economy of Samoa. We are not convinced this is the full story, but further analysis would be needed to identify leadership opportunities and engagement strategies. We understand elsewhere there is significant evidence of the traditional system under strain. In particular, the assimilation of returned diaspora to Apia suggests there are particular issues around urbanization, justice and political participation that would warrant further investigation. Another area under-researched is about the inclusivity of local governance arrangements at the village level and how village matai mediate development issues such as access to land between the central state and local communities. We were particularly impressed by the work of Leadership Samoa and in particular its efforts to redefine traditional leadership so returnees can play a more constructive leadership role. Understanding how the traditional system is evolving and how in some instances it is being bypassed and overtaken by events on the ground would be a particularly important avenue of further research.

3 Using leadership infrastructure to support key development reforms
While PLP has made some important investments in leadership organizations, the challenge is now to use this leadership infrastructure to support significant reforms. Given the functionality and general clarity of the formal rules of the game in Samoa, a sensible way to do this is by providing technical policy assistance around priority reforms and identifying change coalitions to advocate specific reforms in the political system. The Government of Samoa has proven itself to be a strategic development actor and this represents an ongoing opportunity for engagement.

The stability of the government coupled with its rational amenability to economic reform imperatives means the government is likely to be responsive to well-argued reform proposals made by the right people.

Core development fault lines where we think there are opportunities for issues-based leadership are:

Economic reform: A key reform issue is in the area of microeconomic reform. While SSGM cannot recommend specific reform activities, PLP should work closely with Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other economic actors, to identify specific issues impeding business development. A clear reform opportunity was identified by Grant Percival around the cost of electricity and obstacles to the introduction of renewable energy technologies. There would appear to be significant scope to help leaders make a convincing technical case for specific economic reforms. Public sector reform and the role of state owned enterprises would be another, albeit fraught, area of potentially significant economic impact given the dominance of state owned enterprises in the Samoan economy. If it were to engage in this space, PLP would need to undertake significant political economy analysis of the interconnections between politics, the bureaucracy and private sector. It seems a particular reform challenge centres on the scale of the public sector and the interests of state owned enterprises in framing reform debates.

Urbanisation and social change: This is a very sensitive and challenging area, and one which straddles a broad range of issues including returning diaspora and the breakdown of traditional structures. PLP may be able to provide a useful convening role to help place a challenging issue on the development agenda in a way that could lead to a fertile long-term development agenda. PLP should undertake research to clarify entry-points in this space and, subject to these findings, consider supporting leadership organizations with a specific urban issues focus.

4 Research on the evolving political settlement.
The traditional system is very strong and contributes greatly to the functionality of the Samoan state and society. This is a great strength and provides a clear institutional frame within which to prosecute developmental reform agendas. At the same time, it is clear Samoa is experiencing significant changes and it is not certain the degree to which the political system in Samoa is accommodating and responding to this change. On the one hand, the nature of matai interests and elite power in Samoa ensures that elites have a clear awareness of the development context and system challenges and opportunities facing the prevailing system. On the other, the system potentially underwrites an inherent developmental conservatism and excludes non-matai groups (taulealea (untitled men) and tamaitai (women). To what degree do these interests result in a narrow framing of what come to be considered 'legitimate' reform issues? More information is needed on the inclusive or exclusive nature of the political settlement in Samoa and the degree to which those marginalized from the settlement can register claims in constructive and productive ways. How can marginalized groups engage with the political system in constructive ways, and the power such groups currently exercise?

Vanuatu Developmental Leadership Country Scan

Country context

Vanuatu, formerly known as the New Hebrides,[6] faces significant development challenges. It has limited natural resources (negligible mineral deposits and has no known petroleum deposits), a highly dispersed and ethnically diverse youthful population of approximately 250,000 spread across 83 islands, is vulnerable to natural disasters, has poor transport infrastructure, a small domestic market, and is situated a long way from major international markets. (ILO: 4).

Population growth, coupled with few opportunities to participate in the formal economy in rural areas, has given rise to rapid urbanisation and growing urban/rural inequality. These factors are widely cited as key drivers of change and as threats to social cohesion, sustained growth and long term political stability in Vanuatu (Cox et.al 2007:15; 59). At least one quarter of the entire population is now urban based,[7] and if the peri-urban villages around Port Vila are also included, the urban population rises to around 30% of the total population. (ibid:ii). Finding ways for this rapidly growing urban population to engage with the political system in constructive ways presents as a key challenge moving forward.

Vanuatu's progress against the Millennium Development goals has been mixed. Vanuatu is on-track to reduce child mortality and to combat HIV and AIDS, Malaria and other diseases, but off track with respect to gender equity and environmental sustainability (PIFS 2013). Indeed, persistent gender inequalities remain, and as Cox et.al (2007:30) observe, 'there is limited participation of women in any level of politics in Vanuatu, and men have primary control of the social, political, economic and cultural institutions.'

Vanuatu's rural economy is principally dominated by smallholder agriculture. The national economy has experienced steady growth in recent years, driven largely by foreign investment, particularly in tourism, construction and land development. Tourism and tourism-related services sectors currently account for approximately 40 per cent of GDP and one third of all formal employment.[8] Land alienation has proved particularly problematic, with more than 90% of coastal land on Efate Island, where the capital of Port Vila is located, now alienated. Land disputes are common place.

Australia is the major source of foreign investment in the Vanuatu economy, and Australia and New Zealand are the main suppliers of tourists and foreign aid. Aid flows are central to Vanuatu's economy, accounting for 20–30 per cent of the budget (ibid:51). They are expected to remain high into the foreseeable future.

Seasonal labour mobility is now making an important contribution to Vanuatu's economy as well with several thousand Ni-Vanuatu participating in the New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Program and Australia's Pacific Seasonal Worker Program since the inception of these programs in 2007 and 2008 respectively.[9]

A longitudinal evaluation of the RSE scheme by the World Bank has shown that participating households from Vanuatu have benefited from 'large gains in income and wellbeing' (Gibson and McKenzie forthcoming:25; see also Bailey 2013), including: a 35–43% increase in per-capita income, a 28% increase in per-capita expenditure, a 181% increase in savings (ibid:22), subjective increase in wellbeing and an increase in ownership of durable assets (Gibson and McKenzie 2010:2). Bailey (2103:7) also reports that returning workers from Ambrym, an Island that is disadvantaged with respect to the rest of Vanuatu, have been able to support their children through to tertiary education – something that had proved very difficult in the past. The World Bank evaluation also concluded that the development impact of the scheme in its first two years of operation was equivalent to '25% of annual export earnings for Vanuatu' (Gibson and McKenzie forthcoming:23).

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6 Vanuatu gained independence in 1980, after being governed as a Condominium by Britain and France.

7 See https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/nh.html

8 See https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/vanuatu/vanuatu_brief.html

9 The Australian program started in 2008 as a pilot and was made permanent on 01 July 2012. During the 4-year pilot phase 113 visas were granted to Vanuatu workers. Since the scheme was made permanent, visa grants to Vanuatu workers have risen sharply with 320 granted between July 2012 and 31 May 2014 (unpublished data from Department of Immigration and Border Protection, personal communication Rochelle Ball, June 2014). By contrast the first six years of the RSE scheme saw 13,770 worker arrivals from Vanuatu (see New Zealand Department of Labour –
http://www.dol.govt.nz/initiatives/strategy/rse/information.asp).

Vanuatu's geographical, ethnic and cultural diversity, which is reflected in a weak sense of national identity, poses significant challenges for collective action and instead sees the efforts of political leaders channelled into localised and highly personalised endeavours. Indeed, both development and politics in Vanuatu tend to be understood in very localised terms.

As in the Solomon Islands, prospects for developmental leadership in Vanuatu are also complicated by a poor governance environment. As Cox et.al (2007:43) rightly observe, 'one of the most striking features about the state in Vanuatu is the limited reach of the formal institutions outside the capital, and the resulting absence of the state from the lives of most Ni-Vanuatu' Specifically there is little by way of service delivery in the outer islands and access to basic health and education services is poor.

By contrast, informal institutions, such as chiefs and the churches, 'are seen as highly legitimate and far more relevant to people's lives' (ibid:47). They tend however to be conservative in nature, limiting the way Vanuatu engages with its development challenges. The 11-year delay in passing the Family Protection Bill is a case in point. Chiefs and the churches were particularly opposed to the legislation and when it was finally passed, the Vanuatu Christian Council launched an unsuccessful campaign against the Bill, including lobbying the President not to sign the bill into law, arguing it had unconstitutional content and undermined the sanctity of marriage (AusAID 2009:93; Morgan 2013:30).

To date Vanuatu has struggled to formulate and implement coherent development policy. Instead, 'policy initiatives tend to be inconsistent and short-lived', driven by immediate reaction to constituents' concerns, 'rather than evidence-based advice from the executive' (Cox et.al 2007:38). Coupled with this 'public or civil society participation in the policy process is fairly limited' (ibid:42) and business influence 'irregular and poorly institutionalised, often depending on personal contacts with Ministers' (ibid:42).

As elsewhere in Melanesia, Vanuatu has a surfeit of political parties that are weak and fluid. There are, for example, sixteen parties represented in the current parliament. Elections are fiercely contested and political competition is based on patronage. As Morgan (2013:22) rightly observes, 'attaining government is … only possible through … coalitions of fractious political parties'. Such coalitions tend to be unstable and short-lived, and the form of parliamentary democracy that has developed is 'suffused with local cultural elements' (ibid:23), in particular the expectation that MPs will provide direct assistance to their constituents in times of need and in exchange for their support. As others have pointed out, patronage 'drives corruption at the highest levels' (Cox et.al 2007:20), encourages MPs to squeeze as much out of the state as they possibly can within a short timeframe (cf May 2004:320), and has given rise 'to chronic short-termism across government, undermining any sustained approach to development' (Cox et.al 2007:20; Morgan 2005).

As Cox et.al (2007) point out, individuals are important in such a political system. Indeed 'the fragmented nature of politics in Vanuatu means that no group is in a position to control the state and its resources' and importantly that there is 'space for individuals within the political establishment to pursue a development agenda' (ibid:iii) – something demonstrated by the case studies presented herein. For example Ruth Doro is successfully championing gender equity in the churches (see below), Director of Women's Affairs – Dorosday Kenneth – drove the introduction of reserved seats for women in Vanuatu's municipal councils, and Minister for Land, Ralph Regenvanu, has driven the land reform process, albeit on the back of popular support for such change.

Development fault lines

Vanuatu's principle development fault lines are:

Economic change: Although Vanuatu has experienced steady economic growth in recent years, maintaining this growth may prove a challenge. As noted above a lack of opportunity in rural areas is contributing to rapid urbanisation, giving rise to land disputes, a proliferation of squatter settlements lacking basic services, high unemployment and an exacerbation of urban poverty. Managing such change 'is at the heart of the development challenge in Vanuatu' (Cox et.al 2007:ii). Evidently Vanuatu has the lowest formal sector employment in the region (World Bank 2006), with only 15% of the population is engaged in formal employment (Cox et al 2007:i) and one in four of the 3,500 young people who enter the labour market every year finding formal work (ibid:6). Limited employment opportunities place major strains on the social fabric and fuel social tensions.

Whist Vanuatu's formal economy is growing, it remains firmly centred on tourism, with the sector accounting for well over a third of those in formal employment. Continuing growth in Vanuatu's tourism sector will therefore be crucial to providing further employment opportunities for Vanuatu's young and rapidly growing population.[10]

Regional integration: Vanuatu has made significant inroads into regional economies through seasonal work in Australia and New Zealand, and this has already delivered clear development gains. Supporting Ni-Vanuatu to engage fully with emerging regional labour market opportunities over the long term represents another important opportunity, but will require further investment in vocational training and education to ensure benefits are maximised. Needed too are institutional structures that will allow Vanuatu to benefit from the experiences and capital of returning workers.

Governance: Economic reform in recent years has led to improvements in the management of its public sector finances, although it remains the case that Vanuatu's limited revenue base continues to constrain government efforts to deliver services and implement growth enhancing policy reforms. Linked with this there are significant structural impediments to growth and stability. Weak accountability mechanisms, corruption, and a form of politics that is localised and highly personalised and based upon patronage undermine government responsiveness to citizens and to the collective action problems facing the country. The unfinished business of state-building and decentralisation, which seem to have 'stalled half way through implementation' (Cox et.al 2007:45) have clearly constrained inclusive economic growth. Likewise the inability of customary and informal institutions, which are seen as highly legitimate in the eyes of the rural populace – to contribute to policy formation, means that policy reforms often struggle for legitimacy. Nurturing debate concerning how to involve traditional authorities in national policy dialogue is an important priority, as is support for further debate on decentralisation, the role of provincial government and the relationship between traditional and formal institutions, as resolving some of these issues will be vitally important to Vanuatu's future development prospects.

Social change: As elsewhere in Melanesia, Vanuatu is experiencing rapid social change which is deeply unsettling and potentially destabilising. Urbanisation and the growth of informal settlements on the outskirts of Port Vila, high population growth rates, inter-ethnic marriages and inter-island migration, changing gender relations, rising inequality, challenges to chiefly authority, growing substance abuse and high levels of domestic violence complicate prospects for social cohesion and collective action. As Cox et.al (2007:5) rightly observe, the heart of the development challenge in Vanuatu is managing this change.

Environment: Situated within the Pacific 'Ring of Fire', Vanuatu is prone to earthquakes, cyclones, droughts and floods. As (Cox et.al 2007:14-15) point out 'natural disasters can have major impact on the social and economic fabric. Cyclone Uma in 1987 cost US$25m in damage to infrastructure, and a further US$25m for business. The 2002 Port Vila earthquake caused US$2.5m in damage, while Cyclone Ivy in 2004 caused US$6m in damage and affected around 50,000 people'. Given the risks that such events pose to tourism infrastructure, concerns are growing that the Vanuatu economy has become too reliant on tourism.

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10 See http://pacificaidaustralia.org/manage/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Vanuatu-Country-Brief.pdf

Agency and developmental leadership

Whilst church and kastom provide an accepted, albeit conservative, leadership infrastructure in Vanuatu, the infrastructure for developmental leadership is highly variable and for the most part not particularly well developed, complicating options for PLP support. Vanuatu does not have robust political parties and the national parliament does not function effectively as a forum for considering policy issues and progressing reform. Politics is strongly centrifugal with political actors focusing their political attention on local constituencies rather than looking up to engage with national collective action problems. National political leadership is fluid and unstable, with high turnover of parliamentary representatives and formal political leaders. Governing coalitions within parliament are unstable, require high maintenance over the course of a parliament, and provide an unstable basis for strategic government and policy development. Coupled with this there is no governance tradition of ruling in the national interest to motivate and legitimise strong national government.

Working with developmental leaders in Vanuatu's compromised political space is difficult and by necessity must be opportunistic – something acutely recognised by Vanuatu's developmental leaders themselves.

Sheer bloody mindedness and the right timing is what is needed to advance policy reform and get laws passed in Vanuatu. You need to be in there for the long haul and to have done your homework, and then make the most of the political moment when the stars align, recognising that the political moment is often short-lived (Ralph Regenvanu, Minister for Lands, May 2014).

Indeed a key theme to emerge from the consultations in Vanuatu was the need to work opportunistically and to seize the political moment when it arises. This was the case with respect to the recent land reforms and with the introduction of temporary special measures. Another key theme was the importance of individual development leaders who can mobilise a small but effective coalition that can fly under the radar so to speak and do the necessary legwork for successful reform. Vocal lobbying in the Vanuatu context seems to meet considerable resistance from the more conservative elements of Vanuatu society.

On the face of it there appears to be a vibrant and actively engaged civil society in Port Vila. Notably there is less of a civil society presence in rural areas, save that provided by the churches. It was evident too that the Pacific Leadership Program has made important investments in key leadership organizations and broader civil society in Vanuatu, including the Vanuatu Department of Women's Affairs, Leadership Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Association of NGOs (VANGO), Vanuatu Bible Society, Vanuatu National Youth Council, Wan Smol Bag, Youth Challenge Vanuatu, and more recently Oxfam Vanuatu. Less clear is the extent to which these groups are sufficiently or prospectively developmental and politically orientated (see also Henderson and Roche 2012).

This is not to suggest Vanuatu is devoid of developmental leadership and has not achieved important developmental gains. It has. Indeed our consultations uncovered initiatives that have proved highly successful in areas which might ordinarily seem resistant to reform, for example church leadership.

Our consultations also revealed that while there are key individuals who have a strong sense of thinking and working politically, most civil society groups in Vanuatu remain focussed on local issues, are not sufficiently focussed on key developmental issues, and struggle to gain purchase. Indeed, groups like Leadership Vanuatu, though clearly made up of committed and civically minded individuals, have struggled to hone a developmental focus or to identify a clear reform issue to advance. The leadership of this group might benefit from exchanges with Leadership Samoa which has for instance been actively working to change traditional notions of leadership and to broaden the constituency of Samoan Leaders.

Issues of focus aside it is also the case that there is no clear policy infrastructure with which groups seeking to advance reform might engage. In cases where local groups have actively participated in policy reform processes it has tended to be because Ministers and Directors have created entry points for engagement, rather than the other way around. As such it would seem prudent for PLP to shift the balance of future support away from basic organizational sponsorship to more targeted capacity building and to more issues-based support, including how to use the existing leadership groups in which it has invested to kick-start the establishment of broader change coalitions equipped with the skills to progress substantive developmental issues. PLP might usefully play a role in helping to facilitate linkages between the groups it supports and Vanuatu's key developmental leaders.

At the present time Vanuatu does not have a large diaspora which could play an influential role in shaping national politics. Moreover it remains to be seen if the cumulated experiences of Ni-Vanuatu who have studied and worked abroad will coalesce into a more nationally-focused development elite. There is certainly some evidence to suggest participation in temporary labour mobility schemes is resulting in both developmental gains and collective action on the part of communities at the local level. For example, Bailey (2013:9) cites the example of RSE workers in North Ambrym who contribute part of their earning to the Lolihor Development Council, to support a local health clinic. Whether this can be scaled up to support inclusive economic growth on a larger scale remains to be seen.

Questions remain too as to the extent to which those outside the formal economy, particularly the growing urban poor, engage with the prevailing decision-making structures. A key developmental leadership opportunity would appear to lie in supporting greater engagement of marginalized groups to work collectively to advance development goals.

Vanuatu Christian Council

The Vanuatu Christian Council (VCC) is the peak body representing the most established churches in Vanuatu, namely the Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Churches of Christ and Apostolic Church, with the Seventh Day Adventists as observers.

As noted above the VCC actively campaigned against the introduction of the Family Protection Bill. Under the leadership of the VCC's Women's Desk Officer, Ruth Doro, the VCC has been working to integrate concepts such as Human Rights and Gender Equity into Church policy and broaden the constituency of church leaders, through the development of a Gender Policy. This work was undertaken in collaboration with the Department of Women's Affairs, UN Women and the Vanuatu Council of Women.

The Chiefs and Church leaders were initially quite resistant, opposing public discussion of issues such as gender-based violence, family and sexual violence and women's leadership, arguing that while the Church respects the role of women as mothers, there is no place for women in church decision-making.

Ruth realised that promoting a version of gender equality that was not perceived as in accordance with kastom was unlikely to attract much support, from either men or women. As a consequence she urged UN Women to support the process but to take a back seat, providing regular advice and technical assistance without being actively involved in the church forums that were organised to discuss the issues. This was considered important as local ownership was held to be crucial for success.

Another key concern was the identification of culturally sensitive entry points. Specifically UN Women supported the process by providing funds, engaging a Ni-Vanuatu gender expert – Dr Andrina Thomas – to work with the VCC and by reviewing documents on behalf of the VCC and Department of Women's Affairs. Importantly UN Women stayed in the background and supported from afar, which has held to be a key determinant of success. Indeed it was reported that Chiefs and Church leaders alike saw the initiative as locally owned and driven.

As a consequence of extensive consultation process undertaken by the VCC-led coalition, the VVC has now adopted a Gender Policy, and in early 2014, both the Presbyterian and Anglican Synods elected women to their Church decision-making bodies for the first time. The Presbyterian Church, Vanuatu's largest church, also supported the introduction of reserved seats for women in Vanuatu's municipal councils.

Political system

Rules of the game: Whilst Vanuatu possesses robust customary and informal institutions, namely chiefs and churches, which enjoy popular legitimacy, many Ni-Vanuatu have very little interaction with formal state institutions, beyond their local primary school or aid post (Cox et.al 2007:47). For the most part the formal institutions of government are seen as artificial and remote and are poorly understood. This gap, as Cox et.al (ibid:44) point out, 'is the most prominent weaknesses in the state-building process in Vanuatu, and is key to explaining the limited development effectiveness of the state'.

Compounding this, the formal rules of the game appear weak and somewhat opaque, making the political system complex to navigate and complicating prospects for strategic developmental leadership, in that there are few clear entry points for developmental leaders to shape policy and reform.

It is also the case that parliament operates in compromised ways. It sits infrequently, usually only for the minimum number of sitting days, and does not provide a solid framework for decision-making, in that 'legislation is routinely rushed through under urgent procedure, without time for parliamentary debate' (ibid:29), in the interests of political expediency.

Games within the Rules: The juxtaposition of weak formal institutions and strong informal institutions, which are conservative and adept at exerting influence on decision-making processes as countervailing force often opposed to developmental change, sees politics played out in distinctive top-down way which has significant implications for developmental leadership. Indeed this style of policy making, which places little importance on consultation, limits the scope for civil society engagement in reform processes. Instead it prioritises the importance of reform sponsors. Consequently parties seeking to influence political decision making need either a champion in parliament or connections to a particularly astute Departmental Director with the willingness and where-with-all to push legislation through the system. Indeed the capacity to influence policy reform seeming varies within and between ministries and is usually concentrated in a few key individuals (see also Cox et.al 2007:40).

In the Vanuatu context though, connection with the key individuals possessing the willingness and capacity to effect policy reform is typically not enough to effect change. Indeed in a context where there are few incentives for politicians to get behind growth enhancing reform, developmental leaders must adopt a long-term approach and be prepared to capitalise on political openings if and when they emerge. Ironically it is Vanuatu's parliamentary instability that delivers the clearest reform opportunities, as these often present in the context of a change of government or no-confidence vote.

There are key similarities in the case studies concerning leadership reform amongst the Vanuatu Christian Council's constituent churches and the one concerning the introduction of reserved seats for women on Vanuatu's Municipal Councils. The involvement of donors and international women's groups was actively resisted in both cases, as was vocal lobbying. Reflecting on the reform endeavours both women identified the need to be humble and the need to surround themselves with humble partners, with a clear understanding of how to think and work politically in a Vanuatu context. Both women also agreed that high profile TSM campaigns of the kind employed in PNG and the Solomon Islands would also have failed in Vanuatu. It is also worth noting that the women who led both reform initiatives, Ruth Doro and Doroday Kenneth, have both attended the Legislative Lobbying Course run by the South Pacific Commission's (SPC) Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) and identified this as the catalyst to their respective reform endeavours.

Developmental leadership opportunities

The personalised and localised nature of politics, and the weakness of the formal political system, complicates prospects for PLP to find immediate entry-points to support effective developmental leadership. Successful examples of recent developmental reform in Vanuatu have been locally driven, eschew overt donor involvement and have capitalised on opportunistic political openings. Based on these observations and our previous analysis, we have identified several options for supporting developmental leadership in Vanuatu.

A case of successful policy reform: Reserved Seats for women on Vanuatu's Municipal Councils.

In late 2013, Vanuatu enacted legislation establishing reserved seats for women on Vanuatu's Municipal Councils. The reform was championed by the Director of Women's Affairs Dorosday Kenneth. In effecting the reform she needed to distance herself from the National Council of Women, which is seen to have atrophied due to its own internal politics, and from donors and international women's agencies. She also had to work around local groups comprising failed women candidates, as she felt such groups would be seen as pushing a personal agenda. At one stage early on in the process she had the Minister for Justice and Internal Affairs direct the police to close down a workshop being run by UN Women, arguing that they were interfering in local politics and that their actions would compromise local reform efforts. She felt that UN Women did not sufficiently understand how to think and work politically in a Vanuatu context. Before embarking on her push for reserved seats Kenneth undertook a comprehensive stakeholder mapping and identified the people and groups she would need to work with the effect the desired reform. She then approached them individually.

Given that civil society had been lobbying unsuccessfully for reserved seats for more than a decade, Kenneth decided that timing and the right support would be critical. Following a change of Government on 23 March 2013, which saw Moana Carcasses Kalosil elected Prime Minister, Kenneth approached the Director of the Vanuatu Women's Centre and the Minister for Land, Ralph Regenvanu, for support. In consultation with Regenvanu she determined that a window of opportunity had presented itself, because the new PM was open to reform and in fact had announced a 100-day plan for political reform and was the leader of a party that had a stated gender equity policy. Collectively they agreed that Vanuatu was not yet ready for reserved seats at the national level and that reform at a lower level would prove more palatable and less threatening in the short term. It was also felt that a staged approach, introducing the measure amongst the most educated in the first instance would prove most effective. Kenneth then convened a small coalition including local academic Howard Van Tresse, Vanuatu's principle legislative drafter and the principle electoral officer and work with them to make the necessary changes to Vanuatu's Municipalities Act. She then went to the Secretary of Parliament to have the legislation listed for debate. It was only then that she called a meeting of Vanuatu's women leaders to alert them to what was happening behind the scenes. Once the legislation had been passed she used her networks and connections to walk the legislation through the process of gaining Presidential assent.

Invest in local organizations that have a strong issues focus with a view to prosecuting targeted reforms

PLP has made an important contribution to strengthening Vanuatu's leadership infrastructure, and is now well positioned to work with local actors to prosecute developmental reform agendas. Continued investment in leadership organizations is therefore warranted although PLP should be careful to direct support to organizations that have a strong developmental orientation and issues-based focus, and/or should work with the groups in whom they have already invested to help develop a much stronger developmental orientation. Leadership Vanuatu which presents as a prospectively developmental and politically orientated group appears at present to be struggling to think developmentally. Working closely with this group to help it identify an issues-based collective action problem to address might see it transformed into a strong – or at least potentially strong – developmental organization. This transformation might be effected through peer-to-peer learning and exchanges with Leadership Samoa.

Investing in proven developmental leaders

A key strength of the PLP approach in Vanuatu has been its recognition that reform is a highly charged and extremely sensitive political issue. Their willingness to take a back seat and work with a light footprint, being guided by developmental leaders themselves is to be commended. Moving forward developmental leaders whose achievements can be demonstrated should be invested in further. Forms of support might include targeted technical assistance and diagnostic work around policy development, to help ensure developmental leaders are ready to capitalise on reform opportunities when they emerge, or some form of ongoing support to ensure recent reforms are properly implemented and given every chance of success. Working with the Director of Women's Affairs to support Port Vila's five female municipal councillors would be a good starting point.

Invest in new leadership organizations and those excluded from the current political settlement to cover gaps

At the present time there are several development fault lines in Vanuatu for which there is no clear leadership infrastructure. PLP could usefully consider investing in some new leadership coalitions oriented towards engaging with key issues such as urbanization, social change and labour market access, particularly in the area of seasonal work. PLP could for instance investigate supporting an urban growth coalition to manage processes of urbanisation, social change and the reintegration of seasonal workers. More broadly, further information is needed as to the inclusive or exclusive nature of the political settlement in Vanuatu. Key to this is an understanding of the ways and extent to which the rapidly growing urban population engages with the political system. PLP should undertake further research to consider how to engage with those individuals currently excluded from the existing political settlement, particularly urban migrants and returned workers whose interests might be harnessed in support of positive, inclusive change.

Engagement with emergent challenges and opportunities

Urbanisation and land: Land and urbanisation remain two fundamental development issues that both the Vanuatu Government and donors have found difficult to engage with. PLP may be well placed to support creative, community-level engagement on the issue, drawing on the considerable body of research around the role of urban growth coalitions and their role in driving positive processes of urban change.

Labour Mobility and Regional Integration: Supporting Ni-Vanuatu to engage fully with emerging seasonal labour opportunities over the long term represents an important opportunity, which might be enhanced by investments in a broad-based coalition focussed on labour market opportunities. The reintegration of returned workers and the need for institutional structures that will allow Vanuatu to benefit from the experiences and capital of returning workers are areas that warrant further investigation.

Women's political representation: Improving women's political representation in Melanesia has proved to be a key developmental challenge. Targeted technical assistance to the five women elected to the Port Vila Municipal Council, following the introduction of reserved seats for women, might have a very powerful demonstration effect.

National dialogue: Nurturing debate concerning how to involve traditional authorities in national policy dialogue is an important priority, as is support for further debate on decentralisation, the role of provincial government and the relationship between traditional and formal institutions, as resolving some of these issues will be vitally important to Vanuatu's future development prospects.

PART 3

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPTIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAM SUPPORT FROM PLP

INTRODUCTION

PLP has made an important contribution to nurturing prospective developmental leaders in the Pacific countries in which it works. While this report did not seek to evaluate PLP's past activities or review the quality of its program support, it was apparent from the discussions we had, with PLP-supported developmental organizations, that PLP has made a significant and important investment in the region's leadership infrastructure. We were generally impressed with many of the individuals and organizations PLP has supported. We were also impressed with PLP's own understanding of developmental leadership and determination to leverage past investments in developmental leadership into development outcomes.

The challenge for PLP going forward is to shift the focus of its support from an organizational investment approach (seeding leadership organizations and providing capacity-building assistance) to an issues/outcomes-based approach. Ideally, this will see PLP shifting the focus of support provided to organizations away from generic capacity-building/ organizational strengthening, towards more diagnostic work around issues identification and political strategy development. A key opportunity for PLP is to use existing organizational investments as a beachhead for issues-oriented coalition development e.g. using national chambers of commerce as a foundation for economic reform coalitions.

As part of this process, PLP should also undertake a review of the organizations it currently supports to assess the degree to which they are sufficiently or prospectively developmental and politically oriented to warrant ongoing support. Some groups reviewed, on the basis of quite superficial discussions, appeared more project-oriented (i.e. focused on local service delivery) rather than developmentally engaged (changing local relationships). While in some partner countries, in which the difficult development context makes support for nationally-focused development issues difficult (e.g. Solomon Islands) there may be scope for continued investments in general leadership capacity-building and small-scale project-based leadership activities. PLP has a role to play in supporting civil society networks and using its resources to provide space for such groups to build confidence and engage in general development issues. However, if PLP choses to provide generic leadership support in a particular country, it should be clear on its goals and recognise the limitations of such an approach.

WORKING IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

The country scans broadly validated the political systems framework introduced at in part one of this report. That approach is not particularly insightful and PLP is intuitively – in some cases explicitly – working within this framework already. However, discussions with partner organizations and individuals across PLP's four country programs highlighted the limited degree to which many partner organizations have a sufficiently strong developmental focus or think politically in their daily activities. It was also surprising how narrow was the repertoire of political techniques used by some organizations in prosecuting their reform agendas. This in part reflects the constraints facing formal political institutions (being under-developed and weak in Melanesia and relatively exclusive and inaccessible in Polynesia). More could be done to help partner organizations think more creatively about policy advocacy options.

Many organizations also had an excessively strong donor focus – looking at donors as a principle customer in order to attract funding and other resources, to the detriment of a more externally-focused development change program. Some partner organizations seemed very skilled and savvy in terms of pitching ideas for donor support, but less focused on their development objectives and the political strategies needed to achieve them. The focus on attracting donor support was reflected in a strong project orientation (pitching output focused ideas to donors) at the expense of a development orientation (development outcomes, changing society). A focus on donors has the added benefit of allowing organizations to avoid the difficult challenge of dealing in a substantive way local governments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With these general observations in mind, the following specific recommendations are offered in terms of future program positioning:

PLP approach

Invest more resources into issues identification and local political economy analysis. To date, PLP has focused its efforts on seeding generic leadership organizations (e.g. women's leadership, national leadership organization etc.). PLP should now work with these organizations to identify specific, substantive and politically-energising development issues around which the program can begin to tailor specific support. Once it has identified specific development issues with partner organizations, PLP should undertake issues-specific political economy analysis to identify specific entry points (e.g. if PLP choses to engage with Constituency Development Fund issues in Solomon Islands, it should undertake specific analysis on village level incentives etc. in conjunction DFAT and other engaged donors such as the World Bank). In identifying possible development issues, PLP should work closely with DFAT (see next point).

Invest PLP resources early on in phase three in establishing strong relationships with DFAT. PLP needs to identify politically ripe development issues to work with, as these are the most likely to galvanise strong leadership and allow for the building of broad coalitions. However, PLP has another role which to our knowledge it has not clearly articulated and marketed: as a potential source of cross-cutting advice to DFAT programs on political engagement issues around specific reform priorities. This is not to argue that PLP should seek to supplant DFAT's principal role as a political analyst. Rather, PLP is uniquely placed to draw on its significant networks within its partner countries to identify policy reform entry points, broad analysis on the operation of the political system (broadly conceived, informal and formal institutions), and advise on options for supporting the formation of positive reform coalitions. PLP has not made the most of its strengths as a form of complementary program support of benefit to core development program priorities.

Issues Engagement

A stronger focus on development issues identification will allow PLP to think about more targeted coalition building and tailored support. Several potentially fertile development issues emerged from the country scan analyses that were common to all partner countries:

Private sector development and economic reform: This would appear a safe and effective entry point. All partner countries face significant issues in identifying new market opportunities, business development impediments and growth-enhancing economic reforms. This is an area in which there is potentially a broad constituency (local businesses, donors, labour market entrants). Many developmental elites in PLP's partner countries have personal business interests which will provide entry-points for PLP engagement and reform-oriented coalitions. PLP has already made significant investments in business leadership through its chambers of commerce. It would make sense for PLP to work closely with these existing groups as a starting point to identify major business reform issues and engagement opportunities. Most business organizations interviewed mentioned they would appreciate further program support around technical analysis of policy issues to allow them to engage more constructively with national governments. Business and economic reform issues also have cross-cutting significance and could be linked to broader program efforts focused on youth employment.

Regional integration: The issue of regional integration and the deepening of relationships with metropolitan countries are important to all PLP partner countries. The Polynesian countries already have deep relationships, reflected in large, well-established Diasporas and large remittance-based economies. The Melanesian countries have only limited regional links but there is growing recognition of the importance of deepening these links to future economic and social development. This makes the domestic-metropolitan interface a development fault line ripe for PLP engagement, although the nature of engagement will need to be significantly different in each country.

In Melanesia, a key policy area which is currently under-engaged with is the issue of tertiary and vocational education, skills development and regional labour market participation. There are a host of associated issues in this space that PLP could play a leadership role and support issues-based coalitions. Vocational training is potentially of relevance to a broad range of development actors including the private sector, provincial and national governments, church-based vocational providers,

youth groups, and donors. This issue is very large – part of a broader, long-term nation-building – and PLP would have to be discerning in the way it engaged with it. But it is also an issue gaining a head of steam. For example, in Solomon Islands, the government has recently established the Solomon Islands National University which faces significant institutional challenges but also provides new entry points for engaging in tertiary education and training. Donors are also moving to increase support for tertiary education and will presumably be key partners for well-targeted PLP activities.

In Polynesia, there is already an established set of diasporic relationships and the remittance economy is a fundamental element of the respective political settlements. However, it is notable how under-institutionalised the diasporic relationships are, suggesting development opportunities are not being maximised. The way in which diasporic communities' engagement and influence their home-country political economies is under-researched and would appear a fruitful area for PLP to research further. It appears that the partner countries have yet to fully capitalize on the great development potential of diaspora communities. This would be one area PLP might usefully invest in basic leadership development. We note the significant work being done by Leadership Samoa which includes working to redefine notions of traditional leadership so returned diaspora can more readily contribute to the economic, social and political life of their communities. This may be a specific issue PLP could work within existing leadership organizations to foster. At the same time, PLP could help formalize domestic-metropolitan links as a basis for identifying specific diaspora issues which could be supported.

Democratic deepening: A common issue in discussions with development groups was the reluctance or indifference of development organizations to working within the formal democratic institutions to progress reform. PLP could play a useful role in working with its networks to progress identified issues within democratic spaces available. Such an approach would include organizational capacity building, but with a view to building organizational confidence and skills to navigate parliamentary systems. PLP should work closely with existing democratic governance programs.

Policy capacity-building: All of the country scans discussions identified significant gaps in critical policy making capabilities. Vanuatu has an established policy institute/think tank and there may be merit in PLP seeking to build a strong policy development infrastructure in its partner countries. In Solomon islands, PLP could support SINU in developing a public policy role, which could them work closely with other leadership organizations to provide technical advice on specific development issues.

Regional Issues: Many of the issues flagged above have strong regional/metropolitan links. The issue of regional labour market access in Australia is a significant and sensitive policy issue. There is scope for PLP to complement its country program work with metropolitan-focused leadership activities. For example, PLP could work with Tongan/Samoan diaspora communities in Australia and New Zealand directly in attempting to identify relevant development issues and to complement country-based activities (e.g. in the area of vocational accreditation or remittances).

Women's Leadership: Pacific scholars and policy makers have linked the relative absence and enduring under-representation of women in politics in the region, including in leadership roles, to a range of factors, most notably culture or kastom (Kofe and Taomia 2006:211; Huffer 2006; Whittington, Ospina and Pollard 2006; Whittington 2008; Korare 2002), the dominance of masculine political cultures (McLeod 2002), the apparent incompatibility between traditional societal values and modern state structures (Whittington 2008), the notion that politics is men's work (Pollard 2003), the perception that electoral systems are gender biased (Whittington 2008; AusAID 2012) and inequality in relation to access to campaign financing (McLeod 2002; Whittington, Ospina and Pollard 2006).

Whilst there is some merit in these arguments and explanations, the case study analysis in this report points to the developmental success of women working individually and/or in coalitions to make significant developmental differences when taking an issue-based approach and when supported effectively through issues-based support. The successful reform example of reserved seats for women in Vanuatu's municipal councils underlines the importance of a strategic approach to developmental leadership, and the need for a more nuanced approach to coalition formation (in this case very small and bespoke, and changing according to the point in the policy cycle) and the type of technical assistance provided (in this case around working within a parliamentary framework). The example of the Young Women's Parliamentary Group in Solomon Islands also points to new entry points for women's leadership through an issue-based approach that does not directly focus on 'gender', but rather issues of importance to women and the broader community (e.g. bus routes and public transport). PLP should endeavour to learn more about by particular women have been able to overcome the burden of traditional cultures and prejudice in certain circumstances. Political economy analysis has generally been weak in relation to its handling of women in the Pacific. We recommend PLP undertake specific political economy analysis around women's leadership in the context of traditional systems in the Pacific, to inform more tailored support for women leaders around issues.

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APPENDIX 1 Consultation List

Following is a list of individuals and organizations consulted when undertaking the country scans. SSGM is grateful for the opportunity to consult with these individuals and organizations and the time they so kindly gave up.

Name	Title / Organization
Samoa Country Visit 7–11 May	
Clyde Hamilton	DFAT, First Secretary Development
Vena-liz Upton	DFAT, Senior Program Manager Education and Disabilities
Elisapeta Kerisake	DFAT, Program Manager Education
Ronicera Fuimaono	DFAT, Program Manager Inclusive Education, Gender, Civil Society
Kassandra Betham	DFAT, Program Manager
Megan Counahan	DFAT, Health Specialist
Honsol ChanTung	DFAT, Corporate and Finance Manager
Gardenia Elisaia	DFAT, Communications Manager
Adimaimalaga Tafuna'i	CEO, Women in Business Development Inc (WIBDI)
Afoa Arasi Tiotio	Chief Executive Officer Samoa Land Commission
Esther Lameko	CEO, National Provident Fund
Jennifer Fruean	CFO, National Bank/Treasurer Samoa National Youth Council
Klaus J Stuzner	Director Samoa Spare Parts/President Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization (PIPSO)
Lemalu Nele Leilua	Social entrepreneur
Maiava Visekota Peteru	Partner, Maiava Law/ President Mediation Association
Matafeo Tanielu Aliafi	CEO, Min. Education Sports, Culture
Naea Beth Onesemo	CEO Public Service Commission
Seumanuula Moana Clarke	President Samoa Umbrella of Non-Governmental Organizations
Sili Sala Epa Tuioti	Director KVA Consultants
Theresa Potoi Leota	CEO, Samoa Law Reform Commission
Dr. Siaosi Salesulu	Advisory Board, Leadership Samoa
Mele Maulaivao	UNWOMEN
Grant Percival	
Adimaimalaga Tafuna'i	WIBDI
Naea Beth Onesemo	CEO Public Service Commission

Brenda Heather Latu	Partner Law Firm – Latu and Latu
A'eau Peniamina Leavai	Deputy Leader of Opposition – Tautua Party
Lemalu Sina Retzlaff	PLP Country rep
Hon Fiame Mataafa	Minister for Justice and Courts administration/PLP Advisory Panel Chair

Name	Title / Organization
Tonga Country Visit 19–23 May	
Samiu Fonua	Dean Student Support, Tupou Tertiary Institute
Lady Si'atu Vaea	Deputy Director – Tonga Institute of Higher Education (TIHE)
Ministry of Education and Training, Pahu	
Hon. Dr. 'Aisake Eke	Minister of Finance and Planning, Nuku'alofa – Tonga
Kalafi Moala	Publisher and Managing Director, Taimi Media Network
Nanise Fifita	General Manager, Tonga Broadcasting Commission
Leta Kami	General Manager, Tonga Development Bank
Bishop Soane Patita Mafi	Bishop – Catholic Church Tonga
Rev. Ma'afu Palu	Registra, Sia'atoutai Theological College
Joyce Mafi	Former Governor, Tonga Reserve Bank
Drew Havea	Chair TNLDF, CSFT; President TNYC
Vanessa Lolohea	Director, Tonga National Youth Congress (TNYC)
Na'aluse Taiala	Programme Officer, Tonga Community Development Trust (TCDT)
Siale 'Ilolahia	Executive Director, CSFT
Rev. Dr. 'Ungatea Kata	Dean, Tupou Tertiary Institute
Winston Halapua	Urban Development, Ministry of Land, Environment and Climate Change

Name	Title / Organization
Vanuatu Country Visit 19–23 May	
Dorosday Kenneth Dhressen	Director, Department for Women's Affairs
Hon. Ralph Regenvanu	Minister for Lands
Alex Mathieson	Country Director, Oxfam Vanuatu
Wesley Morgan	Oxfam
Dr. Andrina Thomas	Executive Director, Live and Learn
Shirley Laban	Climate Change Co-ordinator, Oxfam Vanuatu

Michael Taurakoto	CEO, Wan Smolbag
Moses Stevens	President, Pacific Islands News Association
Hannington Alatoa	Consultant and President of the Vanuatu Red Cross Society
Ruth Dovo	Vanuatu Christian Council
Jack Ruben	Co-ordinator, Vanuatu Bible Society
Jesta Simeon	Administrative Assistant, Vanuatu Bible Society
Kiery Manasseh	Senior Communications Officer, Pacific Institute of Public Policy
Lora Lini	Executive Officer, Melanesian Spearhead Group
Rebecca Olul	UN Women
Rebecca Solomon	Vanuatu National Youth Council
Joe Kalo	Vanuatu National Youth Council

Name	Title / Organization
Solomon Islands Country Visit 26–30 May	
Mr Eliam Tangirono	Chairman, PSC
Mr Robert Kaua	Director, Governance, MPGIS
Mr Daniel Rove	U/S, MDPAC
Mr Ishmael Avui	PS, MPS
Ms Marisa Pepa	Young Women's Parliamentary Group
Ms Doris Puiahi	Live and Learn
Ms Nanette Tutua	Entrepreneur/ Owner TIMOL Timber
Mrs Dalcy Tekulu	President, SI Women in Business Assoc
Ms Alphea Hou	Pasifiki Services
Pastor Johni Tango	SDA Church
Pastor Eric Maefonea	SSEC
Father Pius Toomae	Catholic Church
Father Sam Ata	SI Christian Association
Mr Edgar Pollard	SSEC Youth Executive
Ms Sandra Bartlett	Program Manager, SPC Youth at Work
Mr Tony Hughes	Private consultant and academic
Dr Glynn Galo	Solomon Islands National University