STATUS OF TEACHERS

SAMOA NATIONAL REPORT

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March 2015
Overview

- Politically independent since 1962
- 2 main islands, Upolu and Savaii
- Land Area: 2,820 sq km: 43% is arable land.
- Growth rate: 0.8%: high out migration especially to NZ.
- 51.8% males: 55% under 25: 35% under 15
Overview (cont’d)

- GDP (2011) US $505.8m
- 10% primary; 22% secondary and 68% tertiary
- HDI .688 placing 99th out of 187 countries
- Remittances from Samoans overseas: average 18.2% between 2000 and 2011
- Graduated out of LDC status in 2014
- Major recent natural disasters: Sept 2009 tsunami killed over 200 people; Cyclone Evan 2013.
Main Goal of the Study
- to enhance the quality of teaching

Specific objectives
- Review the current status and working conditions of teachers
- Examine the rights and privileges of teachers and
- devise policies and strategies to attract qualified teachers and motivate them to remain in the teaching profession
The study covers teachers of general education in 142 primary schools and 23 secondary schools that are under the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture in Samoa.

All teachers in the government schools are all potential members of the Samoa National Teachers Association (SNTA). Currently membership in SNTA is 98%.

Study does not include the teachers in 33 mission schools and 9 private schools which make up the rest of the schools in Samoa.
Methodology

Research framework principles
ILO/UNESCO Status of Teachers 1966 instrument
i) Desk review of
   ▶ all legal documents
   ▶ All national development plans; education policies and plans; professional standards; annual reports; reports of Samoa’s participation in regional initiatives since 1995

2) Interviews and discussions with ministry personnel, the professional association of teachers and other stakeholders.

3) Researcher Participant/Observor in all education development in Samoa in the last forty three years.
RESEARCH FINDINGS
Samoa’s Education System

Legislation and Education Sector Planning

- Samoa Education Act 2009–overarching framework.
- 2004 Compulsory Education Act
- Samoa Education Sector Plan 2013–2018

Scope of the education sector:
- ECE (mainly private) under the oversight of a National Council;
- Primary Schools; mainly Government;
- Secondary Schools mainly Government;
- Post School Education and Training (PSET) Gov and private providers
- Communities, Parents and Students
Primary education: 8 years; free and compulsory 2014: GER 106%; NER 98% (age cohort 5–12 years)

Secondary education 2014: 5 years: free for 1st 3 years; 2010: GER 81% (73% male and 89% female) total NER 70% (63% male and 78% female) 13–17 age cohort

PSET: tertiary at university, pre and in-service teacher education; theological education and training, apprenticeships; non formal and on-the-job training
Generally affirming of the utmost importance of quality teachers to educational development.

- Government Statements of Strategic Development (SDSs) since 1999
- Samoa National Teacher Development Framework (2011)
- Teachers’ Education Bill 2014 (Teachers’ Act 2015)
Pre Service Teacher Education and Training

- Primary teacher education since 1939 (Primary Teachers College – PTC)
- Secondary teacher education since 1978 (Secondary Teachers College – STC)
- PTC and STC Amalgamation in 1991: Samoa Teachers College
- Amalgamation with the National University of Samoa in 1997
- Faculty of Education since 1997 (currently only provider for teacher education/training.)
**Pre-service teacher education and training**

Entry requirements: Completion of Year 13 (Form 6): Pass for *English* minimum Grade 5 plus total aggregate of English plus 3 best subjects of 17 or better, to enter

i) Foundation Certificate in Education, then

iia) Diploma of Education (2 year programme) for primary, junior secondary, special needs, early childhood education teaching specialisations. (phased out in 2014)

and currently

iib) Bachelor of Education (4 year programme)

OR

First degree in a teaching subject (from another faculty or university) plus one year Graduate Dip.Ed
Teachers In Service

Government Service
80% hold a Diploma of Education
12% hold a first degree plus teaching qualification
8% hold certificate qualifications (in the age cohorts of 50–60+)
Teachers In Government Service

Government Teaching Workforce. Total 1,653. 69% in rural schools. 66.3% in primary, 72% are female

Status as public servants: subject to all public service employment conditions
TEACHER STATUS AS PUBLIC SERVANTS
Teachers are eligible for

- Sick Leave: 15 days annually cumulative (30% untaken sick leave at retirement or resignation)
- Paternity leave (2 weeks)
- Maternity leave (2 months)
- Bereavement leave (3 days)
- Short term study leave (up to one year on full pay)
- Long Service benefit (8 days per year for each year served based on current salary) may apply for this after 10 years of service

Not eligible for annual leave
Salaries

- Generally non parity with other professions until recently.
- Government granted funds in 2013 to correct teachers salaries anomalies since the public service 42% general increase in 2007.
- Then granted 21% in 2014 to be implemented 7% per year for 3 years (2015–2017).
- Improvement in parity
Salaries cont’d

When 21% increase is fully implemented (2017)
Actual Salaries: Entry points

- Dip.Ed : $16,765
- Degree plus teaching qualif; $27,513–00
- Masters plus teaching qual $30,767–00
- Ph.D plus teaching qual. $34,026

Assumption: Teachers will improve salaries through performance and improvement in qualifications.
Career Structure

Approved by PSC in May 2014

Dual tracks

- Teaching into management track
- Teaching track with improvement in salary based on performance

All teaching positions are on tenure

Principals and Deputy principals are contractual positions for three years from 2015 onwards
Principals Salaries

Contractual Positions
5 bands based on sizes of schools

Band 1: $34,841
Band 2: $47,957
Band 3: $55,000
Band 4: $62,000
Band 5: $68,000
Professional Status of Teachers

Value placed on the teaching service as per salary parity was always low.

- Improvement was approached firstly through improvement in teacher education and training.
- Secondly through development of the professional association of teachers SNTA/SFS
- Thirdly through National Teacher Development Framework (2011)
- And now the Teachers Act 2015
National Teacher Development Framework

- Development of professional standards for teachers in Samoa (2011)
- Development of the professional standards for principals (2014)
- Development of the professional standards for trainers (2014)

All need robust systems of implementation
Appraisal systems must be fair and just and practical
The Teachers’ Act 2015

FOR REGISTRATION

- Proof of qualification: certified copies of academic and professional qualifications
- Proof of at least two years of teaching experience in Samoa or another country.
- Birth Certificate
- Police clearance
- Character references (2)
- Any other requirements prescribed by regulations.
- Prescribed Fee
Automatic licensing with full registration when Act is implemented.
Renewal of licensing every three years: to be provided under Regulations which are yet to be formulated.
69% of teachers work in rural schools
Majority live at home in their villages
A few commute to work in other villages
A few remote schools (6 in total)
About 98% of schools infrastructures meet the Minimum Service Standards (MSS)
Four schools exceed the allowable maximum size of 750 students.
Most class sizes fall within the MSS.
Main issue is multiple classes; 81 schools (57%) have composite or multiple classes
Main Issues

- High teacher attrition and its corollary ‘retaining teachers in the service’
- Current developments that threaten security in the work force
  - Contracting principals and deputy principals
  - System of teacher appraisal and implementation
  - Increased paperwork for non teaching purposes
  - Relationship between PSC and MESC
- Inadequate provisions for professional development.
- Capacity requirements to implement reforms.
Retaining teachers in the service

Salaries: these are now much improved—yet to see some impact on retention

Contracting principals and deputy principals: some have opted to resign or not apply for contract positions—loss of human capital

Implementation of the ’new’ teacher appraisal system: quite problematical: need to address in the short term

Dual track system in the teacher career structure: yet to be implemented – for teachers to be convinced
Since 2011, a tool exists that diagnoses and collects the professional development needs of teachers. This is the self appraisal document that teachers complete every year. (SAP)

However, there is still lacking a strategy to address teachers’ professional development needs.

A new division was set up in the MESC in 2014 to look at this.
A) Upgrading teachers qualification from diploma to degree level.
MESC in collaboration with development partners need to look at funding to enable cohorts of teachers (holding Dip.Ed qual) to upgrade to degree level.
An appropriate action plan over the medium term (5 years) should be developed
B. Short term training to address needs identified to be provided by:

a) School based PD
b) Outsourced to appropriate and accredited providers.
c) Systematic programme to be provided and implemented by MESC – through collaboration between CMAD and TDAD
The Samoa National Teachers Association (SNTA/SFS)

Plays a crucial role in the professionalization of teaching in Samoa.

- Has had to fight for legitimacy and recognition.
- Finally achieved in the National Teacher Development Framework.
- Has played a pivotal role in all improvements in salaries since 2002 and in the development of the NTDF.
- Has played a crucial role in the development of teacher standards and leadership standards for school principals and in the TEACHERS’ ACT 2015
Conclusions

- There has been a steady growth in the status of teachers in Samoa in the last thirty years.
- General Policy Environment is conducive to the enhancement of the quality of teachers and the teaching service.
- Regulations to the Teachers’ Act 2015 are a matter of priority. Some of these regulations will address some of the current issues in the implementation of staff appraisal.
- Some aspects of the NTDF need to be refined for clarity and practical implementation eg teacher management.
- The Teachers’ Act is expected to greatly enhance the status of teachers in Samoa.
- The professional association of teachers, SNTA/SFS has become a recognised and valued stakeholder in the professionalization of teaching in Samoa.
- Generally, the ILO/UNESCO 1966 instrument and its principles have been satisfied to a large extent but there is always room for improvement.
Acknowledgement.

- Faafetai tele (Much thanks) to UNESCO for the initiative to conduct this study and for including Samoa as a participant.

- Ia Manuia (Blessings)