



Final D r a f t

TONGA EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

2004 - 2019

Strategic Goals

Goal 1: To improve equitable access to and quality of universal basic education for all children in Tonga up to Year 8 (Form 2).

Goal 2. To improve the access to and quality of post-basic education and training to cater for the different abilities and needs of students.

Goal 3. To improve the administration of education and training so that the quality of educational performance is enhanced.

23 April 2004

Document Details

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Document No.: 05
For: Ministry of Education, Government of Tonga

This document contains 109 pages
Version 05 Revised 5/17/2004 7:22 PM
Document No. 05
Education Policy Framework.doc

“Ko e hakau ‘o e ‘aho ni, ko e fonua ia ‘o e ‘apongipongi”

(The reefs of today will be the islands of tomorrow)



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Opening Statement

The Government of Tonga, through the Ministry of Education, has been working for a period of over two years to develop this Education Policy Framework 2004-2019. The initial impetus for this work was derived from two principal sources.

The production of Strategic Development Plan 7 (2001-2004) in July 2001 was a major milestone for Tonga, as it adopted a new approach to economic and social development planning. The three key themes of this overarching plan for Tonga's development (Restructuring for Higher Sustainable Economic Growth, Ensuring Financial Stability, and Investing in People) focused centrally on the role of the education sector in promoting the country's growth. It was recognised, however, that a more detailed planning blueprint was needed in order to deliver the education outcomes that were being sought for Tonga.

The comprehensive review of the education sector that culminated in the Final Report: Tonga Education Sector Study (March 2003) was a further catalyst for action. The 28 recommendations of this review were formally adopted by the Government of Tonga in April 2003. At the same time, the Government sought additional assistance from the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZ Aid) and the World Bank in order to analyse and synthesise the findings from the Education Sector Study, and to facilitate the development of policy options and broadly costed alternatives for discussion by stakeholders invited by the Government of Tonga to take part in a consultative process. Following these discussions, the Government of Tonga wished to make decisions on the most appropriate Education Policy Framework for the country, and facilitate the development of a Strategic Plan for implementing this framework.

This document is the result. It has arisen from a further comprehensive process of consultation that has seen a discussion booklet (Education Issues and Policy Options in Tonga (September 2003)) circulated throughout Tonga, responses analysed, and a draft Education Policy Options Paper (November 2003) circulated for subsequent comment and feedback from stakeholders. The feedback received has now been incorporated in this publication.

The Education Policy Framework 2004-2019 provides Tonga with a vision and a broad outline strategy for the development of our education system over the medium to longer term (a period of approximately 15 years). It gives guidance for the future development of the country's education sector, and is the foundation document of two other linked and closely related education planning documents.

The first three years of this framework has been further developed in the Ministry of Education's Corporate Plan 2004-2007 which has been designed according to the guidelines set out by the Public Service Commission as part of the Tonga Public Service Reform activities. The design of the Corporate Plan 2004-2007 is also linked to the structure of the Budget, and thus focuses on the 6 broad Programs in the Education Budget. These six Programs in turn are further subdivided into Sub-Programs, then Activities and finally Sub-Activities.

Similarly, the first year of the three-year *Corporate Plan 2004-2007* is the basis of the Ministry of Education's *Annual Management Plan (2004-2005)*. This latter document is the foundation of Tonga's Annual Budget for the education sector.

The purpose of developing this *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* is to provide a coherent and carefully thought out design according to which the education sector can be developed over time. It provides a conceptual and policy framework which allows the Government to discuss its future policy directions and investments with stakeholders, both inside and outside Tonga. It identifies priorities for future investment and for further capacity development of the Ministry of Education.

A key set of education stakeholders is the donor community which provides tangible help to Tonga to assist in the country's development. We trust that this *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* will assist donors in understanding and appreciating Tonga's long-term vision for its education system, and that it will provide a context in which sector priorities can be considered within macro economic constraints. Our objective is to integrate all development spending (by the Government of Tonga and by funding agencies) within a coherent and integrated approach, according to a well documented plan, so that investments in education can be planned wisely.

An integrated approach based on this *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* will, I believe, benefit both children and adults in Tonga, and will support the development of our most precious resource: "our people."

Hon. Paula S. Bloomfield,
INTERIM MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

1. Introduction

The Education Sector in Tonga

- 1.1 The Kingdom of Tonga has an excellent education system that has a long-standing tradition of providing virtually universal access to six years of compulsory, free primary education. Tongans are justifiably proud of the high quality of the education system and the dedication of teachers and other educators. Tonga is also proud of its relatively high adult literacy rates, at least comparatively within the Pacific.
- 1.2 Education in Tonga is compulsory and free for all children between the ages of 6 and 14, until a child has completed 6 years of primary education. The formal primary education system comprises 118 schools (107 Government and 11 Church schools), with 17,051 students enrolled in 2002 (53% male, 47% female) and a teaching force of 823.
- 1.3 In the 7-year secondary education cycle, by contrast, 72% of students study at non-Government Church schools or private schools, while the remaining 28% are enrolled at state schools. There are 14,567 secondary students (just under 50% female, and just over 50% male) attending a total of 41 schools, only 10 of which were operated by Government. In 2002 the secondary teaching work force stood at 1,012.¹
- 1.4 The post-secondary formal education picture comprises 12 institutions funded by Government (60% of the sector) with the other 40% coming from a variety of Church, private and industry-based providers. In addition there is a substantial non-formal sub-sector targeting adult groups and youth.

Background to Present Developments

- 1.5 The Ministry of Education (MOE) has undertaken a broad consultative process to align the education sector with the demands of the 21st century and to meet the objectives of SDP7 and the NPRS. In 2002, the Ministry of Education commissioned a comprehensive *Tonga Education Sector Study*, funded by the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID). The international consultancy team responsible completed its task and duly sought critical feedback from the Government of Tonga and from NZAID. A final version of the Report was produced in March 2003, with an accompanying draft *Strategic Plan for Education 2003-2013*. The *Final Report: Tonga Education Sector Study* was circulated within Government, and among interested funding agencies (including the World Bank, AusAID, the European Union and JICA) in April 2003.
- 1.6 The consultant team recommended the following major reforms:
 - 8 years of basic education for all (up to Form 2 secondary);

¹ Statistics taken from the *Report of the Ministry of Education for the Year 2002*

- Increased government involvement in pre-school education;
 - Increased attention to the special needs of physically and intellectually disabled children;
 - Review and reform of primary and secondary curriculum;
 - Reform of summative and formative school assessment systems;
 - Revision of the policies on language, literacy and bilingualism in school classrooms, recognising the importance of early learning through the medium of Tongan language;
 - Strengthening of teacher training, especially the revitalisation and reform of pre-service and in-service training and the links between them;
 - Development of a National Strategic Plan for post-secondary education and training related to a national training needs analysis;
 - A range of initiatives to develop technical/vocational provision, including within secondary education;
 - A range of administrative reforms, including a review of the Education Act of 1974.
- 1.7 The 28 specific recommendations made by the Tonga Education Sector Study team were reviewed and adopted by the Cabinet in mid-2003.
- 1.8 The Government of Tonga decided that the Sector Study should be complemented by deeper work in certain areas, particularly in analysis of education finance and the elaboration of fully-costed policy options, in building deeper stakeholder commitment to a prioritised strategic plan, and in developing a framework and approach for more effectively managing external support for education. In this latter regard, there was a call for facilitating a period of deeper processing of the ideas in Tonga.
- 1.9 To this end, NZAID and the World Bank funded a two-person short-term technical assistance team to assist the Ministry of Education in developing its own strategic plan for education using the education sector review documents as a base resource. The team consisted of an Education Planner (Vince Catherwood, team leader of the Tonga Education Sector Study) and an Education Economist (Victor Levine). The two-person team was assisted by a Tongan counterpart, Tatafu Moeaki, a Deputy Director in the Ministry of Education.
- 1.10 Two major purposes of the follow-up assignment were to facilitate the development of costed policy options (an *Education Policy Options Paper*), and to facilitate the consultative development of an *Education Policy Framework* (based on the policy options paper, and covering the entire sector, including pre-school and tertiary education), and a costed Strategic Plan to

implement this framework. As part of this process, the objective is to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Education and others involved in respect of policy development, strategic planning and donor co-ordination.

- 1.11 In January 2003, the MOE endorsed an Education Policy Options Paper which identified 17 main policy issues, which constitute the basis of this Tonga Education Policy Framework. The Education Policy Options Paper also outlined strategic investments required during the initial three-year transition phase and beyond, and identified opportunities for collaboration with development partners. These have been included in this Education Policy Framework.
- 1.12 Both the Tonga Education Sector Study and the Education Policy Options Paper were developed through a broad consultative process and reflect the input of a wide spectrum of Tongan stakeholders.
- 1.13 In mid February 2004, the Ministry of Education presented the Education Policy Options Paper to development partners at a seminar in Wellington, New Zealand. The principles and approach proposed in the Education Policy Options Paper were strongly endorsed by development partners. The Ministry of Education was encouraged to continue development of the Education Policy Framework, incorporating the ideas outlined in the Education Policy Options Paper, with emphasis on a number of agreed principles. These principles, summarised in the following paragraphs, were adopted in a formal Aide Memoire recording the outcome of the seminar.
- 1.14 First, those development partners present would move as quickly as possible towards providing budgetary support to Tonga's education sector. The medium to long-term objective is to harmonise most external assistance in the form of budget support which would support both development and recurrent expenditure. The Ministry of Education was invited to propose institutional arrangements for a Budget Supplementation Fund, which might be functional in providing limited support to the Financial Year (FY) 2004/05 budget.
- 1.15 Second, the preferred means of implementation of all new investments and programmes would be direct Ministry of Education management, using the regular financing, procurement and auditing procedures of the Government of Tonga. Alternative or parallel institutional structures (such as a service contractor or project implementation unit) would be avoided if possible.
- 1.16 Third, as an interim financing mechanism, major development partners would move toward the co-financing of a common Education Development Fund, and would co-ordinate appraisal, reporting, review and related activities to minimise the burden on the Ministry of Education.
- 1.17 Fourth, both budgetary (the Budget Supplementation Fund) and project (Education Development Fund) external support would conform to and be reflected in the existing structure of the Ministry of Education budget, the three-year Ministry of Education Corporate Plan, and its Annual Management Plan.
- 1.18 Fifth, the Government of Tonga undertook to host an education conference in May/June 2004, at which time a strategy for moving forward with co-ordinated assistance would be agreed. The Ministry of Education will advise participating organisations of areas in which it would like professional advice regarding

policy options, and the required expertise will be reflected in the composition of the delegation attending the conference.

- 1.19 As a result of decisions agreed at the Wellington Seminar, the Ministry of Education will be structuring its FY 2004/05 budget submission, and its Corporate Plan to reflect its priorities and the anticipated external support.
- 1.20 This Tonga Education Policy Framework has been developed as a result.

Purpose of the Education Policy Framework

- 1.21 The purpose of developing this Education Policy Framework for Tonga includes the intention to:
 - set guidelines and provide a framework and a context for the future development of Tonga's education sector;
 - strengthen the Ministry of Education's management of the education sector;
 - help the Ministry of Education assess whether the key strategic policy directions identified for the improvement of education in Tonga are appropriate and comprehensive;
 - help the Ministry of Education identify the critical information and analysis required to validate these strategic directions; and
 - ensure appropriate criteria are applied when determining priorities for and timing of education development and investment in Tonga.

Scope & Design of the Education Policy Framework and its Relationship to Other Planning Documents

- 1.22 Under its national strategic development plan for Tonga (Strategic Development Plan 7 or SDP7) the Government is implementing a national strategy to strengthen the private sector, increase employment and improve international competitiveness. The Government is also implementing the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) which, among other objectives, targets increasing access to basic education and addresses the special needs of the least well-off. It is therefore necessary to identify and implement reforms in education to ensure that the education sector complements the goals of SDP7 and contributes to economic development, employment and poverty alleviation.
- 1.23 This Education Policy Framework for Tonga is therefore closely related to and derived from these national planning documents.
- 1.24 The Education Policy Framework covers a 15 year period. It incorporates a broad strategic plan to undertake comprehensive reform and improvement of education in Tonga. It is intended to be visionary, conceptual and directional.
- 1.25 The Ministry of Education is in the process of substantial strengthening of its capacity to conduct policy analysis and research. This process will provide the basis for evaluating the costs and benefits of different implementation options over the coming years.

- 1.26 In order to develop a preliminary sense of the likely cost, financial implications, and long-term financial sustainability of the *Education Policy Framework*, the Ministry of Education has developed a set of simulation tools to estimate “indicative” cost and resource implications of various combinations of intervention options. A set of estimates, using “high” and “low” cost and resource assumptions is presented in Chapter 12 (“Resource Projections”) of this document.
- 1.27 It should be stressed that the indicative figures presented in this document do not reflect a “commitment” by the Government of Tonga to a specific approach or modality of implementation. Rather, these indicative figures are intended to examine whether, in principle, the proposed agenda of reforms will be financially sustainable, in the long run. For example, in the case of Universal Basic Education (UBE) for Forms 1 & 2, the cost/resource simulation uses figures are based on assumptions about increasing grant support to Non-Government providers, and associated efficiency improvements. The estimates based on this policy option provide a basis for developing a reasonable set of assumptions in order to examine costs. In practice, based on careful analysis of alternatives, and further policy development, the Government may decide on a combination of policy options, such as increased provision of form 1 and 2 places at primary schools, construction of new (middle) schools, and/or grant support to Non-Government providers
- 1.28 The first phase of the 15 year plan focuses on *transition* and the *capacity building* required for Tonga to achieve its long-term objectives. That programme of transition and capacity building is reflected in the other two related documents that are derived from this framework document: the *Ministry of Education Corporate Plan 2004-2007* and its *Annual Management Plan 2004-2005*.
- 1.29 The scope of this *Education Policy Framework* is broad. It encompasses all education sectors (early childhood education, the compulsory primary schools sector and the secondary schools sector, as well as post-secondary and non-formal education. It goes beyond the formal education system to include all aspects of human resource development in Tonga, including strengthening the links between the outcomes of the formal education sector and the training needs of the labour force. In that sense, everyone in Tonga has a stake in the future of education (including employers, parents, students, teachers, Ministry of Education personnel, people in non-government education institutions such as the Mission Schools, other workers in the Government and the private sectors, and members of the community). Education is not the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Education: everyone in Tonga is and must be involved.

Problems Affecting the Education Sector’s Development

- 1.30 The *Education Policy Framework* was developed in the context of an extensive review and analysis of the education sector, and broad-based consultation with stakeholders. The *Education Policy Framework* is designed to address efficiently and effectively a range of issues and problems identified during this two year process. We therefore encourage readers of this document, who are not familiar with the outputs of these earlier processes, to refer to the *Tonga*

Education Sector Study (TESS) of March 2003 and the Education Policy Options Paper (EPOP) of November 2003. The Ministry of Education is arranging to make these (and other related) documents available to interested stakeholders on a Government of Tonga web site. These documents include an analysis of some problems facing the education sector in Tonga, and, in order to avoid repetition, are not repeated in this document. The proposed policy solutions outlined in this Education Policy Framework have been designed, however, to deal with the problems that have been identified.

2. Vision

- 2.1 Education is the most valuable asset a person can possess. A well-informed and educated people is fundamental to our society's well-being. It is through education that individuals can achieve fulfilment, attain their goals, and improve their standard of living. Education in Tonga should encourage people to think for themselves and to contribute to their society. It should help us find the right balance between the needs of the individual, the transmission of Tongan culture, and meeting the development needs of Tongan society.
- 2.2 Our vision for education in Tonga is that the people of Tonga will achieve an excellence in education that is unique to this country, and that Tonga will become a learning society. .
- 2.3 Educational institutions, irrespective of ownership, will have the incentive and opportunity to become more efficient through increased capacity and responsibility for managing resources. The education system will progress to a "level playing field" in which Government (and other stakeholders) will finance "outputs" and "outcomes," rather than inputs. The MOE will move rapidly to implementing the principles of program budgeting.
- 2.4 The "transformed" education sector will be flexible and capable of quickly responding to the needs of the economy and of a quickly changing global environment. The system will be capable of responding to "market signals" and will move from a "supply-driven" to a "demand-driven" basis.

Achieving the Vision

- 2.5 The Ministry of Education has primary responsibility for the implementation of this Education Policy Framework. This framework will be the vehicle for achieving our vision.
- 2.6 Achieving the objectives of this framework will require us to invest in training and in improvements that transform our organisation. We are committed to a goal of achieving excellence, and recognise that changes must be made if we are to improve.
- 2.7 The Ministry of Education is responsible for the administration of the education system. Our goal is to foster a policy environment in which teachers can operate effectively, and students can participate and achieve to a high standard. We want to ensure that the education system is able to respond quickly and effectively to social and economic trends as they emerge, and can meet the diverse needs of different communities, employers, and the wider society.
- 2.8 We see our role in the Ministry of Education as empowering other people through our own leadership, through our support of the infrastructure, and through our assistance of those who are at risk of underachievement.

2.9 We envision a future Ministry of Education that puts the learning of children first. We will have the trust of parents, the confidence of employers, and the respect of our colleagues in government. We will be recognised for the achievement of our children, for the efficacy of our policy advice, and we will be looked up to as a leader in educational thinking and achievement both in the Pacific and in the wider world beyond.

2.10 . Access to public support for education will be allocated on an equitable basis, and no child's prospects for receiving support for secondary, tertiary or vocational training will be determined primarily by his or her gender, place of birth, or family socio-economic status.

2.11 We want nothing short of a world class education system.

3. Mission Statement

3.1 The mission of the Ministry of Education is as follows:

**“TO PROVIDE AND SUSTAIN LIFELONG RELEVANT
AND QUALITY EDUCATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT
OF TONGA, AND HER PEOPLE.”**

4. Values

4.1 The way the Ministry of Education operates, the perspectives it introduces, and the way the people in the education system relate to each other and to those outside the system all impact upon effectiveness, efficiency and the quality of the education work environment. These factors also influence the Ministry's ability to maintain a broader perspective and to develop as an organisation.

Personal Values

4.2 The following personal values and principles underpin this *Education Policy Framework*. All those involved in education in Tonga are encouraged to embrace them.

4.3 **Be purposeful. See the bigger picture.** The vision, goals and aims of education need to be understood and subscribed to by all the workers in education, and by the community at large. The outcomes of education need to be seen as relevant and useful to each individual's own personal goals and aspirations. People in education need to think strategically and look for linkages, by recognising that work in one area might inform or be informed by other areas.

4.4 **Focus on achievement. Seek innovation and excellence.** The community at large needs to be satisfied that the goals and objectives of education have been successfully achieved. People in education should seek to meet the highest standards possible in everything they do. Teachers and Ministry officers should encourage new and innovative ways of doing things, both inside and outside the Ministry of Education.

4.5 **Support, help and care for each other.** The people working in education should respect and support each other in order to achieve the aims and goals of education, by providing learners with all necessary resources and equipment, and by committing themselves selflessly to achieving the goals in a secure, clean and attractive environment. Qualities such as charity, understanding, consideration, selflessness, humility and justice will be valued.

4.6 **Seek fulfilment. Ask questions. Bring solutions.** Every person involved in education will feel that his or her contributions are worthwhile, appreciated and acknowledged. People in education should be encouraged to question, challenge and take responsibility. The people working in education need to question whether they are doing the right things, as well as whether they are doing them correctly. Value those who work with others to find solutions, not problems.

4.7 **Engage constructively. Value individual differences.** The most important outcome of education is the well-being and development of the people, and the improvement of their lives in all aspects. Everyone needs the right and the opportunity to be involved in decision-making in relation to themselves and their work, and should have the opportunity to use their individual talents for the benefit of the people as a whole. Different viewpoints and perspectives need to be heard and valued. Focus on issues, not personalities. Basic human rights (such as

freedom of expression, or freedom of worship) should be supported for all staff and students.

- 4.8 **Develop a healthy mind in a healthy body.** Education should foster all aspects of growth and development: intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual and physical. As part of developing the whole person, it should seek to improve fitness and health through physical education and sport.

Philosophical Values

- 4.9 The following are philosophical values and principles which underpin the *Education Policy Framework* in Tonga.

4.10 **Focus on the individual learner.** The essence of education is the development of the individual to realise his or her potential as a human being, living a self-fulfilling life and as a worthy member of Tongan society and the wider world.

4.11 **Strengthen moral and cultural values.** Education should seek to strengthen and develop the moral and cultural values that underpin Tongan society. These values include dimensions such as tauhivaha'a (caring), mamahi'me'a (responsibility), faka'apa'apa (respect), and lototō (humility). There are generally agreed moral and social values such as concern for others, honesty, justice and personal integrity that the education system should seek to foster.

4.12 **Acknowledge the primacy of parents in education.** Education is a shared function in which the parents and the family play a vital role in caring, nurturing and providing for the emotional, social and physical welfare of the individual as he/she grows and develops from infancy to adulthood.

4.13 **Acknowledge Government's role in supporting education.** Education is a basic social service that must be accessible to all members of Tongan society as their God-given right. Education is the cornerstone of all aspects of national development. The Government acknowledges that Tonga is fast becoming part of a global village, and education needs to develop the skills of Tonga's people so that they can participate in the wider world and return benefits to the country. Nevertheless, the Government must always prioritise its investment in education, since Tonga is a small island nation with very limited resources.

4.14 **Support staff and employees in education.** The people working in education need to see their role as contributing to the development of the nation as a whole. The Government, through the Ministry of Education, should support its workers (at all institutions, both Government and Non-Government) to ensure that the standard of education in Tonga is high, and that its quality is excellent. This goal can be achieved by recognising competent performance, and by providing just rewards and incentives for achieving objectives, as well as by providing appropriate resources and support services. Workers themselves have responsibilities too: they need to develop effective leadership, to create positive working environments, and to ensure communication is clear and efficient.

4.15 Value the contribution of communities, Non Government Organisations, and Churches. Communities, Non-Government Organisations and Churches all play an important role in education through enhancing the spiritual, social, cultural, political and economic welfare of the country. As a social service, education should be people-centred, focusing on the development of the quality of life for the people of Tonga. This approach applies both in a national and a global context.

4.16 Acknowledge the contribution of international agencies. It is now a global concern that education should be available for all. Tonga does not act alone in the provision and resourcing of education for its people. Due consideration must therefore be given to the part played by international agencies in the development of education in Tonga.

5. Policy Statement

5.1 This Education Policy Framework 2004-2019 has been constructed in order to :

- ◆ increase access;
- ◆ increase efficiency;
- ◆ improve equity;
- ◆ improve organisational structures and management at different levels;
- ◆ improve quality and performance; and
- ◆ be based upon sustainable methods of financing education

5.2 .The Kingdom of Tonga is committed to improved access and equity in education, improved quality, better student achievement, and a more efficient and sustainable education system.

6. Goals

6.1 The three goals recommended for Tonga's education system in the *Tonga Education Sector Study* have been adopted in this *Education Policy Framework*. These goals are:

GOAL 1: TO IMPROVE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN IN TONGA UP TO YEAR 8 (FORM 2).

GOAL 2. TO IMPROVE THE ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF POST-BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO CATER FOR THE DIFFERENT ABILITIES AND NEEDS OF STUDENTS.

GOAL 3. TO IMPROVE THE ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING SO THAT THE QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE IS ENHANCED.

7. Principles.

7.1 A number of principles underlie the development of this Tonga Education Policy Framework 2004-2019. These principles include that the Tonga Ministry of Education has undertaken to

- place a focus on learners;
- be committed to equity;
- be responsive;
- be transparent;
- be inclusive;
- focus on results;
- decentralise decision-making where possible;
- delegate authority where possible;
- move gradually to increase autonomy for institutions;
- be innovative;
- collaborate with other education partners;
- be accountable; and
- undertake planning based on agreed principles (as set out in the Education Policy Options Paper, November 2003)

8. Policy Areas, Government Responses, and Expected Policy Outcomes

8.1 This section identifies seventeen areas for policy development, arising directly from the identification of problems affecting the Tonga education sector. The following text describes the policy issue for each policy area, outlines the anticipated policy outcomes, and sets out the Government's policy responses to the problems identified, and the policy choices that the Government wishes to make. These policy choices are intended to provide a strategic direction for Tonga's education policy over the medium to longer term (the next 15 years, or the period from 2004 to 2019).

8.2 The seventeen policy areas identified for further policy development and action by the Government of Tonga are the following:

- Policy Development, Planning and Monitoring;
- Universal Basic Education to Year 8 (Form 2);
- Education After Year 8 (After Form 2);
- Early Childhood Education;
- Special Education;
- Language Policy;
- Curriculum;
- Assessment;
- Teacher Supply;
- Teacher Quality;
- Skill Development and Lifelong Learning;
- Reorganisation of Tertiary Education;
- Management and Control of Education;
- Efficiency;
- Sport;
- Information and Communications Technology; and
- Financing Options and Financial Sustainability.

8.3 Each of these policy areas is now dealt with in turn.

Policy Development, Planning and Monitoring

Policy Issue and Policy Outcome

8.4 The desired policy outcome is that the MOE should have the *appropriate capacity* to develop policy, and to design, implement and monitor the existing education system and the new investments that are envisioned². The education system should meet the following tests:

² "Appropriate" in terms of the size of the education system and extent to which quantitative information is seen as important for policy formulation, planning, management and monitoring.

- the education system is informed and steered by education policy that has been designed and developed according to an appropriate education policy framework and a robust education policy methodology;
- to the extent that it is appropriate to the Tongan context, policy, planning, management, assessment, monitoring, administration, budget preparation, and resource allocation will be based (or, at least validated by) reliable information and analysis, and linked to measures or indicators of learning outcomes and social benefits;
- there will be Ministry staff specifically responsible for these functions, and policy, planning and monitoring would be seen as “core” responsibilities;
- the “culture” of information-based decision making will be developed throughout the system, and staff at all levels will be provided with the necessary equipment and skills to utilise information effectively;
- respondent burden will be minimised, and information will be used at all levels from the classroom through the school to the Ministry of Education;
- redundant data capture and duplicated tasks will be eliminated;
- time-series data, in a consistent format, will be available for analysis; and
- projections and indicators, comparable to international and regional norms and standards, will be generated and reviewed on a regular basis.

8.5 The policy methodology required will consist of (a) provision of high quality policy advice and (b) the undertaking of policy development and analysis activities, plus policy projects. These are described in more detail in Appendix 1, including a description of the criteria against which the effectiveness or otherwise of policy advice can be assessed.

Government Policy Response

8.6 As an ongoing measure, the Ministry of Education will continue to strengthen existing information and staff capacity, with the aim to enhance policy development, planning and monitoring, over time.

8.7 At the same time it will request external support to provide this capacity as a priority activity under its three-year *Corporate Plan*. This approach will be clearly linked to a plan and a commitment to establish and institutionalise all positions and functions during the project period.

8.8 As an interim measure, the Ministry of Education has developed the *Education Policy Framework* and *Corporate Plan* with existing information and staff capacity, drawing upon bridging local and international technical assistance, provided by NZAID and the World Bank.

8.9 The Ministry of Education will also request continued external support to strengthen this capacity as a priority activity under its three-year *Corporate Plan*. This approach will be clearly linked to a plan and a commitment to establish and institutionalise all positions and functions during the project period.

8.10 The development of this plan will require undertaking a review of the MOE policy and planning functions. Strengthening policy and planning will be a priority component of the *Corporate Plan*, with a firm timeframe and indicators

for having an information-based planning and policy capacity fully operational within three years. This capacity will include addressing staffing and space requirements through a request for new positions and/or a re-designation of existing posts within the Ministry of Education.

- 8.11 As indicated elsewhere in this *Education Policy Framework*, this capacity will enable the Ministry to decide on the specific modalities and preferred options for attaining goals and objectives, based on the expertise and advice of its own policy analysts. Implementation strategies and details will evolve, over time, within the broad indicative financing framework presented in this document.
- 8.12 During the three-year period covered by the *Corporate Plan* (Phase 1), the programme will focus on strengthening Ministry of Education capacity in policy development, planning and monitoring, and on strengthening information systems and utilisation. In the course of Phase 1, the Ministry of Education will develop all needed capacity and obtain information required to design and implement a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) for the remaining 12 years of the Plan period.
- 8.13 The Ministry of Education will restructure its administration and management in order to strengthen its policy development role, its administrative structure, and its capacity to deliver education more effectively. The policy development and policy analysis roles of the Ministry of Education will be strengthened, so that its administrative structure meets the new proposed national requirements, and so that its efficiency is increased.
- 8.14 The approach involves integrating information gained from selected investments with an overall initiative to strengthen Ministry of Education capacity. This *Education Policy Framework* identifies 17 key areas in which reform and expansion are planned. Initial investment under the *Corporate Plan* involves a combination of capacity building, research, strengthening data systems, and staffing reform to address the full range of policy, planning and monitoring requirements for the 15 year period. In addition to the direct investments to be made, investments in each of the remaining 16 policy areas include activities which will provide, test and/or validate information essential to policy and planning.
- 8.15 By the end of Phase I, the Ministry of Education will have a fully staffed policy, planning and monitoring capacity with information and staff skills appropriate to this function. An initial Educational Management Information System (EMIS) will be fully functional to support these activities at all levels of the system, including school and classroom management. The Ministry of Education will have developed a comprehensive and detailed plan for the next Phase of the 15 year Strategic Plan, including modalities and conditions for moving to external budgetary support, if this is determined to be the preferred approach. Phase I investments in each of the 17 Main Policy Areas will have been implemented, monitored and evaluated, and this will constitute an important input into continuing the strategic planning process.
- 8.16 The plan is to initiate capacity building activities through a combination of project support and earmarked grant funds. During the first phase, the Ministry of

Education will develop the necessary capacity to move forward in the remaining years, without projectised support. While data collection and analysis tasks can be supported under a project, responsibility for policy making cannot be delegated. The Ministry of Education would still have to invest time and staff in order to “engage” with the implications of information that would be produced. The principal risk of this project approach is that the “culture” of information-based analysis and the associated skills will not be internalised in the Ministry and that, at the end of the project, the investment will be of marginal value. In addition, the costs of “projectised” support are substantially higher. The benefit of this approach is that the quantitative data and analyses, needed to operationalise and implement the plan and to “validate the intervention logic,” could be produced relatively quickly.

Proposed New Investments

8.17 The following investments in new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Programs and Activities are recommended, and will be included in the Corporate Plan:

Policy Dialogue

01: Consultative For a.

Strengthen Policy Planning and Evaluation

- 01 Develop, adapt and implement a policy framework.
- 02 Develop an education policy & planning methodology.
- 03 Provide high quality policy advice.
- 04 Identify information required to manage education system.
- 05 Design & implement an Education Mgt Info System.
- 06 Undertake policy studies and research.

Capacity Building & Support Services

- 01 Assessment of skill needs to implement new MOE Corporate Plan.
- 02 Appoint staff (Deputy Director, & policy, IT & property analysts).
- 03 Train staff (including policy analysts, IT specialists, & property staff).
- 04 Undertake capacity building activities.
- 05 Implementation activities and support services.

Universal Basic Education to Year 8 (Form 2);

Policy Issue and Policy Outcome

8.18 The desired policy outcome is that there be universal basic education in Tonga up to the end of Year 8 (Form 2), and that this education should meet the following tests:

- education should be available to all children on an equitable basis;
- it should be of high quality, should promote student achievement at a high level, and should meet individual and national needs; and

- it should be delivered by competent, qualified, motivated and committed teachers; and
- it should be compulsory and free.

8.19 The education policy issues include:

- how the Government can move towards accepting responsibility for providing a universal basic education for all, up to the end of Year 8 (Form 2), given the constraints of limited resources;
- what implications, if any, this might have for revising staffing norms (pupil:teacher ratios) at all levels of the system, including classes (grades) 1-6;
- the impact that increased funding of staff (either directly or through grants to mission schools) would have on resources for other inputs, and the likely impact on the quality of education and differences between schools and communities in their ability to raise additional funds;
- what intervention or combination of interventions (expanding existing government primary schools, constructing new government (middle) schools, and/or full government finance at mission schools) is appropriate;
- how to improve the partnership between the Government and Non-Government education authorities, and implications of increased direct Government provision for the viability of schools in the Non-Government systems;
- whether there is an aggregate need (independent of ownership) for additional classroom places, and the cost-effectiveness of investments in new physical infrastructure;
- projections as to whether additional facilities will be utilised in future, given trends in population growth and internal and external migration (i.e., school mapping and siting issues);
- the level of support that would be needed to “effect” the elimination of school fees at Government and Non-Government schools, and whether this should be done in stages or as a comprehensive policy change;
- policy on whether students should be retained in order to promote improved learning, or socially promoted each year;
- policy on equality of teaching/learning across all systems; and
- policy on recognising the development levels of individuals.

Government Policy Response

Three Options

8.20 The Government of Tonga is at present contemplating three main options to address these issues. The three options are not exclusive, and a combination of all options may finally be adopted. Further analysis and policy development is required before a final decision can be taken as to the most appropriate direction. The Government of Tonga will continue its own further policy analysis and development, once its policy capacity has been enhanced by proposed new appointments, and it will also request further external assistance and advice to inform its decision-making. The three options being considered are:

- *Option 1*: Increased assistance to support Non-Government providers offering forms 1 & 2 education, as a prelude to full Government support;
- *Option 2*: Gradual expansion of Government provision of forms 1 & 2 education. Assistance would be provided to Non-Government providers offering forms 1 & 2 education, but free access to forms 1 & 2 education would be available in Government primary schools (where places are available) for those students whose parents wish to enrol them;
- *Option 3*: Development of a Plan that would move towards full Government funding of all forms 1 & 2 education in Tonga

Option 1: Increased Assistance to Non-Government Providers

8.21 Under this option, the Government of Tonga proposes to increase assistance to the Non-Government (Church) providers, in combination with negotiated arrangements between the various Non-Government providers and the MOE. Funding will be sought to increase over time the current grants to Non-Government providers. The most practical policy to assist and improve the performance of the Non-Government schools immediately is the development of a subsidy funding policy that would ensure increased funding for the Non-Government systems (to be used at the discretion of the employing authorities to improve quality and learning outcomes. The strategy for use of these additional funds would be specified in an annual school improvement plan and impacts would be monitored on a regular basis.)

8.22 It would be necessary initially to increase the current subsidy (T\$100 annually per student) to at least T\$200 for each forms 1 & 2 student in Non-Government systems, and then progressively seek to increase this amount until there is equity of public support to forms 1 and 2 between Government and non-Government schools. Non-Government schools will be provided with the additional funds in order to improve quality and increase equitable access. The mechanism will be a gradual increase to the amount of the annual per pupil subsidy. The increase in the subsidy amount will be part of a staged process, linked to a reduction in fees. The conditions under which the policy was implemented would need to be negotiated.

8.23 Any increased funding to Non-Government secondary or middle schools would be available on a conditional basis, and would be targeted as a “quid pro quo”, whereby Non-Government secondary or middle schools would agree, as a condition of accepting the additional funds, not to charge tuition fees (or to charge proportionally reduced tuition fees) for the education of students at year 7 (form 1) and year 8 (form 2) levels. This proposal, and its negotiation, would recognise the Government’s responsibilities for education of students who fall into the 11 to 13 age range in the compulsory education sector. The Non-Government systems would still manage their own finances and employ their own teachers. Fees could still be charged for the education of students at other levels, although it may be necessary to set conditions about maximum fee increases elsewhere in the schooling system in order to avoid cross-subsidisation of “free” access to forms 1 & 2 education by the charging of fees elsewhere in the system. A formal Memorandum of Agreement would be required between each Non-Government

system and the Ministry of Education to reflect the negotiated agreement in exchange for the additional funds.

- 8.24 The issue of how and when fees would be eliminated would also have to be clearly negotiated and agreed, from the outset. It is not clear what level of Government support would effect the complete elimination of fees, or whether any staged increase in the per-capita grant could be linked to policies on fees reduction.

Option 2: Gradually Expand Government Provision of Forms 1 & 2 Education

- 8.25 Under this option, the Government would gradually expand provision of forms 1 & 2 education in Government Primary Schools. Assistance to Non-Government providers offering forms 1 & 2 education would be provided, but free access to forms 1 & 2 education in Government primary schools (where places become available) would be offered to those students whose parents wished to enrol them. The effect would be to provide free (but not compulsory) access to forms 1 & 2 education in Government Primary Schools, where places could be made available. Owing to the resource implications, the process would need to be staged. The number of places offered would be gradually expanded as additional resources to support the Government Primary Schools became available.

- 8.26 The policy would begin with the status quo (approximately 72% enrolment of forms 1 & 2 students in Non-Government Middle or Secondary Schools), and would move gradually over time to shift the balance of enrolments of forms 1 & 2 students to Government Primary Schools, while allowing those parents who wished to enrol their students in (and pay fees at) Non-Government Schools to continue to do so. The recommended strategy would be to move to develop the Government Primary School system as a way of moving to universal basic education for all those forms 1 & 2 students whose parents wished to take advantage of the opportunity of free education at this level.

Option 3: Towards Full Government Funding

- 8.27 Under the third option, in order to reach its ultimate goal, the Government would make a commitment in principle to move to fund the full cost of the education of all students in forms 1 & 2 in both Government and Non-Government schools. This option could be combined with either (or both) Option 1 or Option 2. A strategic plan would be developed to achieve the desired objective. Policy would need to be developed on how additional funding might be found. Introduction of the policy might need to be staged over a period of several years, and may not be fully achieved within the time frame of this *Education Policy Framework*. Negotiations would be needed on whether the Government would provide places for all students in Government schools, and on any conditions set if there was an agreement between Government and Non-Government systems to move towards a “level playing field” under which the Government would fully fund all forms 1 & 2 education.

Implications

- 8.28 For purposes of forward planning, it will be critical that the Government develop and announce a clear set of principles and intentions. If Government provision is to be expanded to accommodate all students in forms 1 and 2, this policy would have clear implications for the organisation and viability of Non-Government schools.
- 8.29 During the first three years (Phase 1) investments would focus on improving the quality and efficiency of forms 1 and 2 education services in Non-Government schools, by providing additional resources for non-salary recurrent inputs in the form of school improvement grants. The investment will also support data collection, analyses and consultative processes required to design and negotiate strategies required to move toward full government funding and universal, free, compulsory education through form 2, with high quality service delivery by all providers.
- 8.30 The strategy during Phase I would be designed to bring some targeted interim relief to schools offering forms 1 and 2 education, and to improve standards, with minimum cost. It is likely that the strategy will include a combination of interventions, such as expanding places at existing government primary schools, and providing additional government finance at mission schools. The strategy adopted would be designed to assist the MOE and other education systems in identifying the best strategies for gaining maximum impact on learning outcomes, and would help to strengthen the collaborative relationship needed to move towards free, universal provision of eight years of basic education.
- 8.31 The MOE will provide policy guidance and technical support to schools and systems in helping them to identify critical constraints to quality improvement at forms 1 and 2, and to design school improvement plans and the design of a monitoring system. Once the annual plan is agreed, then schools will be required to implement a monitoring system to assess the impacts of school improvement plans.
- 8.32 This activity would initially be funded through a special fund (See paragraphs 1.14 and 1.16 of this *Education Policy Framework*). During the course of Phase I, the MOE, in consultation with the Ministry of Finance, Central Planning and development partners would move to restructure the annual budget submission, with support moving to earmarked budget support. Provisions would be agreed to ensure that additional Government resources were allocated to non-salary recurrent inputs to match those funds to be provided by development partners.
- 8.33 Outputs and outcomes anticipated during Phase I include the following:
- identification of the recurrent cost implications of adequately funding efficient, high quality education at forms 1 and 2;
 - the implementation, assessment and validation of a range of strategies and options for best using additional resources to maximise student learning outcomes;

- measurable improvements in the quality and cost-effectiveness of form 1 and 2 instruction at Non-Government secondary schools;
- a comprehensive plan for moving to fully-funded free forms 1 and 2 education, with specific agreements on the elimination of fees on a quid pro quo basis; and
- reductions in class 6 repetition and improved public perceptions regarding the quality and desirability of education provided at Non-Government institutions.

Proposed New Investments

8.34 The following investments in new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Programs and Activities are proposed, and, subject to further policy analysis and development, will be included in the *Corporate Plan*:

Extend UBE to 8 Years

- 01 Establish a UBE Working Party.
- 02 Implementation plan developed and approved.
- 03 Assessment of provision of services at secondary schools.
- 04 Provide help to schools with school improvement grants.
- 05 Provide per capita grants to Government schools for non-salary recurrent costs
- 06 Assess the impact of school improvement grants.

Grant System for Forms 1 & 2

- 01 Move funding provision for Forms 1 & 2 from Prog 4 to Prog 3 in Budget.
- 02 Increase subsidy grants to Non-Government schools.
- 03 Negotiate conditions for increased grants in Memoranda of Agreement with Non-Government systems.

Education After Year 8 (After Form 2);

Policy Issue and Policy Outcome

8.35 The desired policy outcome is that all children in the secondary age cohort (ages 12 to 16) have access to educational services appropriate to their interests and abilities. Public funds should be allocated in an equitable manner and skills provided to these children should contribute to national development and enable students to obtain marketable skills. The education system should meet the following tests:

- beyond Form 2, Tongans would have increased options for alternative training paths and would receive partial support in identified high priority areas;
- the relevance of skill training investments would be reflected in increased employment, based on tracer studies and other instruments;
- both Government and Non-Government providers would have equal access to public support under a system that linked finance to output and outcomes; and
- the MOE would assume the responsibility of establishing and monitoring quality and performance standards in institutions and programmes receiving public funds.

8.36 The education policy issues include:

- how to develop a flexible system, responsive to changes in the national and global environment, with provisions to redirect focus;
- how to serve secondary age students with a range of aptitudes and interests and to provide equal opportunity and support for alternative pathways;
- how to develop an appropriate and integrated qualifications framework that allows students pursuing non-academic areas to gain credit and recognition which could be applied to further education;
- how to serve the needs of secondary school age children who may emigrate as adults, ensuring that they have the skills and competencies required in a global economy;
- how to ensure that service providers meet agreed policy standards and that students and taxpayers are getting value for money; and
- how to ensure that the system is sufficiently flexible to accommodate changes in the labour market and economy, and that the MOE has the required information and flexible options to redirect areas of focus and support in response.

Government Policy Response

8.37 The Government of Tonga will continue to strengthen the current academic program, and at the same time revise the secondary curriculum, providing more courses and opportunities for those students **in school** who elect to follow a non-academic path. It essentially involves expanding the range of programmes on offer in existing institutions. At the same time it will develop policy to promote a seamless movement between secondary and tertiary institutions. This approach would involve the provision of targeted funding to secondary schools to enable them to purchase instruction or places in short vocational or technical courses at selected post-secondary institutions for selected students for part of the school day (the New Zealand “STAR” funding (secondary/tertiary alignment resource) is an example of this type of initiative).

8.38 In tandem with this approach, the Government of Tonga will expand opportunities for the secondary age cohort out of school. This approach envisages providing public support for those of a designated range of age cohorts who select technical and vocational training options **outside** schools. The actual mechanism used might involve a voucher or entitlement (probably a subsidy delivered to an institution) for vocational, technical or life skills training delivered by Government and Non-Government providers. The MOE Secondary Division would develop the capacity to administer a system of vouchers or an entitlement system (possibly needs-based), and to set and monitor standards of training providers in non-school settings.

8.39 A longer-term objective (beyond the three-year horizon of the *Corporate Plan* but within the 15 year period) involves rationalising the existing system of government training institutions and moving from direct funding of staff and operations to a service/output based system of finance. Over time, Government training institutions and programmes that serve the clients (including those in the secondary age cohort) would become autonomous and self financing in order to “level the playing field.” Public finance would follow individuals (through

scholarships, subsidies and/or vouchers) in targeted skills areas. The system would include non-academic courses. This option would maximise freedom of choice and encourage competition. This would also provide greater flexibility in skills targeting and annual level of financing.

Proposed New Investments

8.40 The following investments in new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Programs and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*:

Education After Form 2 - Alternatives

- 01 Revised curricula in industrial arts, home economics & technology - link to Program 2 (Professional Services).
- 02 Pilot projects to develop technical and vocational training initiatives.
- 03 Develop a monitoring and evaluation system, and undertake impact assessments of alternative service delivery modes.
- 04 Implement training for teachers working on technology and vocational curriculum.
- 05 Upgrade facilities and equipment for technical and vocational curriculum.
- 06 Develop a teacher appraisal system.

Early Childhood Education

Policy Issue and Policy Outcome

8.41 The desired policy outcome is that Tonga has an education system that ensures equal access to early childhood education (ECE) (i.e. pre-school education). There is strong international evidence of a high rate of return from investments in early childhood education. Pre-school education is important for laying the foundation for primary schooling. There are also equity dimensions: children from least advantaged communities are likely to benefit most from early childhood education.

8.42 The fundamental principle underlying support for early childhood education is that a child's development can be fostered by positive learning experiences in the early years, and that such experiences, based on a developmentally appropriate curriculum, provide an excellent foundation for formal schooling. Access to structured pre-schooling leads to improved achievement levels of children in primary schools, when compared with those who do not have access to such provision.

8.43 There is a need for formal recognition of the importance of the role of the early childhood education sector in child development. The growth and development of this sector, and support for parents in their roles, needs to be acknowledged as a priority because of the positive impact investment in the sector has upon children's development.

8.44 The Government interventions proposed to support early childhood education are also based on the principle that the formal education system should recognise,

and build upon, the important role parents play in the education of their children. Parent education that recognises the role of parents as first teachers in the very early years contributes positively to children's subsequent progress in formal schooling. There is potential to further support parents and families in this important task.

Government Policy Response

8.45 The Ministry of Education proposes a combination of policy responses, including direct and indirect support for early childhood education by the Government. The present policy of encouraging community initiatives and community ownership of early childhood initiatives in local communities should be continued. This policy is having the positive effect of leading gradually to an extension of provision of early childhood education in Tonga. Community ownership and direct involvement of parents in supporting these early childhood initiatives have many strengths that should be built upon.

8.46 As a means of improving quality, the Ministry of Education will develop a system of incentives to encourage teachers in the early childhood sector to improve their qualifications. At the same time, the Ministry of Education will move gradually to increase its formal support of early childhood education through a number of strategies.

8.47 These strategies include

- formation of national working parties to survey and report on early childhood provision in Tonga (including Tongatapu and the Outer Islands);
- formal registration of all pre-schools;
- development of an early childhood education curriculum;
- production and dissemination of culturally appropriate developmental learning resources;
- provision of pre-service teacher training at Tonga Institute of Education;
- provision of in-service training and professional development programmes for existing teachers at the early childhood level;
- incentives to improve the qualifications of teachers in the early childhood sector, such as financial subsidies (through the scholarship system) for access to University of the South Pacific and other tertiary institute courses in early childhood education for people wishing to work in this area in the community;
- support for the development of new early childhood centres in areas where there is no provision;
- appointment of an early childhood education officer (or officers) [or formal redesignation of an existing primary school officer (or officers) position(s) in the Ministry of Education as early childhood education positions];
- support for parent education initiatives; and
- undertaking an analysis of the long-term implications of providing a subsidy for enrolments in early childhood education.

8.48 Resource constraints preclude the immediate adoption of a direct Government funding subsidy for enrolments in early childhood education at this time. At a later stage, a direct funding subsidy for pre-school education based on actual

enrolments could be considered. Direct Government financial support should be considered only when a more developed infrastructure and an improved information base for the early childhood sector has been established. The Tonga Pre-School Association could take a leading role in these developments.

Proposed New Investments

8.49 . The following investments in new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Programs and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*:

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

- 01 Appoint ECE officer (or officers).
- 02 Survey of pre-school provision in Tonga.
- 03 Undertake registration of all pre-school centres.
- 04 Review ECE curriculum and develop culturally appropriate learning materials.
- 05 Develop and implement training programme for early childhood teachers.
- 06 Set up pilot projects for community-based ECE centres.
- 07 Develop policy for provision of subsidies for ECE education.

Special Education

Policy Issue and Policy Outcome

8.50 The desired policy outcome is that Tonga has an education system that ensures equal access to education and training for those children and adults with special learning needs. Those people with special learning needs include the physically handicapped (those who require wheelchairs, for instance), the visually impaired (the blind or near-sighted), those with hearing impairment (the deaf), those with speech defects, and those with intellectual disabilities. The category of those with special needs also includes the emotionally disturbed.

8.51 The rationale for Government intervention is based on the principle that access to education should be provided to enable all people with disabilities to develop to their full potential. Students with physical and intellectual disabilities face impediments that make access to learning difficult, and as a matter of equity should be assisted to take their place in the formal education sector and develop fully as individuals.

8.52 The first step in improving the opportunities for students with physical or intellectual difficulties is to recognise their rights to access education. The Ministry of Education acknowledges that, flowing from such recognition, there are certain obligations which it will be required to meet.

8.53 While education of disabled children was previously catered for in Tonga by the extended family, this policy has meant that considerable human potential has remained undeveloped, owing to lack of access to education. Focused intervention would prevent this wastage of human potential. There exists therefore a need to provide more effective support, particularly for people with special needs who are of school age.

8.54 The Government of Tonga, through the Ministry of Education, wishes to support the special needs of children and adults with physical and intellectual disabilities by: recognising that these children and adults need to have access to appropriate educational opportunities, and by supporting policies to provide this support within the acknowledged resource constraints.

Government Policy Response

8.55 The Ministry of Education proposes a combination of policy responses, including direct and indirect support for special education by the Government. While the current community initiatives to support those with special needs are to be encouraged, the Government now wishes to consider how it might provide additional targeted support.

8.56 A clear message that the claim of students with disabilities has been recognised would be provided if the Ministry of Education were able to appoint a special education adviser.

8.57 A special education adviser could devise a workplan that would include a thorough survey of the needs of students with disabilities, an outline of the assistance available through NGOs and other regional bodies, an assessment of the potential for incorporating some special education training into the course offerings at TIOE, and provision of assistance for the development of individually targeted curricula by teachers.

8.58 The Ministry of Education would then undertake to move towards formal support of children with special needs through a number of strategies, staged over a period of years. These strategies include:

- undertaking a review of special education provision in Tonga, by inviting donors to fund specialist technical assistance to help the Government of Tonga undertake this formal review, by establishing national working parties to support the review, and by considering in this review the issue of mainstreaming children with special needs within the formal education system, and the implications, and costs and benefits (social and financial), of such a policy for Tonga's education system;
- conducting a baseline survey to ascertain the nature, number and extent of children with special needs (including those children currently attending schools, and those whose needs are too acute and who do not attend school);
- establishing a central database with detailed information about those people (adults and children) who have special learning needs, having due regard to privacy considerations;
- providing assistance for special needs children in existing schools through
 - a special needs component in all pre-service teacher training,
 - providing teachers of children with special needs with professional development opportunities and targeted in-service training to assist them to help each child with special needs, and
 - training of teacher aides who could provide individual assistance to children with special learning needs;

- reviewing the school curriculum to ensure that it caters adequately for children with special learning needs, and making available appropriate learning materials and equipment for special education;
- provision of incentives to improve the qualifications of teachers in the special education field, such as financial subsidies (possibly through the scholarship systems) for supporting access to special education programmes for teachers of special needs children offered by tertiary education providers, including the University of the South Pacific, and making provision for training of special education teachers at the Tonga Institute of Education (i.e. additional specialist training for regular trained teachers); and
- supporting classes for adults with special needs in the community.

Proposed New Investments

8.59 The following investments in new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Programs and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*.

Special Education

- 01 Appoint special education advisor(s).
- 02: Baseline survey of current provision for children and adults with special needs.
- 03: Review of special education provision in Tonga.
- 04: Provision of learning materials and specialist equipment for learners with special needs.

Language Policy

Policy Issue and Policy Outcome

8.60 The desired policy outcomes are that students at all levels will develop proficiency in the Tongan language, students will understand and speak English by the end of Class 6, and will be competent in oral and written English by the end of secondary schooling.

8.61 All Tongans will be literate in both Tongan and English. Students will also have opportunities to learn other languages, including French, Japanese and Mandarin.

8.62 Education policy issues include determining appropriate bilingual teaching methodologies, the appropriate point at which the language of instruction in schools should switch from Tongan to English, and appropriate diagnosis and support of language learning difficulties.

8.63 Basic literacy and numeracy skills are essential to success in education and are the right of all children. Two key principles therefore underpin Tongan policy on languages and literacy:

- effective education builds on the child's early learning in the mother tongue;

- literacy in the first language is needed before the introduction of reading and writing in the second language can take place.
- 8.64 These principles are confirmed by the Ministry of Education. Their adoption is intended to ensure the enhancement of the Tongan language and Tongan culture. Schools which choose to use English as the language of instruction from Year 1 (Class 1) must also teach Tongan Language in every year.
- 8.65 While Tongan is more important in the early years, English becomes of equal importance by the time form 1 is reached. The key to achieving student competence in literacy is the development of high standards of literacy and effective literacy teaching methodologies by teachers, both in Tongan and in English. Good quality reading materials are also needed to assist classroom teachers in developing literacy.
- 8.66 Effective learning is predicated on good literacy and numeracy skills. There is growing evidence that good levels of literacy in students' first language improves their learning of all subjects taught later in a second language. High priority should be given to early learning in Tongan language. Given the problems identified with student literacy, assistance for a supply of primary readers in the Tongan language is therefore a very high priority. The most immediate mechanism for meeting such demand is the adaptation/ translation of existing relevant readers from other countries, and reprinting existing Tongan readers which are missing from some schools.
- 8.67 There is a perceived need (made evident in the consultations on the Discussion Booklet) to improve basic literacy and numeracy levels throughout the schooling system. Support and resources are required to allow teachers to diagnose and address learning difficulties experienced by students at an early age. Early intervention, diagnosis and remediation can keep a student on track in his or her schooling, and avoid more expensive remedial work, and other undesirable consequences, at a later age. More resources need to be directed at diagnosing and addressing the literacy and numeracy difficulties experienced by students in the early years of primary schooling.
- 8.68 There is a recognition that increasing globalisation, Tonga's trade and relations in the Pacific with other English-speaking nations, and the fact that English is used as the language of much business in Tonga, make proficiency in English for all Tongans a necessity.

Government Policy Response

- 8.69 The Ministry of Education will review the existing language policy on languages, literacy, and bilingualism. It will develop a comprehensive policy on languages, literacy, bilingualism, and the language of instruction, including use of diagnostic instruments at an early stage of primary schooling to identify students with literacy problems. The policy will include provision for intensive retraining of teachers, and development and distribution of learning resources (graded readers and quality books) in both Tongan and English.

- 8.70 In undertaking a review of the existing language policy on languages, literacy, and bilingualism, the Ministry of Education intends to take into account that all Government primary schools will follow bilingual teaching methodologies that recognise Tongan as the first language of the majority of students. Basic literacy will be established in Tongan before the introduction of English. The main language of instruction in Government primary schools will be Tongan Language up to the end of Year 3 (Class 3), while a bilingual approach (both Tongan and English) will be used to support instruction in Years 4 to 6 (Classes 4 to 6). English will be the main language of instruction from Year 7 (Form 1) onwards.
- 8.71 To support any new language policy, significant investment will be required in appropriate in-service training to develop skills in teaching literacy in both Tongan and English by early childhood and primary school teachers. This investment is intended to ensure that primary school teachers will be adequately trained and appropriately skilled to meet the stated Tongan and English language objectives.
- 8.72 Tongan Language and culture will be taught throughout all schools from Years 1 to 13 (Class 1 to Form 7).
- 8.73 Diagnostic instruments will be developed and used at an early stage of primary schooling to identify students with literacy problems. These diagnostic instruments will include a major focus on diagnosing students' reading skills through use of techniques such as the individual running record of a students' progress in reading. Individual remediation by the class teacher, based on this assessment, should follow if necessary.
- 8.74 The Ministry of Education also wishes to investigate the introduction of a "reading recovery" programme in Tonga for a small number of targeted students at risk who are aged about six or seven. The internationally acclaimed work by Professor Marie Clay in New Zealand would be a good starting point for such an initiative.
- 8.75 High priority will be given to developing, producing and distributing quality learning resources to support the development of literacy and numeracy (both graded readers and good quality books), initially in Tongan for the early primary school years, and then in both Tongan and English. Investment will be made in the development of quality, attractive Tongan learning materials for the first three years of the primary school, by employing writers fluent in Tongan who are also competent teachers knowledgeable about the curriculum. In addition, an adequate supply of books, both in Tongan and in English, will be made available for use across the curriculum.
- 8.76 The public policy questions on the language of instruction involve a trade-off between the need for retention of Tongan culture, the importance of the Tongan language to national identity, the reality that most Tongans speak Tongan as their mother tongue when they start school, the importance of English as an international language and the language of discourse in much business in Tonga, and the need to develop an appropriate policy on bilingualism and schooling that recognises that proficiency in both Tongan and English is essential.

- 8.77 Different views have been expressed on the stage at which it is appropriate to switch to learning in English in the school system. Policy on this issue will be further developed by the Ministry of Education. Primary schools are required to offer instruction both in Tongan, and in English.
- 8.78 The increase in enrolments at Tonga Side School (where instruction is in the medium of English) has caused the Ministry of Education to decide to explore the policy issue of whether schooling in the medium of English - based on the Tonga curriculum - needs to be available from the start of primary school in more Tonga Government primary schools (even if only as an option in some schools at this stage).
- 8.79 Tonga Side School is exceptional in that it is a government-funded school with English as the sole medium of instruction (except in Tongan language classes). The Government of Tonga will consider increasing fees gradually at this school (over, for example, five years) as a policy that will free up funds for use elsewhere in the education sector.
- 8.80 The Ministry of Education wishes to develop a core of education advisers as specialists in literacy and numeracy within the primary division. Additional resources will be needed for this proposal to become a reality. The possibility of a partnership between these Ministry of Education specialists and an overseas tertiary education institution will also be investigated.
- 8.81 Current opportunities to learn languages other than Tongan and English (French, Mandarin, Japanese and German, for instance) will be maintained.

Proposed New Investments

- 8.82 The following investments in new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Programs and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*.

Language Policy

- 01 Review language & bilingualism policy & training programmes.
- 02 Review and revise the National Strategic Plan (Literacy & Numeracy).
- 03 Develop a system of objective measures and benchmarks.
- 04 Develop improved early diagnostic methods & train teachers.
- 05 Pilot of a reading recovery programme.
- 06 Produce Tongan language learning materials.
- 07 Deliver teacher in-service programmes to improve literacy teaching.
- 08 Increase opportunities for students to learn other languages.
- 09 Monolingual Tongan Dictionary project.

Curriculum

Policy Issue and Policy Outcome

8.83 The desired policy outcome is that the Tonga school curriculum prepares students to live fulfilling lives, is of high quality, promotes student achievement at a high level, and meets individual and national needs.

8.84 The curriculum policy issues include

- the need for review and modernisation of the curriculum to accommodate advances in knowledge and new developments such as technology;
- the appropriate relationship between Tongan curriculum objectives and assessment criteria and procedures;
- the balance between the extent to which the school curriculum captures the uniqueness of Tongan culture and prepares students for life in Tonga, and the extent to which the curriculum develops skills that may be required in a global world; and
- an evaluation of the quality of support for children's learning provided by current learning resources in Tonga, and by current pre-service and in-service teacher education.

8.85 Improving learning in schools will assist in better matching the outcomes of education with the requirements of Tongan society, and should lead to individuals who are better equipped to participate in their society and in the wider world. Well-rounded individuals with skills that complement their interests and abilities are more likely to find employment and integrate well into their society.

8.86 The keys to improving learning in schools lie in the areas of curriculum and assessment, literacy and numeracy, and the abilities of the teachers charged with managing students' learning. Recognition of and adherence to the fundamental principles outlined below must underpin any strategies concerned with improving learning in schools in Tonga.

8.87 The curriculum and assessment systems should value equally the full range of student abilities and should address the needs of society for the range of employment opportunities.

8.88 The current curriculum and assessment system should provide more scope for students to demonstrate or practise their creative, artistic, physical and practical abilities. There is also a need to acknowledge the importance of these skills and abilities in the wider Tongan society.

- 8.89 As outlined in the previous section, an effective curriculum will support the development of the basic literacy and numeracy skills which are fundamental to success in education and underpin all learning.
- 8.90 It is imperative that Tonga should continue to develop within the country the expertise to review and update curricula. This expertise must then be retained within a core of officers who are given regular opportunities for updating their skills through mechanisms such as short-term overseas attachments, in-country training and access to web-based information.
- 8.91 An overarching Curriculum “Framework” is necessary in any curriculum revision exercise to ensure each subject area has a reference to which it relates. This framework need not necessarily be too ambitious, but the process of developing the “Framework” ensures that all curriculum developers (and assessors) share the same values and goals and are working towards shared outcomes for students throughout the school years.
- 8.92 Review of curricula should occur on a regular and planned basis, and revision should be undertaken as a result of evaluation of existing curricula and changes in society. It is thus essential that a core of curriculum officers is developed and retained in Tonga with the skills and expertise to review and evaluate curricula continuously.
- 8.93 Curriculum renewal and review could be partly funded by savings that could be made in the Ministry of Education as a result of reviews and other efficiency measures recommended elsewhere (for instance, rationalising the number of schools, rationalising the numbers of teachers provided to smaller schools, and raising the average pupil:teacher ratio should be investigated.).

Government Policy Response

- 8.94 The Ministry of Education will undertake a review of the primary and secondary school curriculum in order to ensure appropriate linkages between the levels of schooling, to further enhance transition between the levels, and to foster the introduction of new subjects. This process will lead to the production and delivery of:
- an overarching curriculum framework in order to provide progression and continuity in learning outcomes from pre-school levels to year 13 (form 7);
 - a broader curriculum which recognises existing strengths while relating school learning outcomes and objectives to the educational, social and economic goals of the country;
 - an appropriate sequence of revised specific subject syllabi within the curriculum framework;
 - revised secondary agriculture and technology syllabi through an early request for assistance to ensure that progress in these areas is maintained, and to meet the pressing need for more relevant practical courses in secondary schools;
 - a revised primary and secondary physical education and sports syllabus (or syllabuses);
 - sufficient and appropriate teaching and learning support resources to enable children to maximise their potential; and

- improved school broadcasting programmes, such as radio and television, for primary and secondary schools.
- 8.95 Continuous curriculum improvement will be emphasised in the initial stages. Developments in specified areas of the curriculum will be continued (in technology, for instance). The preliminary policy focus will be on the development of quality learning resources to support the curriculum, particularly in the language area, and on improvement to teaching skills and competencies through a programme of in-service training and professional development in targeted areas of the curriculum.
- 8.96 Donor assistance will be sought for the development, production and dissemination of learning resources, and to support a programme of teacher professional development.
- 8.97 Curriculum renewal and development will lead to restructuring and revision of both the primary and secondary curriculum, resulting in production of an integrated overarching curriculum framework. In addition, syllabi for each component of the curriculum will be developed which explicitly state the required learning outcomes for students at each level from pre-school to form 7. This development will be consistent with international practice in curriculum renewal. This new approach to curriculum development will focus on learning outcomes, and would be developed and owned by all teachers. This approach implies a different outcomes-based approach to curriculum design, and a focus on assessing student achievement against specified criteria. All individual curriculum statements will require some revision over a period of time. Curriculum development will be accompanied by production of learning resources and teacher professional development in order to implement the new curriculum effectively. It will be a long-term project, that will need to proceed in phases.
- 8.98 Sub-components of the policy include the establishment of a Tonga Curriculum Redevelopment Project within the Curriculum Development Unit, appointment of a core group of trained and experienced curriculum development staff, and donor assistance for experienced international consultant(s) to assist with planning and training in the review of the curriculum, and to assist in training and rewriting syllabi with an outcomes focus. The project will include development and production of new learning resources, and a programme of extensive teacher professional development.
- 8.99 The Ministry of Education will co-locate the Examinations Unit with the Curriculum Development Unit under a single administration, with a core of competent staff appointed, trained and given long term tenure in the positions created. Adoption of this policy is intended to improve accessibility of services to school students and the public, and to foster closer links between curriculum and assessment objectives. Retention of competent officers on a long-term basis will enhance the productivity and skills of officers and enhance morale.

Proposed New Investments

8.100 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the Corporate Plan.

Curriculum Development & Support

- 01 Development of curriculum framework.
- 02 Development of revised syllabi.
- 03 Develop & produce learning materials.
- 04 Develop and deliver in-service teacher training programmes.
- 05 Develop improved school broadcasting programmes.
- 06 Co-locate curriculum and assessment units.

Assessment

Policy Issue and Policy Outcomes

8.101 The desired policy outcome is that the assessment system in Tonga promotes excellence in teaching and learning, provides information for teachers to allow them to ensure each child performs to the best of her or his ability, and does not discriminate against any student.

8.102 The assessment policy issues include striking an appropriate balance between different purposes of assessment. Assessment can be used for different purposes:

- assessment for learning, in order to diagnose any learning difficulties, and to indicate the direction of further learning that may be required, thus improving learning and teaching;
- assessment to monitor and report on progress against learning objectives;
- assessment for selection for further study or limited places in some learning institutions; and
- assessment for the purpose of providing a summative report and feedback on student learning that has been achieved.

8.103 Approaches to assessment are to be reviewed, as well as an evaluation made of the relationship between Tongan curriculum objectives and assessment criteria and procedures, and an evaluation of the quality of support for children's learning provided by current system-wide assessment methods in Tonga.

8.104 Assessment should continue to focus on support of learning objectives. For this reason the assessment system in Tonga has widened to cover the whole range of student abilities, to support student learning, to assist in diagnosing student difficulties, and to inform teachers of the effectiveness of strategies they use.

8.105 Where assessment is to be used to select students for further study, this assessment should be undertaken as late as possible so that the fewest numbers of

students are disadvantaged. The proposal to move the SEE from year 6 (class 6) to the end of year 8 (form 2), or to eliminate it entirely, is therefore important.

8.106 Currently secondary school students in Tonga follow a national curriculum at year 11 (form 5) leading to the Tonga School Certificate, follow a regional curriculum in year 12 (form 6) leading to the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate (PSSC), and will follow the new regional qualification or the CIE (Cambridge International Examinations) in form 7 in 2004.. Each year concludes with external examinations.

8.107 Participation in the regular surveys of student achievement undertaken by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement would provide information on the relative “health” of Tonga’s education system, and would also provide international benchmarking of Tonga’s student achievement as a basis of comparison against objective world class standards.

Government Policy Response

8.108 The Ministry of Education will broaden the assessment system in Tonga to ensure a wider range of students’ skills and abilities is assessed, by:

- developing assessment policy through the establishment of an Assessment Review Working Party, including representation from the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment, to review the current school assessment system and report to the Director of the Ministry of Education;
- reporting the findings of the Assessment Review Working Party to the independent Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board which will have oversight of all qualifications in Tonga (once legislation is passed and this Board is established);
- producing an assessment handbook for teachers;
- phasing out the Secondary Entrance Examination at Year 6 (Class 6) and replacing it in the short term with an examination at the end of compulsory education at Year 8 (Form 2) to select entrants for secondary schools, which would then cater for Year 9 (Form 3) and above,
- in the medium to longer term, examining the feasibility of removing the Secondary Entrance Examination completely and allowing social promotion to year 11 (form 5) with selection to secondary schools (beginning at year 9 (form 3)) determined by a combination of school-determined criteria and geographic zoning;
- developing and applying assessment instruments across the early primary years to assist with diagnosing learning difficulties and remediation strategies; and
- monitoring and supporting the regional qualification for year 13 (form 7) developed by the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment, and the CIE (Cambridge International Examinations), introduced in 2004 to replace the New Zealand University Bursaries examination.

8.109 The Assessment Review Working Party (ARWP) should be established with a limited Terms of Reference and a short reporting period to undertake a review of the assessment system used in Tonga. Assistance for the review process should be sought from SPBEA. The objectives of the ARWP would be to:

- assess the long-term need for the Secondary Entrance Examination (SEE) and its appropriateness;
- plan (in the short term) the move of the SEE from year 6 (class 6) to year 8 (form 2); and
- examine and report on the type, number and placement of examinations at the upper secondary levels with the aim of rationalisation.

8.110 New assessment instruments will be developed for use in all primary schools to assist with diagnosis of learning difficulties, associated with in-service training for teachers for follow-up remediation. These instruments would include the enhancement of existing techniques used by teachers in Tonga, such as the development of a running record of a student's progress in reading and the implementation of STATS (Standard Test of Achievement for Tongan Schools).

8.111 Consideration will be given to the introduction of new forms of system-wide assessment, based on the development of standardised criterion-referenced instruments that sample student achievement at different levels, and report results against national and international benchmarks. The Government of Tonga will investigate whether Tonga could attract donor support for participation in the regular international assessments of student achievement in various dimensions of the curriculum conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.

8.112 Consideration will also be given to streamlining and rationalising the certification system used to assess student achievement in the final three years of secondary schooling. At form 7 level, the South Pacific Board of Educational Assessment (SPBEA) proposal to establish an alternative curriculum and examination to the New Zealand University Bursaries examination has been adopted, to commence at the beginning of the 2004 school year. The progress of this qualification in 2004 should be monitored and supported. Some individual schools will use overseas end-of-school assessment systems such as the Cambridge (United Kingdom) examinations, but the fit between this overseas curriculum and the cultural needs of Tongan students needs to be monitored carefully.

Proposed New Investments

8.113 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*.

Assessment for Better Learning

- 01 "Fast track" development of assessment instruments for pilots.
- 02 Develop national assessment policy.
- 03 Develop assessment handbook for teachers.
- 04 Establish Tonga National Qualifications & Accreditation Board.
- 05 Develop a strategy to introduce the Secondary Entrance Exam at the end of Year 8.
- 06 Monitor & support the new regional Form 7 qualification and CIE as an alternative Form 7 qualification.

Teacher Supply

Policy Issue and Policy Outcomes

8.114 . The desired policy outcome is that education in Tonga is supported by an adequate supply of competent, trained, and well-qualified teachers at all levels, teaching in Tonga is perceived as an attractive profession, teachers are motivated to stay and contribute to the education sector, all teaching positions are filled by teachers of quality, and advance planning for teacher supply is undertaken to ensure that teacher shortages do not occur.

8.115 The teacher supply policy issues include more effective forecasting, planning and monitoring of teacher supply in Tonga. It is necessary to verify whether there is an increased exodus of teachers from the profession in 2003, and, if so, identify which parts of the teaching profession are experiencing an increased loss rate, and the reasons for any defined trends that may be emerging. Trend analyses of teacher mobility and past and future teacher loss rates (including teacher retirements) are required. The development of a robust model is needed to forecast future teacher supply needs for Tonga accurately.

8.116 Policy on appropriate sources of future teachers needs to be developed. A review of policy is required on teacher recruitment and retention, teacher remuneration, and teacher preparation in and beyond Tonga, including the policy on the annual intake to Tonga Institute of Education or other providers. Recruitment of expatriate teachers may be needed. Policies to improve the quality of teaching are also needed, in order to improve and upgrade the skills of the existing teaching work force, particularly unqualified teachers. If there are to be basic changes in the secondary curriculum, the data and analysis requirements must be extended to reflect these changes. This extended analysis would also be essential if there is to be more emphasis upon provision of qualified tutors for expanded vocational and technical education.

8.117 The availability of qualified teachers is an essential pre-requisite for an effective education system. Conditions of service are not under the direct control of the MOE and strong evidence is required to influence decisions of the Public Service Commission. Salaries in Government schools will influence compensation levels in Non-Government institutions. Increasingly, there is an international market for qualified teachers in specialised areas and it is essential to monitor the dynamics of the supply and demand equation.

Government Policy Response

8.118 The MOE will develop appropriate policies on teacher supply needs. The MOE will also document the existing situation in Tonga with respect to teacher supply needs. Interventions which the Government will consider include:

- a review of teacher remuneration policies;
- a public relations exercise to promote the teaching profession;
- supporting the Tonga graduate teacher preparation programme;

- developing alternative school-based models of teacher training using a mentor system;
- targeted (and bonded) scholarships for secondary teachers to study overseas, who then return to teach in Tonga;
- approaches to donors for assistance with a specific proposal for a teacher support and/or teacher development programme;
- establish a teacher relieving system using retired and experience teachers;
- review of policies to upgrade skills of unqualified teachers; and
- initiation of a programme to upskill existing teachers.

8.119 During the first three years, the Ministry of Education will focus on identifying factors related to the supply of and demand for teachers (with specialised skills) at different levels of the system. Special emphasis will be placed on issues of remuneration and the implications of devolution of authority for staffing decisions to institutions. By the end of Phase I, the MOE will have the appropriate information needed to develop a coherent and financially sustainable strategy for balancing pupil:teacher ratios, conditions of service for teachers, and support for non-salary operating inputs to maximise system efficiency. Initial estimates of the recurrent cost implications of teacher upgrading and modest improvements in terms and conditions (to be considered for implementation in Phase II and beyond) will be based on an initial workshop exercise using the cost projection/resource envelope simulation model.

8.120 During Phase I the MOE will examine these issues within the framework of on-going labour market analyses, plans for expansion of vocational/technical training, trends in teachers' wages, projections of the education labour market, and analyses of the cost implications of teacher upgrading and salary increases. The MOE will develop a coherent, information-based strategy to ensure supply of adequately trained and motivated teachers. This work will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Public Service Commission and the Ministry of Finance.

8.121 The following investments will be supported during Phase I:

- time series analysis of real (inflation-corrected) teacher wage patterns;
- analysis of school population projections and trends over a ten-year time frame;
- study of patterns in teacher retention, mobility, loss rates;
- data base on numbers and location of teachers in the community pool;
- tracer studies of new teacher trainees;
- analysis of trends in advertisements for teacher vacancies;
- analysis of time series data on intake at TIOE;
- study of changes in the attitudes of a sample of secondary students regarding the teaching profession;
- improvements in the Tonga graduate teacher preparation programme; and
- identification of options and incentives to introduce more "contestability" into the teacher education market.

8.122 Outputs and outcomes anticipated during the preliminary Phase 1 activities (the first three years) include the following:

- a comprehensive “model” of teacher supply and demand, under a range of assumptions;
- analysis of the long-term cost implications of teacher upgrading and improvements in remuneration, in the context of possible savings related to improved teacher pupil ratios;
- a detailed plan for strengthening TIOE within the framework of a reorganised system of tertiary education under the Tonga Institute of Higher Education;
- identification and costing of options to increase alternative modes of teacher training provision.

Proposed New Investments

8.123 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*.

Improve Teacher Supply

- 01: Develop policy on teacher remuneration.
- 02: Develop supply & demand projection model(s).
- 03: Develop improved teacher data base.
- 04: Undertake TIOE intake analysis.
- 05: Undertake study of teacher recruitment and retention.

Teacher Quality

Policy Issue and Policy Outcomes

- 8.124 The anticipated policy outcome is that all teachers in Tonga are well qualified, trained, committed and competent, and are able to motivate and encourage all students to learn. Teaching will be perceived as an attractive profession and held in high regard by the community, and all teaching positions will be filled by teachers of quality.
- 8.125 The key education policy issues relate to ways of raising the standard of teaching, improvements to the quality of pre-service and in-service teacher education, and whether formal registration of teachers is required in order to maintain standards of quality and ensure public confidence in the profession.
- 8.126 Policy on teacher education should be supported by a regime that maintains a core of trained specialists in teacher education at the Tonga Institute of Education, and should ensure that teacher education specialists are accessible to the various education systems for assistance with in-service delivery, curriculum review and development, and examinations expertise.
- 8.127 Teacher education is the heart of human resource development in an education system, since the quality of teaching is the single most important factor that relates to the quality of student achievement. Effective learning in schools depends upon effective teaching. Improving the quality of teaching is therefore a significant factor in raising the level of student achievement.

- 8.128 The effective preparation and supply of teachers are fundamental aspects of a well-performing education system. Government has an important role in creating the environment in which teachers can be well prepared for their role. While not all teachers need necessarily be trained in the state institution, in a small country like Tonga the Government has a particular responsibility to ensure that its one teachers' training college is well supported and resourced, is itself staffed by well qualified teachers or lecturers, has a sound system of quality assurance in place, and is able to deliver quality programmes.
- 8.129 Granting the Tonga Institute of Education more autonomy by separating it from the Ministry of Education in a structural and budgetary sense would enable it to operate more effectively in carrying out its core functions. This initiative would assist Tonga Institute of Education to improve the offerings of in-service training for all teachers in the various education systems. It would enable it to build collegiality, higher status and increased stability of staffing in the institute, and should also lead to efficiencies through increasing administrative savings, since it would be part of the Tonga Institute of Higher Education. Furthermore, an independent Tonga Institute of Education would be able to plan its place and course offerings to match more closely the needs of the various education systems.
- 8.130 The re-establishment of the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education (concerned with advising on pre-service and in-service teacher education) is desirable, in the spirit of partnership between systems, to ensure that scarce resources are used most efficiently for the benefit of all teachers, irrespective of the system in which they teach. The Advisory Committee would be tasked with ensuring that the present impediments to all teachers' access to professional development are eliminated. The committee would also be tasked with ensuring that the in-service offerings associated with the adoption of new curriculum and assessment systems are planned, integrated and delivered for optimal teacher development.
- 8.131 Creating a more "level playing field" in the teaching labour force by moves to decentralise functions such as appointment of staff, and fostering an environment in which Non-Government systems can compete for teaching staff on an equal basis with Government schools, would have the effect of improving the quality of teaching overall in Tonga's schools. Achieving this objective would require additional financial support for the Non-Government school systems.

Government Policy Response

- 8.132 In pursuit of a goal of improving the quality of teaching, the Ministry of Education will undertake reforms to improve the teacher education system. Policies will be developed to improve the overall quality of teacher education. This goal will be achieved by providing Tonga Institute of Education with more autonomy, along with increased accountability. Tonga Institute of Education should be ideally under the umbrella of the Tonga Institute of Higher Education, where it could share enhanced human and physical resources, administrative functions and physical infrastructure, with adequate resources, a stable core of trained staff, and sufficient autonomy and access to information to proactively

assess and meet the needs of the various education systems in Tonga for quality teachers.

- 8.133 Tonga Institute of Education could plan the number of places and courses it offers to match more closely the needs of the various education systems. It would be able to appoint a stable core of trained and competent staff with planning skills and retain them at the Tonga Institute of Education. It would have the autonomy to select students for entry to the institute on the basis of a commitment to teaching in addition to academic performance.
- 8.134 Policy on how the Tonga Institute of Education could help improve the in-service training of teachers as well as pre-service training will be developed. An in-service development group will be formed involving teachers from all education systems in Tonga, along with Ministry of Education officers, to produce an overall teacher in-service professional development plan.
- 8.135 Independently of these other developments, the Tonga Institute of Education will investigate, as a priority goal, how it could obtain accreditation from an appropriate quality assurance agency. This accreditation could be gained within Tonga if the Tonga National Qualifications Authority is speedily set up, and its operational procedures established without delay, although it is likely that, if this route was followed, the process of formal accreditation, even with a following wind, would not be effective at the earliest before 2006. Another option would be to seek accreditation from a quality assurance agency outside Tonga, although this process would also be time-consuming.
- 8.136 More immediate steps will be taken. The Tonga Institute of Education will at once begin a process of self review and evaluation with a view to preparing itself for formal accreditation. The Tonga Institute of Education Advisory Committee for Teacher Education, comprising representatives of the Government and Non-Government education providers and other stakeholders, will be re-established.
- 8.137 Among the functions of this Advisory Committee are the need to:
- advise the Ministry of Education on improving teacher education in Tonga;
 - advising on the process of moving the Tonga Institute of Education towards formal accreditation;
 - coordinate and advise on all pre-service and in-service teacher education offerings;
 - develop a coordinated plan for pre-service and in-service education in Tonga, which recognises serving teachers' need for a qualification;
 - encourage partnership between Government and Non-Government providers for integrated planning; and
 - ensure that in-service training forms an integral part of the overall revision of curriculum and assessment in schools.
- 8.138 Another more immediate initiative, that will run in parallel with the work of the proposed Advisory Committee for Teacher Education, is to seek formal links (“twinning”) through a Memorandum of Agreement with an already accredited overseas provider of quality teacher education. This process has already been

initiated by the Minister of Education through a preliminary visit in February 2004 to a number of New Zealand tertiary education institutions, with a view to establishing a teaching degree programme at the Tonga Institute of Education. A conjoint arrangement with a suitable overseas provider of teacher education would enable the Tonga Institute of Education to improve its own standards by giving it access to other established high quality teacher education programmes, support from high quality staff at the “twinned” institution, and a raising of its standards through improvement of its own programmes and procedures. It would also be a practical first step towards the Government’s goal of establishing a University of Tonga on Tongatapu.

8.139 Incentives will be developed to improve the quality of teaching by encouraging existing teachers to improve their existing Diploma qualification by undertaking degree studies. It may also be desirable to explore links and co-operation with the University of the South Pacific, which has a campus on Tongatapu. Studies to upgrade existing teacher qualifications could be undertaken either through the University of the South Pacific, or through TIOE if arrangements to offer a teaching degree programme at that institution can be finalised.

8.140 The Tonga Institute of Education will be supported, through donor assistance and by the Ministry of Education, to ensure that:

- pre-service curricula and teaching and learning processes anticipate and reflect proposed changes in school curriculum and assessment;
- the Tonga Institute of Education is accredited, in order to improve the quality of its teacher education programmes;
- the Tonga Institute of Education curriculum is strengthened in areas of diagnosis and remediation of children’s learning difficulties and working with children with special needs;
- the Tonga Institute of Education curriculum is further strengthened in areas of language and literacy learning (bi-lingual literacy);
- a programme is provided for teachers in early childhood education;
- the Graduate Diploma of Education is continued to target the training of teachers in areas of skills shortage for senior secondary levels;
- teacher education programmes for post-secondary/tertiary teachers and teachers of vocational and technical programmes are provided; and
- current TIOE facilities are upgraded, or new facilities are provided.

8.141 The Ministry of Education will consider whether formal registration of all teachers (in both Government and Non-Government systems) is required, in order to maintain standards of quality and to ensure public confidence in the profession. Registration of teachers would provide protection for students and a means of establishing quality by ensuring that only qualified teachers who were suitable for teaching were appointed to permanent teaching positions. As a first step, a list (register) of all teachers in both Government and Non-Government systems will be developed, with a record of each teacher’s name, qualifications, teaching experience, current place of employment, and other relevant information. This task will be undertaken by the person who is appointed to the role of providing technical assistance to the MOE in the use of information.

8.142 One policy issue that has a significant impact upon the quality of teaching is the policy on the remuneration of teachers. The difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff (particularly in the Non-Government secondary sector) suggests that a labour market response may also need to be a factor in the recipe for improving quality. This issue was discussed in the section on teacher supply. How any proposal to increase teacher remuneration would be funded is an issue. While financial incentives for teachers to improve their qualifications should be considered, this policy response is not the only answer to improving teacher quality. The Ministry of Education may wish to consider whether a policy to increase teacher-pupil ratios is warranted in order to reduce the overall number of teachers and free up funds that could then be targeted at providing incentives to teachers to raise their qualification standards and performance.

8.143 Some decentralisation of functions by the Ministry of Education will be considered in order to allow schools more autonomy in the appointment of staff. Quality would be improved by moving towards more school self-management and creating a more “level playing field” in the teaching labour force, by freeing up access to teachers outside the Government system to apply directly to Tonga Government schools for appointment, and by encouraging moves that would allow Non-Government providers to compete for teaching staff on a more equitable basis than exists at present.

8.144 A review of the teacher appraisal system will be conducted, with a view to developing more positive incentives for teachers to improve the quality of their performance.

Proposed New Investments

8.145 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the Corporate Plan.

Improve Teacher Quality

- 01 Strengthen Tonga Institute of Education.
- 02 Establish a "twinning" arrangement between TIOE and an accredited overseas provider for delivery of teacher education degree programmes.
- 03 Strengthen in-service programmes.
- 04 Develop improved facilities at TIOE.
- 05 Introduce improved access to Bachelor of Education degree programmes (or Bachelor of Teaching degree programmes) for existing teachers.

Skill Development and Lifelong Learning

Policy Issue and Policy Outcomes

8.146 The desired policy outcome is the development of skills and competencies required for Tonga's economic and social development, with competent educators delivering high quality, relevant, and cost-effective services.

8.147 The education system should meet the following tests:

- graduates from the formal education system would possess a range of generic skills required in the work force;
- across the system, Tongans would have increased experience and competence in the use of information technology, one of the target areas for SDP7;
- the relevance of skill training investments would be reflected in increased employment, based on tracer studies and other instruments;
- skills and credentials would meet regional and international standards and would empower Tongans who decide to work overseas to command higher salaries (which would also presumably be reflected in remittances);
- opportunities and public support would be in place to encourage individuals to upgrade their vocational and professional skill as an on-going activity in order to maintain international competitiveness;
- student competencies would increase (using criterion-based standards) and the linkage to teacher skill improvements would be demonstrated.

8.148 The education policy issues include:

- how to ensure that the formal schooling system and non-formal training develops the skills required in the work place, including work readiness, initiative and enterprise skills;
- how to develop a flexible system, responsive to changes in the national and global environment, with provisions to redirect focus;
- how to serve students and adults with a range of aptitudes and to provide equal opportunity and support in alternative pathways;
- how to develop an appropriate and integrated qualifications framework that ensures national standards and regional and international recognition;
- how to serve the needs of all Tongans, both those who live and work in Tonga, and those who will live overseas;
- how to upgrade skills of teachers and MOE staff; and,
- how to improve co-ordination among providers, while maintaining freedom of choice with the features of market efficiency.

Government Policy Response

8.149 The Government of Tonga sees the appropriate delivery of vocational and technical education and training as one of its highest priorities. For this reason a mix of policy responses will be adopted. During the first three years, investments will focus on improving the match between the education system and the needs of the economy by making the system more flexible and responsive to market “signals.” The concept of learning will be expanded to include activities that occur outside formal school settings, such as community development training and other non-formal short courses, and will encompass lifelong learning and greater use of distance education and ICT.

8.150 First, a comprehensive survey of public and private employers will be undertaken to determine national training needs, and subsequently the systematic and regular collection and analysis of data on the training needs of the economy,

as a basis for planning. The purpose of the training needs analysis is to provide data that might inform the Ministry of Education's strategic response to match more effectively the output of the education system with the needs of the labour force.

- 8.151 A policy will be developed to provide public support to those of secondary school age who select technical and vocational training options outside schools. This policy might involve a voucher for vocational, technical or life skills training delivered by Government and Non-Government providers, or alternatively a subsidy arrangement of some sort. This response is intended to address access and equity concerns. The review of the secondary school curriculum (referred to in greater detail in the section on Curriculum) would expand opportunities for secondary students to access technical and vocational training.
- 8.152 The Ministry of Education proposes that the Tonga Institute of Science and Technology (TIST - also known as the Tonga Maritime Polytechnic Institute) be assisted by an audit and benchmarking of its technical and engineering courses. This audit could be undertaken by staff from the Auckland University of Technology. The purpose of this proposal is to explore possible avenues where the current trade certificates offered by the Tonga Institute of Science and Technology can be upgraded to a Diploma level (New Zealand Standard). This initiative is intended to improve the quality of the Certificate courses offered by TIST.
- 8.153 The Ministry of Education proposes expanding and rationalising the existing tertiary education system over time. Government post-secondary institutions will become autonomous and self financing to "level the playing field". Public finance will follow individual enrolments (through scholarships, vouchers or subsidies) in targeted skills areas. The system will include non-academic courses, and will maximise freedom of choice and encourage competition. This system will also provide greater flexibility in skills targeting and annual levels of financing. This policy response addresses the need for efficiency and for a coherent move away from funding inputs to funding outputs. This will also probably be an essential reform, if the MOE wishes to have the flexibility and capacity to redirect resources, in response to market signals. The implications of such a change, in terms of organisation, staffing, finance and culture are immense, and the Ministry of Education recognises that a transition will undoubtedly take many years to fully design and implement.
- 8.154 A National Qualifications Framework for Tonga will also be established, which will set standards for qualifications, and provide quality assurance services by monitoring accreditation of providers, approving programmes, and conducting audits, and ensure there are clear pathways to develop skills. Legislation to establish such a body is expected to be considered by Tonga's Parliament in the middle of 2004. The Ministry of Education wishes to access external technical assistance from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority in order to advise on setting up the new authority, and to assist in the design of a national qualifications framework for Tonga. One purpose of these initiatives is to improve the quality of post-secondary education and training, and to ensure a better link between vocational education and training and the needs of the labour force.

8.155 This development will help to define and ensure quality standards in a more flexible and “market-driven” environment. It will facilitate the accumulation of credit through multiple pathways, allowing re-entry and lifelong learning. It will better accommodate emerging opportunities for distance education and will improve the regional and international marketability of Tongan graduates.

8.156 The feasibility of providing short courses will be considered to meet the mix of skill needs required in the workforce (including the public sector). Current short courses offered by the Ministry of Education (and sponsored by AusAID and NZAID) cater effectively for small scale technical skill needs. Examples include competency-based courses, generic management courses, and community outreach courses (especially those offered in the Outer Islands). The delivery of short-term courses is a flexible response in the context of Tonga’s small scale and diverse sectoral needs. Through an appropriate mix of delivery modes, these courses can be more effective than formal courses provided in an institution. Short courses can also cater for the variation in skill needs in the economy, and the course content can be tailored more flexibly to target particular needs. The proposed national training needs assessment should assess whether short courses are able to provide a useful function in bridging the gap between the skill needs of the economy and the skills delivered by current formal training.

8.157 There is a need for initiatives and pilot schemes that foster an improved linkage between employers and education and training providers. Skills training needs to be driven by the needs of industry. Employers need to have greater input into the mix of skills required of graduates of tertiary education institutions. For this to occur opportunities for on-job training in the workplace need to be expanded, pilot skill development projects that are anchored in the workplace should be set up, and consultation with the private sector must be undertaken.

8.158 Outputs and outcomes anticipated during Phase I (the first three years) include the following:

- a system for the on-going monitoring and projection of skill needs in the Tongan economy (as well as skills required in the region and internationally);
- a national qualifications framework that ensures accreditation of providers and programmes to an appropriate standard, and allows recognition of specific competencies, including options for re-entering the formal education system and life-long learning;
- information on the cost-effectiveness, flexibility and responsiveness of a range of skills delivery modalities; and
- information needed to implement a policy of outcomes-based skills training with public finance linked to outcomes.

Proposed New Investments

8.159 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*.

Skill Development and Lifelong Learning

- 01: Undertake a national training needs assessment.
- 02 Undertake an audit of Tonga Institute of Science & Technology.
- 03 Develop the Tonga National Qualifications Framework.
- 04 Expand opportunities for on-job training.
- 05 Develop pilot skill development projects.
- 06 On-going consultation with private sector.
- 07 Increase the provision of short courses at the national level, with a focus on courses that maximise public returns.

Technical and Vocational Training

- 01 Comprehensive review of international experience in technical and vocational education.
- 02 Develop and implement a policy on entitlements for out-of-school technical and vocational training.
- 03 Negotiate work experience placements with employers for students.

Reorganisation of Tertiary Education

Policy Issue and Policy Outcomes

- 8.160 The anticipated policy outcomes include a coordinated national system of post-secondary education and training with adequate provision to meet the needs of Tonga's society and economy. The system should be characterised by equity, quality, relevance and efficiency. Qualifications would be internationally accredited and recognised, and limited resources would not be dissipated through unnecessary duplication of services. A further policy outcome is a strategic plan for the development of tertiary education in Tonga.
- 8.161 The integration of administration of some or all government funded post-secondary education has the potential to provide educational and efficiency benefits. There is a case for co-ordinating all government funded post-secondary education under the Tonga Institute of Higher Education. Considerable financial efficiencies, and non-financial benefits, could be achieved with such a development. This proposed development could extend to location of all delivery on one physical campus, but the actual physical integration of programmes on one site would be a longer-term goal. The proposed integration of services would enhance library and information technology services, strengthen staffing, foster efficiency through use of specialist teachers across different faculties, rationalise resource use and programme delivery, and support adult and continuing education and the training of teachers for post-secondary education.
- 8.162 Expanding and strengthening TIHE is a logical first step towards the development of a robust tertiary education sector and the development of a national university in the future. Autonomy of governance for TIHE is seen as necessary to ensure the international recognition of qualifications by allowing for academic independence, enabling the development of specialist tertiary educators, attracting the return of qualified Tongans from positions overseas, and providing for the development of an independent research focus.

8.163 Financial and resource management for post-secondary education may be enhanced through the establishment of an autonomous TIHE, by fostering greater transparency.

Government Policy Response

8.164 The Ministry of Education wishes to reform and co-ordinate the provision of post-secondary education and training in Tonga. A specific national strategic plan for the development of post-secondary education and training in Tonga, that ensures co-ordination with other post-secondary education providers, will be developed as part of the Ministry of Education's broader planning for education in Tonga. A planned approach to the development of formal post-secondary education, taking into consideration the role of all post-secondary education providers, should lead to a more efficient sector.

8.165 An internationally recognised tertiary education sector in Tonga will be fostered by expanding the Tonga Institute of Higher Education, and coordinating existing post-secondary education under its umbrella.

8.166 Financial efficiencies, and non-financial benefits, could be achieved through the merger and location on a single campus of all Tonga Government funded post-secondary education (including the nursing training and health studies currently funded by the Ministry of Health). Achieving this goal implies a broad review of various current providers such as the CDTC, TIST, TIOE, the Centre for Information Technology, DECC and the Short-Term Training Centre, with a view to eliminating overlaps and achieving greater financial efficiencies, and non-financial benefits. Possibilities for improving library and information technology services, adult and continuing education, and teacher training of post-secondary teachers would be enhanced by this development. The goal of achieving a single campus is a longer-term objective, and may not be immediately achievable. As an interim measure, most of the various separate Government institutions could be combined for administrative purposes under one overarching entity (the Tonga Institute of Higher Education).

8.167 The MOE is considering a model under which this expanded institution will be formally established as a separate autonomous tertiary education institution, accountable to a duly constituted Governing Body, and responsible directly to the Minister of Education for its policy direction and for achievement of its negotiated outcomes. Legislation may be prepared and submitted to the Parliament for consideration, in order to enable the new institution to have formal autonomy and status.

8.168 Initial action has been taken in Tonga to develop position descriptions for the administration of TIHE. Technical assistance will be sought by the Ministry of Education to develop a plan (including appropriate staffing arrangements) for the development of TIHE.

8.169 Once the legislation is passed, members of the governing body for TIHE can be appointed, reporting through the Minister of Education. This body will be responsible for appointing the Chief Executive Officer, who in turn would be

responsible for appointing and managing staff at a lower level. The duly appointed TIHE management team will set and collect fees, and manage staff appointments and remuneration.

8.170 Autonomy of governance for a Government of Tonga combined post-secondary education institute could be seen as a step towards the establishment of a national university in the future. Before proceeding to consider any proposal for the establishment of a national university in Tonga, a full investigation and report on the costs and benefits, including the ongoing costs of supporting the staffing and infrastructure of a university, will be undertaken.

8.171 The increased use of technology to access learning and recognised qualifications can be a cost effective way to achieve higher education outcomes in Tonga.

8.172 Any proposal to introduce a student loan or support scheme needs careful consideration before a scheme is implemented.

8.173 The policy strategies required include the following:

- co-ordinate existing government post-secondary education institutes (including nursing and health studies) under a single administration. This could become the Tonga Institute of Higher Education (TIHE) and would be a stage towards the development of a national university for Tonga;
- move to establish an autonomous governing body for TIHE, reporting directly to the Minister of Education, and representative of key stakeholders in post-secondary education;
- establish the Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board (TNQAB) as a statutory body reporting through the Minister of Education, to provide a framework for post compulsory education and training in Tonga and to implement quality assurance and audit for the sector;
- support further articulation agreements with international institutions and maximise the use of technology to facilitate on-line and distance education;
- undertake the drafting of legislation to give effect to these changes, to be considered by Parliament;
- establish a representative working party (including USP) to examine the nation's longer-term needs for infrastructure and systems for post-secondary education and training, and to develop a plan for development of post-secondary education in Tonga;
- establish and maintain a register of providers of post-secondary education;
- develop an equivalent full-time student (EFTS) system and an appropriate education management information system for recording consumption of post-secondary education; and
- publish and promote awareness of the pathways in existing post-secondary provision, and between secondary and post-secondary provision.

Proposed New Investments

8.174 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*.

Reorganisation of Tertiary Education

- 01: Establish the Tonga Institute of Higher Education as an autonomous body which will provide oversight for the establishment of a national university.
- 02: Develop & pilot "demand-driven" funding models.
- 03: Undertake a survey of infrastructure needs and utilisation.
- 04: Establish and maintain a register of tertiary education providers.
- 05: Develop an equivalent full-time student (EFTS) system to record consumption of tertiary education

Management and Control of Education

Policy Issue and Policy Outcomes

- 8.175 The desired policy outcomes include improved delivery of education and training, improved administration and co-ordination of education, improved student achievement, and improved efficiency and effectiveness of resource use in education.
- 8.176 The education policy issues include determining the appropriate balance between central control and a decentralised education system, the extent to which schools should become self-managing institutions (and whether the same policies should apply equally to primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary institutions), the degree of autonomy that is appropriate for schools, and how more autonomy for Principals and schools would be balanced by accountability procedures and processes. A key policy is the extent to which schools should be able to plan and manage their own annual budgets.
- 8.177 Policy on the role of the Ministry of Education is central.
- 8.178 Greater devolution of authority will be considered, in order to improve the effective and efficient delivery of education services, to support the role of communities in education, and to strengthen accountability. Staff involved in undertaking these increased responsibilities (both financial and otherwise) will need to receive training for these tasks.
- 8.179 One of the aims of the current Public Sector Reform Programme in Tonga is to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Less centralised decision-making would give those directly affected in specific localities the authority to make immediate decisions where appropriate. The Ministry of Education is examining the extent to which the public sector reforms may have implications for the education system. Any changes in the control of education should be in line with the current Public Service Reform in Tonga, in order to increase efficiency.
- 8.180 More decision-making needs to occur away from the central bureaucracy at an appropriate delegated level. This delegation of authority would develop the management skills and professionalism of those required to make these decisions, and would enable them to be more responsible for the consequences of their decisions. The process of involving families and communities more in education

would also have beneficial effects on student achievement. In this way a culture of dependency within the education system would be avoided.

- 8.181 The Ministry of Education will therefore consider the development of policies and structures that empower professionalism and responsible decision-making. The outcome sought would be improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery of education services.
- 8.182 There would also be advantages such as improved efficiency and effectiveness if the Ministry of Education developed over time a more open and flexible system of making staff appointments, having regard to Tonga's cultural and geographic needs, the necessity for staffing all schools appropriately, and the need to give reasonable consideration to an individual teachers' choice of place of employment and prospects for career advancement. The MOE intends, therefore, to develop a more open and effective staff appointment policy.
- 8.183 The three core functions of the Ministry of Education should be policy development, implementation of policy, and management of resources. A review of the organisational structure of the Ministry of Education with these functions in mind is required. The timing of such a review should be co-ordinated with any public service reforms initiated by the Public Service Commission.
- 8.184 It is difficult in a relatively small education system such as Tonga's to balance the need for specialist education professionals in areas such as curriculum development or examinations, or even in specialist secondary school teaching positions, with the flexibility necessary if scarce expertise is to be deployed across the education system. There is a cost that has to be acknowledged in maintaining specialist positions, and these costs are more difficult to sustain in a smaller country with limited resources. However, if people in the system are to keep reasonably abreast of developments overseas they need to specialise to a degree, and people need to be identified to take some responsibility for specific areas (such as literacy, for instance).
- 8.185 The Ministry of Education will develop policies that will enable the Government post-secondary education institutions, to become self-managing institutions, to take on more responsibility for decision-making, and to move towards becoming autonomous self-managing institutions. The aim is to increase their efficiency and effectiveness, and their accountability to communities. The long-term implication of this change is a reduction in costs to the Government. This policy will have to be implemented in stages, over a period of years.
- 8.186 Schools, however, should be encouraged to move gradually to undertake more responsibility for their own management, over time, within the Tongan cultural context. Tonga will need to monitor closely what is being done in neighbouring Pacific countries, and should consider moving towards greater devolution in the schools sector as a longer-term goal.
- 8.187 The implementation of the principle of self-management in schools needs to be carefully planned, and put into practice as a series of small, manageable and

progressive steps that fit the cultural context of Tonga, perhaps over a period of several years.

8.188 A strong and effective partnership between Government and Non-Government education systems is desirable. There has always been a close partnership between Government and Non-Government education providers in Tonga. The Advisory Council for Education established under the Education Act 1974 is a forum for dialogue between the Government and Non-Government systems. The Government of Tonga may wish to consider whether the existing networks and partnerships could be strengthened by negotiating an accord that recognises the contribution made to education in Tonga by the Non-Government providers, particularly the Churches. This accord could recognise the Government's wider responsibility for national education policy and administration of the system, within the constraints of annual budgets, and at the same time acknowledge the valuable contributions (both financial and otherwise) made by the Non-Government systems.

8.189 Greater involvement of communities (including parents) in education will lead to improved educational achievement. The Ministry of Education places a high value on the contribution of parents to schools, and the good working relationships between schools, parents and people in local communities.

8.190 The principle of access underpins the current provision of schooling. It is important to examine whether the current network of schooling provision that has been put in place in Tonga in the past, and which provides access to a school on every inhabited island in Tonga, within a walking distance of two miles, for children of compulsory school age, is still appropriate in each case, given changing circumstances and the mobility of the population. It is also important to ensure that principles of efficiency and effectiveness are also considered in any review of current schooling provision.

Government Policy Response

8.191 The Government of Tonga through the Ministry of Education will consider a mix of policies in order to make improvements to the existing centralised management and control of education. The objectives of any changes will be improved delivery of education and training, improved student achievement, and improved efficiency and effectiveness of resource use in education. One of Tonga's main strengths is the stability and continuity of its administration, and any changes proposed would need to be carefully planned and implemented to ensure that the education of the students was not adversely affected.

8.192 The Ministry of Education's planning documents for education in Tonga will:

- bear a clear relationship to the National Strategic Development Plan and the current Government reform exercise;
- set out goals and objectives for education in Tonga;
- aim to increase effectiveness and efficiency;
- plan for progressive improvements to the education system over the medium term;

- allow the Ministry of Education to undertake responsibility for policy oversight of the whole education system through the development of national guidelines;
 - foster improved networks and partnerships between the Government and Non-Government sectors;
 - set out where devolution of more responsibility to schools and their communities would be in the national interest, and how any appropriate changes might be managed progressively over time;
 - review the current national network of schooling provision; and
 - move progressively to reform the national distribution of funds for education where such reform is in the national interest.
- 8.193 Development and changes to Tonga’s education system should be linked to SDP7 and the Government reform programme, as mentioned above.
- 8.194 The national education system in Tonga should include national guidelines for Early Childhood Education and school dropouts.
- 8.195 Progressive improvements to the education system over the medium term will be undertaken. A co-ordinated national education system will foster partnerships between the Government and Non-Government sectors (as an example, the Government could subsidise operational costs, if the Churches would provide the facilities).
- 8.196 National guidelines will be developed for all schools in the Kingdom (e.g. on curriculum, or on examinations) with opportunity for innovation within the guidelines. The post-secondary sector will be developed within a coordinated framework. Government will support and encourage early childhood education provision and special education provision for those students who are currently not catered for by existing policies. It will in principle accept responsibility (within the constraints of current resourcing) for the education of all students in the compulsory education sector, including “drop-outs” and early school leavers.
- 8.197 As an interim measure, partnerships between Government and Non-Government sectors will be fostered in which the Government may subsidise operational costs, while the Churches provide facilities (using their existing buildings). Concessions will be needed by all partners to develop an agreed and effective working plan that is in the country’s national interest. It is also implied that reform of the national distribution of funds for education will be required to achieve an effective working partnership model. If, for instance, a more “level playing field” between Government and Non-Government providers could be achieved, funds to support education could be delivered on the basis of enrolments, regardless of the type of provider. Development of an appropriate funding policy, however, is a longer-term objective. These proposals for change need to be carefully evaluated by the Government to ensure that they are in the national interest.
- 8.198 A clear policy to reflect the contribution made by all the education sectors, including the Churches, should be articulated and implemented. At the same time, the Ministry of Education will consider Government responsibility in principle for

funding education provision at forms 1 & 2 levels. This issue has been explored in more detail in the section on *Universal Basic Education to Year 8*.

- 8.199 It would be relatively inexpensive to put in place a campaign that would introduce to communities ways in which home and family interactions could support children's learning. Such an initiative would be a useful first step in forging closer links between home and school.
- 8.200 Restructuring of the administration and management of the Ministry of Education is necessary to achieve the goal of strengthening its capacity. The aspects of its capacity that require strengthening include a stronger focus on developing and implementing education policy, a strengthened planning, forecasting and monitoring capacity, improved property management, improved financial management, and better tools for information management and analysis (that is, collecting and analysing information and data needed to support the policy development process). Its administrative structure needs to be adjusted to meet these national requirements.
- 8.201 The Government must consider the national interest of Tonga before making any decisions to proceed with significant education reforms. The timing and nature of any proposed changes to the education system are matters that should continue to be the subject of consultation with stakeholders in Tonga.
- 8.202 Prior training of personnel (especially Principals) must also be undertaken before the proposals to decentralise functions are implemented, so that an adequate skill base of competent and committed people is available to give effect to the proposed changes.
- 8.203 The leadership of the Principal is a key factor in strengthening management of schools across the education system. Principals need to be able to exercise increased professional leadership. The programme of leadership training for school principals implemented under the TISP project will be extended and further developed, in order to develop their professionalism. The Ministry of Education will consider how delegation of further authority to Principals, by enabling them to exercise more autonomy, would improve the delivery of education. There will be a continued emphasis in professional development programmes on fostering school-based management practices as a means of moving gradually towards the proposed directions indicated for education reform.
- 8.204 The proportion of public funds spent on salaries in the education sector is high relative to the proportion of funds spent on operating expenses of schools (over 95% of the funds in the primary sector are spent on salaries). A consequence is that the amount of operating funds available to schools is limited, schools have difficulty managing their operations with a restricted budget, and must instead turn to the central bureaucracy to provide resources for what many Principals consider are essential items, or to local communities for financial assistance with necessary operations such as payment for utilities (power and water) or maintenance of school property.

- 8.205 Progressive moves within the Government sector towards increased school-based management and shared community responsibility would have the potential to lead to more efficient management of scarce resources.
- 8.206 The Ministry of Education will investigate whether there is support for a trial of a more devolved system of education, based on the establishment of Boards of Trustees for individual schools, more autonomy for school Principals, and increased responsibility for school management of staffing and resources. The Ministry of Education considers such a system is not suitable for primary schools at this time, but may be suitable for some secondary schools. Principals of some Church secondary schools in Tonga have moved to adopt a more self-managing style of operation.
- 8.207 Establishing such a trial would be a way of exploring the implications in Tonga of extending more autonomy to School Principals in a controlled environment by delegating decision-making, and testing whether and how such a system could work. Such an initiative would be a way of maintaining in the interim the separate dual system of secondary education delivery by the Government and the Church education systems, but could begin to explore the implications of devolving some responsibility within the Government sector towards increased school-based management and shared community responsibility. This proposed trial would also assist the Ministry of Education in developing and implementing clear written policy guidelines for devolution of central responsibility on issues such as staffing, funding, and assessment. Any trial of this sort would need to be evaluated carefully.
- 8.208 The Ministry of Education is empowered under the present Education Act to allow schools to be managed in the way outlined above. This system is being implemented in the Catholic school system in Tonga as this school system sees the need for such a form of school management.
- 8.209 A principled and planned approach to school property management and development is required. The management of the education property portfolio by the Ministry of Education needs to be strengthened. The Ministry of Education should develop a National Strategic Plan for school property development and investment as part of the overall national Strategic Plan for Education.
- 8.210 There is a need for an overall strategy about where new schools are required (if any), and about how existing schools should be maintained in good repair. Decisions about the construction or siting of new schools need to be made on a considered and principled basis. A carefully thought-out policy and strategic property plan will consider all the implications and the flow-on impact of school property decisions. The property plan may need to include proposals for relocation of schools where appropriate. Timing and affordability are aspects that will be determined as the plan is developed.
- 8.211 Many schools require extensive maintenance, as funds for maintenance are very limited and the responsibility for upkeep of schools falls on teachers and parents. Funding will need to be identified, either from within the Education Vote or from external sources, for ongoing and “catch-up” property maintenance, and

an order of priority for necessary work over a period of several years established, so that the system can “catch up” on maintenance that has not been attended to (largely, it is conceded, because of lack of funds).

8.212 Tertiary (post-secondary) institutions need to be given more autonomy in order to protect academic freedom and to ensure the efficient and effective use of resources. Legislative change will be needed to establish formally a Governing Body (or bodies) that would undertake responsibility for governance of post-secondary institutions. The functions of the Governing Body (or bodies) should be clearly set out in legislation. This issue is explored in more detail in the previous section *Reorganisation of Tertiary Education*.

Proposed New Investments

8.213 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*.

Strengthen Management and Administration

- 01 Establish a Strategic Planning Group with oversight responsibility.
- 02 Performance audit of Ministry of Education.
- 03 Review of Education Act.
- 04 Review of MOE structure (and revision if/as needed).
- 05 Facilities to support new structure and functions.
- 06 Improve management of Govt's investment in school property.
- 07 Develop an Education Property Management Strategic Plan.
- 08 Institutional capacity building to allow devolution.
- 09 Programme of Principal & teacher development.
- 10 Redesign Vote Education to an output-based programme budget.

Improve Primary Education

- 01 Develop improved data base with primary school information.
- 02 Develop guidelines on best practice in primary school management.
- 03 Provide help to schools with school improvement grants.
- 04 Provide per capita grants to schools for non-salary recurrent costs.
- 05 Assess the impact of school improvement grants.

Self-Managing Secondary Schools

- 01 Develop policy on increased delegation of authority to secondary schools.
- 02 Determine operating budgets for secondary schools.
- 03 Survey of training needs of Principals.
- 04 Undertake programmes of professional development for Principals.

Efficiency

Policy Issue and Policy Outcomes

8.214 The desired policy outcome is that available resources be used to maximise educational outcomes (internal efficiency) and that these educational outcomes meet the needs of Tonga's society and economy (external efficiency). The education system should meet the following tests:

- criteria, indicators and information systems would be in place to monitor internal efficiency and to support management and school improvement;
- external efficiency should be monitored, based on information from industry and commerce, rate of return analyses and tracer studies which include a sample of emigrants;
- policies and plans would be based on realistic resource projections and inputs would be financed to assure adequate balance (e.g., non-salary recurrent inputs would be adequate);
- public resources should be allocated equitably, and a system of equity targets and indicators would be developed; and
- the need for donor support would be eliminated within 15 to 20 years.

8.215 The education policy issues include:

- how to constrain recurrent costs (provision of an adequate recurrent budget is the principal constraint facing the MOE);
- how to increase efficiency through reduced repetition, improved pupil:teacher ratios, and the use of multi-grade teaching and technology;
- how improve external efficiency, while protecting personal choice.

Government Policy Response

8.216 During the first three years, investments will focus on identifying cost-effective ways to improve efficiency. The Ministry of Education will consider several efficiency and restructuring options, but there is not a commitment to any specific course of action or reform, at this time. Further analysis and policy development is required before firm decisions can be made. Special attention will be paid to efficiency issues both at the system level (such as reviews of the configuration of schooling provision, and of school staffing), and at the school level. Consideration will also be given to the impact of increasing resources for operations, teaching and learning materials, maintenance and supplies within the framework of school improvement plans.

8.217 The Government's response will be to adopt a mix of different policies that have the potential to increase efficiencies. The process will involve a careful, information-based analysis of efficiency in the existing system, and the identification and analysis of difficult policy reforms to reduce repetition, increase pupil:teacher ratios (or enforce existing staffing guidelines), redirect available resources towards operating costs and learning materials, upgrade staff, and provide more equitable financing of secondary and post-secondary education. Savings realised through implementing such reforms would be available for quality enhancements under this *Education Policy Framework* and the related planning documents.

8.218 On the basis of projected efficiency savings over the longer term, the Ministry of Education will be proposing increased Government allocations to education,

and external funding of recurrent non-salary costs through budgetary support. To complement this approach, the Ministry of Education will move forward with preliminary analysis and policy development of efficiency options, leading to a reform and investment strategy, based on the information that is available.

- 8.219 In the context of analysing efficiency issues, the Ministry of Education will examine critically how resources are currently used at the system level within the existing Vote:Education, and whether the current use of resources represents best value for money. It is acknowledged that the necessary analysis of these issues and the subsequent development and implementation of suitable education policies will take some time to complete, and that where community involvement is required, building understanding and consensus on the way forward will be both difficult and time-consuming. For this reason, the time frame to achieve the efficiencies sought in the Tonga education system may extend over several years.
- 8.220 For example, the current national network of schooling provision in Tonga has a number of undoubted strengths. Tonga makes strenuous efforts to ensure that every child, even on small and isolated islands, should receive schooling close to his or her home. But there is a financial cost to the provision of schools in remote areas. One of the consequences of allocating scarce resources to small and uneconomic schools is that the quality of education provision elsewhere in the Kingdom may suffer, for instance through overcrowding in urban schools. Closing or merging small schools in remote geographic locations may also require a Government commitment to make legislative changes to the Education Act, so these issues will need to be approached carefully.
- 8.221 There will be some circumstances where it will not be sensible to consider closing or merging small schools, owing to reasons of transport or access to education, particularly on some of the Outer Islands. But there are some situations where rationalisation may be possible. The Ministry of Education will consider putting a process in place, involving community consultation, in order to deal with these situations on a case by case basis.
- 8.222 The current national network of schooling provision will be analysed, with a view to finding ways of improving effectiveness and efficiency in the use of scarce resources for education. The goal will be to establish a national network of schooling provision, based on principles of access, efficiency and effectiveness. The Ministry of Education is aware of those areas in the Kingdom where schools are small and uneconomic, or where staffing could be rationalised or reduced as a result of falling school rolls. Similarly, the Ministry knows which schools are overcrowded. The possibility of school mergers where appropriate will be examined, and measures to eliminate overcrowding (such as zoning, or complementary arrangements with Church schools) will be considered.
- 8.223 In situations where efficiencies appear to be possible and viable, the Ministry of Education will also initiate a process of community engagement to identify the most effective site solution, with a view to improving the overall quality of education provision. While it may be logical to merge schools for reasons of economies of scale or a more effective use of scarce resources, the emotional attachment of communities to schools must also be dealt with. It may be useful to

consider providing incentives where school mergers seem possible or desirable (such as reinvestment of savings on an identified site for a period of time, or using savings for purchase of supporting learning resources such as computers).

8.224 One possible process which the Ministry of Education will consider involves the establishment of Education Development Working Parties, associated with the determination of criteria to be applied, in order to examine the current network of schooling provision. (The process would include maintaining access to and quality of educational provision, support for Government/Church education system partnerships, and ensuring overall cost effectiveness and efficient use of resources).

8.225 The arrangements for staffing schools and appointing staff to administrative positions in the central Ministry of Education in Tonga are managed centrally in Tonga. The current centralised system of staffing has grown out of the need to ensure balanced staffing of schools throughout the entire Kingdom, including those schools in the Outer Islands. This need is an important cultural imperative for Tonga that is acknowledged. The only positions that are “reserved” are those for returning scholars who have been given a Ministry of Education scholarship. Not all positions are advertised, although some are. Principals are also instrumental in negotiating teachers for their schools. Principals and Heads of Ministry of Education Divisions come together and undertake an annual staffing allocation exercise, chaired by a Deputy Director. Prior to that exercise, the Principal and the Senior Lecturers assess their staffing needs having regard to the needs of the school, and send recommendations to the central office of the Ministry of Education to be discussed as part of the central staffing allocation exercise.

8.226 The Ministry of Education will examine whether further reform to existing staffing arrangements can be undertaken in the Tongan context, and whether a clearer and more transparent policy on school staffing entitlements can be developed and implemented. An examination of school rolls and the teacher and student numbers at individual schools has revealed quite wide variations in teacher-student ratios and unit costs. The Ministry of Education will consider whether there is scope for rationalisation and a better (and fairer) distribution of resources.

8.227 Options which the Ministry of Education will consider include whether an appropriate decentralised staffing policy might be more effective in meeting the requirements of schools and other sectors of the education system. For instance, appointments to teaching positions in schools or posts in the central Ministry of Education could be opened up to people outside the Government list by advertising the jobs. This process would require the development of clear job descriptions and person specifications, a sound process of application for jobs including open advertising, and selection and appointment of the candidate best suited to the job. The Ministry of Education has already initiated this process for some of its senior appointments, so that, to a degree, this process is already beginning to happen.

8.228 The following investments would be supported during Phase I:

- establishing norms for non-salary support to school operating budgets based on a review of the curriculum and regional and international practice;
- analysis of unit costs at all levels of the system;
- pilot testing options for multi-grade teaching and alternative pupil:teacher ratios;
- assistance to schools in developing school improvement plans;
- block grants to schools to develop improvement plans and to monitor implementation and impacts;
- per capita grants to schools to improve the supply of teaching and learning materials and to support operating and maintenance budgets;
- analysis and policy development in respect of current schooling provision (school mergers); and
- development and implementation of school staffing policies.

8.229 Outputs and outcomes anticipated may include some or all of the following:

- revised budget priorities and submissions with increased Government allocations for non-salary recurrent inputs to increase efficiency;
- decentralisation of decisions on resource allocations to the school level;
- validated options for improving pupil:teacher ratios through use of multi-grade teaching, ICT and other innovations; and
- a comprehensive system of indicators to monitor systemic efficiency.

Proposed New Investments

8.230 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the Corporate Plan.

Efficiency Improvements

- 01 Establish norms for non-salary support for school budgets.
- 02 Analysis of unit costs.
- 03 Policy for current schooling provision (school mergers).
- 04 Policy for school staffing.
- 05 Pilot test options for changing pupil:teacher ratios.

Sport

Policy Issue and Policy Outcomes

8.231 The anticipated policy outcome is that the sporting skills and abilities of Tongans will be identified and developed through a programme of elite development, co-ordinated through primary and secondary schools.

8.232 The rationale for this initiative is based on the wastage of human sporting potential that presently occurs, since talented individuals do not have an appropriate pathway to achieve results through focused development of their sporting skills and abilities. Investment in sport also has the potential to generate benefits not only for selected individuals but also for the country as a whole, by

supporting objectives from the Strategic Development Plan 7 such as investing in people and sustainable economic growth. The specific Strategic Result Area that is being targeted in SDP7 is Strategic Result Area 4 “Developing Human Resources Including Youth and International Sports”, and the specific objective “creating opportunities in sports, especially for youth”.

Government Policy Response

8.233 The Government of Tonga, through the Ministry of Education, will develop a co-ordinated policy to foster individual sporting talent (beginning the process through the school system). The policy option will be co-ordinated within the Ministry of Education.

8.234 The Ministry of Education proposes that a number of aims for the development of sport be adopted:

- to introduce proper training for sports through the Tonga Institute of Sport;
- to identify individuals with sporting talent, and to record the skills of individuals with exceptional sporting skills on a central database;
- to develop those individuals through an appropriate pathway of elite development that will achieve results;
- to co-ordinate these developments in sport in primary and secondary schools through a programme of teacher development; and
- to foster opportunities for employment through sport.

8.235 The intention is to develop a strategic plan for the development of sport in schools and beyond. This plan will involve a holistic co-ordinated programme of development in sports, with a focus from year 7 on, through schools. The proposed programme will involve the integration of sport, the physical education curriculum, the health education curriculum, and other academic activities (science, mathematics and so on). The focus will be on certain sports in which Tongans excel, such as rugby, netball, and the “throwing” or projectile sports in athletics (discus, shot put and javelin).

8.236 Teacher training will be required. This training includes pre-service training at the Tonga Institute of Education (through preparation to teach the physical education curriculum), and in-service training for teachers already in the service. The Ministry of Education is working with a form 5 and form 6 curriculum from Adelaide as a model. Booklets and supporting teacher guides are being developed: one for classes 1-6 (primary schools) and one for forms 1 to 7 (middle and secondary schools).

8.237 The in-service training of teachers will focus initially on the identification of individuals with sporting talent. A one-week training course for these teachers will be delivered through the Short-Term Training Centre.

8.238 Training of individuals with sporting talent will occur through the Tonga Institute of Sport (at the stadium), generally over a focused period of time. Most will be trained in Tonga, but some may be trained overseas. The objective is that the Tonga Institute of Sport be incorporated within the Tonga Institute of Higher Education as a separate faculty.

8.239 The Ministry of Education will set up a working committee involving other stakeholders to advise on and assist the development of the aims outlined above.

8.240 It will be important that the focus on elite development in sport does not compromise equity objectives of the school system which need to offer all students the opportunity for healthy development through physical exercise and sport. There is some risk that concentrating on the elite development of individuals with sporting talent may siphon off scarce resources that should be used to meet the broader objectives of a physical education curriculum and develop the skills and talents of all students. It will be important that the Ministry of Education continues to evaluate the progress of this initiative, and ensures that the objectives of the sports programme to meet the needs of the gifted, and the objectives of a more comprehensive physical education curriculum are seen to be complementary. For this reason priority needs to be given to a revision of the physical education curriculum where appropriate policies can be developed and evaluated.

Proposed New Investments

8.241 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the Corporate Plan.

Sports Policy

- 01 Develop policy on sports.
- 02 Develop strategic plan for development of sports in schools.
- 03 Review physical education curriculum.
- 04 Develop teacher development programme focusing on sports.
- 05 Develop specialised academies for potential sports as well as “sports for all” programs.
- 06 Develop a marketing unit for sports.

Information and Communications Technology

Policy Issue and Policy Outcomes

8.242 The desired policy outcome is that Tonga has an education system that provides all students with up to date skills in the use of information technology and that the system uses available information and communications technologies to maximum advantage in planning, management, and the delivery of educational services.

8.243 The education system should meet the following tests:

- the needs of the Tongan economy and private sector for skilled personnel would be met in accordance with Strategic Result Area 2 of SDP7 (Facilitating the Development of the Private Sector);
- the national vision of developing an adaptive culture would realised;

- training in ICT would support Strategic Result Area 6 (Developing of Communications and Information Technology) in the Government's Strategic Development Plan 7 by focusing on training at all levels to ensure maximum benefits are achieved;
- students at all levels of the system would develop competence in using new information and communications technologies;
- new ICT-based opportunities for delivering instruction would be evaluated and adopted, as appropriate, in areas of multi-grade teaching, distance education, assessment and remediation, meeting special needs, etc.;
- a broad range of life-long learning opportunities would be made available to all Tongans; and
- ICT would be effectively integrated into the operation of the sector through development of an EMIS and other initiatives, including improved systems of school records, scheduling and dissemination of information.

Government Policy Response

8.244 . The Ministry of Education recognises that there are many unique opportunities in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) and approaches. Investments in information and communications technology will assist in more efficient management and analysis of information, but will need to be offset by efficiency-related savings in service delivery, if they are to be affordable. Opportunities to invest in ICT as well as in human resource potential will be acted upon accordingly where the efficiency related savings cover expenses.

8.245 . The Ministry of Education will develop its capacity to design and revise an ICT policy and strategy on an ongoing basis. This approach may require an explicit ICT brief in the job description of a Deputy Director or other senior official. Given the rate at which technology changes, intensive and focused ongoing tracking of issues and opportunities will be required. The MOE may also establish an ICT Advisory Board.

8.246 Under the direction of a senior official, the MOE will undertake a comprehensive review of options for using information and communications technology in four areas:

- the capacity of the education system to upgrade information and communications technology skills in the population at large, in order to contribute to the Tonga economy;
- the capacity of the Ministry of Education and other institutional providers to use information and communications technology to deliver improved services;
- the use of information and communications technology to improve learning and teaching, and to deliver instruction, and
- the capacity of the MOE to use ICT to improve management decisions.

8.247 This activity would probably require a major review of the ICT literature, a study tour to countries that have appropriate systems in operation, and the commissioning of a series of studies. The objective of this exercise would be to both develop a set of policy recommendations (to be included in this *Education Policy Framework*) and to put in place a system to ensure that policies and

strategies are continuously reviewed and updated in light of changes in technology. The Advisory Board may be used to ensure that information remains current.

- 8.248 There is international support for ICT initiatives. The MOE is developing a policy on how best to use this support, including the use of technical assistance and volunteers. The Government of Japan has indicated an interest in assisting the MOE in investigating ICT options by funding a consultant. The MOE will approach JICA and other donor organisations for assistance in developing this component of the strategic plan. NZAID and EU are supporting a regional initiative on educational policy and planning (PRIDE Project). The MOE will explore opportunities for technical assistance and the broader issues of collaboration in the development of curricular materials and instructional software that is appropriate to Pacific Island states.
- 8.249 The cost structure of ICT differs fundamentally from traditional educational inputs. Capital costs (hardware, software development, replacement of equipment) are relatively high. The marginal costs of replicating instructional materials and service delivery are extremely low, approaching zero in some instances. This factor implies a major change in the paradigm of policy analysis and planning, as well as regional and international collaboration in sharing these high development costs. The Ministry of Education will seek to invest the gains resulting from more efficient distribution of materials and improved management and administrative systems in educational improvement initiatives, as a way of offsetting the higher capital costs of ICT investment. The MOE recognises that capital investment will be required through Government of Tonga budgetary support and through external donor assistance in order to achieve the potential benefits that ICT might generate.
- 8.250 During the first three years, investments will focus on improving the information base related to ICT and on identifying and testing options for using ICT at all levels of the system. Given the rapid rate of change in ICT, the MOE will need the capacity to update information and revise policies on a continuous basis.
- 8.251 The Ministry of Education proposes the following investments be supported during Phase I:
- development of ICT education policy for Tonga;
 - developing a system for collection and analysis of information on ICT educational uses and “best practice” elsewhere;
 - dissemination of information on ICT options to school managers, linked with criteria and a system of competitive grants under which schools and other institutions could pilot test and evaluate ICT solutions;
 - analysis of the cost-effectiveness of ICT delivery modalities, with special emphasis on the costs and benefits of substituting technology for labour, and the potential impact on salary savings relative to costs;
 - analysis of the capacity and costs associated with maintaining and supporting ICT hardware and software, and appropriate schedules for equipment depreciation and replacement, and

- establishing an ICT Education Advisory Committee.

8.252 Outputs and outcomes anticipated include the following:

- institutionalised MOE capacity (staff and procedures) to review “state of the art” ICT opportunities for education and training;
- ICT policies, validated on the basis of pilot tests; and
- systems and policies in place to support ICT services and to maintain and upgrade equipment.

Proposed New Investments

8.253 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*.

Information & Communications Technology

- 01 Develop ICT policy for education in Tonga.
- 02 Review of best practice for use of ICT
- 03: Design pilot projects using ICT at all levels.
- 04: Analyse options for use of ICT-based distance education.
- 05: Institution capacity building in using ICT for administration.

Financing Options and Financial Sustainability

Policy Issue and Policy Outcomes

8.254 The desired policy outcome is that Tonga provides high quality educational services to meet the needs of all citizens, with provision to ensure the equitable allocation of public funds and targeted support to vulnerable groups on a time frame and basis that is financially realistic and sustainable.

8.255 The education system should meet the following tests:

- policies and plans would be based on realistic resource projections;
- conditions of service (in both Government and Non-Government institutions) would be adequate to attract and retain qualified and motivated staff;
- recurrent costs would be controlled to ensure an effective balance of staff and other inputs;
- assets would be appropriately maintained and sufficient resources should be allocated for this purpose;
- public resources would be allocated equitably, and a system of equity targets and indicators would be developed and tracked;
- provisions would be in place to ensure that low income and other groups with special needs have equitable access to quality education; and
- need for donor support would be eliminated within 15 to 20 years.

8.256 The education policy issues include

- how to constrain recurrent costs;

- whether, and under what conditions, external support for recurrent expenses should be sought; and
- the appropriate scale and timing to implement the 15 year Education Policy Framework and associated planning documents.

8.257 An outline of various approaches to providing external funding support is attached as Appendix 2 (“Possible Approaches to Financing”).

Government Policy Response

8.258 The Ministry of Education recognises that it may be necessary to adjust its expectations to reflect resource availability. It will therefore develop a range of “scenarios” to ensure that its plans are realistic and can be implemented. This “reality therapy” will mean constraining new investments to levels and rates consistent with the capacity of the Government to finance recurrent costs (within Vote 19) and within the MOE’s staffing and capacity. On this basis it will be possible to make some moves immediately, without the delay associated with analysis, or the need to meet the demands of donor agencies.

8.259 At the same time, as outlined in the earlier section on Efficiency, the Ministry of Education proposes to undertake a careful, systematic, information-based analysis of efficiency in the existing system. Savings realised through such reforms would be available to (partially or fully) address the recurrent cost implications of new investments proposed under this Education Policy Framework and the related planning documents. At present, the recurrent budget is insufficient to adequately support free UBE up to Year 8, and to support the other services provided or administered by the MOE. New investments and extension of public support to include forms 1 and 2 carry the danger of “over-stretching” resources which may result in a “down-stream” deterioration of quality and efficiency.

8.260 The Ministry of Education takes the view that the goals and policy objectives emerging from the Final Report: Tonga Education Sector Study and subsequent consultations are of sufficient importance and urgency to warrant “fast track” implementation. While, in the medium term, these investments may “outstrip” the Government’s capacity to finance recurrent costs, in the long term they will be financially sustainable. Of greater importance, the investments in education and human resources will contribute directly to economic growth and development in Tonga, thereby providing the revenue base necessary to make them financially sustainable.

8.261 The Ministry of Education is therefore developing a proposal (and justification for) increased Government allocations to education, and external funding of recurrent costs through budgetary support. External support will be for a fixed period (10 to 15 years) on a decreasing scale, predicated on the assumption that, with economic growth, the Government would be able to eventually fully finance the improved system without continued dependency on external funding, thus leading to a sustainable system. A clear plan for implementing efficiency reforms will be developed as an essential precondition for seeking additional resources. It will probably take a minimum of 2 to 3 years to secure external budgetary support

and will require close engagement of the Government with donors and a transparent review of public expenditure.

8.262 During the first three years, it is anticipated that the mechanism for external investments will move from projectised to on-budget support. The MOE will develop the capacity to design and implement a comprehensive Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) to financing and managing the sector and competencies required, and to engage the Ministry of Finance, Central Planning, the Public Service Commission and key development partners in developing agreed strategies and mechanisms for finance.

8.263 The following investments would be supported during Phase I:

- training, study tours, technical assistance and other activities required to strengthen MOE capacity in financial planning, projection and management;
- an expanded simulation model for projecting costs and resources under a range of scenarios; and
- construction of indices and indicators to track the financial and equity implications of the existing system and proposed reforms, including a public expenditure review of the education sector and benefit-incidence analysis.

8.264 Outputs and outcomes anticipated during Phase I include the following:

- the capacity to execute systematic analyses of the entire education sector, projecting costs and effectiveness under different “scenarios” of resource allocation, with recommendations regarding reallocation of resources between sub-sectors, and in ways that maximise access and equity; and
- a comprehensive plan and proposal for combining Government and external support under a medium term framework, leading to sustainable high-quality education.

Proposed New Investments

8.265 The following investments in a new Ministry of Education Budget Sub-Program and Activities are proposed, and will be included in the *Corporate Plan*.

Transition to Sector Wide Approach (SWAp)

- 01: Capacity development activities to strengthen financial planning.
- 02: Training in use of simulation models.
- 03: Development of indices and indicators.
- 04: Strengthening of monitoring capability.

Youth

Proposed New Investments

- 01: Develop national policy for youth.
- 02: Establish administration and professional structures for the coordination of youth programmes and activities.
- 03: Promote and support employment opportunities for youth.
- 04: Provision of second chance education and training for out of school youth.
- 05: Provide assistance to youth programmes and projects in collaboration with the Tonga National Youth Congress and Tonga National Volunteer Committee.
- 06: Public promotion of youth program and activities in the media.

Culture

Proposed New Investments

- 01: Develop national policy for culture.
- 02: Tongan language and culture taught throughout the school from Year one to the year 13 (Class 1 to Form 7).
- 03: Establish administration and professional structures for the development of and preservation of the Tongan culture.
- 04: Participation in regional and international culture programs and activities.
- 05: Collaborative with the Tonga Traditional Committee in the maintenance and preservation of Tonga's cultural heritage.
- 06: Public promotion of the values and importance of Tongan culture in the media.

9. Strategies.

9.1 The strategies adopted to implement the complete package of three integrated planning documents (the *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019*, the *Corporate Plan 2004-2007* and the *Annual Management Plan 2004-2005*) are described in more detail in this section.

9.2 A key strategy is to focus on the Government of Tonga's two main education priorities: universal basic education, and technical and vocational education. The initial part of the overall comprehensive strategy will focus on capacity development in the Ministry of Education in order to support these two priorities.

9.3 As a result of decisions agreed at the Wellington Seminar on February 17 and 18 2004, the Ministry of Education is structuring its 2004/2005 financial year Budget submission and *Corporate Plan 2004-2007* to reflect priorities and possible anticipated external support. The *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019*, the *Corporate Plan 2004-2007*, and the *Annual Management Plan 2004-2005* will all be based on the Government of Tonga's internal Budget processes and approach.

9.4 The Ministry of Education's current Budget structure is organised around 6 Programs, and various Sub-Programs and Activities. The current structure of the six existing Programs will be maintained in the planning documents.

9.5 The existing six Programs in the Ministry of Education's 2003-2004 Budget (and their current names) are:

- Program 1: Leadership and Policy Advice
- Program 2: Professional Services
- Program 3: Primary Services
- Program 4: Secondary Services
- Program 5: Post-Secondary and Non-Formal Education
- Program 6: Youth Development, Sport and Culture

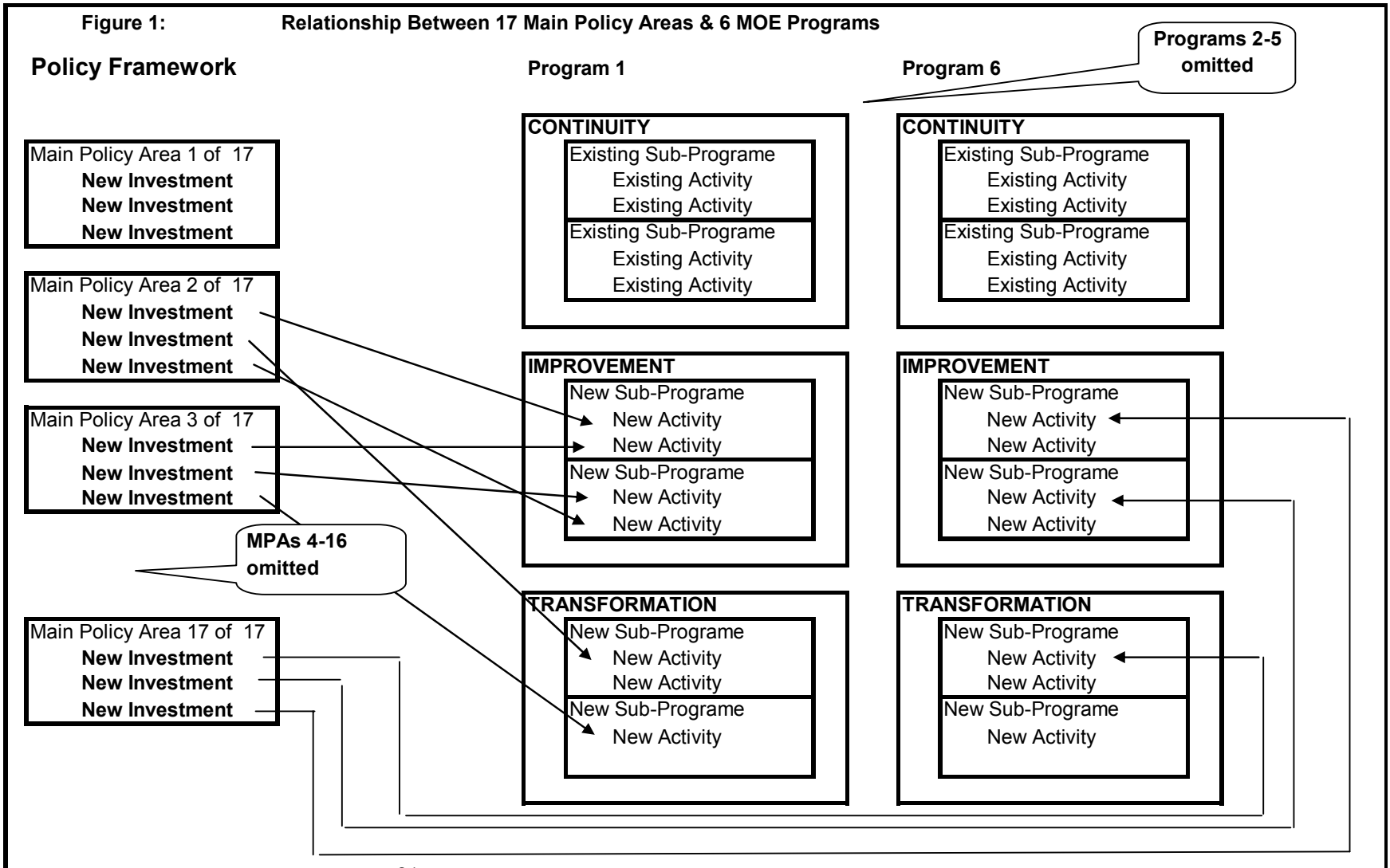
9.6 It is proposed that some of these six Programs be renamed to reflect the new priorities arising from the Government of Tonga's adoption of the recommendations from the *Tonga Education Sector Study*, as follows:

- Program 1: Leadership and Policy Advice
- Program 2: Professional Services
- Program 3: Universal Basic Education
- Program 4: Either: "Secondary Education" or "Post-Basic Education (Secondary)"
- Program 5: Either: "Post-Secondary and Non-Formal Education" or "Post Basic Education (Post-Secondary and Non-Formal Education)"
- Program 6: Youth Development, Sport and Culture

9.7 Within each of these six Programs (whether renamed as proposed above, or not), the strategy will be to present investments for funding within three categories: Continuity; Improvement; and Transformation.

- 9.8 **Continuity.** The Government of Tonga and development partners recognise and acknowledge the success of the existing system of education in Tonga, and agree that the existing accomplishments must be protected. The first priority, therefore, is to ensure continuity of existing programmes and services with no compromise on quality and standards. The existing funds provided by the Government of Tonga for each of the designated Programs in its Annual Budget will be maintained in this category
- 9.9 **Improvement.** The *Education Policy Options Paper* identified a number of areas in which the Ministry of Education wishes to expand access (particularly Universal Basic Education) and to improve the quality of existing services. Development partners have indicated a willingness in principle to assist the Government of Tonga in mobilising resources required to meet these objectives. Donors will be invited to contribute funding to new proposed Sub-Programs and Activities for “improvement” of education in Tonga.
- 9.10 **Transformation** The Ministry of Education recognises that, in order to be fully responsive to national goals articulated in SDP7, to complete the transition to programme budgeting, and to ensure long-term financial sustainability through efficiency gains, a programme of transformation will be required. Development partners have indicated a willingness to assist the Government of Tonga in this area. Donors will be invited to contribute funding to new Sub-Programs and Activities to assist “transformation” of education in Tonga.
- 9.11 The Ministry of Education is therefore preparing its three-year *Corporate Plan 2004-2007* and *Annual Management Plan 2004-2005* within the overall Budget structure, but with new proposed investments presented within these three broad categories.
- 9.12 In the next financial year (2004/2005), programmes designated within the category “Continuity” will be funded primarily from Government of Tonga resources. Funding for activities within the categories “Improvement” and “Transformation” will be sought from external assistance. During the course of the indicative three-year planning period, the Ministry of Education plans a review of its mission and institutional structures, and this will, in all likelihood, be reflected in a new budget structure.
- 9.13 In the structure of the Ministry of Education’s Budget, each Program is sub-divided into Sub-Programs that are positioned within the three categories described above. Each Sub-Program is then further sub-divided into a number of specific Activities. These Activities are the basis of the actions required to implement the overall education strategy.
- 9.14 The relationship between the new investments identified in the *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* and the structure of the *Corporate Plan 2004-2007* is shown in Figure 1.
- 9.15 This *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* identifies a total of 121 new investments (distributed across 17 Main Policy Areas). Each of the existing MOE Programs has been expanded to identify the MOE units responsible for

- 9.16 management and implementation, as well as the resource implications of each investment.
- 9.17 The existing Sub-Programs in each of the six main MOE Programs have been identified as the “**CONTINUITY**” component of each Program. These are the Sub-Programs and Activities which appear in the MOE 2003/04 budget framework.
- 9.18 The new investments, identified in this *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019*, have been organised as new Sub-Programs related to either **IMPROVEMENT** or **TRANSFORMATION**. Each of the 121 specific investments is associated with a specific **New Activity**, under one of the new Sub-Programs.
- 9.19 In summary, each new investment identified in this *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* “maps” to a specific activity in the *Corporate Plan 2004-2007*. For each activity, details on the timing and level of investment required (over the first three years of the *Corporate Plan*) are identified in detail by Special Expenditure Group (SEG) in the 2004/05 – 2006/07 Rolling Budget. The MOE has developed more detailed (below the level of SEG) estimates for each activity and these are being used and updated as a planning tool by the Ministry.
- 9.20 The following figure explains the relationship graphically.



10. Monitoring.

- 10.1 A critical aspect of the Education Policy Framework 2004-2019 and the related planning documents (the Corporate Plan 2004-2007 and the Annual Management Plan 2004-2005) will be the arrangements that are put in place to monitor progress of the plan as it proceeds, and to evaluate and modify the plan.
- 10.2 Performance measures have been constructed (and included in the Corporate Plan 2004-2007 and the Annual Management Plan 2004-2005) that include specific targets with measures of quality, quantity and timeliness. Regular reporting against each of these performance measures is required.
- 10.3 The Ministry of Education needs to ensure that it has, within its organisational structure, developed the capacity necessary to manage the ongoing monitoring and reporting against the performance measures in the planning documents. At least one full-time staffing position is required to undertake this work thoroughly and successfully. This aspect is described in the first Policy Area (Policy Development, Planning and Monitoring). This monitoring is an essential part of effective management of the overall planning process.
- 10.4 Regular quarterly reporting against all the performance measures in the Annual Management Plan 2004-2005 will be required. This monitoring should be recorded in writing in a formal Ministry of Education Statement of Service Performance. The completed document should be presented to the proposed Strategic Planning Group within 30 days of the end of each relevant quarter. The quarters end at September 30, December 31, March 31, and June 30 in each financial year. Monitoring reports need to be completed and submitted within no less than 30 days after each of these dates.
- 10.5 The construction of the Ministry of Education's Education Management Information System will need to be designed with the performance measures included in the planning documents in mind, in order to allow the capture and recording of the essential information that is needed to track progress against the specified benchmarks and to ensure that effective monitoring takes place.
- 10.6 Feedback from the monitoring of the plan should be used to make adjustments to the planning documents on an annual basis as the proposed activities are implemented. Experience in managing the plans will show where targets were unrealistic, or where timing needed to be adjusted because of unanticipated events. Those responsible for monitoring the plans should also be engaged in the process of forward planning as the Corporate Plan 2004-2007 and the next year's Annual Management Plan are revised and redesigned on a rolling basis.

11. Budget

Major Cost Drivers and Assumptions

- 11.1 Estimated cost projections are included in the Budget over the 15 year period. These cost projections are set out below for each of the seventeen policy areas.
- 11.2 The *Education Policy Framework* is structured in terms of 26 new Sub-Programs (composed of 121 activities). There are initial indicative estimates of costs for each of these 121 activities, aggregated by Program and Sub-Program, in the three year rolling budget projection which constitutes the basis of the MOE *Corporate Plan 2004-2007*. These cost estimates are used as the basis for 15 year cost projections.
- 11.3 In terms of resource implications, eight of these 26 sub-programs represent the major “cost-drivers.” The assumptions used in projecting the long-term costs of these eight sub-programs are the main determinants of costs and likely financial sustainability. Unfortunately, as discussed below, at present, there is little information or analysis available to use as a robust basis for these projections. The estimates presented in the *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* must therefore be treated as tentative and preliminary, and possibly subject to change. A range of higher and lower cost assumptions has been developed and the underlying assumptions are discussed below.
- 11.4 Following the structure of the existing MOE budget, the eight major cost drivers are reflected in the following eight MOE sub-programs:

Sub-Program	Activity
3.06	Improve Primary Education
3.07	Extending UBE to eight years
3.08	Grants Programme for Forms 1 &2 at Non-Gov. Schools
3.09	Teacher Upgrading and Conditions of Service (Primary)
4.11	Teacher Upgrading and Conditions of Service (Secondary)
5.18	Skill Development and Lifelong Learning
5.19	Reorganisation of Tertiary Education
1.08	Improve Efficiency – a critical NEGATIVE cost driver

- 11.5 The assumptions used in developing preliminary cost estimates are discussed below.
- 11.6 **Sub-Program 3.06 (Improve Primary Education)** involves a system of grants for non-salary inputs, based on School Improvement Plans (SIP) to be developed by teachers, principals and community members.
- 11.7 This component is intended to improve the quality and efficiency of primary education by providing more resources for non-salary inputs such as teaching and learning materials, supplies and consumables. It is assumed that this will improve the quality of learning and reduce the high rate of repetition at Class (grade) 6.

- 11.8 The investment is also designed to serve the national goal of poverty alleviation. Since, at the present time, the Government provides no (budgeted) resources for *books* and materials, these inputs must be financed at the community level. To the extent that poorer communities are less able to contribute to these costs, the quality of educational provision will be lower and, as a consequence, children will be less likely to benefit from publicly subsidised services in government secondary and tertiary institutions.
- 11.9 The investment is also intended to strengthen school management and facilitate the devolution of responsibility and authority. School managers and community members will have direct control of additional government resources and, through the system of School Improvement Plans, more control of the services provided.
- 11.10 In principle, the level of grant support to primary schools would be determined by identifying a “critical package” of teaching and learning materials, supplies and consumables, etc. that is seen as being essential for effective teaching and learning, and by assisting communities and schools in planning the most effective way to use additional resources to improve quality. This information will emerge from Activities 3.6.1 through 3.6.4 of the *Corporate Plan 2004-2007*, and will determine the level of additional grant support through School Improvement Grants. It is also possible, that on the basis of an improved Primary School data base (Activity 3.6.1) the Government may decide on graduated levels of grants, based on the socio-economic status of the communities served.
- 11.11 For purposes of the initial cost projections, the MOE has used the following assumptions:
- (1) Each primary school will receive an annual planning grant to prepare the annual School Improvement Plan (SIP). The high assumption is that annual grants will be \$1,000 per school. The low assumption is \$500 per school. [Activity 3.6.3]
 - (2) The initial round of grants for preparing School Improvement Grants will be made early in the 2005 academic year (for implementation in the 2006 school year) to 50% of Tonga’s government primary schools (serving about half of the primary school population). The remaining schools will be brought into the programme in the following year. This staging will accommodate the need to build school-level capacity in the design and assessment of School Improvement Programmes.
 - (3) The level of funding needed to provide the critical level of inputs will be between \$75 (high assumption) and \$50 (low assumption) per pupil per year. This will commence for half the schools in 2006, with the remaining schools beginning to receive grants in 2007. [Activity 3.6.4]
 - (4) All primary schools will receive the same level of per-capita funding, independent of local “fiscal capacity.” That is, grant levels will not be adjusted to compensate for lower community income. If, over time, the MOE is able to develop appropriate criteria for means-based support, the costs of this sub-program may be reduced.

- (5) The annual cost of impact assessment will be between \$75,000 (high assumption) and \$50,000 (low assumption) and the assessment process will be discontinued after the 2008 school year because required information will come from the improved broader assessment impact system. [Activity 3.6.5]
- 11.12 **Sub-Program 3.07 (Extend UBE to 8 years)** involves providing information on “best practice” to all secondary schools and providing School Improvement Plan (SIP) grants for better use of resources at forms 1 and 2. Non-Government secondary schools will be the primary beneficiaries of these SIPs and will use this opportunity to plan for the effective use of increased grants provided in sub-program 3.08. This sub-program will also include a system for assessing the impact of additional funds and provision of additional funding to Government secondary schools to “level the playing field.”
- 11.13 For purposes of the initial cost projections, the MOE has used the following assumptions:
- (1) Each secondary school offering forms 1 and/or 2 will receive an annual planning grant to prepare the annual School Improvement Plan (SIP). The high assumption is that annual grants will be \$1,000 per school. The low assumption is \$500 per school. [Activity 3.7.4]
 - (2) Beginning in 2007, form 1 and form 2 fees will be eliminated at all schools. Compensation and incentives to Non-Government schools will be included in an enhanced grant (Sub-Program 3.08). Government schools will receive additional support to compensate for lost fee income. For purposes of projection, future form 1 and 2 government enrolment is estimated at 1,500 students and fees are estimated at \$110 per student per year (this figure is the average level of fees estimated for the 2004 year).
 - (3) The annual cost of impact assessment will be between \$75,000 (high assumption) and \$50,000 (low assumption) and the assessment process will be discontinued after the 2008 school year because required information will come from the improved broader assessment impact system. [Activity 3.7.6]
- 11.14 **Sub-Program 3.08 (Grants Programme for Forms 1 & 2)** involves “levelling the playing field” by providing full and comparable education to all children in Forms 1 and 2, independent of the ownership or management of the institution they attend.
- 11.15 The sub-program is intended to improve the quality of education at Non-Government schools (currently accommodating about 72% of Form 1 and 2 enrolment). It intends to eventually fully-fund eight years of basic education, with the elimination of fees. It is also assumed that by offering comparable quality in Government and Non-Government schools, there will be a substantial reduction of repetition at Class (grade) 6.
- 11.16 In the medium term, the sub-program is intended to increase funding to support students attending Non-Government schools to the same level that is currently provided at Government secondary schools.

- 11.17 At present, there is insufficient information to estimate the cost of educating a Form 1 or 2 student at Government schools. The MOE estimates the average cost of a year of secondary education at a Government secondary school at \$1,325³ per pupil in 2003/04. This figure is derived by dividing the total budget allocation for Program 4 by total enrolment and adding \$110 for fee income. During the first year of the *Corporate Plan 2004-2007*, the MOE will commission a detailed study of staffing and assignments to develop a better estimate of true costs. As an interim measure, the MOE has requested a “qualitative” estimate of relative costs from all Government and Non-Government secondary schools. Cost estimates will reflect this “qualitative” information, as it becomes available. This estimate excludes all parental and community contributions, and the imputable rental value of facilities and equipment.
- 11.18 It is recognised that owing to more subject specialisation and small classes, this average figure may overstate the unit costs for the earlier years of the cycle. There is also a further possibility that this estimate may be biased in a downward direction, as it does not reflect the value of administrative and other services from the central ministry, or staff whose salaries are charged to professional services or primary education, but who are actually teaching in Government secondary schools.
- 11.19 A further complication is that, prior to fully implementing a system for meeting full costs, the Government must negotiate with each of the independent school authorities to ensure that fees will be eliminated and that additional grant support will actually improve quality at Forms 1 and 2 and not be re-directed to cross-subsidise higher grades. Finally, before committing to a national funding standard, the MOE will review the efficiency and unit costs of existing Government secondary schools, before committing to a national funding norm that may be too high.
- 11.20 For purposes of the initial cost projections the MOE has used the following assumptions:
- (1) The “full cost” (or more correctly, “estimated subsidised cost”) of Form 1 and 2 provision ranges from a high estimate of 75 percent of the observed average cost of education at Government secondary schools (i.e. government support plus fees) to a low estimate of 50 percent.
 - (2) Initial support to Non-Government secondary schools (which will be based on a School Improvement Plan model similar to that proposed for primary schools) will commence during the 2006 school year.
 - (3) The initial level of support will be \$100 per pupil (in addition to the existing grant of \$100, that is currently in operation).
 - (4) The grant level will increase by \$100 per student each year until it reaches parity with support for Government schools.
 - (5) There may be scope for efficiency improvements in Government secondary unit costs which would be reflected in a lower target for “levelling the playing field” at non-Government schools. Assumptions on potential gains range

³ Calculated by dividing \$4,903,588 (Program 4 total for Estimates FY2003/4) by 4037 (secondary enrolment total for 2002) = \$1214.66 and adding \$110 as a fee component. (= \$1324.66).

from a low cost estimate of 25% improvement to a high cost estimate of no improvement.

11.21 Sub-Programs 3.09 & 4.11 – (Teacher Upgrading and Conditions of Service, Primary and Secondary)

11.22 The MOE recognises the importance of well-trained, competent, properly qualified and motivated teachers as constituting the heart of any educational system. This MOE *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* calls for improvements in both teacher quality and teacher supply.

11.23 For this reason, the *Education Policy Framework* Cost Projection (and the Rolling Corporate Plan) include line items to reflect costs associated with a better qualified teaching force (higher salaries associated with higher qualifications) and for improved conditions of service (increases in remuneration in real terms). It should be emphasised that these are conceptual “constructs.” In practice, these costs will be reflected in the salary bill of existing Programs (“Continuity” in Programs 3 and 4). For planning purposes, it is useful to consider them as discrete budget line items and to create a place for “modelling” cost implications.

11.24 At present, there is no budgetary provision to accommodate upgrading within a given fiscal year. In the past, the MOE has “financed” these costs through “salary savings” associated with vacant posts. This year, all vacant posts have been deleted from the budget submission.

11.25 Similarly, aside from the irregular provision for a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) adjustment, public sector salaries have been declining steadily in real terms. Terms and conditions for teachers are set by the Public Service Commission and, in the short run, are not under the direct control of the MOE. However, it is apparent that there is a chronic problem of teacher retention and supply (at least in selected subject areas and institutions) and that the transition to an internationally recognised bachelors degree for teachers will inevitably introduce market forces that push in the direction of higher real wages.

11.26 For purposes of the initial cost projections the MOE has used the following assumptions:

- (1) There will be no adjustment in teaching costs in FY 2004-05.
- (2) In response to policies of upgrading and improvements in average teacher qualifications, the salary costs associated with a better-qualified teaching force will be reflected in a credential-based increase of 10 percent implemented over a ten-year period, beginning in the 2006 school year.
- (3) Based on the findings of a teacher supply and demand study and in the context of negotiations with the Public Service Commission, real wages will increase by 10 percent over a ten-year period, beginning with the 2007 school year.

11.27 Sub-Program 5.18 (Skill Development and Lifelong Learning)

11.28 Goal 2 of the *Tonga Education Sector Study* has been identified by Cabinet as the second highest priority of 15 year strategic planning period. The MOE

recognises the importance of improving provision of technical and vocational training, linked to the needs of the economy and the private sector. The MOE is also aware that in many countries initiatives in this area have proven to be expensive and, in some instances, have failed to produce the intended outcomes. The MOE *Corporate Plan 2004-2007* includes a range of activities to identify the most appropriate and cost-effective strategies for the Tongan context. More precise cost projections will only be possible once the initial research and planning activities have been completed.

11.29 For purposes of the initial cost projections (aside from the detailed activities specified in the three-year *Corporate Plan 2004-2007*) the MOE has used the following assumptions:

5(1)The average annual costs of this sub-program will range from an additional \$300,000 per annum, beginning in FY 2007/08 (low estimate) to \$500,000 (high).

11.30 Sub-Program 5.19 (Reorganisation of Tertiary Education)

11.31 The MOE has considered the policy towards restructuring of tertiary education. During the course of the planning period, the Government of Tonga intends to move toward the establishment of a national university. A provision for senior administrative posts for the university are already reflected in the current budget.

11.32 The MOE plans to investigate opportunities for increased use of distance education, linkages with other institutions, and options for “re-programming” resources from overseas scholarships to increased cost-effective tertiary provision at home. The details and cost implications of various alternatives will be developed and finalised during the first three years of the 15 year planning period.

11.33 For purposes of the initial cost projections the MOE has used the following assumptions:

(1) The costs of reorganising tertiary education (beyond those specified in the three-year *Corporate Plan 2004-2007*) will be primarily offset by savings associated with efficiency improvements and redirection of resources currently allocated to overseas scholarships. The net additional annual cost, beginning in FY 2007/08, will range from \$300,000 (low) to \$500,000 (high) per year.

11.34 Sub-Program 1.08 (Improve Efficiency) involves initiatives to improve efficiency across the system. The expenditure items in this sub-program will be relatively modest. The impact of this sub-program is expected to be reflected in substantial efficiency-related savings, particularly in the area of staff salaries. Through a combination of improved training and qualifications, better access to books, supplies and teaching and learning materials, and through the increased use of ICT in instruction, it is anticipated the teacher:pupil ratios will decrease in proportion to the increase in per-teacher remuneration. This principle is consistent with and at the heart of public service reform.

- 11.35 In terms of cost projections, these anticipated savings are reflected in a reduction of the “net cost” of sub-programs 3.09 and 4.11. The impact of the assumptions will be shown in a supporting worksheet, breaking out additional costs associated with credentials and real wages and efficiency savings, associated with improved teacher:pupil ratios.
- 11.36 For purposes of the initial cost projections the MOE has used the following assumptions:
- (1) Investments in teacher upgrading must lead to anticipated efficiency benefits. That is, there will be a period of three to four years of additional net costs, as teacher competencies, motivation and supporting structures are developed, before efficiency gains will be realised.
 - (2) Aside from this transitional period, the MOE is using a “neutrality assumption”. That is, in the long run, efficiency related improvements will fully offset the costs of improvements in qualifications and terms and conditions.

Fifteen-Year Cost Estimates

- 11.37 The following table sets out 15 year cost estimates by the seventeen main policy areas discussed in this *Education Policy Framework 2004-1019*.
- 11.38 The same 15 year cost estimates are also set out in Appendix 3, but are arranged according to Program, Sub-Program and Activity (based on the Tonga Government structure).

15 YEAR COST ESTIMATES Pa'anga (000) -

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08-09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/5	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
1 Policy Development, Planning and Monitoring															
Strengthen Policy, Planning and Evaluation	264	222	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162
Capacity Building & Support Services	117	174	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
Strengthen Management and Administration	23	409	944	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Sub-total	404	805	1,195	451	451	451	451	451	451	451	451	451	451	451	451
2 Universal Basic Education to Year 8 (Form 2);															
Improve Primary Education	39	285	686	881	856	831	831	831	831	831	831	831	831	831	831
Extend UBE to 8 Years	134	132	280	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
Grant System for Forms 1 & 2	4	334	651	868	1,157	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286
Sub-total	177	750	1,617	1,929	2,193	2,297	2,297	2,297	2,297	2,297	2,297	2,297	2,297	2,297	2,297
3 Education After Year 8 (After Form 2);															
Education After Form 2	5	128	148	148	148	148	148	148	148	148	148	148	148	148	148
4 Early Childhood Education															
Early Childhood Education	0	95	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
5 Special Education															
Special Education	0	57	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123
6 Language Policy															
Language Policy	320	505	571	50	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
7 Curriculum															
Curriculum Development & Support	0	637	648	648	648	648	648	648	648	648	648	648	648	648	648
8 Assessment															
Assessment for Better Learning	108	166	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
9 Teacher Supply															
Improve Teacher Supply	45	105	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46
Upgrading and Conditions of Service	0	31	111	239	400	533	605	644	680	712	741	740	686	581	452
Sub-total	45	136	157	285	446	579	651	690	726	758	787	786	732	627	498

15 YEAR COST ESTIMATES Pa'anga (000) -

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08-09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/5	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
10 Teacher Quality															
Improve Teacher Quality	0	132	352	352	352	352	352	352	352	352	352	352	352	352	352
Upgrading and Conditions of Service	0	31	111	239	400	533	605	644	680	712	741	740	686	581	452
	0	163	463	591	752	885	957	996	1,032	1,064	1,093	1,092	1,038	933	804
11 Skill Development and Lifelong Learning															
Technical and Vocational Training	78	227	271	271	271	271	271	271	271	271	271	271	271	271	271
Skill Development and Lifelong Learning	6	150	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Sub-total	84	377	571	571	571	571	571	571	571	571	571	571	571	571	571
12 Reorganisation of Tertiary Education															
Reorganisation of Tertiary Education	34	150	295	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
13 Management and Control of Education															
Self-Managing Schools	42	136	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	71
14 Efficiency															
Efficiency Improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 Sport															
Sports Policy	15	42	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
Talent Development in Sport	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sub-total	20	47	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
16 Information and Communications Technology															
Information & Communications Technology	35	255	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
17 Financing Options and Financial Sustainability															
Transition to Sector Wide Approach (SWAp)	20	278	129	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20

12. Resource Projections

Assumptions

12.1 The Government of Tonga has articulated the long-term objective of Budgetary Self Reliance as a key component of our national vision for the future. The Vision statement in *Strategic Development Plan 7* targets Budgetary Self Reliance as an objective for 2025 and notes that

“enhanced capacity of the government to finance its operations and public investment is particularly important over the longer term. In this way, dependence on foreign aid and external borrowing may be minimised”

12.2 The Ministry of Education 15 year *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* has been developed with this vision in mind. While it is difficult to make reliable long-term economic projections, and while this responsibility lies primarily with central ministries, the MOE is in the process of undertaking an analysis of the range of financing scenarios which are likely over the medium- to long-term. With assistance from the Government of New Zealand, the MOE has commissioned a local Tongan consulting firm to conduct an analysis of time series trends in public support to the social sectors, as a basis of more robust forecasts. Our Ministry will work closely with the Ministry of Finance, Central Planning and development partners in developing realistic resource projections.

12.3 The MOE plans to host a donor conference in May/June 2004 at which time the issue of medium term external support for Education’s **recurrent** budget will be discussed. It is therefore important that a plausible scenario for reaching the objective articulated in SDP7 be identified.

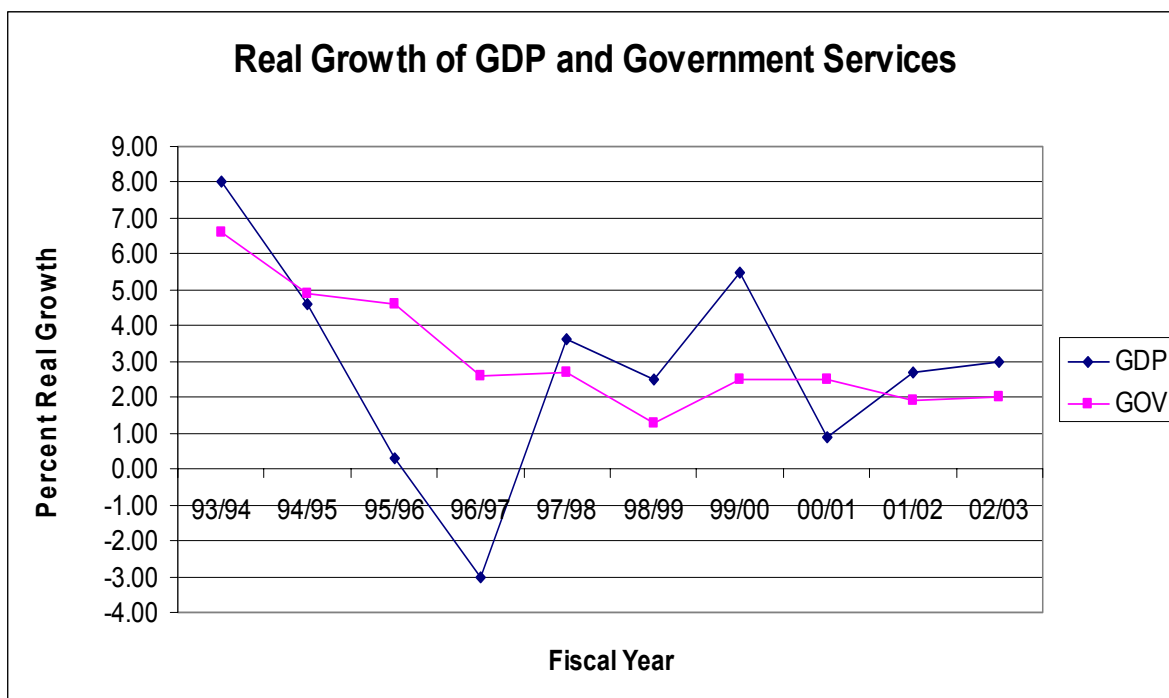
12.4 For purposes of developing an indicative financing framework for the 15 year plan, the MOE is using the following preliminary assumptions:

- 1) **Assumption 1:** Budgetary allocations to education will grow at an average rate of two per cent (low) to three per cent (high) per annum in real terms.
- 2) **Assumption 2:** External support, currently reflected in the budget, will remain at current levels, and resources coming through budgetary support will be additive, rather than a redirection of existing support to a new modality.
- 3) **Assumption 3:** The level of funding from the revolving fund will remain unchanged.

Discussion of Assumption 1

12.5. Despite fluctuation in real growth of GDP, with the exception of FY 1998/99, allocations to Government services have grown in real terms at a rate of between 2 and 3 percent during the past eight years, following a decline in the rate observed in the early 1990s, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 2 - Real Growth of GDP and Government Services



12.6. Since the social sectors have been identified as priority areas in SDP7, it is reasonable to assume that allocations to the education sector will, at a minimum, keep pace with the average growth of Government services.

12.7 The Government of Tonga has engaged on a major initiative to improve overall Government efficiency, to reduce subsidies to loss-making public enterprises, and to reduce the overall size of the civil service. Since activities in areas other than the social sector currently consume about three-quarters of the total budget, it is reasonable to assume that efficiency improvements elsewhere will translate into a larger share of the budget being available to priority sectors in future years. That is, a one percent reduction in 75 percent of the budget would be sufficient to fund a three percent increase in the other 25 percent. Therefore a range of assumptions of two to three per cent growth seems realistic, over a fifteen year time horizon.

Discussion of Assumption 2

12.8. The continuity and predictability of external support is difficult to assess over the medium- to long-term. This concern strongly suggests that Tonga should aim to reach financial self-sufficiency. Preliminary discussions, held with key development partners in early 2004, suggest that donors would be open to considering requests to meet a portion of the education sector’s recurrent costs through a time-bound program of budgetary support. It was recognised that, in order to successfully support the proposed agenda of Improvement and Transformation, increased levels of external funding would be required. The

MOE anticipates that we will be better placed to assess the likelihood of increases in support, after the Donor Conference that is tentatively scheduled for May/June 2004.

12.9 The MOE recognises that ultimately decisions on whether to accept an increased level of external support to the sector must be made by Cabinet, based on the advice of central ministries. The implications of increased support on the macro-economic framework, and the implicit increase in dependency (and associated political risks) during the transition period, will require close examination. The Government and development partners will undoubtedly also need to be confident that the program will eventually lead to financial self-reliance, and that the proposed initiative is financially sustainable.

12.10 There are codes for 13 donor sources in the 2003/04 budget, Of these, 11 have token values of under \$25. The only significant on-budget support came from the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) (\$25,000) and the European Union (EU) (\$1,240,000). Virtually all of the EU funding was targeted at initiatives on Vava'u.

Discussion of Assumption 3

12.11 The 2002/03 Budget lists 21 Revenue Codes. Of these, over 99% of revenue comes from five sources, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: 2002/03 Revenue by Main Source

Exam Fees	186,000	4.9%
Other Fees	825,499	21.6%
CFT	25,000	0.7%
EU	1,240,001	32.5%
REVOLV	1,540,903	40.3%
Other	1,547	0.0%
TOTAL	3,818,950	100.0%

12.12 The revolving fund clearly represents a major source of revenue to the education sector and the MOE is planning analysis of time series trends.

12.13 About 94 percent of Revolving Fund income (in FY 2002/03) came from Program 5, Post Secondary and Non-Formal Education, as shown in Table 2

Table 2: Revenue Source by Program

Program	Exam 03	Fees 04	CFT 61	EU 63	REVOLV 92
1 Leadership Policy					
2 Prof Services	186,000				100,001
3 Basic Education		218,499		712,000	1
4 Secondary		470,000		528,000	1
5 Post Sec & NFE		137,000	25,000	1	1,440,900
6 Youth, Sport, Cul					
Grand Total	186,000	825,499	25,000	1,240,001	1,540,903

12.14 As the changes envisioned in the *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* are implemented, it is entirely possible that the Government will move toward a policy of greater cost-sharing and cost-recovery in post-secondary programs. International experience indicates that the private rate of return to tertiary education is high and that cost-recovery at this level of the system is desirable. The assumption of Revolving Fund revenue remaining stable is therefore quite conservative.

Resource Envelope Projection

Based upon the assumptions discussed above, three scenarios of projected resources for the MOE budget are presented below.

Scenario 1 – Low Estimate - real growth of 2 percent per annum.

Real Growth	Pa'anga (000) "Current" 2004 values														
	2.0%														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/5	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
GoT Fund	16,460.6	16,789.8	17,125.6	17,468.1	17,817.5	18,173.8	18,537.3	18,908.1	19,286.2	19,672.0	20,065.4	20,466.7	20,876.0	21,293.6	21,719.4
Current Donor	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0
Revolving Fund	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9
TOTAL	19,266.5	19,595.7	19,931.5	20,274.1	20,623.4	20,979.8	21,343.2	21,714.0	22,092.2	22,477.9	22,871.3	23,272.6	23,682.0	24,099.5	24,525.4

Scenario 2 – Medium Estimate - real growth of 2.5 percent per annum.

Real Growth	Pa'anga (000) "Current" 2004 values														
	2.5%														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/5	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
GoT Fund	16,460.6	16,872.1	17,293.9	17,726.3	18,169.4	18,623.7	19,089.3	19,566.5	20,055.7	20,557.1	21,071.0	21,597.8	22,137.7	22,691.1	23,258.4
Current Donor	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0
Revolving Fund	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9
TOTAL	19,266.5	19,678.1	20,099.9	20,532.2	20,975.4	21,429.6	21,895.2	22,372.4	22,861.6	23,363.0	23,876.9	24,403.7	24,943.6	25,497.1	26,064.3

Scenario 3 – High Estimate - real growth of 3.0 percent per annum.

Real Growth	Pa'anga (000) "Current" 2004 values															
	3.0%	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08-09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/5	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	
GoT Fund	16,460.6	16,954.4	17,463.1	17,987.0	18,526.6	19,082.4	19,654.8	20,244.5	20,851.8	21,477.4	22,121.7	22,785.3	23,468.9	24,173.0	24,898.2	
Current Donor	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	1,265.0	
Revolving Fund	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	1,540.9	
TOTAL	19,266.5	19,760.4	20,269.0	20,792.9	21,332.5	21,888.3	22,460.8	23,050.4	23,657.7	24,283.3	24,927.6	25,591.3	26,274.8	26,978.9	27,704.1	

Sustainability Analysis

- 12.15 The MOE has developed indicative estimates of likely costs associated with implementing the recommendations of the *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* over a fifteen year time horizon. For a set of eight major “cost drivers” we have identified a set of high cost and lower cost assumptions. Data in the body of the program summary table reflects the lower costs assumptions. Similarly, we have developed high and low projections of the “resource envelope” likely to be available to the sector over this 15 year time horizon.
- 12.16 As noted in the earlier sections of the *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019*, additional work and analysis will be required to “validate” and refine these assumptions. This work is currently in progress with support of a local Tongan consulting firm and financial support from NZAID. The validity of the sustainability analysis depends upon the validity of the underlying assumptions. For this reason, the analysis presented below must be treated as preliminary.
- 12.17 Figure 3 shows the pattern of the “main cost drivers” over a fifteen year time horizon. This figure is based on the lower cost assumptions, but the higher cost assumptions display a similar pattern. Costs rise steeply over the first six or seven years of the program, as improvements are put in place and investment costs of “Transformation” are met. The largest single “cost driver” is the extension of Universal Basic Education from six to eight years. Beginning in FY 2011/12 the rate of growth in costs levels out. In part, this reflects the point at which support to Non-Government schools matches that reaching Government schools and cost growth is contained. Beginning in about FY 2015/16, total projected costs begin to **decline**. This reflects the impact of efficiency improvements that are anticipated to begin to be felt four years after investments in teacher quality have taken hold.
- 12.18 The observed pattern is typical of social investments, particularly in education. Returns lag investment by a number of years. It is during the transitional period (when investments in Improvement and Transformation must be financed), that the largest financing shortfall is anticipated.
- 12.19 Table 3 provides projections of Financial Sustainability under a range of scenarios. The “best case” projections combine the lowest cost assumptions with the highest resource envelope assumptions. The “worst case” scenario reverses this combination. Under the most optimistic set of assumptions, all of the objectives of the *Education Policy Framework 2004-2019* could be reached and the reformed system could be financed with no external assistance within a period of 13 years. Under the “worst case” scenario, self-reliance would not be reached during the 15 year life of the Plan but, given the pattern of declining costs and increasing own resources, would be sustainable in the longer-run.
- 12.20 The same information is presented graphically in Figure 4.

Figure 3: Pattern of the “Main Cost Drivers” Over Time

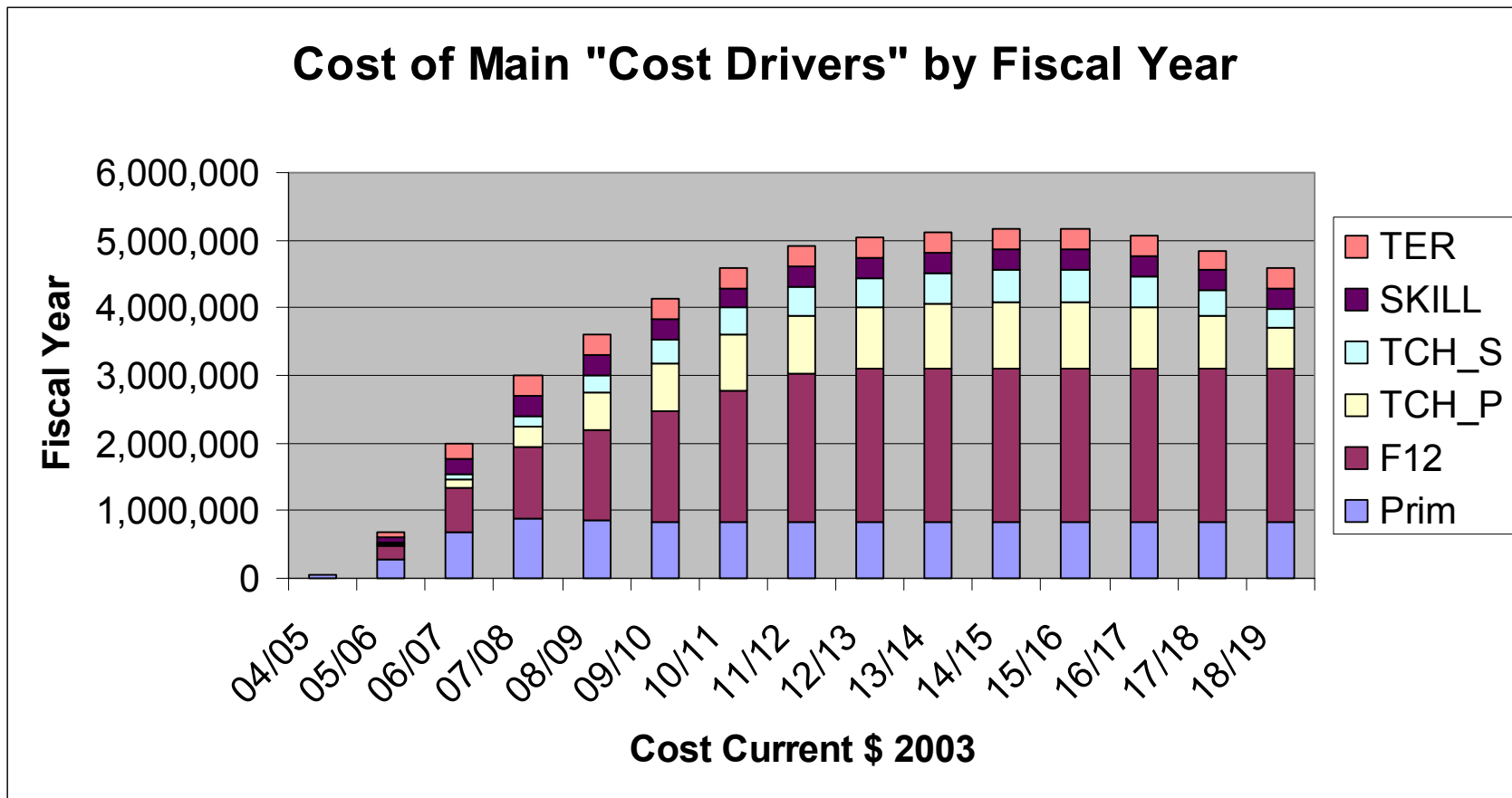
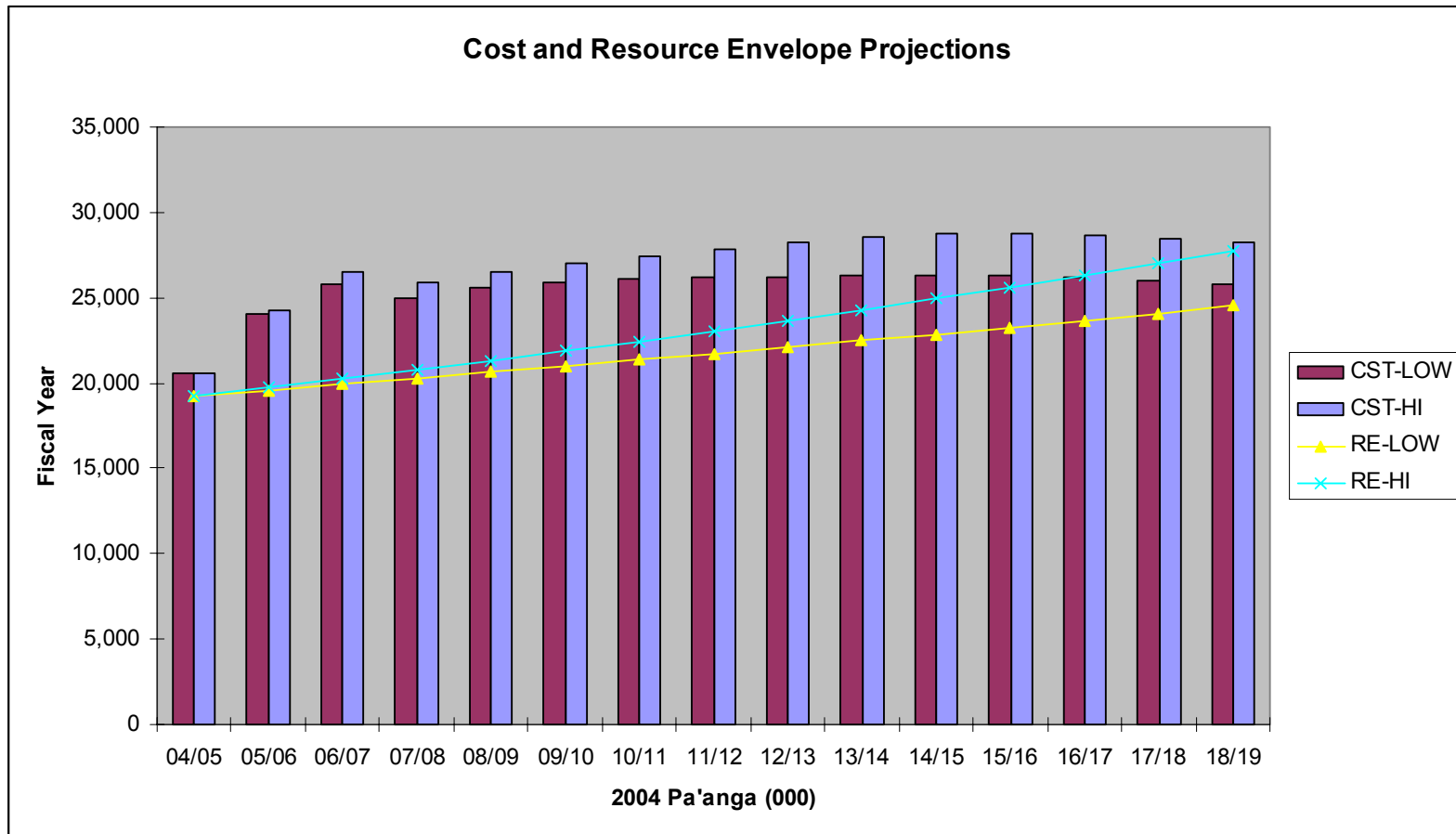


Table 3: Projections of Financial Sustainability Under Different Scenarios

Pa'anga (000) "Current" 2004 values								
Scenarios	1 04/05	2 05/06	3 06/07	4 07/08	5 08-09	6 09/10	7 10/11	8 11/12
Cost Low Proj	20,578	24,002	25,804	25,004	25,564	25,934	26,079	26,158
Cost High Proj	20,604	24,287	26,520	25,917	26,457	26,967	27,431	27,829
Res Env Low	19,267	19,596	19,932	20,274	20,623	20,980	21,343	21,714
Res Env Hi	19,267	19,760	20,269	20,793	21,332	21,888	22,461	23,050
Projected Shortfall								
Best Case	-1,311	-4,242	-5,535	-4,211	-4,232	-4,046	-3,619	-3,107
Worst Case	-1,337	-4,692	-6,589	-5,643	-5,834	-5,987	-6,088	-6,115

Scenarios	9 12/13	10 13/14	11 14/5	12 15/16	13 16/17	14 17/18	15 18/19
Cost Low Proj	26,229	26,294	26,350	26,349	26,240	26,030	25,773
Cost High Proj	28,219	28,592	28,798	28,796	28,687	28,478	28,221
Res Env Low	22,092	22,478	22,871	23,273	23,682	24,099	24,525
Res Env Hi	23,658	24,283	24,928	25,591	26,275	26,979	27,704
Projected Shortfall							
Best Case	-2,572	-2,010	-1,423	-757	35	948	1,931
Worst Case	-6,127	-6,114	-5,926	-5,523	-5,005	-4,378	-3,695

Figure 4: Sustainability Projections – “Best” and “Worst” Case Scenarios



13. Appendix 1: Policy Advice & Policy Development

I Policy Advice

Policy advice involves the provision of timely and relevant policy advice through briefings and policy papers to the Minister of Education and the Government on a wide range of issues relating to various aspects of the Tonga education system. The policy advice provided will anticipate future opportunities and pressures, identify priorities for improvement, develop options for improving the effectiveness of the Tonga education system, and recommend appropriate legislative change (if required) to give effect to education policy.

High quality policy advice, in both the short and the medium term, includes:

- the systematic collation of information covering various aspects of the performance of the education system;
- analysis of the impact of current and potential Government interventions on education outcomes;
- research on various elements of education, and
- monitoring national and international developments in education and related areas.

Policy advice also includes advice on the implementation of Government policy.

II Policy Development

All policy advice will be fit for the purpose of informing Government and/or Ministerial decision-making. The advice will have regard to the political context within which those decisions are made, incorporating the following two qualitative characteristics:

A *Policy Analysis and the Policy Development Process*

Problem definition – the public policy problem, including the underlying causes, will be identified and supported by data or other evidence, and the policy objectives will be articulated.

Analysis incorporates the following aspects:

- *A range of options* will be identified and assessed for benefits, costs, risks (including strategic or long and medium-term risks, as well as operational or immediate risks) and consequences to the Government and the community.
- *Consistency* – linkages will be drawn with prior advice provided through cross-referencing or trade-offs, or explicit variations will be made to improve prior advice.

- *Cross-sector inter-relationships* – linkages with Government policy directions and interventions across sectors, particularly other social policy areas and within the broad public education sector, will be taken into account.
- *Stakeholder impact* – the impact of the proposals on relevant stakeholders will be taken into account, including specifically the achievement or participation of disadvantaged or “at risk” groups of students.
- *Assumptions/Principles* will be explicit and robust, with logical argument supported by fact.
- *Cost implications* – costs will be identified, and methods and assumptions for costings will be transparent and robust, with risks explicitly identified.
- *Regulatory impact* – the impact of the proposals on efficiency and compliance costs for the sector will be identified.
- *Implementation implications* – the proposals will include approaches for addressing any feasibility, timing and change management issues, and associated legislative implications.

Consultation – relevant Government agencies and other affected parties will be provided with reasonable opportunities to influence policy advice, and any comments on the analysis, options, or proposals will be taken into account.

Timeliness – Policy advice will be provided to the Minister in sufficient time to enable the Minister and/or the Government to make decisions in a timely fashion.

All policy papers, briefings to the Minister, and initial promulgation of Government policy will meet the following presentation standards:

- **Written policy advice** – will be presented in accordance with the following standards
 - *Purpose* – the purpose of each policy paper and written briefing will be clearly stated.
 - *Argument* – each policy paper will present the assumptions and principles on which it is based, and the evidence on which conclusions and recommendations are based.
 - *Recommendations* – all papers will include specific recommendations for decision or action.
- **Oral Policy Advice** – will be provided by people with the appropriate delegated authority.
- **Initial Promulgation** – notification will be consistent with the objectives of those policies.

B Policy Projects

The Ministry of Education will maintain a capability sufficient to enable it to advance policy projects in accordance with milestones established in project specifications, which will be set out in a *Policy Work Programme*. The *Programme* may be modified from time to time during the year by agreement between the Minister of Education and the Director.

Appendix 2: Possible Approaches to Financing

Preliminary analyses strongly indicate that the main constraint facing the Kingdom of Tonga and Ministry of Education is financing recurrent costs associated with new policies and investments. There is a range of instruments that can be used to provide external assistance to delivering education. They overlap and are not mutually exclusive. It is useful to briefly to describe the main characteristics of different options, their advantages and disadvantages and the conditions under which they may be preferred.

General budget support is the preferred option in terms of efficiency (low “transaction” costs), reinforcing Government capacity and the rigour of existing Government systems, and client “ownership” and control of implementation. The necessary preconditions for this option are:

- agreement between Government and partners on social priorities, reflected in budget priorities and allocations, across all sectors and government programmes;
- clear targets and an agreed system for monitoring progress and outcomes;
- sound and transparent systems of procurement, financial management, auditing, and accountability;
- agreement by the Ministry of Finance and international organisations (such as the IMF and World Bank) on the macro-economic impact of budgetary support and the economy’s capacity to absorb higher levels of finance; and
- a clear and agreed strategy for the staged decline and eventual withdrawal of budget support, based on assumptions about economic growth and the “down-stream” capacity of the economy and Government to finance the ongoing recurrent costs.

When all of the above conditions are in place, and the only constraint is availability of funds, general budget support is the preferred option. Moving to general budget support requires substantial analysis and dialogue and often involves a public expenditure review

The principles and objectives of general budget support apply to all other forms of external donor support and provide a point of reference in design of support interventions.

Education budget support is the preferred option when Government and donors are in complete agreement on priorities, strategies and the allocation of available funds in the sector. Differences regarding inter-sectoral priorities may still exist, but within the education sector, there is clear agreement on social and educational goals and objectives and the best means of reaching them. The necessary preconditions for this option are:

- agreements and procedures to assure that external funds will be additive. That is, the level of funding provided by the Government will not decrease with funds that would otherwise (in the absence of external support) have gone to education being diverted to other sectors or projects. This is generally supported by an agreed set of benchmarks that will be reached as successive

“tranches” of donor funds are released. (This is sometimes referred to as “conditionality”);

- the overall programme is clearly linked to agreed objectives such as poverty alleviation, and indicators and monitoring systems are in place to assess progress in meeting targets of access, equity and efficiency;
- transparent and reliable systems for procurement, financial management, auditing, and accountability are in place;
- support is consistent with the macro-economic framework and targets (agreed by Finance, IMF and the World Bank); and
- there is a clear strategy to eventually reduce and eliminate dependency on external support.

In summary, the objectives and principles of general budgetary support are applied to the education sector. The key constraint within the education sector is the availability of funds (for a defined period of time) and whether Government and Ministry administrative, implementation and management systems can efficiently manage the additional funds provided by donors.

The Sector wide approach (SWAp) is a strategy for improving planning and resource allocation that is often used to operationalise education budget support. It has evolved from funding strategies and instruments such as the Sector Investment Programme (SIP) and Sector Development Programme (SDP). It need not be associated with external funding and is an approach that Ministries may wish to implement to improve delivery of services and efficiency within their own budgeting and management processes.

Key elements of a SWAp include:

- a holistic view of education and the education sector, including all providers (Government and Non-Government) and the full range of learning experiences, including on-the-job training;
- all costs and finance involved in education including contributions of families and communities and the “opportunity” cost of students’ time;
- explicit examination of priorities and “trade-offs” between education sub-sectors and beneficiary groups;
- a rigorous conceptual model and information system to assess social impacts on access, equity, and efficiency and to monitor progress in reaching agreed goals and objectives.

Ear-marked sector support involves providing additional resources (either “on-budget” or “off-budget”) to meet a set of agreed objectives in the education sector. This is an appropriate instrument for financing an agreed set of activities to support education, when all of the conditions for budget support cannot be met.

Ear-marked sub-sector support involves providing additional resources to meet a set of agreed objectives in a sub-sector of education such as early childhood education or universal primary education. Funds will be targeted at activities in a specific sub-sector. External agencies will have an interest in ensuring that the ear-marked support is additive, and that government resources are not re-directed to other sub-sectors as a consequence of this support.

Government managed programmes are implemented when there is agreement on the need for a set of activities, and the Ministry of Education can demonstrate that it has, or can develop, capacity to implement this programme. Commonly, this capacity is developed by creating a Programme Implementation Unit (PIU) that can meet agreed standards in procurement; financial management; auditing; timely implementation; monitoring; and impact assessment. At the end of the programme the capacity available under the PIU is generally lost.

Government managed projects are externally funded projects which can be implemented by the Ministry of Education using existing Government procedures. Sometimes, administrative and reporting requirements are met by creating a Project Implementation Unit (PIU)

Donor projects deliver services and outputs agreed by the Ministry of Education and the funding agency but are generally delivered through an external management contractor. This is the most common form of donor assistance.

As Governments and development partners move down the hierarchy from budgetary to project support, investments tend to become more fragmented (lack a coherent fit with the overall Government plan), more expensive in terms of overheads and transaction costs, contribute less to strengthening long-term ministry capacity and frequently over-stretch ministry resources through excessive burden of donor demands. It is widely recognised that project assistance is costly and inefficient.

A major objective of the proposed interventions in Tonga is to strengthen MOE capacity, including self-examination and possible restructuring, to ensure that external funds can move toward a budget support modality during the first phase of the plan period. It will be necessary for the MOE to become fully conversant with the range of funding instruments identified above and to engage with development partners, in identifying strategies to move forward.

Appendix 3: Estimated 15 Year Costs By Program, By Sub-Program, & By Activity

	SUB-PROGRAM	COMPONENT	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08-09	09/10
1	Leadership and Policy Advice				1	2				
	01-02	CONTINUITY	414	1,022	1,022	1,022	1,022	1,022	1,022	1,022
	03	Policy Dialogue			17	49	49	49	49	49
	04	Strengthen Policy, Planning and Evaluation			264	222	162	162	162	162
	05	Capacity Building & Support Services			117	174	89	89	89	89
	06:	Strengthen Management and Administration			23	409	944	200	200	200
	07:	Transition to Sector Wide Approach (SWAp)			20	278	129	20	20	20
-->	08:	Efficiency Improvements			0	0	0	0	0	0
	09:	Information & Communications Technology			35	255	197	197	197	197
2	Professional Services									
	01-04	CONTINUITY	656	721	721	721	721	721	721	721
	05:	Language Policy			320	505	571	50	25	25
	06	Curriculum Development & Support			0	637	648	648	648	648
	07	Assessment for Better Learning			108	166	141	141	141	141
3	Universal Basic Education									
	01-05	CONTINUITY	7,533	8,042	8,042	8,042	8,042	8,042	8,042	8,042
-->	06	Improve Primary Education			39	285	686	881	856	831
-->	07	Extend UBE to 8 Years			134	132	280	180	180	180
-->	08	Grant System for Forms 1 & 2			4	334	651	868	1,157	1,286
-->	09	Teacher Upgrading and Conditions of Service			0	36	143	323	540	720
	10	Early Childhood Education (ECE)			0	95	122	122	122	122
	11	Special Education			0	57	123	123	123	123
4	Secondary									
	01-10	CONTINUITY	4,549	4,904	4,904	4,904	4,904	4,904	4,904	4,904
	11	Education After Form 2 - Alternatives			5	128	148	148	148	148
-->	12:	Teacher Upgrading and Conditions of Service			0	27	79	155	259	345
	13:	Technical and Vocational Training			78	227	271	271	271	271
	14:	Self-Managing Schools			42	136	71	71	71	71
5	Post Secondary & Non-Formal									
	01-15	CONTINUITY	3,254	4,399	4,399	4,399	4,399	4,399	4,399	4,399
	16:	Improve Teacher Supply			45	105	46	46	46	46
	17:	Improve Teacher Quality			0	132	352	352	352	352
-->	18:	Skill Development and Lifelong Learning			6	150	300	300	300	300
-->	19:	Reorganisation of Tertiary Education			34	150	295	300	300	300
6	Youth Development, Sport and Culture									
	01-03	CONTINUITY	129	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
	04	Sports Policy			15	42	35	35	35	35
	05	Talent Development in Sport			5	5	5	5	5	5
		TOTAL	16,535	19,268	20,578	24,002	25,804	25,004	25,564	25,934

	SUB-PROGRAM	COMPONENT	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/5	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
1	Leadership and Policy Advice										
	01-02	CONTINUITY	1,022	1,022	1,022	1,022	1,022	1,022	1,022	1,022	1,022
	03	Policy Dialogue	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49	49
	04	Strengthen Policy, Planning and Evaluation	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162	162
	05	Capacity Building & Support Services	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
	06:	Strengthen Management and Administration	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	07:	Transition to Sector Wide Approach (SWAp)	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
-->	08:	Efficiency Improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	09:	Information & Communications Technology	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
2	Professional Services										
	01-04	CONTINUITY	721	721	721	721	721	721	721	721	721
	05:	Language Policy	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
	06	Curriculum Development & Support	648	648	648	648	648	648	648	648	648
	07	Assessment for Better Learning	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141	141
3	Universal Basic Education										
	01-05	CONTINUITY	8,042	8,042	8,042	8,042	8,042	8,042	8,042	8,042	8,042
-->	06	Improve Primary Education	831	831	831	831	831	831	831	831	831
-->	07	Extend UBE to 8 Years	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
-->	08	Grant System for Forms 1 & 2	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286	1,286
-->	09	Teacher Upgrading and Conditions of Service	818	871	919	963	1,001	1,000	926	785	611
	10	Early Childhood Education (ECE)	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122	122
	11	Special Education	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123	123
4	Secondary										
	01-10	CONTINUITY	4,904	4,904	4,904	4,904	4,904	4,904	4,904	4,904	4,904
	11	Education After Form 2 - Alternatives	148	148	148	148	148	148	148	148	148
-->	12:	Teacher Upgrading and Conditions of Service	393	418	441	462	480	480	445	377	293
	13:	Technical and Vocational Training	271	271	271	271	271	271	271	271	271
	14:	Self-Managing Schools	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	71
5	Post Secondary & Non-Formal										
	01-15	CONTINUITY	4,399	4,399	4,399	4,399	4,399	4,399	4,399	4,399	4,399
	16:	Improve Teacher Supply	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46
	17:	Improve Teacher Quality	352	352	352	352	352	352	352	352	352
-->	18:	Skill Development and Lifelong Learning	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
-->	19:	Reorganisation of Tertiary Education	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
6	Youth Development, Sport and Culture										
	01-03	CONTINUITY	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
	04	Sports Policy	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
	05	Talent Development in Sport	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
		TOTAL	26,079	26,158	26,229	26,294	26,350	26,349	26,240	26,030	25,773