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**Beach *Fale* Tourism for Pro-poor Development:  
A Study of Expectations in Rural Samoa**

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**A dissertation  
submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Applied Science  
in International Rural Development**

**at**

**Lincoln University**

**By  
Angela M. Haughey**

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**Lincoln University**

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Abstract of a dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of M.Appl.Sc.

**Beach *Fale* Tourism for Pro-poor Development:  
A Study of Expectations in Rural Samoa**

By Angela M. Haughey

Beach *fale* accommodation is a unique tourism product in the Pacific, offering low-key, basic holidays in rural Samoan villages. Having gradually evolved from day-rentals of traditional open-sided housing on the sand, beach *fale* businesses allow tourists to spend a night in simple accommodation, with meals, at low cost. As traditionally developed, beach *fale* are well-integrated with culture, *aiga* (family) and community. Beach *fale* businesses enable Samoan families with access to beach land to work within their villages, and provide a range of livelihood benefits including cash income, education, health, communications and transportation benefits. Recent research has indicated that beach *fale* are evolving away from their low-key nature towards enclosed units, westernised food and facilities, and adopting a more western approach to business where *fa'aSamoa* ('The Samoan Way of Life') and family interaction may play a lesser role.

This dissertation examines the influence that aspects of beach *fale* tourism, particularly the process of evolution, may have upon the livelihoods of owners, their families and communities. Using a qualitative approach, the research identifies beach *fale* owner and tourist expectations in relation to beach *fale* evolution as well as the beach *fale* experience. Areas in which expectations are successfully matched, supporting the success of beach *fale*, and the subsequent provision of a range of tangible and intangible livelihood benefits, are discussed. Livelihood decisions in Samoa are made within *fa'aSamoa*; the beach *fale* cannot be separated from the cultural context they operate within. Therefore, the research also examines the interaction of expectations with *fa'aSamoa*.

The extent to which beach *fale* tourism extends benefits to rural communities is important to assist business integration with *fa'aSamoa*, and to aid the reduction of inequities and socio-cultural problems. This is assessed through an examination of ways in which beach *fale* tourism could be considered 'pro-poor' – an approach which seeks to provide “net benefits to the poor” through a range of context-specific strategies.

The outcomes of the research suggest that the beach *fale* businesses participating in the research are diverse in business style, priorities and desired livelihood benefits. Beach *fale* evolution is occurring in response to the specific needs of particular tourist markets. In meeting these, beach *fale* owners participating in the research choose to prioritise some livelihood benefits over others. They are forced to trade-off modernisation and participation in the increasingly influential globalised cash economy, with maintenance of their traditional lifestyles within *fa'aSamoa*. The different livelihood benefits that different beach *fale* owners prioritise leads to diversity between the businesses in the research. While largely happy, some tourists interviewed had expectations that fell outside the culturally-integrated management of some businesses, and were not met. However there is still enough variation to match the type of beach *fale* to the requirements of the tourist. The beach *fale* are providing desired livelihood benefits to *fale* owners and their families, yet are largely not pro-poor – there are few economic linkages to encourage the spread of benefits into the community. This is an area for future research attention.

Keywords: Samoa, livelihoods, beach *fale* tourism, pro-poor tourism, development, modernisation, globalisation, beach *fale* evolution

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## Glossary

<i>aiga</i>	Family, nuclear and extended
<i>fa'alavelave</i>	Life events in a village, such as weddings, funerals, or christenings. Involves the exchange of donations and gifts
<i>fa'aPalagi</i>	'The European way of life'
<i>fa'aSamoa</i>	'The Samoan way of life', Samoan culture
<i>fale</i>	Traditional Samoan house
<i>fiafia</i>	Expression of culture through performance, song, dance
<i>fono</i>	Village council (composed of the village <i>matai</i> )
<i>matai</i>	Person holding a chiefly title (male or female), leader
<i>palagi</i>	Non-Samoan person, western, white person
<i>pule</i>	Authority, of a <i>matai</i> within village
<i>tala</i>	Samoan unit of currency
<i>tautua</i>	Service provided by individuals, to the <i>aiga</i>
<i>pola sisi</i>	Coconut blinds traditionally used on <i>fale</i>
<i>poutu</i>	Supporting posts on a <i>fale</i>

## Acronyms

DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
NZAID	New Zealand aid agency
SHA	Samoan Hotel Association
STA	Samoan Tourism Authority
STDP	Samoan Tourism Development Plan
TSF	Tourism Support Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

## **Chapter 1.0 Introduction**

Small-scale, family owned beach *fale* tourism is a unique tourism product in the Pacific, offering low-key, simple accommodation in rural Samoan villages. This dissertation examines the influence that the current modernisation ('evolution') of beach *fale* tourism businesses (Woods, 2006) may have upon the livelihoods of owners, families and wider communities. The research firstly seeks to identify reasons for beach *fale* evolution, and some beach *fale* owner and tourist expectations in relation to both evolution and the beach *fale* experience. It aims to assess the extent to which these expectations are successfully matched. A match would support the success of beach *fale* businesses, and subsequently provide a range of tangible and intangible livelihood benefits. Implications of the extent of the match are discussed.

Beach *fale* tourism operates within the cultural context of *fa'aSamoa* ('The Samoan Way of Life'), and therefore the ways in which expectations interact with culture are considered – livelihood decisions are interwoven with the cultural context that informs them (Cahn, 2006). The dissertation is shaped and underpinned by a 'development' approach to tourism. Broader implications for beach *fale* tourism arising from social change are thus acknowledged, and the extent of the potential that beach *fale* have as pro-poor tourism providing "net benefits for the poor" (Ashley, 2000, Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001), and livelihood benefits for the wider community, is explored.

### **1.1 Motivation for research**

The motivation behind the research arose from the results of a prior study (Woods, 2006); an assessment of Samoan beach *fale* businesses for development. The process of beach *fale* evolution as it is occurring in some businesses was an outcome of this study, and was flagged as a crucial area for future research. The need for further examination of these changes occurring in beach *fale* tourism was largely due to what Woods (2006) described as a mismatch between the desire of beach *fale* owners to maintain their traditional lifestyles (and of Samoa to preserve its beach *fale*), and the direction in which the beach *fale* businesses are actually being taken (towards modernised, enclosed accommodation).

If Samoa is to maintain beach *fale* businesses as a unique niche tourism product and continue to provide owners, families and communities with their desired livelihood outcomes, then the reasons for this mismatch of direction requires further exploration. This is subsequently the basis of this research. In addition to an investigation of beach *fale* evolution itself, the impact of beach *fale* tourism on livelihoods is explored (assuming that obtaining secure and durable livelihoods is one of the main reasons for developing tourism businesses in rural areas). Beach *fale* tourism's long term ability to benefit not only the owners of the businesses and their families, but their wider communities, will inform the extent of their long-term sustainability, and to this end the research also seeks to examine their credentials for 'pro-poor' tourism growth.

### **1.2 Research aim**

Broadly, the aim of this research is to investigate the changing face of beach *fale* tourism in Samoa in relation to its value as a livelihood strategy. As such, the overall aim of the research is to: *“explore the impacts of some aspects of Samoan beach fale tourism on the livelihoods and well-being of beach fale owners, their families and communities”*.

### **1.3 Research questions**

In order to address the aim, two specific research questions have been developed, and these were used to underpin the review of literature, and subsequently to develop the questions used in semi-structured interviews with participants in Samoa. Firstly, local-level expectations surrounding the changes occurring in Samoa's beach *fale* tourism - and their relation to the cultural context - are examined, and secondly, the wider context is addressed through the application of the pro-poor tourism approach to beach *fale* tourism.

*1) To what extent are the expectations for beach fale tourism of both tourists and beach fale owners matched, especially in relation to beach fale evolution and the cultural context (fa'aSamoa)?*

*2) To what extent are Samoan beach fale consistent with a pro-poor tourism approach?*

#### **1.4 Introduction to Samoa**

The Pacific, Polynesian nation of Samoa consists of two main islands (Upolu and Savai'i) and five smaller islands (*See Plates 1. and 2.*). The islands are volcanic and largely rocky-shored with coral reefs; there are a limited number of sand beaches. The land mass of the country is 2850 square kilometres, with a population of 176,710, 76% of whom live in Upolu and 22 percent in Apia, the capital and the only major town. The remainder of the population lives in rural villages (So'o, Unasa, Lafotanoa & Boon, 2006), most of which are coastal.

*For access to Plate 1. Map of Samoa, please go to the following link on the*

*Samoa Tourism Authority website:*

<http://www.visitsamoa.ws/map.aspx>

#### **Plate 1. Map of Samoa. Source - Samoa Tourism Authority, 2007**

The islands spent some time as a German territory, and following 1914 and the Treaty of Versailles, were under New Zealand administration. Following World War II, Samoa was named a United Nations Trust Territory under New Zealand. This trusteeship was terminated in January 1962, and Samoa became independent again.

In the past, Samoa has been dependent on agricultural exports (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994; Government of Samoa, retrieved 06/07). In recent years, tourism has become an increasingly important sector. Affordable air access to Samoa has improved with the 2005 launch of a new airline, Polynesian Blue, a joint venture between the Government of Samoa and Virgin; this has supported increased tourism flows - "tourism in Samoa

grew by 14.5% for January-May 2006 compared to an average of just 3.9% per year for the past ten years” (Virgin Blue Press Release, July 2006). Those visiting friends or relatives remain the largest market, but holiday-maker figures are increasing – with a difference between 28,903 holiday-maker arrivals in 2004, and 33,129 arriving in 2005 - from a total 2005 arrivals tally of 101,807 (Samoan Tourism Authority Statistics, 2005). Major countries of tourist origin include New Zealand, Australia and the USA (Samoan Tourism Authority Statistics, 2005; Deloitte & Touche, 1998).



© South Pacific Maps Pty Ltd

**Plate 2. Location of Samoa. Source - Hema Maps Pty Ltd, Australia.  
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## **1.5 Structure of dissertation**

Chapter 1.0 outlines the context of the research, and provides some information on Samoa, location maps and Samoan tourism statistics.

Chapter 2.0 addresses the socio-cultural context of the research through a review and analysis of relevant literature. The chapter firstly outlines the Sustainable Livelihoods development approach, which informs all aspects of the research. An introduction to Samoan culture, *fa’aSamoa*, is provided, followed by a description of *fa’aSamoa* as a form of moral economy (Scott, 1976) - a theory outlining social relationships and their connections to basic livelihoods in subsistence societies. Literature examining the

poverty context in Samoa is examined, and this is followed by a review of the increasing influence that globalisation has on Samoan society - including a growing need for cash income, and related socio-economic issues of migration and remittances.

Chapter 3.0 further underpins the research by outlining the Samoan tourism context. It provides a brief discussion of the diversity of tourist motives, experiential sustainability, and then reviews Samoan tourism development - touching upon its relationship with *fa'aSamoa*. It provides context on beach *fale* tourism and some of the issues surrounding it. These include the extent of government support for beach *fale* tourism, livelihood benefits arising from it, and an examination of beach *fale* evolution as it is occurring in rural Samoa.

Chapter 4.0 draws in the broader context, by introducing community-based tourism, and then pro-poor tourism; an approach designed to increase the benefits that tourism has to offer the poor by placing them in the centre of the tourism industry. A range of pro-poor tourism strategies are outlined, along with some lessons from the literature on successful implementation.

Chapter 5.0 describes the research methodology selection, followed by data collection, analysis of data, constraints and issues arising during fieldwork, ethics and feedback.

Chapter 6.0 presents the descriptive results and outcomes of the field research, with regard to beach *fale* evolution, preferences and expectations of both beach *fale* owners and tourists, reasons for beach *fale* enclosure and the interaction of expectations with the cultural context (*fa'aSamoa*). It discusses the field research outcomes in relation to modernisation and social change, including returning migrants, western influences, equity and investment issues. This chapter concludes with a brief review of participant perspectives on the future of the beach *fale* in Samoa.

Chapter 7.0 outlines the field research outcomes in relation to both the livelihood benefits and socio-cultural problems of beach *fale* tourism. Responsibility for socio-cultural

problems is discussed, as well as ways of reducing problems and increasing benefits. These outcomes are presented from both beach *fale* owner and tourist perspectives.

Chapter 8.0 draws together the field research outcomes presented in chapters 6.0 and 7.0, in light of the literature reviewed and analysed in chapters 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0. The aim of this chapter is to identify areas where the research outcomes support previous literature and in addition, where new data and new ideas have emerged from the research.

Chapter 9.0 draws conclusions about the research and describes the ways in which the outcomes of this research have provided answers to the research questions and have achieved the overall research aim. This concluding chapter also offers some areas where gaps exist and future research would be of value.

## Chapter 2.0 The Socio-cultural Context

### 2.1 The sustainable livelihoods approach

This research is broadly informed by the ‘sustainable livelihoods approach’; in that beach *fale* tourism is one of the activities with which rural Samoan families can construct a sustainable and secure ‘livelihood’ (means of living) for themselves. The sustainable livelihoods approach was originally developed in 1992 by Chambers and Conway (1992, cited in Cahn, 2003) and has been widely applied throughout the development field. This is a people-centred development approach that takes into account ‘strengths’ - what people already have, rather than focusing on ‘needs’, or what they do not have (DFID, 1999; Carney, 1999).

According to the sustainable livelihoods approach, a household’s livelihood consists of the assets that they have available to construct their livelihood with, the ‘vulnerability context’ which influences the extent to which households can make use of assets, and the ‘external transforming processes and structures’ which are barriers, opportunities and policies at the broader (governmental, institutional) level and additionally affect the use of assets. Assets can include social assets (including networks and relationships), human (including skills and health), and financial, natural and physical assets (DFID, 1999). ‘Livelihood strategies’ are then developed, using available assets, to achieve desired ‘livelihood outcomes’. Woods, (2006) found that in Samoa, these outcomes often include firstly family support, then school fees, church donations and social donations for *fa’alavelave* (funerals, weddings or other community events). Achieving livelihood outcomes in turn reduce poverty and improve well-being (DFID, 1999; Farrington, Carney, Ashley and Turton, 1999; Carney, 1999; Cahn, 2003). The sustainable livelihoods approach is based on specific local-level situations (Purdie, 1999). People combine a series of changeable livelihood activities that are relevant to their unique situation, in order to develop a livelihood strategy. Diversifying livelihood activities through a range of choices (for example tourism, plantation agriculture, formal-sector employment or remittances) helps to reduce risk.

The strength of *fa'aSamoa* and influence of Samoan culture on small tourism businesses is a frequently reiterated theme throughout this research. Cahn (2003; 2006) has addressed the application of the sustainable livelihoods framework to the Pacific, by acknowledging that culture affects every livelihood decision made within the Pacific context, and therefore requires explicit acknowledgement within the livelihoods approach. Cahn (2003; 2006) places the framework within a broader cultural context, and reinforces that “culture relates to, influences, and is influenced by every factor in the sustainable livelihoods framework” (Cahn, 2006: 54). Livelihood decisions and culture in Samoan are tightly interwoven.

Purdie, (1999: 71), comments that while fishing and agriculture still play a strong role in Pacific livelihoods, this is now changing - “the context...is one of transition from a predominantly subsistence base to an increasingly urbanised population. The process...results in an increasing demand for formal employment...the formal job market is unable to meet demand”. The most likely short-term situation for Samoan livelihoods is an increase in unemployment combined with an increase in migration; which aims to balance out the lack of formal employment opportunities available within the country (So'o, *et al.*, 2006: 54).

A move from a subsistence livelihood towards a cash-based livelihood can result in tensions and a need for balance – “traditional land tenure systems are not designed to cope with the sudden economic value of trees or other resources...local landowners, or a small elite among them...(can)...act in shortsighted ways” (Purdie, 1999: 77). Farrington *et al.*, (1999) note the need to balance short-term income generation with the longer term sustainability of assets (particularly environmental ones). Tension can arise within the village in relation to the well-being of the “individual, household or community, and the desirability of not compromising livelihood opportunities open to others” (Farrington *et al.*, 1999: 3).

## **2.2 Introduction to fa'aSamoa**

Given that livelihood strategies in Samoa operate within the cultural context (Cahn, 2006), an explanation of that context is necessary. The population of Samoa operates

within a cultural system known as *fa'aSamoa* – “the Samoan way of life”. This is a system where sharing of resources and communal support, operate alongside *tautua* - service to others (Shadrake and van Dierman, 1998). Iati (2000: 71) describes *fa'aSamoa* as “essentially a governance system, comprising social, economic and political functions”. Village life in Samoa consists of a number of *aiga*, or broad family groups including nuclear and extended relations. Families and villages are led by *matai* (chiefs), who are elected to a family title and thereafter set the rules and guidelines for their village. Ownership of customary land (and distribution of rights to use land) is “legally vested in the *matai*, who directs the economic, social and political affairs of the family” (Deloitte & Touche, 1998: 18). Both men and women are eligible for election to *matai* titles, which are within families - it is the family that decides on the next title-holder.

Family members within an *aiga* have complex socially defined roles depending on their position (wife, husband, daughter, brother, untitled male, unmarried woman) and there are clear expectations of them in accordance with their position. Acting correctly ensures social order – “every person is expected to know their place and the correct behaviour patterns of their place...correct behaviour ensures the smooth running of the chiefly system” (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994: 124). The obedience to and respect for children towards their parents, and of adults to their *matai* and village *fono* (council) is essential. These expectations are largely based around the key concept of service – service to the family is a key factor taken into account when a new chief, or *matai*, is elected to a title (Iati, 2000). Work is shared out, with younger people being allocated a heavier share.

Although there are social expectations of who will do what within the *aiga*, if one person is more suited to a particular task they will be relieved of other duties – “women do not automatically work a double day” (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2004: 127). Livelihood activities, such as beach *fale* tourism, can support the involvement of women through the informal channels (Roe & Urquhart, 2001: 2). Many beach *fale* are managed by women, due to “convenience, skill and responsibility” - women are often seen to have the appropriate organisational, hospitality and financial skills required (Woods, 2006: 79). Fairbairn-Dunlop (1994: 122) points out that women’s involvement in beach *fale* is appropriate

within *fa'aSamoa*; which acts to protect women's rights and resources within their traditional societal roles. Women's input and participation is seen to support the family's wellbeing through seeking cash income, and hence is acceptable as *tautua*; service. Shadrake and van Dierman (1998: 7) note that "there is an increased desire for cash, which has reduced concern that women should work within their traditional role".

Shadrake and van Dierman (1998: 2) describe *fa'aSamoa* in terms of three key and intersecting concepts - "(a) *pule*, authority, (b) status and (c) *tautua* (service)". *Pule* is the authority held by the *matai*, and on a broader level by the village council, which expects submission of other village members to its authority - with fines and a range of other social sanctions occurring if this does not happen (Iati, 2000). In severe breaches, banishment from the village can occur. Samoa's government is based on the traditional system - it is *matai* who are chosen as members of parliament, and in this way village-level issues can remain at the forefront of national-level decision-making (Linkels, 1995: 16). This helps to reinforce *fa'aSamoa* at all levels. The Samoan Tourism Development Plan (1992-2001) identifies *fa'aSamoa* as a dynamic, lived culture, based around the common tenets of traditional land tenure, traditional architecture (the *fale*), village life, Samoan hospitality and community views and opinions (STDP, 1992: 37).

Status is gained in the village through sharing and service - "hence the system is marked by a continuous exchange of goods and services" (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994: 125). The more a family is able to donate to their church and village events such as weddings, funerals and christenings (*fa'alavelave*), the higher their status in the village - "the family's ability to mobilize its members and their resources shapes its status within the village" (Macpherson, 1994: 89). The needs of the family are more important than the needs of the individual, and are prioritised over individual achievement and development, thus the need to ensure individual obedience to family goals. The setting up and running of a new business (such as a beach *fale*) is done when "the prime motivating factor is to promote the family good" (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994: 126); it is important that such a venture be seen to be established for family purposes. Conversely however, the

importance of sharing can damage businesses when requests for donations exceed the financial resources available (Shadrake and van Dierman, 1998; Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994).

A successful business owner's ability to use their available resources (in the case of beach *fale* owners, their beachfront land) to financially support not only their own family, but wider village requirements through these types of donations, is likely to increase their status to the extent that it is connected to the third factor – *tautua*, or service. “Supplying cash, from a job or business, is increasingly seen as a way of satisfying this part of the *tautua* obligation” (Shadrake and van Dierman, 1998: 3). Because status rises through service, the beach *fale* businesses are therefore a culturally appropriate method of addressing all three of these key aspects of *fa'aSamoa* – if managed correctly within the framework of cultural expectations, they are a way of fulfilling social obligations through financial donations (*tautua*) and also act to increase family status; as well as providing a wide range of other livelihood benefits.

One of the strengths of *fa'aSamoa* is that it acts as a form of social support. The placement of family before the individual at all times, along with access to subsistence-level agriculture, ensures a roof and food for all members of the *aiga*. The communal nature of *fa'aSamoa*, based on sharing and reciprocity, means that all members are supported and basic needs are provided within the community. A system of rites, sanctions and what Iati (2000) describes as a ‘social cage’ reinforces each individual's responsibility to meet social obligations; and a reason for this is that “to ensure that there is a network of support for people” available when they need it (Iati, 2000: 75). Although there is social pressure to donate and share, this is a reciprocal system, with the expectation that goods and assistance will be eventually returned in kind – thus providing an inbuilt safety mechanism for every member of an *aiga*.

### **2.3 The moral economy**

This reciprocal social and cultural management of village life can be described as operating under a ‘moral economy’ (Scott, 1976). A moral economy consists of the reciprocal and non-financial social relationships (based on cultural expectations and sanctions) that guarantee a basic level of subsistence for all members of a pre-capitalist

community. The economy is described as 'embedded' - there is no separation between livelihoods and cultural institutions such as kinship, religion and politics; rather, livelihoods are obtained in conjunction with the cultural context - "historically, the provision of humans – the securing of their livelihoods – was located in, or integrated through non-economic institutions" (Booth, 1994: 2). Cash economies are, in comparison, considered 'autonomous', in that "production and exchange are much more significant, increasingly serve economic ends, and operate according to the constraints of...impersonal markets" (Arnold, 2001: 2). *Fa'aSamoa* is a form of moral economy in the extent that it protects the *aiga* through reciprocal subsistence relationships; and protects the well-being of the group above the individual. Exposure to the cash economy and monetization of goods may cause the moral economy to weaken, increasing vulnerability (Scott, 1976; Paulsson, 1993).

Paulsson (1993) applied the moral economy theory to the Samoan context, assessing the recovery of two rural villages from Cyclone Ofa (which struck Samoa in 1990). In Paulsson's (1993) research, assessment was made of the strength of the moral economy in each village. It was found that the village with stronger links to trade and the cash economy had a weaker moral economy. Neighbours requiring staple food supplies were more likely to pay for them, whereas in the second village (with limited ties to the cash economy) villagers were more likely to be given the essential food items, in line with *fa'aSamoa* - improving family status through gifting. The moral economy was more intact in the second village. Paulsson's (1993) research suggests that increased exposure to economic mechanisms may have a negative affect on the strength of traditions within *fa'aSamoa*.

#### **2.4 Samoan poverty/hardship context**

Like most other small island states, Samoa's economy is affected by its "small population and workforce, limited land area and resources, isolation from major trade routes, restricted range of marketable products and limited numbers of markets and suppliers" (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994: 127). While the Samoan GDP is growing, there is a noticeable disparity between the incomes of rural people when compared to those living in the capital of Apia (Cahn, 2006: 106). Estimates of basic-needs poverty in 2002 were 20

percent – those struggling to meet education, health and social commitments (So’o, *et al.*, 2006: 62). Many families are able to obtain food and shelter with help from their *aiga*; depending “heavily for their sustenance on their families in Samoa or overseas” (So’o, *et al.*, 2006: 62). NZAID defines three types of poverty – absolute poverty, poverty of opportunity and vulnerability to poverty (Buchanan, 2006: 9). Due to support provided through *fa’aSamoa*, absolute poverty in terms of hunger seldom occurs; but poverty (or hardship) of opportunity is an issue, especially in the rural areas.

The UNDP Pacific Human Development Report (1999, cited in Tafuna’i, 2003: 2) defines poverty of opportunity as situations where “people’s talents, skills and aspirations are frustrated and wasted, denying them the opportunity to lead productive and satisfying lives”. Poverty of opportunity is often the cause of poverty of income (Tafuna’i, 2003). A weak private sector can lead to limitations on formal employment opportunities, particularly in outlying rural areas. There is a lack of paid employment in Samoa (Cahn, 2006). In the 2001 census, only about half of the employed population (27,000 people) were working in paid jobs (So’o, *et al.*, 2006: 60). A range of tangible and intangible factors such as lack of business opportunities, cash income and access to public services (Lumbao, 2003, cited in Cahn, 2006: 108), social freedoms, material well-being, access to markets and job security (So’o, *et al.*, 2006: 62), can all lead to hardship of opportunity and financial hardship. Buchanan (2006: 12) suggests that powerlessness (an inability to act to better a situation) arising from lack of opportunity is a measure of poverty. All of these issues can lead to village-level hardship.

Particular to the Samoan context, cultural pressure put on communities (including newly-elected *matai*) to contribute financially to *fa’alavelave* or their Church can lead to severe business problems, financial problems and debt. It is difficult within a reciprocal culture for a business owner to refuse credit or a requested donation. Income gained from small businesses – including beach *fale* - is therefore often consumed by these social obligations (the desire to maintain status through giving). Donations of cash and gifts are made for *fa’alavelave* – “the duty to share with the family and the community creates a pressure to give from business assets...many village shops fail because of these

obligations” (Shadrake & van Dierman, 1998: 3). The expectation within *fa’aSamoa* is that *fa’alavelave* is an integral part of the business, and “this can be a constraint on the resources of a commercial operation, however...returns on these kinds of investments are always realised...particularly when they need help themselves” (Deloitte & Touche, 1998). While previously aimed at meeting a particular need, expectations for donations have crept up; “the scale of *fa’alavelave* donations was many times larger today than the past...while *fa’alavelave* was part of Samoan culture, it had become abused following the intrusion of *fa’aPalagi* (the European way)” (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994: 8).

## **2.5 The impact of globalisation on Samoa**

Samoa’s increasing involvement in the global economy has brought with it social changes that place a greater emphasis on individual benefits and material possessions than has previously been the case. Fairbairn-Dunlop (1994: 2) argues that the culture in Samoa has been “incorporating western values since contact with Europeans in the eighteenth century...nevertheless, the sense of a traditional form of *fa’aSamoa* is very important to Samoans”. This places Samoa in a difficult position, whereby the desire to protect *fa’aSamoa* from excess external influence can cause tensions with the increasing “need nowadays...for certain material goods that most Samoans were unaware of until fairly recently...most of these consumer goods originate from a society with a completely different social, cultural and political system, and with radically different ideas about time, property and personal development” (Linkels, 1995: 7). Tourism can also act to speed the introduction of technology, which opens communication with the wider world. Deloitte & Touche (1998: 18), point out that “tourism development has been a major catalyst in enhancing the introduction of information technology into Samoa”.

*Fa’aSamoa* has thus far proven to be adaptable and resilient to many of the social and cultural changes it has been exposed to throughout Samoa’s history (STDP, 1992). It has survived the introduction of Christianity; indeed, neatly blended this religion with traditional attitudes to service, sharing and family (Muliaina, 2006; Linkels, 1995), and rejected foreign control to become independent in 1962. Entrance into the global economy brings with it social as well as economic issues that the country must attempt to balance with *fa’aSamoa*.

The younger generation are in particular absorbing western values, in particular through music the media and education, as well as additional influences on Samoa such as aid programmes and returning migrants - “the basic principles of Samoan society...continue to be respected, but the interpretation of the rules have been liberalized to satisfy the needs of an increasing population” (So’o, *et al.*, 2006: 125). McDade and Worthman, (2004) agree, explaining that the rapid pace of change is causing social uncertainties and the development of a ‘generation gap’ between adults and their increasingly westernised children. They explain that while the practices of *fa’aSamoa* continue to be respected, it is no longer the only influencing factor:

*Engagement with non-traditional political, economic and social institutions is increasing. Western-style media... (is)...proliferating, and luxury consumer goods are increasingly available and desired. More children are attending schools modelled after western education systems, and teachers are becoming major agents of socialisation....new sources of power are emerging – education and wage labour in particular – that circumvent the traditional...social system (McDade & Worthman, 2004: 9).*

The situation is now that of attempted balance, between maintaining traditions without rejecting modern development - “the people are trying to benefit as much as possible from the material prosperity of the western world, but they are at the same time attempting to preserve the essence of the *fa’aSamoa*. Future will tell whether this combination is possible or not” (Linkels, 1995: 7). This sense of attempted balance extends to the wider scale in Samoa. Meleisea (2000) notes that external influences have resulted in tension between living within *fa’aSamoa* - where authority is not questioned - and the level of individualism that is generally required to succeed in a cash economy:

*Samoans are living in two worlds, a situation which is breeding kind of a moral confusion. The problem is not that there are contradictions between old and new principles, but that these two sets of principles can be selectively invoked to justify almost any action (Meleisea, 2000: 193).*

It is possible that this sense of contradiction - as applied in the beach *fale* context - could lead to lack of equity within a village. Certain *aiga* benefit and obtain more from tourism than others, (through their individual business ownership and development) and

therefore, “it is possible that this will lead to stark social/economic differences, expressed in material goods” (STDP 1992: 39). These village-level tensions play out against the increasing need that rural Samoans have for cash incomes.

## **2.6 Need for cash income**

Since the early 1990’s, there has been a shift within Samoa in line with its increasing exposure to the global economy. It is moving from a “subsistence lifestyle to a cash economy catering for education, healthcare, religious and family needs” (STDP, 2002: 88). Cash has also become important in order to meet the increasing desire for material goods in Samoa. Tafuna’i (2003: 1) remarks that while increased access to the global economy has allowed village access to consumer goods, they are often “unable to generate the cash needed to purchase these items”. Samoan communities thus have an increasing need for a regular cash income (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994; Woods, 2006; Tafuna’i, 2003) and it is noted that “tourism can play an important role in meeting the need for income in rural areas” (STDP, 2002: 88). Tafuna’i (2003: 1) expands, suggesting a focus on the development of sound village economies to support rural participation in the cash economy; “many Pacific people have adequate food and adequate housing. What they don’t have is adequate cash. The demands of a cash economy have caught up, but they are still living a subsistence or semi-subsistence lifestyle”.

A weakening of *matai* (village chief) authority over the community in recent times has led to an increased emphasis on the family unit as the unit of production. This has provided “non-*matai* greater scope to engage in business” such as beach *fale* - decisions to participate in business can be made more frequently at the family level (Shadrake & van Dierman, 1998: 4). Income is now more likely to be retained within the immediate family rather than be distributed amongst the wider *aiga* (Cahn, 2006: 113). Beach *fale* tourism is one of several livelihood activities that families with access to beach land can implement to meet financial priorities and to provide a cash income – and thus increased involvement with the cash economy. Social pressure to fulfill kinship obligations also increases the need for cash incomes in rural Samoa – in particular where donations are now often made with cash instead of items in kind. Tafuna’i (2003) argues that families in Samoa are accustomed to the cash economy – but they are not necessarily accustomed

to developing sources of cash income themselves – much of the cash within a village is remittance-based. Fairbairn-Dunlop (1994) explain that roles within the family are also affected by the desire for cash, as it has led to an increase in women’s involvement in business - as well as a greater level of tolerance for change in roles within *fa’aSamoa*; service to the family through income generation is prioritised. Woods (2006) found that women frequently take a lead role in running small tourism businesses in Samoa.

## **2.7 Socio-economic issues in Samoa: migration and remittances**

Samoa - as an island nation - has a long history of migration, and subsequent influences on traditional Samoan culture and society. During the 1970’s and 1980’s, one-third of the country’s population moved overseas - this has seen Samoans described as “among the most ‘globalised’ people in the world...a nation without geographic boundaries” (Meleisea, 2000: 191). Most Samoan migrants maintain strong links to home; reinforcing *fa’aSamoa* outside of the islands, as well as introducing global values to Samoa in kind:

*The overall effect of modernisation has been the gradual incorporation of Samoa into the global community. No longer would Samoa be an isolated island group in the Pacific Ocean...migration...has resulted in the establishment of migrant communities in those countries who would not let go of their cultural links with the homeland. Constant contact...ensured not only the maintenance of culture but the incorporation of new variant elements (So’o, et al., 2006: 38).*

The extent of the Samoan diaspora in (primarily) New Zealand, Australia and America has provided Samoa with increased access to the global economy and new “social, economic and political relationships” with foreign countries (Connell & Conway, 2000: 1), as well as increasing individualism in Samoa (Cahn, 2006: 140). Migration is desirable for many young Samoans – for some families “educating children for ‘export’ is a form of livelihood” (So’o, et al., 2006: 60). Migration has been identified (alongside agricultural extension or intensification, and livelihood diversification) as one of three specific types of livelihood strategies that can be employed in rural communities (Scoones, 1998, cited in Ellis, 2000) and therefore has “particular implications for the asset status of those left behind...and the utilisation, or not, of external resources” (Ellis, 2000: 41). Migration can be seen as both the result of economic change, and catalyst for further change; it is a response to a lack of opportunity within small-island states

(Connell & Conway, 2000). Purdie, (1999: 79) notes that “migration and remittances...play an important role both in people’s geography and aspirations, and in the efficacy of local-level livelihood strategies”. Tafuna’i (2003) argues that when people are forced to leave rural villages to generate income, many social problems can occur, including the loss of human labour for everyday village work. Ellis (2000) explains that migration can be considered a deliberate part of a diversification livelihood strategy, where cash - via remittances - is supplied to the village instead of labour.

The remittance of cash funds from Samoan overseas migrants back to their family in Samoa is closely tied to *fa’aSamoa* as a form of *tautua*. Remitting money to Samoa is part of kinship obligations within *fa’aSamoa*, rather than an issue of personal choice – it is “no more or less than the service, *tautua*, that young single people are expected to provide for their families” (Macpherson, 1994: 89). Iati (2000) agrees – remitting allows family members to fulfil their responsibilities to the *aiga* in absentia. Remittances play an important role in Samoan livelihoods – to the point where Samoa has been described as one of the Pacific MIRAB states – dependent on migration, remittances, aid and bureaucracy (Bertram & Watters, 1985). The remitting of funds from family members overseas is a livelihood strategy for many Samoan families. Remittances are a way of obtaining social insurance for the future for those migrants who remit (Ahlburg, 1991). One participant in a study by Macpherson (1994: 99) explains that, “if they lost everything, they would still have a place to go”. Connell and Brown (1995) agree that remittances can be linked to the maintenance of a migrant’s option to return – including maintaining a political presence in the village in relation to possible future *matai* titles.

It has been suggested that the influence of returning migrants outweighs the influence of tourism on Samoa’s culture (Lindgren, Lodin and Schonfeldt, 1997). Returning migrants can act as agents of change in modernising societies - bringing with them foreign values and world-views (Macpherson, 1985; STDP, 1992: 43; Connell & Conway, 2000). The Commission on Sustainable Development, Economic and Social Council, United Nations (cited in Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999: 98) notes that “many negative social changes often attributed to tourism could just as easily have been the result of modernisation, in

particular the development and diffusion of media and mass communications”.

Macnaught, (1982: 7), urges caution in the Pacific context because there are a range of institutions that can affect the way a country develops; “stronger forces for change that will prevail regardless of tourism”. Remittances can lead to negative social issues such as heavy consumption of imported products, a shift from locally produced to imported foods and the building of elaborate and expensive western-style housing (McKee and Tisdell, 1988). As well as being a livelihood strategy in its own right, migration, and resulting remittances, can be used to establish additional livelihood activities; there is “evidence that remittance money has constituted the start-up money for many small shopkeepers” (Connell & Conway, 2000: 67). Changes in family status can become based on external sources of income; rather than being earned on equitable internal village factors (Branan-Shute, 1982, cited in Connell and Conway, 2000: 58).

Some of these changes may be driven by the migrants themselves; “building a European style or concrete-walled house has been a key goal of most migrants, since these are symbols of achievement for both returning migrants and members of the family overseas” (Connell & Conway, 2000: 66). Some migrants remit money for a house for themselves, which is seen as a sign of their success overseas and their desire to return, although Macpherson (1994) notes that not all migrants who maintain ties will eventually return. Those who do, “represent people endowed with human capital, capable of enriching the social and cultural capital stocks of their island communities” (Connell and Conway, 2000: 53), however expectations may have changed. Labouring in family plantations may no longer seem appealing to returning migrants, who seek more fulfilling employment, and harbour fears about returning to the realities and strict limitations of island and village life (Connell & Conway, 2000). Migration, and the subsequent remittances, are two potential forces for social change in rural Samoan communities, and may contribute further to the establishment of the cash economy and potential weakening of the moral economy. While remittances can provide financial support to beach *fale* businesses, the introduction of foreign worldviews to rural communities (and entrenchment of western consumerist values) may act as an important factor reinforcing the modernisation of both beach *fale* buildings and beach *fale* management styles.

## Chapter 3.0 Tourism in Samoa: Issues and Context

### 3.1 Tourist motives

Tourism is a recreational activity. Destination ‘pull factors’ (what the destination has to offer the tourist as a consumer) likely play a bigger role than a desire on the part of the tourists to actively contribute to the well-being of the destination. Research into tourist motivations has primarily supported this angle (Sharpley, 2006: 14). Considerable attention in the tourism literature has been paid to segmenting tourists – and their choice of holiday destination - into a range of types. Frequently mentioned theories include those that outline the development of a destination over time - such as Butler's well-known ‘tourist area cycle of evolution’ (1980) - and those that focus on the variations in types of tourists attracted to different destinations, such as Plog’s (1973) separation of tourists into three distinct categories based on their personalities - and on the level of adventure (or safety) that they seek in their experience (Plog, 1973, cited in Saarinen, (1998), retrieved 09-07).

The inherent assumption behind this is that tourists are not a homogenous group, and do not have the same reasons and motivations for travel (Pryer, 1997). Tourists may be visiting the beach *fale* with different aims in mind. This is why an understanding of beach *fale* tourist demand is important in the Samoan context – beach *fale* owners cannot assume that the “pull factor” is the same for all tourists, or that all tourists will want the same experience from the beach *fale*, neither it cannot simply be assumed that potential tourist impacts on environment, society and culture will be the same either. Milne (1990: 18) notes that the type of tourist attracted to an area will play a major role in the socio-cultural impacts that tourism has on a community. Samoan beach *fale* are a unique niche product (Schevyens, 2002: 1; Engelhardt, 2000). The differences between ‘sun-sand-sea’ resort-style beach tourism in the Pacific and Samoa’s beach *fale* product highlight that what motivates tourists to participate in a beach *fale* holidays may potentially differ from expectations elsewhere in the Pacific.

Expectations for beach *fale* tourism need to be managed, and can be unrealistic on both sides – tourists can hold unrealistic expectations for the beach *fale* product – particularly as travel to Samoa becomes cheaper and easier, and opens access to an increasing range of tourists. The concept of ‘paid hospitality’ in Samoa has been largely contrary to *fa’aSamoa* as it is lived everyday; with its emphasis on community service, sharing of resources and labour (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994: 133). Beach *fale* owners can potentially hold unrealistic financial expectations when they come into frequent contact with tourists whom they perceive as overly wealthy (STDP, 1992: 39), however in some cases, a lack of understanding of how to practically transfer traditional and culturally-embedded village hospitality into paid accommodation services has resulted in under pricing of the beach *fale* tourism product, and has opened potential for abuse of hospitality by tourists (STDP, 1992). Scheyvens (2005c) adds that beach *fale* owners can enter tourism with high expectations, and if a business fails, it damages morale; hence initial and ongoing management of realistic expectations, on both sides, is important.

The Samoan Tourism Development Plan 1992-2001 suggests that the development of a tourism awareness plan, to help tourists understand what to expect from Samoa would assist in encouraging socio-culturally sustainable tourism. In addition, increasing the range of information available to tourists would assist with cultural education, as “a visit...would be more memorable if they have some information about what they are seeing. There is a near total lack of such information readily available at present” (KRTA, 1998:119).

### **3.2 Experiential sustainability**

Lindberg and McKercher (1997) define long-term sustainability in small-scale tourism as having several facets, including social, cultural, environmental, economic and experiential sustainability. They note that experiential sustainability is under-examined in the literature, and define it as the degradation of the visitor experience over time (often due to cumulative negative impacts). Engelhardt (2000: 176) describes this as exceeding the destination’s carrying capacity and thus reducing the visitor experience, and Blank (1989: 101) stresses that, “without quality, the experience downgrades to one that will not be voluntarily sought”. Tourists have particular expectations for their chosen holiday - “if

the visitor experience is sufficiently degraded, there will be a reduction in visitation that jeopardizes sustainability” (Lindberg & McKercher, 1997: 72). Pryer (1997) argues that tourists are not homogenous; they vary in their tolerance with respect to destination capacity and authenticity. Increases in location popularity and subsequent negative impacts may result in some tourists moving on and being replaced by those with a higher tolerance for lowered destination quality – and potentially different impacts on the destination.

The Samoan Tourism Development Plan (2002-2006) - following a survey of potential Pacific Island tourists - notes that “Samoa’s people and culture were seen to be the major reason why the destination appealed”, Samoa was the second preferred destination for tourists seeking “a distinctive cultural experience” (STDP, 2002: 36). Deloitte & Touche (1998) agree that Samoan culture has been a key motivating force for tourism. If beach *fale* continue to be developed to the point where they are no longer commensurate with tourist reasons for visiting, this may remove Samoa’s point of difference in the Pacific market to the point where the visitor experience is affected; leading to a possible decline in tourist numbers and subsequently, a drop in the range of benefits obtained through beach *fale*. Understanding what tourists are expecting from the beach *fale* experience is important in supporting beach *fale* as a secure livelihood activity in Samoa.

### **3.3 Samoan tourism development**

Tourism development in Samoa has historically been cautious. 81% of land in Samoa is under customary ownership, the Samoan government controls another 10% as crown land (Shadrake & van Dierman, 1998: 2; Scheyvens, 2005b; Tuilaepa & Nartea, 2003). Any decisions made over the use of customary land have traditionally been made by the collective agreement of the *aiga*, rather than individuals. It can sometimes be difficult to ascertain where boundaries lie, as these may have been set informally (STDP, 1992). As a result, families have faced difficulties in obtaining credit for small businesses, as land that is communally owned cannot be used as collateral (Tuilaepa & Nartea, 2003; ADB, 2000). Communities have cultural ties to their land and have been reluctant to allow external interests to acquire control – land establishes identity, and “in the context of the new economy the land is perceived as a security...a source of livelihood should all else

fail” (STDP, 1992: 38). Governmental support of external investment in tourism has been guarded in the past; (although this is now changing) due to the potential effect that tourism might have upon *fa’aSamoa* (Scheyvens, 2003: 2). “The major factor affecting the industry...is the widespread fear that tourism will undermine the *fa’aSamoa*” (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994: 131). As a result of this caution, Samoa’s tourism industry is still in its relatively early stages. Promotion of the country as a tourist destination did not begin in earnest until the early 1990’s, when cyclones and taro blight led to recognition of the need for livelihood alternatives in Samoa (Scheyvens, 2003: 3). The economic value of tourism as a high growth sector is acknowledged in that, planning is “aimed at ensuring positive and sustainable tourism development, in partnership with the private sector in order to promote national economic growth” (Deloitte & Touche, 1998: 10).

### **3.4 The beach fale**

Alongside a growing number of western-style resorts, much of the beach-side tourist accommodation in Samoa is in budget-sector, family-owned beach *fale*. Traditionally Samoans have housed themselves in *fale*, open sided raised-platform huts. Well-suited to Samoa’s humid tropical climate, *fale* are used for sleeping accommodation, cooking and meeting-houses. Linkels, (1995), describes the traditional *fale* as “made from natural materials, notably wood and leaves. Because of the hot and humid climate, the houses do not need walls. A house is simply a steep, thatched roof supported on posts...blinds, made of coconut fronds take the place of walls around the houses” (Linkels, 1995: 9). Strongly suited to the climate, *fale* hold important cultural significance for Samoans and make logical use of the resources available. For many they are an expression of *fa’aSamoa*. In recent years a transition in some areas (particularly Upolu) to enclosed housing has occurred within Samoan villages. While perhaps a representation of Samoa’s increasing engagement with western influences, it is argued that “the shape and form of the *fale* was logical in its traditional form, and its traditional uses. In its modern application and adaptation, with modern materials, with external walls and enclosed spaces, it is neither functionally nor aesthetically convincing” (STDP 1992: 183). It has also been noted that traditional materials for *fale* building are becoming scarce, due to increasing deforestation within Samoa (Scheyvens, 2005c). (*See Appendix 2.0 for examples of different beach fale*).

In the early 1990's, tourist interest in the cultural and aesthetic appeal of the traditional Samoan *fale* led to an increase in families renting out a beach *fale* to day-tourists, for a small customary fee (Woods, 2006; Scheyvens, 2005a, 2005b). Neighbours often copied neighbours in developing this income source (Scheyvens, 2005c). Over time, day-rentals developed into accommodation businesses, where for a modest rate (approximately \$50-90 Samoan tala, depending on the size and type of beach *fale* business), tourists can spend the night in a beach *fale* on or near the sand; provided with a mosquito net, mattress and two meals a day. Toilet and shower blocks are basic and a central dining *fale* is usually available. Most beach *fale* are staffed by *aiga* members, who are expected to instruct guests in appropriate cultural protocol (Scheyvens, 2005a; 2005c). The need to diversify livelihoods has led to a rapid increase in the number of beach *fale* - they represent the fastest growing area of tourism in Samoa, with a growth between one beach *fale* business operating in 1980, and 44 registered in 1999 (Scheyvens, 2005a). Exact numbers today are not known, due to businesses that are no longer trading, or damaged by cyclones and under repair (Woods, 2006), however beach *fale* are currently estimated to comprise approximately 30% of the industry's accommodation (STA participant interviewed by Woods, 2006: 128). Many of the beach *fale* businesses are concentrated on two stretches of coastline: in south-east Upolu, and northern Savai'i. Some businesses have significant earnings, reportedly between \$4500 and \$9000 tala per week (Scheyvens, 2005c).

Beach *fale* businesses vary widely within Samoa in terms of service style (Scheyvens, 2005b), and size. Woods (2006) reported a clear dichotomy between those beach *fale* run in a traditional manner, and those now run in a more westernised business style. Many of these more westernised beach *fale* are now feeding tourists a large percentage of imported western-style foods rather than using local produce alone; as they are "becoming more upmarket, their use of local resources has declined" (Scheyvens, 2005c: 6; Deloitte & Touche, 1998). Scheyvens (2005c) comments that a major difference between the beach *fale* businesses is their service levels, with some businesses providing western-style restaurant buildings and facilities, and others run in a more low-key manner. The entry level for a family can be as low as the cost of building and outfitting

two or three beach *fale* on family land, catering for tourists with family amenities. For some, beach *fale* are not the primary livelihood activity. If tourists are present, the money is a bonus; if not - the plantation feeds the family (Schevyens, 2005c; Woods, 2006). Other businesses have grown considerably and may have up to twenty beach *fale*, restaurant facilities, planned activities and a wider range of small luxuries such as towels and power sockets. The markets for beach *fale* can vary widely also; some businesses now focus on the domestic market. Schevyens (2005c) points out that jealousy can occur when hotels are passed over in favour of beach *fale* for government retreats. The Government of Samoa has recently instituted minimum standards for beach *fale*, which has lifted the entry barrier for rural families, (Schevyens, 2005a), and involves yearly compliance inspections by the STA (STA Minimum Standards Guide, no date). The beach *fale* have the Samoan government's support in relation to their stated interest in culturally-sound, low-impact tourism (STDP, 2002).

Visitors to beach *fale* are encouraged to learn about *fa'aSamoa*, and respect village life. Beach *fale* tourism is seen as an effective livelihood strategy for isolated rural communities, in that it supports rural livelihoods while remaining largely compatible with *fa'aSamoa* (Schevyens, 2005a; 2005b; Woods, 2006). The cultural aspect of beach *fale* tourism is primarily what differentiates it from other Pacific tourism choices. The cultural and natural contexts are emphasized as draw-cards on many Samoan tourism websites, which promote "traditional, alternative holidays" (Samoan Accommodation Guide, retrieved 05/06).

*Samoa is developing its tourism industry in a culturally and environmentally responsible way. Samoans are...proud of their land and their culture, and they're not interested in the fast buck approach to tourism that has destroyed so many other destinations. They actively discourage visitors who are not interested in their culture or environment, so if you just want to lie on the beach, Samoa might not be the place for you (Nomads Travel, retrieved 05/06).*

The extent of local ownership in Samoan tourism has differentiated it from other Pacific holiday destinations – "only one of the four hotels with over 50 rooms is foreign owned, which makes Samoa very different from neighbouring Fiji" (Schevyens, 2003: 3). The

concept is that beach *fale* tourism fits within Samoan practices and traditions, not the other way around (STDP, 1992; Scheyvens, 2005c). Beach *fale*, are accordingly described as a “culturally responsible format of tourism” (Sooaemalelagi, Brown, Martel & Dolgoy, 1996: 201), and have been included as part of an ecotourism programme for Samoa (Sooaemalelagi & Brown, no date; Sooaemalelagi, *et al.*, 1996).

In addition they are supported by the private sector – they are part of the itinerary for Green Turtle Tours, a private sector company which encourages responsible cultural tourism, and provides support for a range of beach *fale* throughout Samoa. Previous companies have done the same - Ashley, Roe & Goodwin (2001: 47) describe Ecotour Samoa Ltd (while no longer active) as a private company demonstrating “substantial investment and success in developing linkages between a small formal sector operator (beach *fale*) and local producers”. Burns (1997: 211) explains that Samoan beach *fale* tourism is a useful tool for rural development, and a “successful village stay program”, although it is arguable as the extent to which beach *fale* businesses facilitate tourist interaction with the village; this varies widely between businesses. Some take an ‘enclave’ approach whereby the tourists have all their needs met at the beach *fale* and do not need to venture out, thus limiting the extent to which the wider community is involved. The enclave approach generates fewer economic linkages, but can also reduce unwanted impacts (Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999). A small number of businesses operate a shop, which may serve both locals and tourists.

*Fa’aSamoa* is considered to strongly influence the planning of tourism in Samoa (Scheyvens, 2003: 2). The Samoa Tourism Development Plan 2002-2006 specifically indicates that future tourism growth within the country will focus on “culture, nature, adventure and coastal tourism”, all of which will be “underpinned by the *fa’aSamoa*” (STDP, 2002: 33). The emphasis for Pacific tourism according to Weaver (1998: 55) should be on a ‘small-scale, nature-centred and locally-controlled’ approach to the use of tourism for development. This fits with the operational model of the beach *fale* businesses in their traditional sense, and shows that – as far as they have historically developed - they are in line with the protection of *fa’aSamoa*. Future development and

evolution of the businesses, however, may mean that heavier resource use and cultural pressure could eventuate; shifting the beach *fale* businesses away from low-impact ideals.

### **3.5 Government support for beach fale tourism**

Samoa is unusual in the Pacific region in that the Samoan Government has indicated support for Samoan-owned, small-scale tourism (STDP, 2002). The Samoan Tourism Authority (STA) has been available to advise and support beach *fale* businesses. Support in the past has included training workshops (Woods, 2006, Schevyens, 2002), and business funding, alongside NGO assistance. NZAID offers a Tourism Support Fund, which reimburses 50% of expenditure on beach *fale* maintenance, up to \$10,000 *tala* – this has helped a range of small businesses needs such as “fund water tanks, first aid courses and building materials” (NZAID, 2005: 38, NZAID Tourism Support Fund Information Sheet, no date). NZAID has also helped with STA capacity building (NZAID, 2005: 38). The Small Business Enterprise Centre offers business training and assistance with loan guarantees (Schevyens, 2005b). A Samoa Beach *Fale* Owner’s Manual was produced in 1998, following workshop consultation with beach *fale* owners – this contains advice on key issues such as guest care, food preparation and maintenance (Woods, 2006, Schevyens, 2003). In addition, marketing assistance and business support is available via membership of the Samoan Hotel Association (SHA), which operates an online booking service for beach *fale* businesses. This is particularly valuable for those businesses without internet access or the skills to manage their own internet presence (SHA Representative, Interview 08/03/07).

Despite this support however, there has been a focus in Samoa’s recent tourism development plans (STDP, 2002; Deloitte & Touche, 1998; STDP, 1992) towards increasing hotel rooms and “high quality small-scale beach resorts” (Deloitte & Touche, 1998). The context is changing rapidly - communal land tenure in Samoa has previously been a barrier to investment; as long-term, undisputed leases are difficult to obtain - “investors in tourism are likely to find it difficult to gain access to land for the purposes of tourism development” (ADB, 2000: 9). There has been a shift on behalf of the Samoan government towards encouraging foreign investors to become involved in the hotel sector. The ‘Tourism and Hotel Development Incentive Act’ was passed in 2003, and

new hotel development was made a priority in the last Tourism Development Plan 2002-2006, which cited a need for further hotel rooms (STDP, 2002; Schevyens 2005c: 23). Tax breaks, and Government assistance with obtaining leases have contributed to the recent development of several resort hotels in Samoa. These include major chains such as Warwick Hotels, which has leased land at Vavau in South-East Upolu, and the Tanoa Hotel Group, which aims to build near Apia. Hotel Elisa has recently been built in Apia, and land is being made available near the ferry wharf at Mulifanua - “the government has plans to free up over 200 acres of Samoa Trust Estates land...for hotel development...50 other businesses have applied for land at the site” (Radio New Zealand Online, 2006; Scheyvens, 2005c). As well as the surge of interest from foreign investors, Samoan ventures are also building large hotels - Aggie Grey’s hotel (which is Samoan-owned) obtained land here and is now operating a luxury resort.

Beach *fale* owners may face lost custom if large resorts are developed in prime areas. Scheyvens (2005c: 23) suggests that while hotels and beach *fale* businesses can co-exist in Samoa, conflict may arise if Government support is expected from both beach *fale* owners, and foreign investors who have interest in prime beach land. At the same time as encouraging hotel development, the Samoan Tourism Development Plan has underlined support for small-scale nature and coastal tourism based on *fa’aSamoa*. This contradiction in direction reveals a basic lack of cohesion as to the path which Samoa’s tourism should take (Scheyvens, 2005c). The Samoan Tourism Development Plan confirms that there is a lack of stakeholder agreement regarding the appropriate way forward – “there is...evidence of a lack of direction...many different stakeholders involved in tourism have often gone their own way” (STDP, 2002: 30). Beach *fale* in the Samoan tourism literature have been to an extent ignored, or only anecdotally mentioned – as discussed by Scheyvens (2005c: 23), Pearce’s (2000) review of Samoa’s tourism development plans excludes the beach *fale* in a count of accommodation, as does the Asian Development Bank report, ‘Samoa 2000’. Tour operators have considered their development uncontrolled and excessive - going so far as to describe them as an “unchecked rash of huts all over the place” (Schevyens 2005a: 199). Scheyvens (2005c) notes a dichotomy, in that while the Government of Samoa appears to want small-scale

rural tourism to thrive, the current policy situation leans more towards the type of large resort development that usually requires foreign investment to become established. This may be an issue for the type of tourists visiting the beach *fale* (and the expectations they bring with them) in that “in general, the total volume of tourists and type of visitors will be determined by the wider destination” (Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001: 41).

### **3.6 Livelihood benefits of beach *fale* tourism**

Due to their size and limited resources, island states tend to be among those countries most dependent upon tourism (Roe & Urquhart, 2001: 2). Small-scale micro-enterprise tourism is useful in rural communities, because “aiming ‘low’ builds upon skills, promotes self-reliance, and develops the confidence of community members in dealing with outsiders – all signs of empowerment” (Scheyvens 1999, cited in Scheyvens, 2001: 158). Increased confidence can lead to a break in the “isolation of the poor...throwing themselves into a world of diversity, understanding and enlightenment” (Bowden, 2005: 11). Small-scale tourism activity can be an especially useful livelihood choice for rural areas where resources and opportunities may be limited, (Fagence, 1997; Weaver, 1998; Milne, 1990; Twining-Ward & Butler 2002; de Haas, 2002) and supports a broader range of social and economic opportunities than currently exists (Chow, 1980: 585). Beach *fale* businesses allow a family to “diversify their livelihood options, thus spreading their economic risk” (Scheyvens, 2005c: 5). Soaemalelagi, Brown and Dolgoy (1996), comment that tourism not only provides income, but helps to raise environmental awareness.

Beach *fale* tourism can offer choice about where to live and work. It can stimulate rural economies in rural and peripheral areas (Diamantis, 1999: 105). Urbanisation is occurring in Samoa, with rural population figures dropping. At the 2001 census, Savai'i experienced a population drop over ten years of 3,222 and Upolu of 368, whereas the population of Apia within the same time span had risen from 39,046 to 52,412 (So'o, *et al.*, 2006: 126). This is caused by the movement of young Samoans to the urbanised areas, in response to the search for employment and for education. This lack of formal employment in rural areas has left villages populated by the very young and the old (So'o, *et al.*, 2006: 126). Tafuna'i (2003: 2) argues that “there is now a need to ensure

that rural people (families) are given the opportunity to earn an income where they live. Without this, they are going to need to move to where they can find an income”. Revenue from tourism can therefore help to create employment within the village – tourists travel to communities rather than local people having to leave (Roe & Urquhart, 2001: 1). The Samoa Tourism Development Plan, 2002-2006, indicates that at least 160 jobs are associated with the beach *fale* industry; however it does not mention whether part-time, seasonal or informal work done by family members is included in this figure (STDP, 2002: 58). Beach *fale* businesses can in this way provide an important social benefit; keeping the structure of the *aiga* intact by allowing young adults to stay with their families and work within the village.

Broadly, tourism that benefits the poor can provide social, environmental or cultural benefits (Roe & Urquhart, 2001: 3). Tourism that incorporates respect for cultural norms and traditions can be empowering for communities (Wall, 1997; Scheyvens, 1999: 248). Tourism development in Samoa has had a positive effect on the preservation of traditions (Deloitte & Touche, 1998). Additional benefits to livelihoods can include the enhancement of infrastructure and assets (including opportunities for communities to improve and protect natural resources) the potential to influence planning and policy, opportunities to develop transferable skills, and a form of income generation that is a good ‘fit’ with other livelihood priorities (Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000: 4). Tourism is highly dependent upon natural and cultural resources, which small communities usually have; even if their additional resources are limited (Scheyvens, 1999). Tourist interest can encourage pride in local culture as well as economic development at a manageable small-scale level - “increased demand for locally produced goods and services as well as the increased supply of public utilities such as power, water and telecommunications can have a substantial positive economic impact on quality of life in rural areas” (STDP, 2002: 88).

### **3.7 The changing face of beach *fale* tourism: beach *fale* evolution**

Recent research (Woods, 2006) identifies a gradual evolution in beach *fale* tourism businesses in Samoa, whereby these traditional open-sided huts are being intensified and modernised. There is a move towards guest-house or motel-type accommodation rather

than traditional *fale*. Limited beach space at popular businesses has resulted in beach *fale* being placed closer together, which has necessitated their enclosure to provide privacy. Owners are enclosing the *fale* and adding westernised amenities such as tourist-only beach areas, air-conditioning, thicker mattresses or beds, extra pillows and towels, verandahs and provision of western foods (Woods, 2006: 123). This is the result of a perception that western comforts are what tourists expect from a beach *fale* holiday. This perception has been identified as being based on assumption rather than knowledge of the market (Woods, 2006).

The modernisation of beach *fale* businesses shifts them away from the traditional cultural context that they were developed within, and may be diverging from tourism planning which envisages the health of *fa'aSamoa* to be vital to the tourism industry as a whole (Twining-Ward & Butler, 2002: 369; Woods, 2006: 51). Woods (2006: 143) explains that as traditionally intended, beach *fale* tourism is compatible with rural Samoan “family, village and culture”. Beach *fale* evolution may change the extent to which beach *fale* businesses support *fa'aSamoa*. This could affect their value as a means of secure livelihoods for owners and their families – and those who may potentially benefit within the wider community. Beach *fale* evolution may be damaging Samoa’s tourism industry and unique product by homogenizing it in line with westernised resort-style tourism elsewhere in the Pacific; “the *fale* adds to the uniqueness of...(the)...tourism product, and a radical departure from it might undermine aspects of the industry” (STDP, 1992: 40). Scheyvens, (2005b: 26) found that some of the tourists interviewed in her research considered enclosed *fale* ‘mass-produced’, and representative of a loss of Samoan culture. Beach *fale* evolution may also increase negative impacts on community, culture and environment; (including pressure on resources) which in turn will affect tourism.

Fagence, (1997), explains that in order for low-impact forms of tourism (such as ecotourism and community-based tourism) to succeed, there needs to be a clear understanding of both what tourists want and what is being provided for them. In the Pacific, he argues that island states are committing to tourism without “...a realistic knowledge and assessment of ecotourism demand.” He points out that “...governments

may be unaware of the client groups seeking ecotourism experience, or the experiences being sought” (Fagence, 1997: 31). Many beach *fale* owners may simply be running their businesses in relation to the range of skills that they have available to them, rather than in response to an understanding of actual market demand (Pearce, 2000). A range of literature confirms this position. Scheyvens (2005c: 17) feels that beach *fale* owners, most of whom do not have experience in being tourists themselves, do not entirely understand what their clients want. Burns (1997: 211) agrees that “a lack of tourism awareness” in Samoa is damaging future development. The ADB report ‘Samoa 2000’ notes that occupancy levels in Samoa’s tourist accommodation are still low, and therefore “the development of accommodation must be demand-driven, not supply-led” (ADB, 2000: 7). The STDP (2002: 30) states that most tourism development prior to the release of the plan has indeed been supply-led, as does the Samoa Tourism Economic Impact Study (Deloitte & Touche, 1998: 10), pointing out that accommodation development in Samoa “would appear in large part to reflect what the local economy and society can provide in terms of finance, available land and entrepreneurial skills, rather than a carefully considered response to market demand. A more market oriented approach must be adopted”.

Tourism can affect village life in a myriad of ways, and there are “potential tourist-host problems if expectations on both sides are not satisfied” (STDP, 1992: 40). Fagence (1997) stresses the importance of “developing facilities to meet the requirements of specialised niche markets” (Fagence, 1997: 31). To do this, these requirements need to be identified, as does whether the current evolution of the beach *fale* product is meeting the demand of any particular market. To this end, Scheyvens (2005c: 29) explains that “consultation with tourists is important in terms of understanding what they see as both positive and negative impacts of their stay”. Of equal importance is the balance between the health of the beach *fale* businesses as they develop and change, and the socio-cultural well-being of the beach *fale* families and their wider communities.

A representative of the Samoan Tourism Authority (interviewed in Woods’ 2006 research) clarifies the demand for tourist research to be conducted: “A huge gap in

research covering what tourists want and what we are providing exists...but the STA has budget constraints which limit the amount of surveys and research we can conduct” (Woods, 2006: 125). Appropriate comprehension of the requirements of the market has been identified as a gap in knowledge in Samoa. Without an understanding of what the demand-side requires, the supply-side may fail to provide it; thus limiting tourist numbers, the success of the beach *fale* product, and subsequently reducing the range of secure and sustainable livelihood benefits that beach *fale* businesses can provide to the rural poor. Whether beach *fale* can continue to be successfully integrated into rural village life without causing undue socio-cultural disruption is a key factor in whether they will remain a viable livelihood activity.

## Chapter 4.0 Beach *Fale* Tourism for Development

### 4.1 Community-based tourism

Community-based tourism is often considered the main avenue through which the poor can participate in tourism (Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000). Scheyvens (1999: 248) discusses the importance of community tourism development, where communities - who suffer the direct negative impacts of tourism - are encouraged to become actively involved in developing and managing tourism on their own terms. Murphy, (1985; 1988) argues that the tourism sector is more than just a driver of economic growth, but also needs to facilitate community aspirations. From the perspective of development and the sustainable livelihoods approach, aspirations are desired livelihood outcomes.

Blank (1989) defines tourism as a series of activities and services that make up a tourism 'experience'; or 'tourism product'. Murphy's (1985) method of achieving community aspirations is through developing "a 'community tourism product' which, like the traditional tourist product, will be an amalgam of the destination's resources and facilities, but in this case it is one which the community, as a whole, wishes to present to the tourism market" (Murphy 1985). Scheyvens (1999) argues that tourism can only be considered successful from a development point of view if local communities have a sufficient measure of control. Fennell (2002: 4) stresses that self-sufficiency for communities in developing countries is 'one of the most pressing issues in tourism today'.

The extent to which a 'community tourism product' could be developed in the Samoan context is arguable, because not all Samoan communities are homogenous with one goal in mind, nor are benefits – or workloads – equally distributed under *fa'aSamoa*.

Therefore it is difficult to assume that a rural Samoan village would be able to act as a cohesive entity in deciding what product to put forward for tourism. O'Meara (cited in Cahn, 2006: 155) explains that in Samoa, most income-producing "productive work is individually, family or household based", and it is the family which is the basic unit of production rather than the village as a whole. The beach *fale* are owned and managed by

individual families, rather than the wider communities. As discussed earlier, funds are increasingly more likely to be retained within the family and the *matai* now have less say over the distribution of this income (Cahn, 2006). Communal work in Samoa is usually short-term and for a specific church or social goal (Maiva, 2001, cited in Cahn, 2003). Co-operative income-producing ventures are less likely to work in Samoa, as there is rivalry and tension between families, and funds can easily end up misdirected if earned by a group – as a result the Women in Business NGO now aims efforts not at communities, but at families, where it has had more success (Tafuna'i, 2003).

#### **4.2 Beach *fale* tourism and sustainable livelihoods**

Small beach *fale* tourism businesses can help to reduce rural poverty; addressing issues such as vulnerability, health, education, lack of skills and opportunities and loss of dignity. When taken from a livelihoods perspective, the application of a recent approach known as “pro-poor tourism” can help to address poverty-related issues in rural communities (Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001; Rogerson, 2006; Ashley, 2000; Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000). In order to be of most use, the beach *fale* need to be able to extend benefits into the wider community context rather than just benefit the families who run the businesses; pro-poor tourism includes strategies with which to develop linkages to encourage the widest possible positive impacts. Tourism that benefits the poor can have a broad influence on the various assets that underpin rural livelihoods, as well as influence change in external influences at the wider scale. Identifying stakeholder priorities for livelihood benefits is vital to achieve maximum benefit, and is best done through encouraging local participation – “taking the livelihoods perspective helps to identify the range of impacts that matter to local people” (Ashley, 2000: 9; Shah & Gupta, 2001). In the Samoan context this may suggest a broader level of community input in relation to beach *fale* businesses than appears to exist.

Tensions can arise between the good of the individual and the good of the community, if priorities differ (Ashley, 2000). Negative issues can include tension over funds, equity and power balance issues and concerns with natural resource management (Ashley, *et al.*, 2001). The way that tourism fits with other livelihood strategies is important – “often there are trade-offs between cash benefits, and opportunity costs to assets or activities”

(Ashley, 2000: 27). Livelihood outcomes supported by pro-poor tourism can be both financial, and non-financial - such as protection of culture, reduction of vulnerability and expansion of opportunities (Ashley, *et. al.*, 2001). Some of the improved livelihood outcomes reported from previous pro-poor tourism case studies have included improved health, increased skills, improved local infrastructure, increased capital (including ability to access loans) and social benefits such as the strengthening of community institutions (Ashley, *et. al.*, 2001). If included as one of a diverse range of livelihood strategies, pro-poor tourism can reduce livelihood vulnerabilities and risk.

### **4.3 Pro-poor tourism**

Tourism is the principal export for 83% of developing countries (Bowden, 2005). From an economic growth perspective, local communities in developing countries have been considered those to be persuaded ‘on side’ to help ensure the success of tourism ventures through a warm local welcome; tourists will stay where “the hosting quality is real” (Blank, 1989: 100). In contrast, ‘pro-poor tourism’ is a response to the rapid growth of tourism in developing countries; an approach that recognises the potential value of tourism as a tool for the reduction of poverty. Community tourism is focused at encouraging involvement in planning and expanding enterprises run by the poor (Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999). Pro-poor tourism takes a broader, holistic approach which includes these factors but acts in a sector-wide manner. It is more than just an alternative option alongside mainstream tourism – instead, it seeks to ‘tilt’ all types of tourism, including mainstream tourism, in favour of the poor (Ashley, *et. al.*, 2001; Ashley & Mitchell, 2005; Bowden, 2005; Bennett, *et al.*, 1999). Pro-poor tourism needs to deliver disproportionate benefits to the poor – it is not enough merely for the poor to receive some benefit; this does not reduce intra-village inequalities. The poor need to benefit equally or to a greater extent than the rich do (Schilcher, 2007; Scheyvens, 2007, Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999). To be successful, pro-poor tourism requires public-sector support (Bowden, 2005) and government action at the policy and planning level – this needs to consider livelihood impacts and not just macro-economic growth (Ashley, 2000).

Pro-poor tourism is therefore significantly more extensive than community-based tourism, addressing wider linkages with the private sector, government and aiming for

“changes at the margin to mainstream tourism” (Ashley & Mitchell, 2005: 1). It is likely to provide wider benefits than forms of niche tourism (such as ecotourism or community-based tourism) alone – even a small change in a large industry can lead to substantial benefits, which can be significant to the poor. The aim is to expand multi-sector benefits across communities (Bennett, *et al.*, 1999; Ashley *et al.*, 2001; Ashley & Goodwin, 2007). While tourism cannot be “a panacea for all”, its labour-intensive nature, high female employment levels (Ashley & Mitchell, 2005), and low barriers to entry (Bowden, 2005), add to its pro-poor credentials. Supported by the World Tourism Organisation (Bowden, 2005: 8), pro-poor tourism aims to generate widespread “net benefits for the poor” through “unlocking opportunities” (Roe & Urquhart, 2001: 2; Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001). A recent report on the Macroeconomics of Poverty Reduction in Samoa, in acknowledging the problem of hardship and poverty, comments on the importance of pro-poor development in Samoa - “it is important for the Government to develop and implement policies that are pro-growth and pro-poor” (Kalirajan, Vaai & Palanivel, 2006: 14).

The pro-poor tourism agenda, while in its infancy, has gained increasing support since the late 1990’s, notably from the UK-based ‘Pro-poor Tourism Partnership’ (which has conducted extensive research in Africa), the World Tourism Organisation’s ST-EP (Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty), programme, and increasing levels of interest from other organisations (Scheyvens, 2007). While largely untried, some examples of good practice and viable strategies have begun to consolidate within the literature (Ashley, *et al.*, 2001). Writing on pro-poor tourism is still on the periphery of the wider tourism literature (Rogerson, 2006), but early experience suggests that pro-poor tourism is indeed capable of ‘tilting the tourism cake’ to benefit the poor (Roe & Urquhart, 2001).

While a range of strategies for placing the reduction of poverty at the centre of the tourism industry have been tested, they are context specific, and must be tailored to fit each situation (Ashley, 2000; Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001; Ashley & Goodwin, 2007). They are separate from, but will often need to be used with, mainstream strategies that

focus on driving economic growth (Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999). Local measures require integration with broader policy and government support (Bennett, *et al.*, 1999; Ashley, *et al.*, 2001), and can include economic strategies (particularly encouraging local employment opportunities – all jobs are helpful, whether full-time or casual/informal), non-economic strategies (such as capacity building, funding, training, increasing opportunities through education and managing environmental and socio-cultural impacts – including tourist behaviour) and encouragement of a supportive policy and planning environment for pro-poor tourism to operate within; at both the public and private sector levels. This can include nurturing links with private sector operators (such as tour companies) and encouraging the dissemination of their commercial expertise; this can be valuable in the early stages when quality of product is often an issue, because quality of the product is essential for success (Ashley, *et al.*, 2001; Bennett, *et al.*, 1999). In addition, infrastructure and transport links to encourage tourism are useful, as is – of particular importance - supporting local ownership. Secure land tenure is required if maximum benefit is to be achieved (Roe & Urquhart, 2001: 6; Ashley & Mitchell, 2005; Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000). Ashley, *et al.*, (2001) also suggest that enhancing opportunities for collective community income generation can spread benefits further where possible. The importance of tourist ‘out-of-pocket spending’, which provides opportunities for tourists to direct revenue to different sectors of the community via food, crafts and activity purchases, has been emphasised as a sound strategy for improving benefits to communities (Ashley & Goodwin, 2007).

Ensuring commercial business viability is a critical issue in terms of suitable product quality, consumer demand, marketing and development of an appropriate skill-base (Ashley & Goodwin, 2007). Access of the poor to markets is also vital - success may depend on “who you are, where you are, what you have and who you know” (Ashley, *et al.*, 2001: 28). Business owners need to be educated and supported in understanding who tourists are, what they need, and in how to produce the type of products that they will want to buy (Bennett, *et al.*, 1999; Ashley, *et al.*, 2001). Ashley *et al.*, (2001) emphasise the need to combine supply-side product development and capacity building with measures to expand demand for the product.

Bennett, Roe & Ashley (1999: 3), list five key strategies for pro-poor tourism development. They include support of micro-enterprise, improved employment, improved socio-cultural impacts, and reduced natural resource/livelihood trade-offs. The fifth key strategy, which is strongly emphasised, is increasing wider-scale benefits through the expansion of linkages between the tourism industry and local product suppliers (Bennett, *et al.*, 1999; Ashley, *et al.*, 2001). A focus on local supplies through the domestic food chain, rather than imported goods, allows informal and formal business relationships to develop and benefits to extend beyond the business itself. Locally owned businesses are likely to develop more linkages with the immediate community – “when local elite, rather than external elite, own formal sector businesses, they are more likely to use local suppliers” (Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000: 3; Bennett, *et al.*, 1999). Encouraging the informal sector to pick up other opportunities such as handicraft selling is also a pro-poor strategy – handicraft sales can be an excellent way of obtaining substantial benefits, particularly for women (Ashley, *et al.*, 2001; Shah & Gupta, 2001). The informal sector is where many benefits lie, but it is often ignored by planners (Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000). The level of ‘out of pocket’ tourist expenditure is important as more discretionary spending reaches the poor than major expenses such as accommodation – this is why options for tourists to spend in the village are needed (Ashley & Goodwin, 2007). The need for ways to diversify the tourist product and to create new economic opportunities through linkages has been recognised as an area requiring attention in the Samoan beach *fale* context (Scheyvens, 2005c).

These linkages have to be actively facilitated through developing the “quality, reliability and competitiveness of local products”, changing business attitudes and “encouraging negotiations” (Bennett, *et al.*, 1999: 66). If linkages do not occur, identifying why they do not exist can help aid donors and governments to encourage change. Linkages can be limited by enclave-style tourism, but an enclave may alternatively prevent unwanted socio-cultural impacts. Realistic expectations must also be managed, as many may expect instant success and will not be expecting a slow capacity-building process (Ashley *et al.*, 2001). Trade-offs between business development, resource use and socio-cultural factors can occur, and need to be managed. These can be particularly high in coastal zones,

where livelihood strategies such as fishing and farming can easily clash with tourism resource use (Bennett, *et al.*, 1999).

Resistance from community elites is an issue within pro-poor tourism (Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000). Reed, (1997), found that it is not possible to separate local-level power relations out from community-based planning in emergent tourism destinations, as they are integral parts of the context. Scheyvens (2007) argues that communities are often susceptible to these local-level elite politics, where elites may control opportunities. Jealousies and tensions can easily occur, particularly where traditional systems of reciprocity operate. This can reduce the extent to which the very poor are able to access employment and business opportunities, and thus benefit from tourism; benefits are more likely to accrue to the middle-poor than the very-poor (Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000).

Lack of skills, credit and market access opportunities (in the Samoan context this might include land access) can all act as barriers to the participation of the poor (Neto, 2003). Bennett, Roe & Ashley (1999: 15) agree, explaining that “differential impacts between poor groups, particularly the fairly poor and the poorest, can be expected, the poor are more vulnerable to...negative impacts, such as conflicts with other livelihood strategies through loss of natural resources...they face the greatest barriers to seizing economic opportunities created by tourism”.

As they are traditionally managed (within *fa'aSamoa*) beach *fale* have potential to be consistent with some strategies for pro-poor tourism. The family-owned beach *fale* businesses keep control in local hands - “tenure over land and natural resources can give the poor market power, and enable them to negotiate and secure benefits from tourism” (Ashley, Boyd and Goodwin, 2000: 2). Bennett, Roe and Ashley (1999) identify a growing tourism industry, receptive government and high incidence of poverty in tourism areas as three indications that pro-poor tourism could be successful. All of these can be applied to Samoa; beach *fale* tourism is located in rural areas where poverty and hardship are highest. Positive tourist behaviour can help - this could be managed through education and inclusion in cultural activities – for example allowing tourists to participate

in community life, and holding *fiafia* (cultural evenings)- however “there are clear limits to which tourists seeking hard-earned rest...will consider ethical issues” (Bennett, *et al.*, 1999: 33).

If the evolution of the beach *fale* should prove to change the extent to which these businesses successfully operate within the context of *fa'aSamoa*, it is possible that this will jeopardise the range of benefits and livelihood opportunities that beach *fale* tourism currently provide - and thus the extent to which these businesses are viable as sustainable long-term livelihood strategies, for not only beach *fale* owners and their families, but also their wider communities. Due to the diversity of the industry, whether beach *fale* tourism is or is not pro-poor cannot be answered simply, but must be addressed through a context specific, case-by-case basis. Rather than a ‘yes’ or ‘no’, the preferable perspective is – now that it is here, “how can tourism be made more pro-poor?” (Bennett, Roe and Ashley, 1999: 17; Roe & Urquhart, 2001).

## **Chapter 5.0 Methodology**

This chapter will discuss the methodology used to conduct the research, including the research approach, data collection and analysis of the data, and issues related to data collection and fieldwork. This chapter will set the context for the data collected during the field research, which is presented in the next chapter.

### **5.1 Selection of research approach**

Hobson (2003) notes that tourism is a field light in theory - he calls for an increase in theory-generating inductive qualitative research to help counter the dominance of quantitative hypothesis-testing. This research is qualitative and inductive in nature, and the strategy used is the purposive selection of a sample of eight beach *fale* businesses in rural Samoa. The sample constituted eight well-known businesses (Samoa Accommodation Guide, retrieved 06/07). While the exact number of beach *fale* businesses in Samoa is not known (see section 3.4), an effort was made to choose a wide selection of business 'types', in order to be as representative as possible given the time constraints. The businesses chosen were in the two areas of Samoa with the heaviest beach *fale* tourism flow; South-east Upolu, and northern Savai'i. Business sizes varied between businesses with upwards of twenty *fale*, and ones with less than ten. However given the variations between beach *fale* businesses in Samoa, and the limited number of interviews and locations, the data arising from this research cannot necessarily be generalised across all beach *fale* businesses. Regardless, the insights gained from the research are relevant to anyone with an interest in beach *fale* tourism in Samoa.

The research is an investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context, and as such, is especially useful when "the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 1994: 13). Essentially, the views, opinions and experiences of the participants formed the data, and thus provided insight into their lives, culture and communities. Interviews are a key method of data collection used in qualitative research, because "the essential task of language is to convey information and describe reality" (Goulding, 2002: 23). Semi-structured interviews will be used in this research as they allow participants to decide which information is important and which is

not, and to lead the direction of the interview, and subsequent research results, in accordance with their priorities. The use of semi-structured interviews often allows valuable information to arise that the researcher was unaware of. A more quantitative approach would run the risk of missing this nuanced information entirely.

Because this research is seeking viewpoints of both beach *fale* owners and tourists, qualitative research is the best approach as it considers reality to be socially constructed and then looks for the insiders' point of view (in this case from multiple angles) in order to understand that reality. It also allows the researcher to look deeper, and obtain a richer and more participatory view than survey data would allow for. Qualitative research is "all about boundary crossing, peering into another world to understand, as best we can, that person or group's perspective" (Martin and Tolich, 1999). Qualitative research assumes that the individual should not be researched separately from their wider context; the context of *fa'a Samoa* that surrounds beach *fale* tourism is intrinsically woven into the livelihood decisions being made within rural Samoan communities. For the purposes of this research a qualitative approach is the most appropriate, and resulted in information and issues arising that the researcher was not aware of and which in fact held more importance than those questions originally asked. In particular, the importance of the broader social context in Samoa to beach *fale* tourism became apparent through this method of data collection.

## **5.2 Cross-cultural research issues.**

A number of difficulties with researching in a culture foreign to the researcher's own arose during this study. In terms of capacity building of the student researcher, these issues and situations proved to be valuable learning experiences. Some issues experienced included failed attempts to reschedule missed interviews, the researcher having difficulty adapting to Samoa's climate, an inability to access a key participant (which limited the data obtained for some lines of enquiry; and subsequently the extent to which the dissertation could focus on these areas), guilt on behalf of the researcher over taking up the time of participants while feeling unable to offer enough back, and a need to guard against prioritizing data from those participants whom the researcher found easier to interview.

A Samoan cultural predilection for ‘telling you what you want to hear’ was raised by several participants, and may have occasionally affected what the researcher was being told. This was guarded against by using triangulation – obtaining information from several sources on the same topic to increase the validity of the data. These sources included questioning other participants on the same topic and the use of secondary data such as literature and reports – “essentially, if different sources of information are saying the same things, the researcher can have greater confidence that the findings are valid” (Martin & Tolich, 2003: 34).

### **5.3 Data collection methods**

Data was collected both before, and during a 30-day fieldwork period in Samoa. Prior to fieldwork, a literature review was conducted, and this data provided context for the field-based research. Interview data was then collected via a series of semi-structured interviews with participants in Samoa (*See Appendix 3.0*). A total of 31 interviews were completed for this research, ranging in length between 20 minutes and two hours (*See Appendix 5.0*). These consisted of nine beach *fale* owner or employee interviews and 16 interviews with tourists staying at the beach *fale*. In addition, six interviews with industry employees, experts and business owners were conducted – these were what Gillham (2000: 82) refers to as ‘elite’ interviews, where participants have specialised knowledge regarding the research area and can help with providing broad context. As many interviews as possible were conducted until time limitations were reached. In some cases, data became ‘saturated’, and no new information was forthcoming from particular locations. This method has been used successfully by previous researchers in the development field (Campbell, 1999; Scheyvens, 1999) and is a key method for qualitative research studies (Maxwell, 2005). Interviews were conducted within two locations, one being the Aleipata area in Upolu Island and the other Manese Beach in the less-populated Savai'i Island. Both of these areas have several beach *fale* properties within walking distance and are the primary beach *fale* locations in each of Samoa's two main islands (Pacific Travel Guides, retrieved 11/05/06). Purposive selection was made of two westernised and two traditional beach *fale* businesses for each location. Selection also depended on whether the beach *fale* owner was interested in taking part when

approached. The researcher stayed at each beach *fale* while interviewing, moving every two to three days.

Initial contact was made with industry and beach *fale* owner participants primarily via telephone. Beach *fale* owners were telephoned ahead of arrival to request participation; and to subsequently book accommodation for the researcher (some were contacted in person during a day trip of Upolu). Emails were also sent to several appropriate organisations in Apia, requesting contact with key staff - however phone calls upon the researcher's arrival in Samoa had a much higher success rate at obtaining interviews. Most of these interviews were via formal appointment.

Selection of tourists was also purposive, which was practical in terms of allowing the researcher to approach those who were most accessible at each beach *fale* business, and select the widest possible mix of participant ages, nationalities and traveller types. Purposive sampling of tourists was the only appropriate way to reach those staying in beach *fale* businesses grouped closely together. The strategy employed was to discuss the research with potential participants, then make an appointment time to undertake an interview at an appropriate time. Many tourist interviews were completed in the evenings once swimming and snorkeling were over and free time was available. Tourists were usually interviewed alone, but occasionally a small focus group was held whereby questions would be discussed between a couple or group of friends. Most tourist and industry interviews were tape-recorded; with permission of the participants. Almost all participants approached agreed to participate, although some interviews fell through due to timing issues or changed plans. The researcher encountered a high level of interest in the study from tourists, with some approaching to ask questions after hearing about it through other participants.

Beach *fale* owners were interviewed at a time most suited to them, often over an informal meal. Some beach *fale* owner interviews were spread out over several short, informal chats. They were asked if they would consent to the researchers' visit - all owners approached agreed to participate. Attempts were made to approach as broad a range of

participants as possible. Additional sampling was completed as time allowed at each destination, and ad-hoc opportunities to discuss beach *fale* with fellow bus passengers, hotel guests and shop assistants were taken as they arose. Tape recording was used where possible, and handwritten notes were taken where recording was not welcomed or appropriate. As a guest at each business, participant observation of beach *fale* operations and participation in activities generated useful secondary data.

A daily log was kept to track events, future appointments and ongoing thoughts on the research process. The Pacific Collection at the Apia Public Library was also invaluable for obtaining secondary documentation. Some industry participants provided additional documentation and literature.

### **5.3.1 Validity bias of researcher**

In quantitative research, the research tool is created and polished before the research commences and is held firm throughout, whereas in qualitative research, the researcher is a tool themselves in that participants “speak through the researcher” in order to allow access to their world (Martin and Tolich, 1999: 37). In interpreting the data, the qualitative researcher does so from within their own social perspective. It is not possible to completely “escape from our insider’s knowledge about the experiences we are trying to understand” (Martin and Tolich, 1999: 57).

As a result, the researcher’s presence as a female researching in traditional Samoan communities quite likely had an impact on the information received; people responded to interview questions through their reaction to the interviewer. Awareness of this bias was kept in mind throughout the data collection. Ways of reducing this included practicing cultural sensitivity and ensuring that questions were put forward in a way that allowed participants to be the ones who identified what is and is not important. Maxwell (2005) suggests that ways of reducing validity concerns are to ensure that interviews are in-depth enough to extend beyond the shallow and provide varied ‘rich data’ that takes the context into account and clarifies what is going on. Goulding (2002: 44) describes this as “thick description”. The length of many of the interviews, plus evidence that data was ‘saturated’, suggests that this ‘rich data’ was obtained.

## **5.4 Analysis of data**

Goulding (2002: 24) describes data analysis as a process of “scrutinizing the text for meaning ‘units’ which describe the central aspects of the theory”; essentially looking for units of meaning within the data. Martin and Tolich (1999) describe the process of the analysing of qualitative data as:

Data Collection – Data Reduction – Data Organisation – Data Interpretation.

Data was arranged to identify patterns and irregularities that were used to explain the issue; wherever possible the newly emerging data was used to improve and inform the research questions during fieldwork (Martin and Tolich, 1999: 9). This process involved verbatim transcription of all interview tapes, then the taking of short notes on sections of raw transcript data. These notes were ‘coded’ into themes. Links were made between the themes, with key themes eventually emerging; these were then used to develop the written report. Literature was reviewed and added on an ongoing basis throughout the analysis as it became relevant, including reports and statistical data.

The focus was on transcribing in the field, then comparing initial interview data to emerging theory – this allowed the data to further inform the research questions – a circular process where the interpretation of the data feeds the development of the interview questions, so that the analysis process is continual throughout the fieldwork rather than just occurring at completion. This enabled the researcher to “track, check and validate” throughout the process (Goulding, 2002: 41).

## **5.5 Constraints**

### **5.5.1 Access to tourists**

Discussions with a travel agent prior to departure revealed that the busy tourist season in Samoa is during the New Zealand and Australian school holidays in August and July. This did not coincide with the research period available to me from 01-30 March 2007. Woods (2006) found that many beach *fale* businesses experience low occupancy rates. This had an impact on the numbers of tourists at each business. Despite areas being visited being the most popular beach *fale* destinations in Samoa, occupancy varied

considerably. Some beach *fale* were busy upon the researcher's arrival, and others had either no tourists or very low numbers. While it was hoped that comparisons would be able to be made between Upolu and Savai'i, the sample of participants in Upolu was taken entirely from the larger businesses with higher occupancy rates; two of the beach *fale* businesses visited had no tourists to interview at all. The field research was considerably affected by the low-season. Many tourists also stayed on both islands during their stay, and it became apparent during the interviews that their views were based on their overall experience rather than opinions on a specific island. It is a constraint of the research that the pool of participants in Upolu came from a limited number of locations. Results from each island will therefore be discussed together, with any differences being identified as they occur.

#### **5.5.2 Over-researched beach *fale* owners**

The beach *fale*, as a form of tourism unique within the Pacific, has been researched by several people over the past few years. There was some indication that beach *fale* owners are potentially over-researched. Comments were made that "you are not the only person to ask questions" and a sense gained by the researcher that some participants were 'doing their duty' in participating but did so without real interest. It is possible that they did not see the value in the information given. All participants were advised that they could stop the interview at any point, but all chose to complete them.

#### **5.5.3 Imbalance of data obtained**

Most beach *fale* owners were not comfortable with the use of tape recorders, and recording was seldom undertaken during these interviews (although some did consent). Most tourists and industry experts were happy to have their interviews recorded. As a result, there was a difference in the detailed content of the transcribed taped interviews, in comparison with the more limited amount that could be taken down in handwritten notes during a non-taped interview. Every attempt was made to expand written interview notes as quickly and fully as possible directly following each interview.

#### **5.5.4 Language issues**

It is possible that conducting interviews in English rather than Samoan could have resulted in miscommunications and incorrect information being given. However due to

prior research experience in Samoa, as well as the experience of other researchers (Woods, 2006), it was considered that accurate and rich data could be obtained without the use of a translator. English is widely spoken in Samoa. Beach *fale* owners deal with foreign tourists daily and were willing to conduct interviews in the English language.

## **5.6 Ethics**

Ethics needed to be taken into account when working with people, especially in a situation where cultural misunderstandings could occur. It is possible that the questions asked may have touched on sensitive subjects, and all interview participants were made aware before the interview that they had the right to withdraw from an interview or withdraw their data at any time. This is standard practice in social science research (Babbie, 2004). An explanation of what the research will be used for was provided during initial contact with participants; and reiterated at the start of each interview. A letter was provided to them with this information as well as contact details for the researcher. Participant information letters also included details on how to withdraw data from the study after their participation. Consent was obtained from participants. Care has been taken to maintain privacy and anonymity; no names have been used and businesses have not been described in a way that could identify them.

## **5.7 Feedback**

Several participants expressed interest in the outcome of this research. Therefore, feedback will be provided as a way of thanking participants for their help, and ensuring that any data that may be of use to beach *fale* owners or industry participants is made available. Tourists, beach *fale* owners and industry participants provided either email or mailing addresses following their participation - they will be sent a copy of the results summary. The full dissertation will be made available to any participant who requests it.

## Chapter 6.0 Field Research Outcomes: Beach *Fale* Evolution

The following two chapters present the descriptive research outcomes of the 31 interviews conducted during fieldwork. Interview locations will not be specified because of confidentiality. Tourists came from a range of countries, including New Zealand, America, Australia, South Africa, France, Holland, Canada, England and Scotland. Chapter 7.0 outlines tourist views on their reasons for choosing Samoa and beach *fale*, followed by tourist and beach *fale* owner views and expectations for open and closed *fale*, and beach *fale* evolution. The chapter then outlines how expectations interact with the cultural context; *fa'aSamoa*.

### 6.1 Tourist Choices

#### 6.1.1 Tourist reasons for choosing Samoa

*“There’s amazing beaches everywhere, but it’s their culture that is a massive selling point” (Tourist 11, English, Interview 24-03-07).*

Many tourists interviewed appreciated Samoa’s traditional cultural context. When asked why they had chosen Samoa, a common response was that *“it is still a place with its own customs, and they haven’t changed too much”* (Tourist 5, French, Interview 11-03-07). Many stated that experiencing Samoan culture was important, as was experiencing it in an authentic manner – *“We wanted a honeymoon, but...we wanted something a bit more authentic, and somewhere where we could get around on the local buses”* (Tourist 10, Australian, Interview, 21-03-07). Another said - *“It’s a bit more about the culture than just kava and beer...you can just go off and experience it yourself”*. (Tourist 12, English, Interview 13-03-07). Another tourist stated –

*I guess there are so many places in the world where you can go for an amazing beach, and what differentiates it is the culture, Fiji’s got it, but Samoa is so much more intact, in the village system, and it’s lived day-to-day. So they’ve got to differentiate between the other islands – it’s something that’s there. (Tourist 11, English, Interview 24-03-07).*

Samoa’s low-key approach to tourism was frequently mentioned, with an emphasis on the difference between this and more commercialised resort-based tourist destinations in

the Pacific such as Fiji – *“All of the other Pacific Islands I’ve been to have been a lot more commercially oriented than Samoa...it’s much more laid-back here”* (Tourist 1, New Zealander, Interview 19-03/07). Another noted – *“Fiji seemed so busy, with lots of tourists, we didn’t think we’d like that, we wanted more traditional”* (Tourist 8, Dutch, Interview 12-03-07).

Others cited ‘sun, sand and sea’ as the reason for their choice, putting the emphasis on a relaxing holiday, enjoyment of the outdoor environment and a beautiful beach; *“Exposure to the elements, being outdoors by the beach, and hearing the wind and the waves; we just wanted that kind of experience”* (Tourist 2, Interview 22-03-07). *“We wanted somewhere to relax; we wanted the beach – that’s not something we can do at home”* (Tourist 6, Scottish, Interview 14-03-07). Some of these tourists did not necessarily expect much cultural exposure – *“I wanted a proper holiday to relax...I wanted a little bit of culture... but I wasn’t hugely interested in becoming really knowledgeable about it”* (Tourist 7, Interview 14-03-07).

### **6.1.2 Tourist reasons for choosing a beach *fale* holiday**

Tourists interviewed discussed a range of reasons for their choice of a beach *fale* holiday instead of a hotel or resort within Samoa. Staying in traditional accommodation and experiencing Samoan culture was important to many of the tourists interviewed. *“We chose the fale because we wanted to experience how people here live...we wanted to experience their culture”* (Tourist 8, Dutch, Interview 12-03-07). Several felt that they had opportunities to encounter culture that they would not have had if they had stayed in a resort - *“Why would you want to go and stay in a (resort), we sort of like to do it as the locals do it...it just feels wrong to stay in a ritzy resort when you’re in a country like this, you don’t get to experience the local lifestyle”* (Tourist 10, Australian, Interview 21-03-07). Another pointed out that the beach *fale* offer more chance to learn about genuine Samoan culture than resorts do, and can offer it in a less passive manner: *“that’s what’s great about the fale...you are not just sitting passively back, you get to chat with the family, whereas when you’re in a resort ... there’s more of a gap between you as a patron and them as a server.* (Tourist 11, English, Interview 24-03-07).

Almost all tourists interviewed considered the beach *fale* to be excellent value for money - *“it’s also an expense thing, for us to have a stay on the beach; it’s essentially fale or a \$250.00 USD per night hotel!”* (Tourist 11, English, Interview 24-03-07). Industry employees commented that beach *fale* were under-priced for the value being provided - *“it has to be the tourism bargain of the Pacific”* (Tour Guide, Interview 25-03-07). Another pointed out - *“The price of beach fale tourism at the moment, at \$30-35 USD a night, is undervalued...in Fiji it’s three times the price for the same product”* (Development Consultant, Interview 08-03-07). Beach *fale* owners were aware of this low pricing. One beach *fale* owner stated that - *“people in town ...they think we are charging too low a price for the tourists”* (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). Another mentioned pressure from family to raise his prices, but he felt that ‘money wasn’t everything’. The low cost of the beach *fale* rendered them attractive to backpackers and those on a budget, however tourists who would normally stay at hotel accommodation chose the beach *fale* as a cultural experience - *“friends of ours...spent half their week at (named resort) and then half at a beach fale; just because they too wanted that experience”* (Tourist 16, American, Interview 21-03-07). A company director noted that *“I usually stay at 4 or 5 star hotels... I don’t need any of that other stuff right now, this is a real holiday”* (Tourist 19, New Zealander, Casual Conversation 21-03-07). A beach *fale* owner confirmed - *“everyone comes here, including...people who would normally go to much more expensive places”* (Beach *fale* owner 5, Interview 20-03-07).

The relatively low profile of beach *fale* (and of Samoa in general) was another factor in choice of beach *fale* over a hotel or resort. Several tourists commented that the ‘cool factor’ - motivated them to pick beach *fale*. *“No-one else I knew had been here, so I win! (laughing)”* (Tourist 7, English, Interview 14-03-07). *“It’s almost like an element of cool - you’re on this beautiful paradise beach, shack on the beach - it’s just this whole image”* (Tourist 13, South African, 13-03-07). An business owner felt that Samoa is yet to be discovered by the mainstream - *“it’s a small world now, and this has become sort of the last outpost as it were, people have done San Tropez, they’ve done New York...so where do you go now, where haven’t you been? This is sort of becoming the last outpost*

*for that*” (Business owner 2, Interview 08-03-07). Access to Samoa’s best beaches was a key factor - *“I’d planned on coming here... this is a stunning beach...and that would be a big part of it”* (Tourist 12, English, Interview 24-03-07). *“The fale are so close to the beach that you are living right on the beach... it’s a perfect location”* (Tourist 8, Dutch, Interview 12-03-07). As one owner noted, *“half of our guests come here for the culture, the other half just want to relax”* (Beach fale owner 5, Interview 09-03-07). Those mainly interested in a ‘sun-sand-surf’ beach holiday tended to have a lower level of interest in Samoan culture.

## **6.2 Tourist views on open and closed beach fale**

From the 16 tourist interviews conducted, six were staying in closed (or semi-closed) beach *fale* and ten were staying in open beach *fale*. Some tourists had stayed in both types, or were considering changing types. Tourists interviewed were very positive about open beach *fale*, with many indicating a strong preference for them over the closed type. The main reasons for this were appropriateness for the climate, value for money and choice of the traditional option. Those primarily staying in open beach *fale* included some couples, older experienced travellers, young backpackers and groups of friends.

### **6.2.1 Suitability for climate**

Almost all tourists interviewed who were staying in open beach *fale* praised their suitability for the hot and humid climate of Samoa – *“you can feel a little bit of the breeze...back in Lalomanu, we weren’t staying in one of the traditional fale; it was that hut thing with the ensuite. That was a real mistake; because it was totally inappropriate...we were too hot”* (Tourist 11, English, Interview 24-03-07). Another tourist felt the design of the beach *fale* was sufficient to keep it cool – *“I like the way they’re open... you have that great cool breeze that comes off the ocean”* (Tourist 14, American, Interview 12-03-07). Another appreciated that open beach *fale* were designed to protect while remaining cool – *“the fale are the perfect way to house someone...when I’m in an enclosed fale, there is no light from the outside, and when you’re outside it’s dangerous with the sun, you can’t stay out in it. In these (open beach fale) you have the shade, and you have the breeze”* (Tourist 5, French, Interview 11-03-07).

### **6.2.2 Preference for the traditional option**

Choosing the traditional accommodation option was a common factor among participants. *“It seems more natural, I think, that’s the way people used to live...and I think it’s not necessary to sleep in a closed bungalow (here)”* (Tourist 8, Dutch, Interview 12-03-07). Another stated *“It’s a unique experience of Samoa, something that is nice and traditional, unique to here”* (Tourist 11, English, Interview 24-03-07). Several tourists also emphasised the value in staying in accommodation that is culturally different from home when discussing their preference for open beach *fale* - *“What is traditional here is the open fale ...if you go to a country you experience what is traditional, not what we have already, what would be the point?”* (Tourist 5, French, Interview 11-03-07). Another noted, *“in England we have a house with four walls... you don’t come travelling to do that, and if you do you might as well stay at home and buy a sunbed! (laughing) It’s the more cultural decision, if we’d had the choice of a four-sided western style cabin for exactly the same price, we’d have still gone for the fale”* (Tourist 10, English, Interview 21-03-07).

### **6.2.3 Moving between beach *fale* types**

Some participants started their holiday in a closed beach *fale*, before deciding they wanted to try an open one. In one case the appeal of an open *fale* on the beachfront was a firm attraction - *“We are staying in a closed fale, we want an open one right on the beach... we have asked to move tomorrow into an open one”* (Tourist 13, South African, Interview 13-03-07). A beach *fale* owner suggested that this usually occurred once tourists had gained some confidence regarding the privacy or security of the open *fale*: *“They have come to the beach and...discovered there is nothing to be scared about, so they move to (open beach fale)...we still have people...requesting a closed fale, they book from overseas and want a closed fale. But they get here, then in one or two days they ask if they can move to an open fale”* (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 13-03-07).

## **6.3 Tourist issues surrounding open beach *fale***

### **6.3.1 Expectations for comfort**

Despite their appreciation for the open beach *fale* concept, the tourists interviewed did not feel they could stay in them long and remain comfortable. *“You get a sandy bed after*

*a bit...we'll stay two nights, but a third night would be pushing it*" (Tourist 1, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07). Another felt that that a few days was enough – *"I'd probably be quite comfortable having a cabin now, after sleeping in the open one for three days and feeling oily and sticky all the time"* (Tourist 10, Australian, Interview 21-03-07). One tourist noted *"for a longer stay, we'd probably want something we were more culturally at home in, something in which we could shut the door"* (Tourist 13, South African, Interview 13-03-07). One tourist commented that – *"I couldn't live in one... it's so western of us but you want somewhere to put your stuff!"* (Tourist 12, English, Interview 13-03-07).

Potential exposure to weather affected the length of stay in an open beach *fale*– one tourist mentioned a leaking roof that played into her choice of a closed beach *fale* at the next beach she stayed at - *"I can't say I slept very well, it was nice but... (my friend) got soaked because her side leaked"* (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07).

Another explained that *"the rain and wind combination could be quite unpleasant...if it's raining heavily; something's going to come in"* (Tourist 12, South African, Interview 13-03-07). One business was particularly affected by weather. The amount of extra work caused the owners to debate their decision to maintain open beach *fale*; *"You think it's a clear night, and you go to bed, and then...the rain comes suddenly, and you are running around everywhere covering (the beach fale with tarpaulin) because the wind always searches for a small space, it always finds a way to get in...the closed fale would be easier, it would be good not to have to worry about the wind and the roofs leaking"* (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 15-03-07). Another beach *fale* owner considered these issues part of the overall experience for the guest - *"sure the fale are lots of work, but we don't care – we love doing this, and the guests do too – if they get a leak in the roof, they laugh at it, it's all part of the experience"* (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 20-03-07).

### **6.3.2 Security issues**

Security issues were mentioned frequently. Several tourists felt that their security expectations were culturally ingrained in them - *"it's always in the back of your mind, your stuff is just sitting there... (but) I think it's safe enough"* (Tourist 9, South African, 23-03-07). Another made a similar comment; *"in terms of what's ingrained in me*

*security-wise... it sits a bit awkwardly with me, but if that's the way it's done that's the way it's done*" (Tourist 7, English, Interview 14-03-07). Most tourists felt that other tourists were the main security risk – *"anyone we know who's had stuff stolen it's been other travellers, because they are going to be less conspicuous when they are wandering into your fale"* (Tourist 12, English, Interview 13-03-07). Many tourists reported feeling more relaxed about security as their stay progressed, however two tourists had possessions stolen, resulting in their reluctance to leave their beach fale unattended – *"things have been stolen out of my fale. I was ok about it (security) until then"* (Tourist 10, Australian, Interview 21-03-07).

#### **6.4 Tourist markets using closed beach fale**

*"Different tourists have different needs"* (Beach fale employee 1, Interview 09-03-07). While there were a variety of tourist types spread across the types of beach fale, from the six interviews conducted with tourists staying in closed beach fale, two were families with young children, one was a family with an adult child and older parents, two were couples and one a solo female traveller. This was commensurate with both tourist and owner comments on the types of people choosing different types of beach fale. The trend emerging from the data is that closed beach fale are the preference for families, older travellers, couples, insecure or first-time travellers and backpackers 'treating themselves'. The data supported that closed beach fale are meeting a demand from these segments of the market.

##### **6.4.1 Families**

The two families interviewed preferred closed beach fale, due to a combination of convenience and safety. One mother explained; *"We picked this fale for the bathroom, with two young children we thought it made life easier"* (Tourist 15, American, Interview 12-03-07). Another family chose closed beach fale to give their children a quiet place to sleep – *"we thought that would be nice... to be able to sit close enough to them, but to have them in a separate room...so I think this is definitely preferable, whereas if we'd be single, the open fale might have been cooler."* These tourists felt that a closed beach fale was the minimum level of comfort they were able to manage with young children – *"as fale have evolved, we've evolved too! (laughs). I think at this time in our lives, this is the*

level we would have to start at... with the kids this is the minimum level to be comfortable” (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07). Beach fale owners interviewed confirm that parents look for the closed beach fale to provide their children with more safety – *“The parents would prefer an open fale, but because of their toddlers...they go into the enclosed fale. Just to protect the crawlers from...falling off the sides”* (Beach fale owner 1, Interview 13-03-07). Another notes; *“it gives them that extra security...to know that the kid will be secure at nighttime, they can’t go outside.* (Beach fale owner 4, Interview 14-03-07).

#### **6.4.2 Older travellers**

The older travellers participating in the research preferred a greater level of comfort than an open beach fale. Some closed beach fale include beds rather than mattresses on the floor. Older travellers were willing to pay extra for the comfort - *“we are at of age where we are much happier to spend another \$10 or \$20 more kiwi or \$40 more tala...to have an incredibly better experience”* (Tourist 16, American, Interview 21-03-07). Others confirmed – *“my daughter would have happily slept in one of those (open beach fale), but I need a bit more comfort...than that”* (Tourist, Canadian, Informal Discussion 17-03-07). A business owner pointed out that providing closed beach fale widens the potential market – *“older people don’t want to sleep in open fale, but they’re happy to sleep in closed fale, so that opens up your market...which is your older people”* (Business owner 2, Interview 07-03-07). One older, experienced traveller, staying in an open beach fale, noted that while she and her husband were happy; *“I have some friends for whom, this would be the very edge of their experiential comfort zone, even staying in a really nice fale would be quite a challenge for them”* (Tourist 16, American, Interview 21-03-07). Despite their willingness to stay in open beach fale, these tourists did agree that they were not as comfortable for older travelers - *“it’s a really good experience, besides being a little rough for older travelers... (laughing). Kids might not care, but our backs are old!”* (Tourist 16, American, Interview 21-03-07). A local business owner felt that this was a cultural issue; as Samoans of all ages use open beach fale. *“Sometimes people tell me ‘we’re too old for an open fale’, and I tell them, ‘you are never too old for an open fale!’ (laughs)...if you are too old in your mind maybe, but you are never too old in your physical body...they just need a little push”* (Business owner 1, Interview 19-03-07).

### 6.4.3 Couples

The couples interviewed chose closed beach *fale* mainly for the privacy aspect. Some noted that they did not want to be disturbed by other travellers, but wanted to ‘hide away’ - “*We just wanted somewhere private...you can hide out a bit if you want*” (Tourist 6, Scottish, Interview 14-03-07). A honey-mooning couple, despite enjoying their stay in their open beach *fale*, were considering changing for privacy; “*we might find somewhere that has a cabin... fale are not the most romantic things in the world (laughing)*” (Tourist 10, Australian, Interview 21-03-07).

### 6.4.4 Inexperienced travellers

Among those interviewed, less secure travellers were more likely to have picked closed beach *fale*, as were women travelling alone. The internal locks on the closed beach *fale* doors increased feelings of security. This was a frequently mentioned issue. A solo female traveller commented that a desire for security was ingrained – “*I wouldn’t have chosen an open one...I’d have felt really exposed...I’d just be really uncomfortable (laughing)*”. (Tourist 7, English, Interview 14-03-07). A beach *fale* owner noted that after they enclosed their *fale*, they received many insecure guests - “*we were getting a lot of those who were insecure tourists basically; with their safety and security...it’s good they know...that someone isn’t going to just come and pull up (their) tarpaulin on the side*” (Beach *fale* owner 4, Interview 13-03-07). Another notes – “*the ones who have just arrived in the country...they are scared to stay in an open fale, they only want a closed fale*” (Beach *fale* owner 1, interview 12-03-07). An employee pointed out that solo female travellers tended to prefer enclosed beach *fale* because of fears for personal security - “*they don’t know Samoa, and they don’t know Samoan village boys, they think it’s the same as in their countries. I would be ashamed that they might think that (of us)*” (Beach *fale* employee 1, Interview 09-03-07).

### 6.4.5 Backpackers

The closed beach *fale* was a treat for some of the backpackers interviewed who would normally have taken the cheaper option, but ‘upgraded’ as a ‘splurge’ - “*In Lalomanu, you had to walk outside the fale and then across a road...to the toilet...so that’s why we got an ensuite, just a little more comfort...we’ve been travelling for about a week in*

*traditional fale and the ensuite was a bit of a treat. You've got to splurge sometimes!"*  
(Tourist 11, English, Interview 24-03-07).

## **6.5 Tourist issues surrounding closed beach fale**

### **6.5.1 Privacy**

Privacy was an issue repeatedly raised by tourists who were staying in both types of beach fale. One tourist commented that she had chosen the closed version in part because *"I could have gone to the bathroom every time I wanted to change, but I want a little more privacy"* (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07). Another explained that - *"they (open beach fale) are nice, but there's a privacy aspect that's more culturally ingrained! (laughs)"* (Tourist 13, South African, Interview 13-03-07). Privacy concerns seemed to be a key reason behind the enclosing of beach fale, whether because of space limitations or direct tourist demand. One business owner felt that tourist concerns for privacy were clearly demonstrated in their failure to use the open beach fale properly - *"the use of the open fale is wrong, they want to have it closed, you have to explain to them how to use the open fale...they just come and see that it's open and they think they have to close it, because people might see in! (laughs). So when they come from overseas the first thing they do is put down everything"* (Business owner 1, Interview 18-03-07). For tourists, this appears to be a balance between a desire to stay in an traditional beach fale while coping with expectations of privacy.

### **6.5.2 Ventilation and humidity**

Problems with closed beach fale were largely related to a lack of airflow. Some tourists interviewed simply found them too hot. A beach fale owner noted - *"Sometimes people will go into the closed fale and... they will come out and say "it's too hot, can we change?"* (Beach fale owner 2, Interview 10-03-07). One tourist had moved fale, due to heat keeping his child awake - *"toilets, ensuite and walls don't mean much when you can't sleep because it's too hot"* (Tourist, English, Casual Conversation 13-03-07).

Dampness due to a lack of airflow within closed beach fale was an issue. A tourist claimed that the only thing they didn't like was *"maybe the dampness, but that's probably more to do with the climate than anything"* (Tourist 6, Scottish, Interview 14-

03-07). Another tourist also disliked the humidity – “*the worst thing that you have is the beds are really smelly, because of the humidity...your bed feels kind of wet*” (Tourist 4, New Zealander, 22-03-07). A business owner argued that when used as traditionally designed, beach *fale* are well suited to the climate and stay dry, but “*a lot of people use the fale wrong...the open fale are designed to be open to...keep it dry – that’s what you have to tell people because they say everything smells so humid...and they say it’s all closed to keep the dampness out, and we say no, you should open it to dry it!*” (Business owner 1, 19-03-07). Closed beach *fale*; in being enclosed for privacy and security, force guests to trade-off the breeze that open beach *fale* are traditionally designed to utilise.

## **6.6 Beach *fale* owner views on maintaining open *fale***

### **6.6.1 Current positions of beach *fale* businesses visited**

Eight businesses were visited during the field research. They were extremely diverse in their size, business styles and future plans. Changes to the beach *fale* are occurring quickly, with many businesses building or enclosing within the last two years (or making plans to do so). Some of these planned new beach *fale* were open style (the business that had never had open *fale*), but most of them were enclosed beach *fale* or units, either with ensuites or shared facilities. Both on and off-beach accommodation was being planned.

Of the three businesses with open beach *fale* only, two were committed to keeping them, and the other was considering enclosing either some or all of their beach *fale*. Of the two businesses with a mixture of types, one had had a mixture for some time, (and had recently added ensuite units) whereas the other had newly enclosed some of their open *fale* (as well as building a new beach-side dining building). One of the two fully enclosed businesses had enclosed all of its originally-open beach *fale*, and the other had built entirely in enclosed style from the beginning of the business. Another business had enclosed most of its open beach *fale*, and partially enclosed the remainder, and was now looking to build enclosed units off the beach. (*See Table 1*).

**Table 1. Positions of beach *fale* businesses, March 2007**

BEACH FALE BUSINESS	BEACH FALE TYPE	CHANGES MADE/CONSIDERED	TIME SPAN	INVESTORS
A	Both open and closed	Enclosed some beach <i>fale</i> , new facilities built, planning closed units off-beach	Enclosed <i>fale</i> & new facilities built 2006	Interested in finding investors
B	Both open and closed	Several types of beach <i>fale</i> for some time, new ensuite <i>fale</i> built on-beach	Enclosed ensuites built recently	Approached, but declined
C	Closed <i>fale</i>	All beach <i>fale</i> now enclosed from the original open style, planning ensuite units on-beach	Enclosed several years ago	Approached, but declined
D	Open <i>fale</i>	Considering enclosing partially or completely, still undecided	Currently considering	Approached, considering, unsure
E	Open <i>fale</i>	Will keep all beach <i>fale</i> open, not planning to build any more	Won't enclose	Approached, but declined
F	Enclosed, complete + partial	Has recently enclosed, building new beach <i>fale</i> , planning closed units off-beach	Recently enclosed, currently building more beach <i>fale</i>	Approached, but declined
G	Closed <i>fale</i>	Always been enclosed. Considering building open beach <i>fale</i> . Would like to build on-beach ensuite units but septic tank is a problem.	Considering adding open <i>fale</i>	Approached, but declined
H	Open <i>fale</i>	Will keep all open beach <i>fale</i> , not planning to build any more	Won't enclose	Approached, but declined

### 6.6.2 Emotional attachment

Beach *fale* business owners interviewed had a number of reasons for maintaining open beach *fale*. For some, emotional attachment to tradition played a part; one beach *fale* owner's father had set up the business, and therefore the family would not change it for at least his lifetime – “*running (traditional) Samoan fale, that was our dream*” (Beach *fale* owner 5, Interview 20-03-07). Another expressed her attachment - “*we loved our fale; it's hard to explain my feelings about them*” (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07).

### 6.6.3 Retaining lifestyle and tradition

Many beach *fale* owners commented that sharing their culture with tourists was one of their reasons for setting up traditional style beach *fale* businesses. “*We thought, those are some of the things that our ancestors have done through their lives...they are still part of our lives in Samoa that we can show the tourists, this is how we have lived*” (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). Another stated “*we want them to experience the Samoan way of living, not hiding themselves away in a box*” (Beach *fale* owner 5, Interview 20-03-07). A small hotel owner felt that the cultural experience was key - “*I told (beach fale owner), don't worry about these air-conditioned places...they come here for you and for the family – we are Samoa!*” (Small hotel owner, Interview 24-03-07). Comments from

tourists supported this – *“if we need to stay there, then we’ll stay there! Even sleep on the beach if we have to. We’re pretty easy...what we had hoped for was interaction with the family”* (Tourist 16, Interview 21-03-07).

#### **6.6.4 Balancing business with lifestyle**

Some of the beach *fale* business owners interviewed were walking a line between balancing the business with their traditional lifestyles. For some, preserving their lifestyle was a reason for limiting the size and style of their business. One pointed out – *“if we have ten fale full, that is just ten, if we have ten empty, that is just ten as well. It is a good number for my wife and I to manage”* (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 14-03-07). Another explained that more beach *fale* would mean more problems and more work – *“thirteen fale, it’s ok...this is enough...too many people, too many problems!”* (Beach *fale* owner 7, Interview 22-03-07). He noted that he and his wife do not want extra staff, as the cost of the wages (at \$80-100 tala per week) would offset the financial benefits. A small hotel owner commented that lifestyles could be sacrificed for profit - *“(named beach fale) used to have 30 guests, and then it went up, and now sometimes I go there...and nobody has any time to talk... I told them, you have sacrificed quality for quantity. They are making the money but, I don’t think (beach fale owner) is enjoying it the way he used to at the beginning. Life’s too short, why do it unless you enjoy it?”*(Small hotel owner, Interview 24-03-07).

### **6.7 Beach fale owner reasons for enclosing (beach fale evolution)**

*“Tourists want the most comfortable accommodation on the beach, and the tourism operators want the most money in their pockets, and these two things absolutely go hand-in-hand, one driving the other”* (Tourist 12, Interview 13-03-07).

#### **6.7.1 Family-made decision**

Discussion with beach *fale* owners and industry experts resulted in a range of reasons behind the evolution of Samoa’s beach *fale*. Several owners reported that their extended village communities did not have a say in how their businesses were built or changed and that only family was involved – *“This business is solely owned by mum, dad, myself and my...brothers...the village has no input”* (Beach *fale* owner 4, interview 14-03-07). Another, when approached by a community member who wished to voice an opinion,

said – “*look, it’s not up to you, you don’t have to stay here*” (Beach fale owner 3, Interview 13-03-07).

### **6.7.2 Developing the business**

Closed beach fale were seen by some as the only viable way to develop a business in the face of land limitations. One business owner noted that the only way to increase yield on a built-up piece of land was to offer a higher-priced product - “*pushing the better (fale) and attracting more guests, that’s the only way of growing their business. That beach...is full now, so the only way you can grow...is to improve the quality...so I guess that’s the next step.*” One beach fale owner planned to build closed units on the village-side of the road (away from the beach) to utilize all available space. She felt that closed units would be enough of a draw to compensate tourists for not having the beach on their doorstep – and planned to add a swimming pool (Beach fale owner 2, Interview 10-03-07).

Limitations on land led directly to a need to enclose the beach fale for guest privacy – this is due to more fale being added with less space between them. Several of the tourists interviewed considered particular businesses over-crowded - “*it used to be less crowded, the fale are closer together now. It’s all about money, that’s why he’s done it, to get more fale in there and more money back. So they have had to put up the wooden sides to give more privacy*” (Tourist 19, Swiss, Casual Conversation 19-03-07).

### **6.7.3 Risk management**

Preventing problems and managing risk was another reason for enclosing beach fale – one owner chose to enclose a fale and add an ensuite to it because of concern about the safety of particular elderly guests (who visit yearly) – “*we felt we should give them a more comfortable place, especially the toilet, we didn’t want the lady to walk across the road at night... so we decided to build one*” (Beach fale owner 1, Interview 12-03-07).

The buildings enclosed were also those closest to the road, thus reducing complaints of dust, noise and lack of privacy. Managing security risks was another reason to enclose beach fale – “*as Samoa grows more capitalistic it is also facing an increase in crime... and that’s definitely happening around the beach communities...operators don’t want to be worrying about...their client’s security risks*” (NGO Employee, Interview 05-03-07).

While reducing some aspects of risk, enclosed beach fale present others – one tourist

noted that the financial risk related to cyclones was higher if the beach *fale* were enclosed - *“it used to be that cost of infrastructure was very low here, if there was flooding...you’re good just to move your fale and build new ones...but if you put a lot of money into a heavy duty cement floor and it goes away, then your family is really in trouble”* (Tourist 16, American, Interview 21-03-07). Open beach *fale* were easier to rebuild if damaged - *“if there is a cyclone, the fale are gone. But these ones are very easy...I can just rebuild them”* (Beach *fale* owner 7, Interview 22-03-07). The environmental risk during cyclone season is an issue; closed ensuite beach *fale* built on the beach require septic tanks, which could be compromised during a bad storm. Another business planned on using the owner’s newly built ‘Palagi-style’ house as a shelter for tourists should a cyclone hit. One beach *fale* owner commented on the work involved in cleaning and repairing her closed beach *fale* following Cyclone Heta in 2004.

#### **6.7.4 Response to competition**

Competing with other businesses was a factor in beach *fale* evolution. One business was planning on replacing some of their closed beach *fale* with ensuite units on the beach, in line with a nearby business that had experienced success with similar units – *“we are looking at building some units, just on the beach...we’ll still have some beach fale, the little bungalows that we have, but it’s always nice to cater for...the ones who would like to have an ensuite”* (Beach *fale* owner 4, Interview 13-03-07) A local business owner explained that this was inevitable – *“(named beach fale business) have already got the ensuite and (neighbouring fale), well, competition says they’re going to have to do something similar to combat that”* (Business owner 2, Interview 08-03-07). Another owner was debating enclosing some of their beach *fale*, noting that - *“we are thinking about enclosing the fale because we need to keep up with competition, we have to move forward...others do and we must compete with them”* (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 14-03-07). An industry representative felt that the increase in beach *fale* evolution promotes diversity – *“they’re trying to differentiate themselves, distinguish themselves – it’s a leveraging thing. So if I offer a unit on the beach with a toilet, of course I’m going to get more business...but for the other guys, cheaper is better.”* (SHA Representative, Interview 22.03/07).

### **6.7.5 Copycatting**

Several businesses had seen enclosed beach *fale* elsewhere and had decided to implement the style themselves. One beach *fale* owner remarked that their enclosed style was due to her parents seeing similar elsewhere – *“Before they built the business, my parents travelled around...have you seen Lalomanu, what they have there? They thought it would be good to copy that style”* (Beach *fale* owner 8, Interview 21-03-07). Another stated that while he was happy with his open *fale*, he would like to travel and see how others were running their businesses, *“just to compare”* (Beach *fale* owner 7, Interview 22-03-07). As well as enclosing their *fale*, some businesses copied facilities - following the building of a new dining building, an owner expressed interest in adding a large deck to the front; having seen similar at a larger luxury resort. The business had also enclosed some of their beach *fale* in line with other businesses nearby (Beach *fale* owner 2, Interview 10-03-07).

### **6.7.6 Protecting *fa’aSamoa***

Some of the beach *fale* owners interviewed had enclosed in order to house under-dressed tourists ‘inside’ and thus prevent young children from seeing them. One owner commented; *“(my parents) started to put up some walls around the fale for privacy basically...my parents were quite cautious of the way that the tourists would come in just bikinis...having a family business where brothers and sisters and nieces and nephews and grandparents all work together...it protects our culture for us”* (Beach *fale* owner 4, Interview 13-03-07). Two beach *fale* owners had experienced problems with children walking home along the beach; one had asked the school to put a stop to it; *“the kids walk down the beach and see them; it’s not good for small kids”* (Beach *fale* owner 8, Interview 21-03-07). Another believed that enclosing *fale* would help protect his young children from exposure to unwanted tourist behaviour - *“sometimes they come here and they want to have a sexy style...even inside the open fale where everyone can see...my employees and my children, well we all have that life, but not yet and I don’t want those pictures in their minds. We need to have the walls, so that they (the tourists) can have their time...but not in the open!”* (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 14-03-07). This beach *fale* owner also noted that if he felt that any particular tourist’s behaviour was inappropriate, he would send his staff and children away to protect them, and he and his wife would care for the tourists on their own.

### **6.7.7 Direct tourist demand**

Direct tourist requests for closed beach *fale* had been made. *“The tourists stopped and told me – you should have this type of fale...they liked the place, but they didn’t like the fale...they asked for a safe, secure fale”* (Beach *fale* owner 2, Interview 10-03-07).

Another had also been asked - *“the guests want privacy, sometimes they come here and then they ask for them”* (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 14-03-07). The desire for greater levels of privacy and security were frequent reasons why tourists demanded enclosure – many beach *fale* owners were aware of tourist expectations in these areas - *“I think the tourists want walls, they come and they straight away drop all the blinds and that tells me they want more privacy”* (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 14-03-07). Another owner commented *“the ones who have just arrived in the country...they only want a closed fale, and we have lost business because we didn’t have that, so in a way the demand by the tourist has some say in the transformation of the architecture of the beach fale”* (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). One tourist stated that tourist requests were likely to be driving beach *fale* evolution, in close combination with other factors such as competition – *“if you’ve got a teething baby, you want what’s easiest and most familiar... and people always want a bit more so then you get your balcony and your plug in the wall, and the business next door does the same thing to keep up, and suddenly you’ve got a resort just like any other, and the fale are gone. And it’s not done aggressively or selfishly, it just ends up like that.* (Tourist 12, Interview 13-03-07). An industry representative stated that demand was a key driving force in beach *fale* evolution, and felt that the economic benefits could eventually result in social change, and subsequently, in socio-cultural problems – *“I think it is the demand, the demand that is driving it, and as a result there’s economic benefits from it, but at the same time, the economic benefits may result in the destruction of the culture and the environment if not managed correctly”* (SHA Representative, Interview 09/03/07).

### **6.7.8 External travel agents**

Travel agents may also have some influence on the evolution of the beach *fale*, although this appears to be minimal at this stage as beach *fale* do not yet have a large presence in travel brochures. *“They (travel agents) say to fale owners, build more air-conditioned suites, we can sell them if you have them... that is what the travel agents are pushing.*

*Only recently have the fale - the larger businesses – made it into the travel brochures at all*” (Development Consultant, Apia, Interview 08-03-07). Another agrees that open beach fale are under-advertised – *“there isn’t really any advertising to show the benefits of the open fale ...so (tourists) think, I will take my own shower!”* (Business owner 1, Interview 18-03-07). Another participant made a similar comment – *“people don’t even know about the beach fale, it’s only when they decide they are coming to Samoa, and then do a bit more research, that they find out about the beach fale”* (SHA Representative, Interview 08-03-07). Direct arrivals from overseas are therefore more likely (although not exclusively) to stay in closed beach fale, and tourists are likely arriving without being aware of other options - *“who’s to say that people know what they’re getting when they book? We booked through Flight Centre, and this place was one of the few they had in their brochure”* (Tourist 16, American, Interview 19-03-07).

## **6.8 Tourist expectations for beach fale tourism**

### **6.8.1 Facilities**

On the whole, tourists were happy with the basic level of facilities provided at beach fale, provided they were clean and well-maintained. This was an expectation that they were not prepared to compromise on - *“basic is fine – as long as they are clean, and they don’t smell, they work and there’s lights!”* (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07). The standard of facilities provided has been shown to have an effect on the success of the business; *“(named beach fale)...keep complaining; that everybody’s heading in this direction, but we’re not getting any business, well I said, it’s because they’ve (the competition) tidied up their facilities...their toilets are always clean”* (Hotel Association Representative, Interview 09-03-07). Sufficient numbers of toilets and showers for the numbers staying is an issue that some participants raised as needing to be addressed at particular beach fale businesses.

### **6.8.2 Internet and communications**

For some tourists, provision of internet access played a role in their decision to stay at a beach fale offering that service – *“Email and internet and things like that, that was important, some people do want to cut off all ties, but...it’s the only way we can stay in contact”* (Tourist 12, English, Interview 13-03-07). An NGO employee notes that

expectations in this area are changing as internet becomes more readily available – *“with the development of the communications here in Samoa...there seems to be quite a growing expectation of tourists to be able to use the internet while they’re on the beach. Especially when, beach fale operations, the more successful ones...are actually using the internet to contact tourists, there is a whole sort of expectation there”* (NGO Employee, Interview 06-03-07).

### **6.8.3 Maintenance**

Some tourists interviewed felt that investment in maintenance was needed at some businesses – *“I think a lot of the fale we have seen need to be maintained better”* (Tourist 16, American, Interview 21-03-07). A business owner noted - *“they need to put a bit more of the money they are making back into the resort (but) if the money is there they spend it rather than invest and...use it for the business”* (Business owner, Interview 19-03-07). The standard of maintenance varies between businesses, as does the way that income is used – *“the guys who are more successful, they are more business-minded...for the majority...it’s money coming into the pocket and getting spent, it’s not re-invested in the business”* (SHA Representative, Interview 08-03-07).

### **6.8.4 Food**

Food ranged broadly between different businesses, some of which were serving mostly western food and others a mix. The larger beach fale businesses were serving more westernised food, much of which is imported - *“tourists are wanting lighter meals and they have certain preferences... not (the) sort of heavy foods that Samoans eat...so a lot of food is brought in”* (NGO Employee, Interview 05-03-07). One beach fale owner interviewed confirmed this, noting that *“the majority of stuff we buy is from Apia, of which probably 50 or 60% is from overseas”* (Interview, 12/03/07). From the beach fale owner’s perspective, they were cooking what they believed tourists would eat – *“probably only 3% of tourists would be pleased with Samoan food, which explains why we don’t cook a lot ...the majority of stuff we buy is from Apia, of which probably 50 or 60% is from overseas”* (Beach fale owner 4, Interview 13-03-07). Another statement supported that there was an element of risk management behind this decision – *“I suppose it’s the safe option, to serve up something that 99% are going to like...and the*

*busier they are the better they feed you...if you've got to cook dinner for five people out of \$250 and still make money on the accommodation, you're not going to do as much with the food*" (Business owner 2, Interview 07-03-07). Those running more traditional businesses, were serving more Samoan food, and therefore were sourcing more locally. Some beach *fale* obtained at least some produce such as fish, vegetables and fruits from the local village area, and others purchased this from the markets in Apia. Tourists interviewed were generally happy with the food being offered. Many tourists felt that their food was nutritious and well-portioned for what they were paying. Provision of food was a balancing act for beach *fale* owners, between providing more expensive western foods they knew tourists would eat, versus maintaining the cultural experience with Samoan foods (which are cheaper to provide and could benefit the local village economy to a greater degree).

#### **6.8.5 Activities**

The main activities provided at beach *fale* include diving, snorkelling, swimming, hiking, tours and participation in fishing and women's *Komiti* demonstrations. These were affected by the quiet season. While some tourists were happy to relax on the beach, wanted activities available – *"I think that the activities were the most important for us...we didn't want to just lie around with nothing to do"* (Tourist 12, English, Interview 13-03-07). Another noted – *"we'd be nuts if we didn't have things to do, but we're not in it for the sand"* (Tourist 16, American, Interview 21-03-07). One tourist felt that beach *fale* owners were missing financial opportunities to increase yield per tourist by not organising enough activities – *"there's opportunity there...what are you doing today? Can we organize a tour for you? Just managing our days, because we are willing...and we are pretty aimless"* (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07). Others felt that the provision of too many activities was against the low-key beach *fale* concept – *"when you start... at 1pm...there will be handicrafts in this section – that I associate more with a resort...they need a few more resources, the talent, the skills, the time...and I don't even know if they have enough tourists coming through here"* (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07).

## **6.9 Interaction of expectations with the beach fale cultural context**

The ways in which culture was presented and interacted with the beach *fale* experience varied widely between different businesses. Businesses run in a more western business style were more likely to include timetabled activities such as a *fiafia* show, whereas smaller traditionally-run businesses may not have the resources for this, (particularly during the quiet period when the fieldwork was conducted) but in some cases were better positioned to include guests into their daily family life. In line with the diversity of options available to them, tourist responses to their exposure to Samoan culture were mixed. While some were happy with the exposure to culture they were experiencing (and some did not expect or want much exposure beyond attending a *fiafia*) others would have preferred more.

### **6.9.1 Exposure to culture**

One tourist did not mind being isolated from the village after time spent elsewhere in Samoa - *“you’re at the beach, it’s great, and, well, you get to step away from the culture and have a bit of recovery time, from the food, and even from the people”* (Tourist 15, American, Interview 12-03-07). Other tourists had a different opinion – *“I do wish that, (they) would make more of an effort to expose us more to the culture, because Samoa...has such a strong...interesting culture”* (Tourist 14, American, Interview 12-03-07). A second commented – *“It’s like they’re only just discovering that people are interested in their culture...they keep it private”* (Tourist 8, Interview 12-03-07).

The beach *fale* owner however, thought that tourists were not truly interested in the ‘real’ *fa’aSamoa* – *“we hardly speak about the culture – it’s so complicated, tourists don’t want to know much about the real Samoan culture; they want to relax, enjoy our hospitality. We’re not using our culture to sell the business!”* (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). A tourist argued that even if tourists are interested, they do not necessarily express that they want to know; *“tourists don’t express that they want to learn more about their culture, so they’re not going to push them, ... the Samoans (think), tourists don’t really want to see that part of Samoa, they just want to come here and relax on the beach”* (Tourist 14, Interview 12-03-07). One tourist response indicated that it was the more managed style of cultural interaction he was looking for – *“I think in Fiji...they do the*

*cultural tourism thing much better than here. When you arrive for dinner, there's a traditional welcome and they do a song. Here there's a weekly fiafia and that's it"* (Tourist 11, Interview 24-03-07). This suggests a possible mismatch of expectations, as well as some confusion about what constitutes Samoan 'culture'. These results indicate diversity among tourists, who appear to interpret and understand Samoan culture differently from each other, with some seeing it as directly represented by *fiāfia* song-and-dance cultural demonstrations, and others having a deeper understanding of the values, sense of identity and community wound together within *fa'a Samoa*. The range of responses may also be indicative of a move away for some businesses from their traditional roots into more resort-style accommodation where culture is presented rather than authentically shared (and tourist types, and their particular expectations, are attracted accordingly).

It is possible that it may be more of a case of matching the right tourists with the business that meets their needs. It was suggested that the diversity of options within Samoa's beach *fale* was a unique strength that caters well for the range of tourists wanting to visit them – *"you know, you can pretty much match the village, match the fale to the visitor and if they don't like it; we'll move them on the next day"* (Development consultant, Interview 07-03-07). Some of the tourists participating felt that a desire to share traditional culture through a stay in a beach *fale* was, more accurately, Samoa's unique selling point, and secondary to financial interests – *"I don't think they're trying to interact with us. I don't think they want to learn about our culture, (laughs) and I don't think they're trying to impart any more about their culture either"* (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07). An industry participant noted – *"they trade on the cultural aspect, if you try and sell an open fale as somewhere for someone to come on holiday, you can't sell it as anything other than 'come and experience Samoan culture'. But no, I don't believe that they are...wanting to teach Palagi about their way of life. They want to take the money to help the families survive, mostly"* (Business owner 2, Interview 07-03-07).

### **6.9.2 Service**

Some tourists felt that, if Samoa was planning on providing more expensive accommodation options for those tourists willing to pay for it, then they need to address

the service to match – *“it doesn’t matter until you lift the service...it doesn’t matter what you do in terms of the product, the little touches, you can build all the concrete Palagi bungalows you like, but unless the service is there to match the guests won’t fill them. The product and the service have to match; some places it feels like they aren’t really trying”* (Tourist 16, Interview 21-03-07). Another tourist pointed out that the provision of higher-priced accommodation brings with it a different set of expectations for service:

*I do think that for Samoa to attract more tourists (there) needs to be a bit more of the service culture...Westerners expect a higher level of service than what you get in Samoa ...they’re bringing that laconic Samoan culture to the service in tourism as well...sometimes there’s not enough attention, and sometimes there’s too much attention...it’s just a training thing I suppose. If Samoa tries to market itself to get the more expensive tourist dollar...who’ll be willing to pay US\$200 a night for places – (and) it seems like the tourism sector, is trying to differentiate like that, they are building more resorts and stuff - they need to improve their service culture (Tourist 11, English, Interview 24-03-07).*

An industry representative noted that this was an issue they were aware of - *“the fale, physically, are catering for the needs of the tourists, but I think it is the service that we have to look at. It’s mainly the service we need to address”* (SHA Representative, Interview 08-03-07). An industry expert felt that service issues may partly be related to some irritation with tourists - *“people do get sick of the tourists. If you go to Manono now, you don’t get the same warm welcome you used to get. In the off-season...they aren’t as interested; they want their down-time”* (Development consultant, Interview 07-03-07). Tourists noticed this – *“there isn’t that welcoming feeling...it’s like we’re intruding on their space, which is kind of odd!”* (Tourist 16, Interview 21-03-07). A beach fale owner confirmed that his family tires by the end of the season; *“we just keep going and going and going; it would be nice to be able to stop (but) that’s the business”* (Beach fale owner 5, Interview 20-03-07).

### **6.9.3 Traditional hospitality issues**

Some of the tourists interviewed suggested that the presence of tourists may lead to a change in traditional hospitality as normally practiced in Samoa. *“They are not practising their normal hospitality as they would if someone was staying on their land, so that’s*

*different for them*” (Tourist 15, American, Interview 12-03-07). A small hotel owner stated – *“we can’t go killing a pig every time we see a tourist, nor can we give them fine mats either! (laughs)”*. She added that the presence of tourism in Manase has changed traditional hospitality among the Samoan people as well – *“things have changed in Manase, I used to go into the village and all the kids would be waving... the chiefs would be straight to greet me... now they don’t do that half the time. Manase is not the quiet little place it used to be”* (Small hotel owner, Savai’i, Interview 24-03-07).

Closed beach *fale* diverge from Samoan culture, which encourages openness. The *fale* in Samoan villages were traditionally open-sided and villagers were welcome to stop and talk. *“Now that the sides are being enclosed, that doesn’t happen - people can’t just wave when they see a friend walking past”* (Development consultant, Interview 07-03-07).

This is occurring in both beach *fale* tourism businesses, and within Samoan villages where many are choosing to build ‘Palagi-style’ concrete houses rather than traditional *fale*. A tourism business owner explained – *“That’s the main problem overseas that loads of people have, they live in closed apartments...but in an open fale you’re really forced to have everything on view. Sometimes it’s a barrier people have to overcome, and if they can overcome it it’s a beautiful free feeling... if you open your fale people come to you and talk to you...if you close it up...they leave you alone...and that’s not the Samoan way* (Tourism business owner, Manase, Interview 19-03-07).

#### **6.9.4 Overcharging**

In relation to these issues and to the increased importance of the cash economy in rural Samoan communities, an increase in the overcharging of tourists was discussed by both tourists and beach *fale* owners. One incident in particular illustrates a shift in traditional hospitality as well as an increase in demand for cash in Samoan society. An Australian couple had missed their bus from a tourist attraction back to their accommodation, due primarily to miscommunication. They walked to a nearby village to find transport, however the only option was to catch a ride with a villager – for the cost of \$120 tala (far higher than a taxi). They had no choice but to pay, but expressed irritation over the issue. Beach *fale* owners expressed fear that the overcharging of tourists would become more prevalent – *“the main problem we have is overcharging, sometimes the village boys*

*overcharge people, I tell the guests “60 tala includes everything”, and then I find later that the boys charged extra...they want that extra money but it’s not right”* (Beach fale owner 3, Interview 14-03-07). Another beach fale owner felt that taking advantage of tourists could lead to other social changes - *“I am worried that some Samoans might overcharge tourists if there are too many of them, they might think they can charge what they want, and if they overcharge tourists, then they will overcharge Samoans too, I am worried about that”* (Beach fale owner 1, Interview 12-03-07).

Some tourists interviewed also felt that particular beach fale owners were overcharging. While almost all tourists interviewed were happy with the price of the stay itself, not all were happy with the cost of additional services. Two tourists had pre-booked taxi transport to the ferry wharf, yet when others wanted to travel also, the beach fale owners would not allow them to share the cost, but charged all parties full cost – essentially the same cost as hiring two different taxis. This left the tourists with ill-feeling – *“that other couple are trying to arrange transportation, and they feel like they (the beach fale owners) are trying to squeeze every penny!”* (Tourist 16, American, Interview 21-03-07). This may tie in to the extent to which beach fale owners can have difficulty in quantifying and charging for aspects of traditional hospitality. An industry representative pointed out that involvement with the cash economy has resulted in the commodification of items that previously would have been shared freely – *“I’ll tell you something, it used to be (that) you went to your neighbour and asked them, can I have ten of those trees for my fale? Now, everyone wants money. And also people are arguing about what is the fair price of any of these materials”* (SHA Representative, Interview 22/03/07). Extra services such as internet and transportation that are not part of *fa’aSamoa*, are possibly being charged accordingly. A fine balance needs to be struck between obtaining maximum yield from each tourist, versus maintaining the genuine hospitality that tourists are seeking in Samoa.

### **6.9.5 Provision of information**

The amount of tourist information provided was discussed by several tourists. In particular, this arose in Savai’i more than Upolu, but this may be a reflection of the more diverse range of beach fale businesses participating in Savai’i. Tourists interviewed

expressed that they wanted more information in terms of activities in the area, cultural requirements and practical matters such as transportation. Some felt that this was not well dealt with at some beach *fale*. One tourist mentioned a rainforest canopy walk excursion, where they felt their beach *fale*-based tour guide had acted as just a driver, as no information was given – *“there’s actually a real lack of cultural understanding that tourists love learning things, and I don’t think it even occurs to the person actually to try to give information...it would’ve been so much more enjoyable...if we had a description of everything...just give it some perspective”* (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07). Another tourist stated that they would have appreciated the provision of more local information – *“nobody gives you information here; you have to dig for it...if you ask if I wish they could provide more information, then yes, I wish!... it would be nice if when you check in, you know, you can give me a map...these are the high tides, that sort of local knowledge...in some ways it’s charming...everyone’s so laid back...but in some ways it’s hard when you’re trying to find out about a certain place”*(Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07).

A cultural predilection to tell tourists ‘what they want to hear’ was mentioned as a source of frustration - *“I think in American culture, we like people to tell us...everything about it, the pros and the cons, and so sometimes it’s frustrating, they really want to tell you what you might want to hear, they’ll say ‘it’s wonderful’ and so on, when the trail is actually really muddy! They want to keep you happy”* (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07). This was a factor in the experience of the Australian couple who missed their bus – *“if someone would’ve told us about the buses... and we were told it would be easy to hitch, but it wasn’t... there wasn’t any real written information, and the verbal information wasn’t quite correct”* (Tourist 10, Australian, Interview 21-03-07). One business owner thought that this was a cultural issue; *“Samoans live for today, they don’t think about tomorrow or what people might need tomorrow, they only think about today’s needs, so they don’t think in advance about what tourists might want to know”* (Business owner 1, Interview 18-03-07). Some tourists suggested information sheets would be a way around this issue. It may in part be a reflection of the extent to which tourists were happy to rely upon guidebooks, thus taking the task out of beach *fale* owner’s hands.

Only a few had not researched at all. Other tourists considered the lack of information part of the charm of the holiday – *“it’s all part of the experience ...you’re used to being catered to in every place you go to, but you’re kind of on your own here so it’s up to you to find out”* (Tourist 6, Scottish, Interview 14-03-07).

### **6.10 Influence of modernisation and social change**

*“How do we protect our culture and still make enough money? How much money is enough, and how much is too much?”*

*(Chief, Aleipata, Casual Conversation, 11-03-07).*

A major theme that emerged during the research is the changing nature of Samoan society, which is moving towards modernisation and a greater demand for cash income and material goods. These pressures are linked to beach *fale* tourism, in that as the desire for income is increasing in Samoa, new ways are being sought to obtain cash livelihoods – this is leading to the enclosure of beach *fale* as a tool for increasing yield and making that income. Others felt that returning Samoan migrants play a major role.

#### **6.10.1 Increased western influence and desire for cash**

Samoans are aware of change in their society. One industry representative explained – *“our people are...becoming very conscious of the dollar... that’s the scary part, that we are going to lose that genuine hospitality, because everyone just thinks, I have to make money...but you know, that’s development for you; you can’t do much about it”* (SHA Representative, Interview 08-03-07). An NGO employee felt that financial affluence was a measure of well-being for Samoans – *“I think Samoans as they get more affluent, move towards a more Western style. I think that’s part of how they see well-being... priorities are moving towards more individual values, and immediate family rather than community and community values”* (NGO Employee, Interview 05-03-07). A business owner commented that increased exposure to the cash economy *“will change their culture...it has to. Simply taken (they) have got more money, that’s got to change the way they live their lives”* (Business owner 2, Interview 07-03-07). This western influence is increasing, especially in Apia. One tourist, currently living in American Samoa, discussed the role of the media and gave a local band as an example – *“most of the music on the radio is their songs...but...over the last couple of albums, it’s changed - it’s started to sound like*

*American-style rap...so yeah, that's the influence you get, that's what I think westernisation is - importing what will make people money but without thought to the impact"* (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07). Other tourists felt that Samoa was following the path of American Samoa – *"it's very close to Australia and America, their influence could easily take over, like (in) American Samoa. It's already got one McDonald's; I wouldn't want to see any more. I think that the western influence could overtake"* (Tourist 6, Scottish, 14-03-07).

### **6.10.2 Returning migrants**

Samoan migrants returning to the islands are considered to have a strong influence, returning with different expectations and a changed approach to *fa'aSamoa* – *"as people are exposed to westernized ways...they can travel overseas and come back with a different perception. So now that motivation for keeping up with the Joneses is strong. It's scary because we are gradually going to erode our own culture...now people are starting to compete among themselves about who has the TV, who has the car, and it's creating a lot of bad blood and friction"* (SHA Representative, Interview 08-03-07). One beach *fale* owner stated that returning Samoans often want to build large Palagi-style houses, which can result in land issues and tensions within the village. *"They bring the overseas culture, that different culture back with them...it's hard for the chiefs...it's the money. Money changes culture, people can't buy things with culture, they choose the money instead, so I think the culture here will keep changing"* (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 14-03-07). A beach *fale* employee felt that tourist clothing should no longer be a problem for *fa'aSamoa*, because Samoans were now used to wearing western types of clothes anyway. Another owner felt that the effect of tourism was minimal in comparison to the impact of returning Samoans *"I do not blame the tourists for the western influence, I blame our own people. They live overseas...when they return, they don't want to be controlled by village politics... they come back and they can't fit into what they have left. So they try and distance themselves from the village council...elderly people are blaming the western influence for this, they are saying it is brought by tourists, but it's not"* (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07).

### 6.10.3 Village equity issues

The wide diversity of the beach *fale* businesses and varying levels of success has led, in some cases, to issues of equity and jealousies. A business owner explained that there is a considerable amount of jealousy towards the owner of the most successful beach *fale* in the area. This manifests in competition – another business blamed its neighbour for failing to care for its tourists after a man drowned; this story was repeated frequently to new guests (it was mentioned to the researcher by tourists prior to her arrival at the beach, and was later recounted to her again by the beach *fale* owner). Similar stories were told in both islands. In terms of marketing, more than one beach *fale* owner felt that a neighbour's website encouraged false expectations - *“they market everywhere, then they put their pictures on the internet...people see them but they don't see how crowded they are, so they come and they are disappointed”* (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 14-03-07). An NGO employee explained how beach *fale* can negatively affect village equities:

*Wealth and affluence (in the village) was fairly evenly distributed. But when you have beach fale operators and somebody starts to accumulate wealth...you have inequity...in terms of his capacity to earn within the village economy. There are some tensions...jealousies. Especially if the tour operator doesn't involve the others in his new found wealth...this person's standing in the village also elevates as well. But...if they don't integrate, and just isolate themselves, and use village resources, water, land, access and so forth for their own benefit exclusively, then the tension starts to rise...and there may be retaliation, there might be...conflict... I've seen some horrible examples of a person who's not integrated and not accepted by the village and in fact there's been an effort to try and get him removed – the villagers will make it quite uncomfortable for him and for his operation (NGO Employee, Interview 05-03-07).*

### 6.10.4 External investment

All the beach *fale* owners interviewed had previously fielded interest from investors. Most of the businesses are largely resistant to investors – *“(I told them) what makes you think you can just come here and ask me to lease our place, that my parent's life-long hard work has gone into...we're not stupid, I don't want your money”*(Beach *fale* owner 4, Interview 13-03-07). Another discussed his family member's decision not to allow

investment, emphasizing the importance of communal land to Samoa's cultural identity – *“She always says, this place doesn't belong to her only, it belongs to her whole family...she does not reap the benefit by herself. I think she's like many Samoans who don't want investors coming and taking over their land (laughs)”* (Beach fale owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). Two of the more traditional businesses however are considering investors as a way of funding the enclosure of beach fale. One noted that she was considering asking the Samoan Hotel Association to help locate an investor for her planned motel units. A business owner remarked that it would be tempting for a family to lease their beach to a hotel and live from the rent rather than try to run the business themselves – the trade-off being their loss of autonomy over their land.

The face of tourism in Samoa is perceived by some, to be changing in favour of foreign investment and movement away from local-level control. Two new hotels are due to be built in Samoa, with support from the government – *“the Ready Hotel Tanua group from...will build a hotel... foreign owned. The Warwick group, another major hotel group, have just leased land in Vavau, out at Aleipata, developing what is possibly the best beach location in the whole of Samoa...and a lot of these decisions are made at a top national planning level, they are not made at a culturally sensitive indigenous community based...level. And that's where the decisions for tourism, for the South Pacific and for Samoa should be made”* (Development consultant, Interview 07-03-07). Another participant felt that as foreign investment in the hotel sector increased, the beach fale industry should be ideally protected for local ownership (SHA Representative, Interview 09-03-07).

### **6.11 The future of the beach fale**

*“If things aren't managed, very well and very quickly, then Samoa will be exposed to the full brutality of unsustainable tourism development, it has all the hallmarks in place of heading down that path”* (Development Consultant, Interview 07-03-07).

Participants held strong views on the future of the beach fale in Samoa. Many participants expressed fear that they would be lost – *“I hope they don't all turn out to be modern fale! That would be a real shame and it is possible”* (SHA Representative, Interview 08-03-07). A tourist commented that *“the absence of fale on this island would*

*be a sadness, and I think it would hurt their tourism”* (Tourist 16, American, Manase, Interview 21-03-07).

Others felt that beach *fale* would become a niche product – *“(soon), if you want the traditional fale, you will have to pay more for it – it will be the unique niche option”* (Tourist 12, English, Interview 13-03-07). An industry representative felt that this could then drive interest back – *“ten years down the line everyone has gone to bungalows, and then we’ve got to go and...and say, ‘let’s go back to traditional’ style, and (then) they will be able to differentiate themselves ...so we should be able to drive that back”* (SHA Representative, Interview 08-03-07). Another participant believed that open beach *fale* were a way for people to get started before upgrading, and that this upgrading was inevitable – *“I think it will be moving to the small motel style. Beach fale are an opportunity...to get started, but I think it’s not an end in terms of the business...those that are able to be more successful...will probably start moving quickly to the cabin style, with the fale as the day option. I see it as sort of an inevitable step”* (NGO Employee, Interview 05-03-07).

There is still strong interest in traditional beach *fale*. Some popular businesses are now becoming crowded, pushing tourists to search for less busy locations, but this flow has to be encouraged – *“the other ones where they have the modern fale are so congested...so people are now looking at the traditional fale...I’m afraid that... if we do not encourage and promote the open fale, and drive the business to them, I am afraid we will lose that, people will start migrating to the other type”* (Samoa Hotel Association Representative, Interview 08-03-07). Some felt that Samoa’s tourism industry was now at a crossroads – a number of participants mentioned Fiji’s tourism industry as an example of a path they adamantly did not want Samoa to follow – *“I don’t particularly want to be another Fiji, where every other building is a resort, that doesn’t appeal to me...(but) who decides what way you want the tourism to go, and the answer is everyone who lives here; because it impinges on their lives one way or another, if they build a resort just down the road. The big decision that the country has got to make...is where we go”* (Business owner 2, Interview 07-03-07).

## **Chapter 7.0 Field Research Outcomes: Development Benefits**

This chapter outlines further results of the field research, discussing the development benefits, negatives and linkages of beach *fale* tourism from both tourist and beach *fale* owner perspectives. It then gives views on protecting *fa'aSamoa* from the negative impacts of tourism.

### **7.1 Tourist views on development benefits of beach *fale* tourism**

#### **7.1.1 Financial benefits**

Most tourists felt that primary benefit to families and communities was financial - *“I think money is the thing that drives it most, it’s opportunity, it’s ‘we have a beautiful beach and let’s tap into that’”* (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07). The families were considered to benefit primarily and some tourists also commented that financial benefits would ‘trickle’ into the community through donations and the church – although their belief was not based on any actual evidence. Other key benefits were employment in the village, and wider entrepreneurial opportunities - *“Providing employment is an obvious (benefit)...and that’s a follow-through, not just for the staff, but for the provision of resources. In terms of using resources from the village, building fale, providing food...cleaning”* (Tourist 1, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07).

#### **7.1.2 Employment benefits**

There are opportunities to work within the village rather than having to leave for employment – *“people do want to work...so if they have businesses where they can work (that’s great)”* (Tourist 3, New Zealander, Interview 20-03-07). This is considered additionally beneficial to women – *“(Families) can...learn all the business development skills they need, they can look after the village interests, the family interests. Women are much more able to get a job in a village business than they are to dislocate themselves from the family and go to Apia, so it’s a lot more gender-equitable”* (Development Consultant, Interview 08-03-07). Another adds that village-level entrepreneurial opportunities can also arise and that people learn to look for them - *“it’s good in terms of it encourages people to be entrepreneurial. So they see...ah, those...beach fale will all need to replace their thatching in six months... so people are smart, they get themselves ready and take the order, it’s creating their own little economy within the village”* (SHA

Representative, Interview 09-03-07). A tourist felt that enabling economic opportunity was a key benefit – *“it helps the economy...there’s money to be made in their own country, you’re giving them choices and options”* (Tourist 6, Scottish, Interview 14-03-07).

### **7.1.3 Other benefits**

Tourists felt that children in the village would benefit – *“I think that the kids here...because there’s work here...and they’ll gain confidence from that”* (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07). Opportunities for health benefits were mentioned – *“I’m sure some people (tourists) will complain that the food is too calorie-rich, so I think exposure to healthier food is a benefit”* (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07). This view was supported - *“Now if they are cooking the best high quality foods and meats for visitors, they’re eating the same, hopefully, so health-wise I think there’s been a lot of benefits, nutrition-wise, hygiene-wise”* (Development Consultant, Interview 08-03-07). Another suggested that the open beach *fale* could support Samoan culture in the face of globalisation:

*Samoa, just like everywhere else, is getting more globalised and people are a bit more open to the outside world...whereas, I think this beach fale tourism is, it is reinforcing the value of something that is traditionally Samoan...we’re staying in what they used for traditional living, not all Samoans live in fale like this anymore...I just wonder if that’s reinforcing the culture. (Tourist 11, English, 24-03-07).*

## **7.2 Beach fale owner views on development benefits of beach fale tourism**

### **7.2.1 Benefits to the aiga**

Beach *fale* business owners listed a wide range of benefits to themselves and their families from beach *fale* tourism; most of these were related to having income available to pay for their desired livelihood outcomes such as transportation, health and education. Initially, two of the businesses used remittance money to set up the business – *“without New Zealand, there is no business!”* (Beach *fale* owner 7, Interview 22-03-07). One participant however felt that reliance on remittances is not positive and that too many families are failing to take responsibility for their own livelihoods because of the

availability of this money – *“the danger is a lot of culture will go away, and a lot of the plantations won’t be maintained...there is no more of their own self-supporting life. People don’t...pick their own food; they just go to Western Union and pick their money up”* (Business owner 1, Interview 18-03-07). Once more successful, one business was able to help the *aiga* through reducing reliance on remittances – *“with the growth of the beach fale there is no more reliance...on children overseas to remit money for some of the things required traditionally over here...this setup has taken care of everything”* (Beach fale owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). Sometimes tourists donations were made directly to the business - one beach fale business had a water-filtration system given to them. Money for travel and overseas education were additional benefits amongst a long list of social and economic benefits to families – *“the families are much wealthier, they can afford their schooling fees, they can afford their medical fees, they can afford better communication, better transport, ...families have now got money to send...sons and daughters overseas for scholarships, so that’s the benefit of development along this style”* (Development consultant, Interview 07-03-07).

### **7.2.2 Community benefits**

Community benefits were both direct and indirect. Directly, communities benefit through cash donations from the beach fale businesses. This included money for *fa’alavelave* (life-events and ceremonies such as weddings, funerals and christenings) and other forms of financial help. Direct donations are also made by tourists - a visiting group gave \$1000 tala to the village council in one village (who shared it out among others) and additionally the Women’s Komiti performed for the group and received another gift of \$1000 tala – *“that’s not small money, that’s big money; these benefits are because of me, because of my business”* (Beach fale owner 2, Interview 10-03-07). Another European tourist donated \$10,000 tala to the business that he visited yearly, which they used for new infrastructure. Tourists attend village church services where they donate money for the pastor – *“we all collect for the pastor, and the guests give money too”* (Beach fale owner 2, Interview 10-03-07). Computers, chairs and tables have been donated to a village school. Another village had been able to obtain litter bins for their main road due to the volume of tourists passing through.

Indirectly, both tangible and intangible benefits were distributed to the community through the beach *fale* businesses; including provision of transport to hospital for the ill and regular meetings whereby “*we feed the whole village*” (Beach *fale* owner 5, Interview 20-03-07). Some stated that there were opportunities for income generation through handicraft sales by the Women’s Komiti, but this was on an ad-hoc basis. Local foods and materials were purchased by some beach *fale* owners where quality and availability was appropriate – “*we pump quite a sizeable amount for a small business like this into the local economy*” (Beach *fale* owner 1, interview 12-03-07). Culturally, an employee noted that tourism interest supports parts of Samoan culture that have faded - traditional forms of dance have been learnt by the village boys (Beach *fale* employee 1, Interview 09-03-07). New skills are another benefit – one village benefits from an internet café set up for tourists. The owner gives the local children computer lessons free of charge, and at least one of these children has gone on to obtain work in Apia using these computer skills.

Employment of locals spreads financial benefits throughout the community, and while most beach *fale* businesses participating employed family only, some of the larger businesses were able to employ additional village members – “*the money that we give them helps to pay for whatever the families need – that is the money that channels through our staff*” (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). Another owner employed both family members, and village staff – “*I try and keep a good balance, so that I am not only employing family. Some work here, and some work on the farm*” (Beach *fale* owner 6, Interview 19-03-07). One business emphasised educating staff – “*we have sponsored three of our workers through polytechnic...we have supported one lady who graduated with a bachelor of nursing... and one more with a diploma of business studies...some of our workers we find they are very smart kids, but they couldn’t sustain the motivation to go to school, so we encourage them to go back to school*” (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). Additional support is provided to help others; this successful business also supports a neighbouring business - “*we are trying to encourage our neighbours to try and take care of their own business, take their own bookings, feed their own guests...we are slowly telling them what they need to do to be able to be self-reliant*” (Beach *fale* owner

1, Interview 12-03-07). The key field research outcome underlying the livelihood benefits obtained by the community is that almost all benefits are distributed via the beach *fale* - or through direct tourist donations.

### **7.3 Economic linkages between beach *fale* businesses and communities**

#### **7.3.1 Tourist expenditure linkages**

An issue raised by several tourists was the lack of shopping, restaurants and other economic linkages with the village. In particular, Lalomanu beach lacks external businesses, whereas Manase beach has both a small petrol station and bakery, (owned by one of the beach *fale* businesses) and an internet café (owned externally). Other opportunities outside of the beach *fale* appear to be of an informal and limited nature – handicrafts are made available on an ad-hoc basis, and some beach *fale* have their own shops – one business in Upolu owns a small shop that serves both tourists and locals; but closes it when the beach *fale* business is busy to reduce pressure on staff (during the time when they would be expected to sell most). Tourism income flowing into the community does so via the beach *fale*, rather than through other businesses alongside the beach *fale* (one of the few exceptions was a business owned by a non-Samoan couple; and operated under a number of restrictions to ensure that it was being managed appropriately within *fa'aSamoa*).

This means that all tourist needs are being met within the beach *fale* including food, activities and entertainment. Tourist reactions to this were mixed. Some saw this all-inclusive nature as a strength – *“I wanted somewhere...I didn't have to go out. Because I didn't know how far away from any sort of village or shop it would be, so it was more safety reasons, and convenience reasons that I chose this place”* (Tourist 7, English, Interview 14-03-07). Another noted – *“they do three meals a day, and that way we don't have to hunt for our own”* (tourist 3, New Zealander, Interview 20-03-07). In containing tourists, this also serves to reduce their socio-cultural impact on the village as they are less likely to wander out of the beach *fale* and spend time elsewhere in the community. However it also reduces their options for spreading expenditure. Some were disappointed by the lack of options – one couple noted that they had expected the village to resemble

more of a Thai beach town – *“I thought it would be like a Thai town, that beachside thing; you’ve got your beach shacks, but also your pubs and restaurants. That was my expectation of what I thought it would be”* (Tourist 13, South African, Interview 13-03-07). Some tourists suggested that increasing financial benefits to the community was difficult in Samoa – *“We try if we can, to share the money around a little, stay at different places...it’s a bit difficult here! (laughs), there’s not really any restaurants here”* (Tourist 10, Australian, Interview 21-03-07). Others pointed out – *“there doesn’t seem to be some sort of ancillary industry that’s reaping the rewards...so to me, it seems that other than what benefits are direct to this place, through to the rest of the community and village, I don’t think there’s a trickle-down effect”* (Tourist 13, South African, Interview 13-03-07). These tourists suggested that ‘resisting the monopoly’ would increase village benefits, but that they could only spend money where there were options to do so.

### **7.3.2 Beach *fale* economic supply linkages**

Economic supply linkages with the village were discussed by several beach *fale* owners. Beach *fale* businesses are increasingly turning to Apia for food products and other materials. Primarily, the village is expected to support the businesses, and the beach *fale* subsequently benefit the village through the purchase of fish, vegetables, wood and other produce. However, some beach *fale* owners felt that the quality of village sources was not reliable, reinforcing purchasing from external markets. Increasing numbers of beach *fale* businesses are now sourcing wood for construction from Apia, as timber is stronger, easily available and lasts longer. Some used their village youth for *fiafia* performances, but one business reported employing dancers from another village, because their village could not provide dancers to the standard required – *“none of the groups in our village have the standard we would like them to have to perform here, so we are using groups from outside our district...we’d love if our village could do it, because our thinking from the start was that we’d hire our people first...consolidate the economic base of our village...but... we had to look elsewhere for our cultural performers”* (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07).

## **7.4 Tourist views on the negative impacts of beach *fale* tourism**

### **7.4.1 Influence of tourism on *fa'aSamoa***

There were some clear themes in the views of participants on what negative impacts beach *fale* tourism could have on families and communities in rural Samoa. Social impacts, such as the influence of tourism on *fa'aSamoa*, were most frequently mentioned. *“The tourists come and the village sees how they dress, and how they act...the kids see...and wonder ‘why are we so traditional?’”* (Tourist 14, American, Interview 12-03-07). Another stated – *“I think the biggest...is the effect on the culture and on the kids. The younger generation can see western ways of life...that impacts the family culture they have here”* (Tourist 7, English, Interview 14-03-07). Conversely, one tourist felt that Samoans did not need the influence of tourists to experience cultural change –

*I guess that most of us perceive that cultures are best preserved in absence of other cultures. All these people showing up with all these toys...and they would think, what about us? But that’s kind of a colonialist view ... it’s not good for you to see what we have because then you might want what we have? How ridiculous is that? It’s very condescending...they all have television, so they don’t need us to... show them what it’s like* (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07).

Several tourists interviewed recognised that some of the actions of tourists were potentially offensive – *“We lie on the beach in bikinis, and...well, maybe they’re just being polite by not saying anything”* (Tourist 9, South African, Interview 23-03-07). Others felt that tourist lack of respect for Sunday as a religious day of rest was an issue in Samoa – *“most tourists have no idea...on a Sunday they don’t take the boats out to go surfing, but some tourists paddle out themselves, they don’t understand that it’s actually offensive to Samoans; it’s not about the boat!”* (Tourist 11, English, Interview 24-03-07).

### **7.4.2 Restrictions on villagers**

Restrictions on villagers, particularly loss of beach access, was an issue for some – *“this is the nicest beach in this area, and it’s not so much being shared as taken over”* (Tourist 13, South African, Interview 13-03-07). Another explained – *“If I were a member of the community I don’t know if I would like to see (so many fale), it’s kind of congested here”* (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07).

### **7.4.3 Authenticity of *fa'aSamoa***

Tourists interviewed pointed out that the health of *fa'aSamoa* was possibly compromised by tourist interest in it- *“I think an example is Hawaii, their culture is almost a by-product of tourism...you don't want it to become...caricatures of what people think the Samoans are...it becomes fake”* (Tourist 10, Scottish, Interview 14-03-07). Another argued – *“with tourism, it's always a fine line between giving the tourists what they want, and keeping it an authentic experience”* (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07).

### **7.4.4 Alcohol use**

Social issues such as alcohol use were discussed – *“these tourists are bringing in their own sense of culture, morals, ethics, behaviour, drinking patterns...that's going to have an impact”* (Tourist 13, South African, Interview 13-03-07). A tourist at a busy beach *fale* business noted that it had changed upon her third visit in as many years: *“there's encouragement for drinking ...as time goes on, it seems to be drawing a younger crowd, it's becoming less of a family spot”* (Tourist 15, American, Interview 12-03-07). Some owners felt that drinking was not a major issue, with one noting that *“all I can say is that of course there are some tourists who get drunk, but we also get drunk... and just because the tourist does not have the same skin as us...people quickly point out, look, the Palagi is drunk”* (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). An industry expert noted that issues surrounding alcohol had been addressed by many beach *fale* over time – *“the first tourists there, money would be handed over, alcohol would be bought, it was like you were encouraging alcoholism, and it was a serious impact...but it is an evolution... families get through that very quickly, policies are laid down by the village Matai, not only for tourists but also for the locals – how to behave”* (Development Consultant, Interview 08-03-07). The owners of a small tourist bar in Manase only serve tourists rather than village residents as per the instructions of their village *fono*.

### **7.4.5 Environmental issues**

Environmentally, the main impacts raised by tourists was damage to Samoa's lagoons and reefs, and problems due to waste – *“There's more waste... that originally this community isn't geared towards or ready for...I think there's a much greater impact than people give it (beach fale tourism) credit for”* (Tourist 14, American, Interview 12-03-07). Another argued that sewage draining onto the reef and its impact on coral was a

‘sleeper’ issue in Samoa – “A lot of people will go to a place because of beautiful coral, but it’s so sensitive to nutrients...I bet they don’t get their septic tanks pumped when they should...I think it’s partly out of their control because they just wouldn’t have the money to pay for it” (Tourist 11, English, 24-03-07). This appears to be confirmed by a local business owner who commented that in his two years on the beach, he had not seen the septic tanks emptied. Several others interviewed felt that tourism was damaging Samoa’s reefs – “at the moment the lagoons are becoming over-nutriented, full of algae, polluted and technically destroyed – in this case by tourists who are putting body oils, body lotion (in),, and trampling and touching corals” (Development consultant, Interview 07-03-07).

Some beach *fale* appear to be handling these issues better than others, with one owner requesting an Environmental Impact Assessment prior to building new beach *fale* – “they are very forward looking, he can see the problem and he’s already fitted a new sewage tank” (Business owner 2, Interview 07-03-07). Others do not appear to be addressing it sufficiently – one tourist commented: “it seems to me they are really busy with now and they don’t look into the future... they think the most important thing is to handle the tourists...the environment is the second problem, and they are not really busy with that right now. For now it’s not a problem but it will be in the future, and I don’t think they really think about that” (Tourist 8, Dutch, Interview 12-03-07). The environmental impact of beach *fale* tourism was a concern being addressed at the wider level, with a Hotel Association representative remarking that the environmental impact is “the biggest problem we are addressing at the moment. (An Environmental Impact Assessment) has to be done ...I insist...if it’s not done we won’t support them. Because our people have that tendency to (say) – ‘it’s none of your business, it’s my land’, and go ahead and build it anyway” (Samoan Hotel Representative, Interview 08-03-07). Pressure on resources such as water and electricity was also a problem for the beach *fale*. Some tourists interviewed experienced problems with a lack of water supply during their stay. One business owner noted that if water was collected, it would alleviate much of the issue - “Samoa is not collecting water, everything is just going to the ground and to the sea” (Business owner 1, Interview 18-03-07).

## **7.5 Beach fale owner views on the negative impacts of beach fale tourism**

Most beach *fale* owners interviewed did not perceive that there were many problems at all arising from beach *fale* tourism, and others felt that villagers were capable of ignoring any minor issues that arose - *“I can’t say I have ever experienced any problems with the tourists, they are basically secluded here most of the time”* (Beach *fale* owner 4, Interview 13-03-07). One owner commented that tourists did not stay long, and therefore he believed it was better to focus on positives rather than the negatives – *“we should just ignore the (influence of) the tourists, we carry on within our culture and we don’t let them bother us. I always tell the village – ‘tomorrow they will all be gone so don’t worry about them today!’”* (Beach *fale* owner 6, 19-03-07).

### **7.5.1 Responsibility for problems**

Beach *fale* owners felt that management of any social problems that did occur was the responsibility of the businesses rather than the tourists - *“(it’s) not their fault, it’s the resort’s fault, wherever they are staying, they are responsible for teaching them”* (Beach *fale* owner 5, Interview 20-03-07). Another noted, having stepped in to correct the behaviour of tourists wandering in the village – *“Yesterday I saw a lady and a man ...they were wearing swimming wear on the road; I told them, they said they didn’t know...it’s (named business’) fault because they didn’t tell them about it, they’ve got to tell them to rules and that’s the main rule”* (Beach *fale* owner 8, Interview 21-03-07). One owner was expected to answer for his tourist despite that tourist ignoring his instructions:

*I had a girl here from Australia...I told her ‘you must wear a lava-lava, and she said yes, and so I took her (to the village), and (then) she took the lava-lava off and was in shorts and her bikini...and the next day I got told that I had to talk to the chief, and he told me... ‘look at what your tourist has been doing’ and I didn’t know about it, but it was my responsibility and she upset some people* (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 14-03-07).

One beach *fale* owner did not believe that tourists had any negative effect on *fa’aSamoa* because control lay with the chiefs – *“I cannot think of an example where a tourist would influence... control of the chiefs in fa’aSamoa. The people in the village are subject to the control of the chiefs in the village, but that...has nothing to do with tourism”* (Beach *fale*

owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). Other owners felt that it was important for Samoans to respect the tourists' culture also - *"it's just a matter of knowing and being told of what we expect of them, and also what they expect of us, so if they respect our culture then we should respect their culture as well"* (Beach fale owner 4, Interview 13-03-07). A balance had to be struck between protecting *fa'aSamoa* and tourist enjoyment:

*My culture is my responsibility, it's not the tourist's responsibility, and if you don't protect your culture then you are guilty of any problems. It's up to me...to be between the tourists and the culture, the tourists shouldn't be stopped by the culture and the culture shouldn't be stopped by the tourists, I am in the middle and I am responsible...if they want to go to the village...I tell them that we don't swim on Sundays (in the village)...but if they want to swim here, that's ok, they need to be allowed to do what they want too (Beach fale owner 3, Interview 14-03-07).*

## **7.6 Ways of reducing problems and increasing benefits**

### **7.6.1 Respecting *fa'aSamoa***

Tourists interviewed had several suggestions about increasing the benefits and reducing the problems surrounding beach *fale* tourism. Most tourists interviewed felt that showing respect for the culture in Samoa was the primary way in which they could reduce any problems and increase the benefits of beach *fale* tourism – *"if you ask me, there's three things, a little more conservative dress...the sa'a, the prayer, and also Sunday, just to respect that. I don't know if there's anything more"* (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07). Another added – *"I think it's important to let people know that you're interested in their culture and that you respect it... act like you're the guest and not the boss around here!"* (Tourist 8, Dutch, Interview 12-03-07).

### **7.6.2 Self-education**

Many of the tourists interviewed felt that educating themselves was important – *"In the back of the Lonely Planet there's a guide...Samoa 101! Try and inform yourself a little bit before you come"* (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-03-07). Others pointed out – *"research it before you come... you don't want to go to church in your shorts and t-shirt"* (Tourist 6, Scottish, 14-03-07). Many tourists interviewed had read about Samoa

beforehand, either buying guides such as ‘Lonely Planet’, or using the internet. For some, this preparation was as much for their personal well-being as it was a desire to be responsible – *“I think if you’re going somewhere on your own, you need to be quite up on the way that things are... you don’t want to find yourself in a situation on your own... where you get in trouble, basically”* (Tourist 7, English, Interview 14-03-07). This supports an assertion made by some beach *fale* owners that most tourists visiting the *fale* are prepared to educate themselves and to demonstrate correct behaviour from the outset. One owner commented – *“they are well educated about Samoa because...they read the books...they know about our culture; we don’t have to teach them”* (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07).

### **7.6.3 Extent of tourist responsibility**

Several tourists commented that they were there for a holiday and that trying to reduce problems was not their responsibility. *“It doesn’t concern us. We would have ideas, but it’s their choice, we don’t have a true view of how it is here...I would be afraid to interfere and not in the right way”* (Tourist 5, French, Interview 11-03-07). Another noted that tourists do not want to see negativity– *“It’s hard, it depends what tourists are here for... why (would you) go on a holiday to learn about all the problems of the country you’re staying in?”* (Tourist 11, English, Interview 24-03-07). The suggestion was made that if offered sustainable choices, many tourists would take them, but that their willingness to assist was limited to being a responsible consumer - *“in the end, you come on holiday for your own reasons anyway... so you might be bringing in some money into the country, but you’re not doing it as sort of a charity (laughs)..., it’s having the options to choose from that are beneficial to the community”* (Tourist 13, South African, Interview 13-03-07). Others suggested that consumer choice could make a difference – *“you know, you vote with your wallet. Just asking questions and making the right choices”* (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07). Another felt that the Samoan Tourism Authority was where the responsibility lay – *“I think it’s less up to the tourists and more up to the government, to say that we have these tourists coming here... so let’s look ten years down the road...and do things that will conserve our rainforest, our coral reef, these things that are part of Samoa... ‘what’s best for our country in one hundred*

years' rather than 'what's best for our country now'" (Tourist 14, American, Interview 12-03-07).

## **7.7 Protecting *fa'aSamoa***

### **7.7.1 Educating tourists on appropriate behaviour**

Most beach *fale* owners interviewed stated that education was the main way in which they protected *fa'aSamoa* from tourist influence - "*It's something that can be helped by us educating the tourists what they can and cannot do at particular places that they stay at*" (Beach *fale* owner 4, Interview 13-03-07). Another added - "*we need to make sure lots of information is given...educate tourists so that they will know how to behave*" (Beach *fale* owner 5, Interview 20-03-07). Although many owners mentioned educating tourists, it did not seem to be occurring - almost all tourists interviewed denied that they had received instructions on behaviour from beach *fale* owners - "*no, and that would have been really useful. We had read about the bells (sa'a) in the Lonely Planet but had no explanation of that. And this guy...we were talking to, he got stopped...told not to walk...he had no idea. And if you don't have Lonely Planet, how would you know?*" (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07). Only one beach *fale* owner discussed behaviour with the researcher upon check-in; however several owners mentioned admonishing misbehaving tourists- so it is possible that this education occurs on an ad-hoc 'as required' basis.

### **7.7.2 The right kind of tourist**

Both tourists and industry employees interviewed felt that attracting the 'right kind of tourist' who would respect the traditional cultural context of the beach *fale* holiday was key to their long-term management - "*I don't think you come here if you wanted to ...party and get smashed....I think, generally, the people who come here are into a bit more of a quieter...more chilled environment*" (tourist 11, Australian, Interview 24-03-07). Another tourist noted - "*I think, ultimately, it's much more important to do what you like, rather than what the guest wants, and then, if you are lucky, the guest likes what you want!*" (Tourist 4, New Zealander, Interview 19-03-07). A development consultant felt that pandering too much to what guests want is a mistake - "*the trend at the moment is to enclose...and I think Samoa is making a major mistake in that trend. Now whether (its)*

*being pushed by the visitor, I don't think Samoa needs to be held to ransom...if you wish to come to Samoa as a tourist, you come here and you do tourism, on our terms"*  
(Development Consultant, Apia, Interview 07-03-07).

One issue potentially arising from beach *fale* evolution is that, as tourists push for more comfort (and it is provided to them), the numbers of higher-end tourists may increase. One tourist pointed out that as businesses enclose beach *fale*, *"you're probably find that you get a different breed of traveller here...not as respectful... if it becomes more luxurious, you're going to get less independent travellers staying in those"* (Tourist 10, Interview 21-03-07). Another said – *"the more simple you keep the accommodation, (the more) you're going to get the backpacker crowd, the higher up you go, you're going to get...the wealthy types"* (Tourist 2, American, Interview 22-007). This may lead to the arrival of tourists who have not researched Samoa, and who will rely more upon the businesses to guide them – thus placing more responsibility on the beach *fale* owners to provide instructions and information. If this does not occur, cultural and social pressures may increase, as tourists may be less likely to regulate their own behaviour.

## **Chapter 8.0 Issues Arising from Field Research Outcomes**

This chapter discusses issues arising from the field research outcomes in relation to the review and analysis of literature; addressing beach *fale* evolution, the extent of the match between tourist and beach *fale* owner expectations and how they interact with the cultural context. It examines the extent of beach *fale* tourism's potential for pro-poor benefits in Samoa, and assesses how some aspects of beach *fale* tourism affect the livelihoods of beach *fale* owners, their families and their wider communities.

### **8.1 Tourist and beach fale owner expectations – the need for a match**

Beach *fale* tourism in Samoa is evolving rapidly, a process that is resulting in greater differences between individual beach *fale*, as well as a move away from their traditions and socio-cultural aspects of *fa'aSamoa*. As outlined within the literature review, beach *fale* owners are initiating this evolution with limited market knowledge of whether these changes are matched to tourist expectations. Beach *fale* have the potential to support livelihood strategies that counter urbanisation and provide a range of benefits for their owners, their families and – potentially - their communities. If the businesses are not matched to what the market is looking for, they may be less likely to be successful, and less likely to provide pro-poor livelihood benefits – neither tangible benefits such as improved incomes, support of extended family and education and health benefits, nor intangible benefits such as increased socio-cultural assets for owners and their families. Therefore an understanding is required of why changes are being made, what tourists and beach *fale* owners want from the beach *fale* product, and the extent to which these are matched.

#### **8.1.1 Expectations for beach fale evolution**

Beach *fale* evolution - as it is occurring within the research sample of eight beach *fale* businesses - is meeting (and is partially driven by) a genuine demand from particular tourist markets, namely older travellers, families, couples, inexperienced or nervous travellers. External pressures such as travel agency requests and industry competition, as well as internal pressures such as those arising from the desire for business growth - copying of other successful businesses (Scheyvens, 2005b), the enclosure of beach *fale*

for privacy when building additional accommodation (Woods, 2006) and the protection of *fa'aSamoa*, are also driving beach *fale* evolution. A combination of competition, business growth and tourist demand appear to be the factors which most influence beach *fale* evolution in Samoa.

It is clear, due to the diversity of tourist responses and the adamant preferences stated by tourists in favour of one beach *fale* type or the other, that there is still room for both traditional and more modern (enclosed) *fale* in the beach *fale* sample participating. Some of the owners interviewed during the research are responding to this, with many of those who are enclosing or have enclosed, retaining some open beach *fale* as well in order to diversify their options and meet the needs of a range of markets. This is demonstrated by the example of a business with closed beach *fale* that is considered adding open *fale* to cater for the diversity of the market, as well as comments by a business owner that by diversifying, particular niche markets can be catered for - “*that opens up your market...which is your older people*” (Business owner 1, Interview 08/03/07). It is important to note here that most tourists interviewed (but again, not all) choosing closed beach *fale* were doing so to address a particular need that the open *fale* could not meet, such as protecting young children or addressing their perception of increased security and privacy. One couple participating in the research confirmed that if they did not have toddlers to consider they would have preferred an open beach *fale*, suggesting that the closed accommodation is genuinely supporting the specific needs of these markets.

The marketing for beach *fale* is slowly improving overseas (development consultant, interview 08-03-07). There has been an increase in their presence in travel agent brochures and websites (House of Travel, retrieved 05/07), and subsequently the external demand for an ‘improved’ product that can be packaged may continue to grow. The increasing tourist numbers in Samoa, spurred by the opening up of Samoan air travel through Polynesian Blue, (Virgin Blue Press Release, July 2006; STA Statistics, 2005) may also lead to more ‘package-style’ tourists, whose expectations can only be met by the type of facilities provided in a closed beach *fale*. The closed *fale* are currently meeting the demand for travellers who might otherwise have difficulty staying in open

beach *fale*, and the actions of the beach *fale* owners match the tourist demand in this respect. Given participant comments however that even tourists who visit 5-star hotels will still come to beach *fale*, it is unclear whether a lack of additional comforts would prevent given markets from visiting at all. Some tourists interviewed in this research - staying in closed beach *fale* - commented that if unavailable, they would have stayed in open *fale*. However overt tourist demand for closed beach *fale* (as well as the reported success of the product) indicates that the business owners are meeting the requirements of particular market segments in providing the closed option; and increasing their financial yield by charging higher prices to do so.

### **8.1.2 Expectations for service**

In line with comments by Scheyvens, (2005b), there appears to be a mismatch in some of the beach *fale* businesses between the type of *fale* provided, and the level of service on offer to match them. This is another area where the businesses differentiate widely, in line with a comment from the Samoan Hotel Association representative, who noted “*fale physically are catering for the needs of the tourists, but I think it is the service that we have to look at. It’s mainly the service we need to address*” (Interview, 09/03/07). One business owner noted that she had previously had to dissuade beach *fale* owners from ringing the breakfast bell at 7am – “*it’s early, and they’re on holiday, but Samoans think that because they get up early, everyone else does too*” (Business owner, Interview 19-03-07). A tourist commented; “*you just have to trust them; it’s not as if they give you a receipt*” (Interview, 22.03/07). This illustrates the dichotomy that beach *fale* owners face between providing a culturally appropriate extension of traditional Samoan hospitality, or operating a western-style business where tourists expect receipts and polished service. It is arguable whether smaller businesses could provide a higher level of professionalism and service without an increase in the resources required and additional training. For some businesses, a need to change their level of service could reduce the extent to which the business fits within their daily family and village life. The comments made regarding tourist service expectations may also suggest that the type of tourist visiting the beach *fale* is changing, as some of the businesses move away from the informal traditional model with low-maintenance guests, towards western-style small hotels where tourists expect more. The potential for this to occur was mentioned by several tourist participants.

### **8.1.3 Expectations for information provision**

In line with KRTA's (1998) economic impact report, there is still only a limited amount of information being provided to tourists in Samoa, and beach *fale* participating in this research do not appear to provide tourists with very much local information. Most of the available information is still either distributed via word of mouth or through the STA 'tourist *fale*' information centre in Apia; and there is a reliance on tourist self-education (guidebooks and internet research) rather than details being provided by the beach *fale* upon arrival. This was a concern for some of the tourists interviewed during this research. Some experienced transportation problems due to lack of accurate information, and others felt that the beach *fale* businesses failed to understand their needs by providing directions and information on local activities. This issue is closely tied with tourist comments on service, and is an area of mismatch of expectations identified in the field research. As with many other issues surrounding the beach *fale* however, there was a great deal of diversity in opinion amongst the tourists interviewed – some appreciated that they were left to explore on their own without being overly directed and felt that provision of too much information or direction would fall outside the low-key nature of the beach *fale* experience.

One tourist felt that accuracy of information provision was a cultural issue related to a desire to please. While beach *fale* owners interviewed stated that they were educating their tourists in relation to correct culturally appropriate behaviour (as per comments by Scheyvens, 2005c; Woods, 2006), this was not occurring in actuality; guests were more likely to be corrected if they were acting inappropriately, than instructed beforehand. Whether this is related to a reluctance to censure guest behaviour, or an indication that most tourists visiting beach *fale* are socio-culturally responsible, is unclear. Most beach *fale* owners reported minimal problems with cultural misinterpretation, suggesting the latter.

### **8.1.4 Expectations for cultural exposure**

The non-resort nature of Samoan tourism combined with the cultural aspects of the holiday are the main reasons given by most tourist participants for their choice of a beach *fale* holiday - in agreement with the STDP (2002) and Deloitte and Touche, (1998). In

line with research findings by Woods (2006), some beach *fale* owners in this research have adopted a western approach to business, with a reduced reliance on culture – they do not appear to be exposing tourists to as much Samoan culture (contact with the family, participation in family activities) as the smaller, more traditional businesses do. The less time tourists spend with the family the more reduced are *fale* owner opportunities to educate tourists in correct cultural behaviour; this may play a part, in some businesses, in the reported gap between stated beach *fale* owner responsibility for tourist education and the amount of education taking place.

As Ashley (2000: 24) points out, “often there are trade-offs between cash benefits and opportunity costs to assets or activities”. In the case of beach *fale* businesses, enclosed, modernised *fale* may be providing more cash, but the trade-off is a business style with reduced socio-cultural compatibility. There is significant diversity in the expectations that tourists hold for active cultural exposure. In that regard, tourist choice is important in order to achieve a match between the cultural exposure they expect and the type of beach *fale* business they stay at. This key issue is recognised by private tour operator Green Turtle, which seeks to place tourists at a beach *fale* that matches their interests (Development consultant, interview 08-03-07).

#### **8.1.5 Expectations for food**

Comments from participants support that while many like to sample traditional Samoan food, they appreciate a mixture of both Palagi food and Samoan food. This is in line with comments by Schevyens (2005c), and is also a match to the approach taken by many of the beach *fale* businesses. In keeping with the diversity of the sector, more traditional businesses are likely to feed Samoan meals, whereas those that are modernised are providing more imported western-style foods – as per the comments from a tour operator (Interview 08-03-07) who noted that the larger businesses had more income with which to keep tourists fed, and could therefore afford more imported food. Most tourists interviewed appeared to be relaxed about the type of food offered to them – with one vegetarian commenting that she appreciated that the business had catered well for her, within their resources. The only negative remarks regarding food were in relation to imported fruit – some tourists felt that tinned pineapple slices and orange juice made

from a packet were not acceptable given the tropical fruit available in Samoa. They felt that the beach *fale* owners had lived overseas, and therefore should understand what Palagi are looking for – tinned fruit, to these guests, was a sign that the owners were not trying hard enough. The increase in imported or tinned foods on offer was also in relation to beach *fale* owner comments that they could not get enough quality produce from their village as supplies available were either insufficient or of poorer quality. Most beach *fale* owners interviewed used some percentage of local foods, and bought the rest from Apia, in agreement with Deloitte & Touche (1998), and Scheyvens (2005c). Most of the literature discussing food supply linkages and the flow of benefits between business and community (Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000, Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999) emphasises the need for reliable supplies and quality produce. One owner commented that during stormy weather, local fishermen were unable to provide the beach *fale* business with fish. It is possible that beach *fale* owners are managing risk on two fronts through their use of imported products; firstly, ensuring that tourists' food preferences are met, and secondly, ensuring reliable food supplies.

#### **8.1.6 Expectations and beach *fale* evolution: summary**

Beach *fale* owners have the difficult task of providing the traditional Samoan experience that many tourists indicate they are seeking, while still managing the varying needs of different types of tourists - and avoiding loss of custom through being unable meet these needs. Beach *fale* owner participants appear to be catering for specific segments of the market in enclosing their *fale*, and tourists are largely happy with the product being offered - despite some concerns revolving around the compatibility of the enclosed beach *fale* with climate conditions. The key factor emerging from the field research is that there is an understanding from most participant beach *fale* owners that tourists arriving in Samoa are diverse in their demands and that there are many tourists still strongly interested in the open *fale* experience as well as those preferring closed *fale*. Many of the beach *fale* owners participating in the research appreciated the value to tourists of the open beach *fale*, and in response to competition were prepared to maintain a balance of *fale* types in order to attract as wide a range of tourists as possible. Those who had businesses based entirely on either open or closed beach *fale* had specific reasons for doing so. Based on the sample of eight businesses participating, there is currently enough

diversity for tourists to be able to seek out their preferred beach *fale* experience. However future indications of some owners that they would consider foreign investors and further enclosure of the beach *fale* (in combination with the support that foreign investors are receiving from the Samoan Government) suggests that this situation could change.

Finding the right beach *fale* to meet the needs of a particular tourist will make or break tourist satisfaction with the holiday, and subsequently have an impact on the extent to which a particular business is a successful livelihood activity. Due to the wide diversities between businesses in their approach to *fale* type, quality, food, facility standards and the cultural context, the livelihood benefits received are strongly related to beach *fale* owner priorities and desired outcomes. Different beach *fale* businesses, in seeking to meet the expectations of different tourists, are subsequently delivering varying benefits for owners, their families and to an extent, their communities. Some of the businesses interviewed are prioritising financial success and active involvement in the cash economy; and are trading off their low-key traditional Samoan lifestyles in order to achieve this livelihood outcome. Improved communications, the internet, transportation and opportunities for overseas education are livelihood outcomes that reinforce modernisation. Conversely, other owners are choosing to prioritise intangible livelihood outcomes such as the extent of business compatibility with their traditional lifestyles. They are limiting the number and type of beach *fale* (as well as, subsequently, the price they are charging for them) in order to be able achieve these outcomes. Balancing individual priorities for desired livelihood benefits with the subsequent trade-offs required has had varied amounts of success among the range of businesses participating in this research.

## **8.2 Current pro-poor tourism strategies in the beach *fale* context**

In agreement with comments by Ashley & Mitchell (2005) and Bowden (2005) Samoan beach *fale* tourism has significant ‘pro-poor’ credentials – it is labour-intensive (thus opening up employment opportunities, including casual jobs), provides employment for women (who run many of the businesses), and has low enough barriers for entry that rural families are able to become involved through building two or three *fale*. The range of benefits obtained through beach *fale* tourism - as listed by both owners and tourists - suggest that the beach *fale* businesses are succeeding in providing some of the livelihood

benefits to rural Samoan communities that the pro-poor tourism literature lists as ways of reducing rural poverty (Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001; Rogerson, 2006, Ashley, 2000, Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000), however in other areas of beach *fale* tourism, pro-poor strategies are not succeeding.

### **8.2.1 Areas of pro-poor tourism strategy success**

Some pro-poor strategies (both economic and non-economic) have had success for beach *fale* owners in the Samoan context. These include building on skills and the provision of funding (through government support and aid sources such as the NZAID Tourism Support Fund), and some linkages with - and support from - the private sector, which Ashley, *et. al.*, (2001) consider essential; particularly for marketing reasons, education of tourists and links with suppliers (see also - Neto, 2003). Private-sector tour companies such as Green Turtle Tours and Samoa Tours help to support the beach *fale* and educate and encourage guests through bookings, transportation and tours. Support in developing quality through outlining tourist expectations (as discussed by Ashley, *et. al.*, 2001) is another area where the private sector has assisted in Samoa.

Beach *fale* tourism can encourage the development of an active village-level economy, in agreement with Tafuna'i, (2002). The research results suggest that as businesses become more successful, they are able to reduce the extent to which external assistance is needed through remittances, and thus reduce the financial pressure on overseas family members. Less successful or smaller businesses participating in this research were still dependent to a degree on remittance money. Once businesses become more successful, this is no longer as needed; cash can be earned within the village itself. This is in line with comments from a business owner (Interview 19-03-07) who felt that excessive reliance on remittance money reduced (over time) rural Samoan's interest in supporting themselves through other livelihood activities and hence their financial autonomy. As per comments from the SHA Representative (Interview 09-03-07), beach *fale* tourism has been seen to encourage some entrepreneurial activity as well as an increased understanding of the value and use of cash (Tafuna'i, 2003).

The management of expectations regarding beach *fale* owner skill development, capacity building and ongoing business development is important in pro-poor tourism (Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001). These are useful non-economic strategies, but their implementation is not a fast process. Even one or two tourists visiting a small beach *fale* business can provide extra income that a family would not have had access to, (Scheyvens, 2005c) and if small scale, this activity can be added to others to develop a durable and risk-reduced livelihood strategy. There is a need to maintain realistic expectations - beach *fale* businesses in the past have had expectations that were not met. Scheyvens (2005c) discusses a number of businesses that opened specifically for, and were unable to attract guests following, the millennium celebrations in Savai'i. This was due to what was considered an excess of new beach *fale* accommodation as well as problems with transport linkages in that part of Samoa. In this situation, unrealistic expectations led to a lack of business viability, the development of which Ashley & Goodwin (2005) describe as a key building block of successful pro-poor tourism. In line with Scheyvens, (2005c), many beach *fale* owners interviewed for this research do seem to be able to maintain realistic expectations, with one owner noting that “*if we have ten fale full, that is just ten, if we have ten empty, that is just ten as well*” (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 14-03-07). This could be difficult to assess on a broader scale, due to the fluid numbers of small beach *fale* businesses opening and closing in Samoa (Woods, 2006).

Non-economic pro-poor strategies include the mitigation of environmental impacts (Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001), which is closely tied to sustainability. Farrington *et al.*, (1999: 3) discuss the need to balance short-term income with longer term sustainability of environmental and social assets. Some beach *fale* are dealing with this better than others, with the main issues being septic tank usage near beaches, and damage to the coral reefs caused by tourist activity and pollutants. An emphasis by the SHA on insisting that Environment Impact Assessments are carried out when new beach *fale* are built may assist with developing the industry in an environmentally sound manner. The active management of socio-cultural impacts is another non-economic strategy that currently appears to be only minimally applied in the Samoan context – as discussed, cultural

education of tourists appears to be passive on the beach *fale* side, and is largely self-managed by tourists through guidebooks and internet research; possibly increasing socio-economic impacts if less tourists were to be willing to take this responsibility on themselves.

Pro-poor tourism involves more than just community-level action, but also support at governmental level, in combination with local-level measures (Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999). Beach *fale* tourism has the support of both the STA and the SHA - although the impact of increasing foreign investment remains to be seen. Support has also been given in encouraging improvements in quality and development of the beach *fale* product (Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001). The protection of land rights is also a key point, and strong in the Samoan context (Scheyvens 2007). The traditional land tenure system is supported through the *matai* system. This allows for pro-poor growth as families have control over physical assets – their land.

### **8.2.2 Areas where pro-poor tourism strategies are not succeeding**

In terms of the extent to which benefits are distributed into the wider community, (one of the key strategies of the pro-poor tourism approach, according to the literature - Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001; Ashley, 2000, Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000) the beach *fale* are arguably not pro-poor. It is doubtful whether beach *fale* tourism can support the desired community self-sufficiency suggested by Fennell (2002), as the beach *fale* are family-owned businesses and the *aiga* are the first and foremost beneficiaries - benefits are earned, and generally retained, within the beach *fale* owning families. Remarks from participants interviewed during the research suggest that most of the money goes directly to the *aiga* for family use or for business maintenance. Percentages vary – a beach *fale* owner interviewed explained that her family “*put maybe 90% of the income back into the business, and 10% for the family, the church and the village*” (Beach *fale* owner 4, interview 14-03-07). For others, less is put back into the business (with complaints of poor beach *fale* maintenance not infrequent from participants in this research).

Benefits are dispersed into the community via donations given by the business owners as a form of service - *tautua* (Shadrake and van Dierman, 1998); however most of these

donations are made to the church, or are in response to a particular need such as *fa'alavelave* events. This is in line with Woods (2006), who listed family needs (such as school fees and food), church and *fa'alavelave* donations, and business maintenance as priorities for beach *fale* owner use of income. Money donated to the church does not return to the village but is usually spent on new church buildings or the needs of the pastor – “Samoa has not fully utilized...the potential of the church in the development process” (Muliaina, 2006: 2; Macpherson, 2004). There is little community consultation regarding the building of and management of the businesses – these decisions are largely family-made (Tafuna’i, 2003). The field research outcomes suggest that the wider village is only indirectly involved in either decision-making or income generation through beach *fale* tourism, therefore benefit only peripherally from the livelihood benefits accrued.

Equity issues may play a role in the extent to which the community benefits. The extent to which beach *fale* will benefit communities will vary between different businesses and communities. Access of the poor to the market is one of the critical issues affecting the success of pro-poor tourism strategies, and the middle poor are more likely to benefit than the very poor who are unable to gain access (Ashley, *et. al.*, 2001; Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999). *Matai* manage and distribute communally owned land, and often it is their families who hold beach-front land. In line with Scheyvens (2007), Ashley *et. al.*, (2001), and Schilfer (2007), elite control of resources can reduce potential benefits to the wider community, as the non-equitable distribution of benefits can result in increased economic and power gaps between different groups within a community. Communities are diverse and hold differing stakes and subsequently differing access to benefits (Scheyvens, 2007; Ashley, 2000). Tourism can increase the social capital of households (Ashley, 2000). In Samoa, donations made through the beach *fale* businesses as *tautua* - service - (Shadrake and van Dierman, 1998; Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994), can result in increased social inequities through rising *aiga* status. These elite families are therefore in a position to develop livelihood strategies based around land and business opportunities that others in the community do not have access to; and they may also have greater input within the community. It has been argued that working directly with families rather than communities is preferable in the specific Samoan context (Tafuna’i, 2003), due to

jealousies, rivalries and lack of community cohesion in Samoan villages where traditional systems of reciprocity operate. This supports Meleisea's (2000: 193) argument that Samoans are living between "two worlds", where the benefits of participation in the globalised cash economy can affect traditional systems of status and reciprocity. Examples of rivalries discussed by participants (Business owner, Interview 19-03-07), and comments from an NGO employee (Interview, 06-03-03), on the lack of tolerance that a village may have for beach *fale* owners who fail to integrate their businesses into the community, support this point of view.

As discussed, government support through planning and policy is required if pro-poor strategies are to be successful (Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999). While the government is supporting beach *fale* through training, funding and marketing, (STDP, 2002; Woods, 2006; Scheyvens 2003) recent policy changes may reduce beach *fale* tourism benefits to the poor. Requirements for entry into the industry are low (Bowden, 2005), but recent implementation of minimum standards for beach *fale* businesses now requires a family that has access to beach land and wishes to develop it as a livelihood activity to provide a higher level of start-up income in order to meet minimum beach *fale* business standards. If unable or unwilling to meet these standards, businesses will not be supported and marketed by the STA and SHA (Scheyvens, 2005c), thus limiting their potential success. Therefore the minimum beach *fale* standards may act as a possible barrier to the distribution of pro-poor benefits through beach *fale* tourism (Scheyvens, 2005c).

Promotion of economic supply linkages is a primary strategy for spreading pro-poor tourist benefits into the wider community. Much of the literature on pro-poor tourism emphasises the importance of economic linkages as a way of distributing benefits into communities to reach the poor (Ashley, 2000; Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999; Ashley & Goodwin, 2007; Bowden, 2005; Torres & Monsem, 2004; Ashley *et. al.*, 2001). While Scheyvens (2005c) notes their potential value to the beach *fale*, currently these linkages appear to be limited in the Samoan context. While some community entrepreneurial activity was mentioned by an industry participant as arising from beach *fale* businesses, and some produce is bought within the village (SHA, Interview 09-03-07), a significant

percentage of beach *fale* food supplies is being bought from Apia – much of which is imported. Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, (2000) note that local elites are more likely to use local suppliers than external elites - some beach *fale* owners participating in this research appear to be buying local resources where they can, and have expressed a desire to assist the economic base of their own communities. Regular fish and vegetable orders are taken by the village; but the westernised diets now fed to tourists by some of the larger businesses require a significant amount of imported foods. Traditional beach *fale* - serving mostly Samoan foods - have stronger supply linkages with the village, but these are also the smaller businesses with fewer tourists. Scheyvens (2005c) discusses an increasing scarcity of traditional building materials due to deforestation. Increased imported building materials are now being used by beach *fale* owners, such as the use of tarpaulin instead of coconut blinds, *pola sisi*, and timber instead of traditional woods for the *poutu*, supporting posts (UNESCO, 1992).

In addition to lack of supply linkages, there is little evidence of business linkages with the community – this leads to reduced opportunities for tourists to spend outside the beach *fale* (out-of-pocket spending), which is an important strategy for encouraging pro-poor benefits to reach the wider community (Ashley & Goodwin, 2007; Ashley *et al.*, 2001). The enclave approach, which most of the beach *fale* business models in this research resemble, may reduce tourist impacts on the community, but also limits the ability that the community has to develop linkages (Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999). Handicraft sales are a useful pro-poor strategy that does not appear to be widely employed in the village context - most tourist craft items are purchased at the Apia flea markets, with little product available elsewhere. Handicrafts can be an important source of income from the informal sector - in which many benefits lie (Ashley *et. al.*, 2001; Ashley, Boyd & Goodwin, 2000). They can also provide significant income to a community, which would be necessary if inequalities are to be reduced between rural Samoan communities and the elite families running beach *fale* businesses within them (Schilfer, 2007; Scheyvens, 2007). There is also a lack of activities and tours in the village; some tourists interviewed in the research were disappointed by this. This is another area where linkages could be encouraged (Scheyvens, 2005c).

Rural Samoan communities are not maximising their potential to develop economic linkages to the beach *fale* businesses; however there is a market available. Tourists interviewed for this research were aware of - and surprised by - the situation, commenting that they could only help spread their expenditure through the community where there were opportunities to do so (Tourist 13, South African, Interview 13-03-07). They indicated willingness to support local businesses if opportunities were available. Some expressed open disappointment that they were not able to purchase handicrafts and souvenirs in the villages (Tourist 10, Australian, Interview 21-03-07), being that they saw shopping as a good way of filling lazy holiday days. Some of the beach *fale* businesses in this research have stepped in to fill the gap – some operate their own small stores, but the income received subsequently stays with the beach *fale* family. Manase beach has a small internet café, which offers local tours; however this business is owned by a foreign couple. While there are benefits to the community (such as tourists staying longer in the area, computer classes for local children), the village is a secondary beneficiary.

There is, in addition, potential for future change in the beach *fale* industry in relation to the flow of economic benefits – some beach *fale* owners interviewed indicated cautious interest in foreign investment. In combination with government support for foreign investment (Scheyvens, 2007c; Radio New Zealand Online, 2006) there is potential for increasing levels of economic leakage, where benefits that would normally be received by families and – to whichever extent – communities, are instead siphoned off to foreign ownership. From the research sample of eight beach *fale* businesses, only two indicated current interest, however other participants discussed temptation in light of supportive policies and potential income from land leases (business owner, interview 08-03-07).

Managing trade-offs between tourism and local resource use is an important pro-poor tourism strategy for long term resource sustainability (Bennett, Roe & Ashley, 1999). As discussed (Shadrake and van Dierman, 1998; Fairbairn and Dunlop, 1994) the provision of service via income earning increases status, which may encourage the village to meet beach *fale* requirements - an example is found in a business that complained to the school regarding children walking on the beach after school and disturbing tourists – the

children were subsequently told not to. This is in line with Scheyvens (2005c: 13), who notes that beach *fale* owners in a popular area asked the *Matai* to prevent “young people from ‘bothering’ tourists, and a ban was formalised through a *fono* decision”, thus limiting local access to the beach. This issue was mentioned by tourist participants as one of the negative aspects of beach *fale* tourism (Tourist 13, South African, Interview 13-03-07), whereas some Samoans in Scheyvens’ (2005c) research felt that it was more a sign of respect for tourists. Bennett, Roe & Ashley (1999: 60) note that resource-intensive coastal areas are particularly susceptible to these types of trade-offs.

### **8.2.3 Pro-poor tourism strategies in the Samoan context: summary**

The multi-sector extension of benefits into the community through maximising economic linkages (Ashley & Goodwin, 2007) is one of the primary strategies used by pro-poor tourism approaches in order to reduce rural poverty. Although there are areas where beach *fale* businesses interviewed are consistent with the pro-poor tourism approach, economic linkages are a key strategy, and to this end, the majority of the beach *fale* businesses participating are not particularly pro-poor. Livelihood benefits from beach *fale* businesses can be extensive, and can accrue in both economic and non-economic forms, however they are primarily limited to ‘elites’ within the community (beach *fale* owners and their families). The lack of beach *fale*-community linkages reduces the potential livelihood benefits that rural village communities could receive from beach *fale* tourism; and also raises equity issues within reciprocal Samoan communities. Despite this, pro-poor tourism is context specific; the strengths and weaknesses of particular pro-poor strategies need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and are unlikely to be useful applied indiscriminately across the entire beach *fale* industry. Each business will have to be assessed upon its own accord as to the extent to which different pro-poor strategies might be applicable and therefore need to be supported. Because of this, conclusions are indicative only and cannot be generalised further than the sample of eight businesses participating in this research.

### **8.3 Implications of the broader social context – modernisation**

#### **8.3.1 Weakening of the moral economy**

The extent to which the broader context affects the management and success of beach *fale* tourism has been a theme throughout the research, as evidenced in the range of beach *fale* businesses, their different livelihood priorities and business styles, and the way they are affected by the national policy and planning context. The beach *fale* owners are trying to strike a (priority-based) balance between maintaining *fa'aSamoa* and adopting the benefits of the westernised cash economy, which can result in tension (Meleisea, 2000), and trade-offs between conflicting influencing factors (McDade & Worthman, 2004). There is some evidence arising from the research that increased globalisation and exposure to the cash economy may be weakening the moral economy in rural Samoa (as per the findings of Paulsson, 1993). An increased expectation of payment for goods that would traditionally be shared within the village is an example of a weakening moral economy (as discussed by the SHA Representative, Interview 19-03-07), as is the shift away from traditional hospitality towards beach *fale* businesses and their commodification of accommodation, food and services that would previously been given freely within a traditional lifestyle of sharing and service (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1994). While increased access to cash enables rural Samoans to obtain many material benefits, the trade-off is a weakening of what Iati (2000) describes as the in-built support network of *fa'aSamoa* - and therefore increased exposure to individual risk should events such as natural disasters threaten livelihood strategies.

#### **8.3.2 Migration and remittances**

The impact of the broader livelihood strategy of migration has affected the extent to which some beach *fale* operate within *fa'aSamoa*, and in close relation, the extent to which they are dependent on the economic support of remittances. The outcomes of the field research indicate that the beach *fale* owners interviewed do not consider the social-cultural impacts of tourism to be major concerns at the village level – in line with Lindgren, Lodin and Schonfeldt (1997), some beach *fale* owners consider returning migrants to have a greater affect on social change, bringing with them westernised worldviews (Macpherson, 1985, STDP, 1992: 43, Connell & Conway, 2000). One owner

noted that “*fa’aSamoa is really the politics in the village...I cannot think of an example where a tourist would influence, or interfere with the control of the chiefs in fa’aSamoa*” (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 12-03-07). This suggests that Samoa’s increasing interaction with the global economy as a livelihood strategy (through the export of migrants and their eventual return) is playing a significant role in village change, over and above the influx of tourists, and this ties closely into one of the primary reasons for beach *fale* evolution – a response to new desires for business growth, cash income and westernised concepts of success. These values are demonstrated by returning migrants, and subsequently seen by some beach *fale* owners as desirable. As one participant stated “*I think Samoans, as they get more affluent, move towards a more Western style. I think that’s part of how they see well-being*” (NGO employee, Interview 06-03-07).

Demonstration from returning migrants of western values and individualism therefore appear to be encouraging modernisation as a way of obtaining this perceived ‘well-being’. As a beach *fale* owner noted (Beach *fale* owner 3, Interview 15-03-07), this is reflected in the number of ‘Palagi-style’ houses being built in villages – a trend that is mirrored in beach *fale* evolution.

While smaller, more traditional businesses have used remittance money to outfit the businesses, (in agreement with Connell & Conway, 2000), and some still rely on it to an extent, larger beach *fale* businesses adopting western management styles have been able to use increased cash flow to reduce reliance on remittances - the business has “*freed the family from all that*” (Beach *fale* owner 1, Interview 13-03-07). The generation by some businesses of significant income (Scheyvens, 2005c) may increase beach *fale* separation from *fa’aSamoa* - where remittance money is a form of reciprocal service and acts to keep migrants active within the *aiga* (Macpherson, 1994; Iati, 2000). It may encourage further individualisation and engagement with the globalised economy, and hence reduce the extent that beach *fale*-owning families need to depend on reciprocity, subsistence livelihood strategies and communal village support of these livelihood strategies. This could subsequently increase risk through jealousies and equity issues, and potentially weaken the integration of beach *fale* businesses with the social net of *fa’aSamoa*.

### **8.3.3 Implications of the broader social context: summary**

The issue of balance between the benefits of the cash economy, and the traditions of *fa'aSamoa*, is a key theme arising from this research, and wider socio-economic issues such as migration and remittances (in situation-specific cases) can also influence the way that beach *fale* tourism, among the businesses participating, integrates within *fa'aSamoa*. Village-level social change through the influence of returning migrants - among other factors such as exposure to media, aid programmes and music (So'o, *et al.*, 2006) - can increase the desire for perceived 'well-being' through western lifestyles, which beach *fale* businesses support through increased income generation. The impact of prioritising this economic livelihood outcome is a potential weakening of integration with *fa'aSamoa*, some loss of the village moral economy, and in addition, the potential for increased risk.

## **Chapter 9.0 Concluding Remarks**

This dissertation has explored aspects of beach *fale* tourism in Samoa and has sought to examine the impacts that this type of tourism may have upon the livelihoods of beach *fale* owners, their families and communities. To address this research aim, specific attention was paid to tourist and beach *fale* owner expectations regarding the changing nature of beach *fale* architecture, facilities and business style (beach *fale* evolution), and the level of match between these expectations. The interaction of expectations with the wider cultural context was explored, as was the extent to which beach *fale* tourism is appropriate as a form of ‘pro-poor tourism’, where a range of livelihood benefits are provided to the families who own the beach *fale*, as well as their wider communities.

A comprehensive literature review provided the context for this qualitative, inductive research. Field data was then collected through a series of 31 semi-structured interviews with tourists and beach *fale* owners, conducted at eight different beach *fale* businesses in rural Samoa, and industry representatives. Themes were then drawn from this data, compared with the literature review, and further developed. This chapter now briefly summarises the key outcomes of the research and includes some suggestions for future research attention.

### **9.1 Concluding discussion of research outcomes**

It is apparent from the outcomes of the research that beach *fale* evolution, as it is occurring among the research sample of eight beach *fale* businesses, is in response to multiple internal and external motivating factors. The main driving forces include direct tourist demand for a range of accommodation types, a desire on the part of beach *fale* owners for business growth and increased income - and in relation to this - competition and copying between businesses. Additional influences on beach *fale* evolution include the protection of *fa’aSamoa* through ‘hiding’ tourists away from Samoans – particularly youth, risk management (such as a perceived increase of safety and reduction of crime), and the influence of external travel agents pushing for a product they can sell. Beach *fale* owners are attempting to strike a balance between maintaining the traditional cultural

experience, and meeting their prioritised livelihood outcomes through their individual responses to these varied factors.

Tourists interviewed in this research demonstrate considerable diversity in their preferences and requirements which presents a significant challenge to beach *fale* owners. The enclosed *fale* do appear to be addressing the specific needs of niche tourist markets, many of whom, for a range of reasons, would find it difficult or uncomfortable to stay in an open *fale*. Beach *fale* owners in this research appear to be aware of the diversity of tourist needs, and there is currently enough variety among businesses for tourists to seek out the experience they prefer. However given the problems with closed *fale* from the tourist perspective (namely humidity, heat and lack of authenticity) and the number of participants who would appreciate an open *fale* given a higher comfort level, further attention to ‘value-added’ open beach *fale* may be a practical avenue. One beach *fale* business in Samoa has already addressed this, providing open *fale* with candlelight, a high standard of facilities, and slightly higher prices. While not part of the research sample, anecdotal tourist reports regarding this business were very positive. A move in this direction would also require further attention being paid to issues surrounding the ‘improvement’ of service, as well as the skills and resources required to provide more value for tourists staying at open beach *fale* businesses – whether a change of service is desirable is again dependent on the different beach *fale* business types, owner priorities, and their distance from - or integration within - *fa’aSamoa*.

The broader societal context also plays a clear role in beach *fale* tourism in terms of the changing nature of Samoan society, and the growing perception that western ideals represent well-being. There is a range of livelihood benefits to be obtained through participation in the globalised cash economy and in addition, a range of benefits to be obtained through maintaining *fa’aSamoa* - and the strong social and familial support networks embedded within it. Essentially, beach *fale* owners’ choice of priorities regarding the trade-offs to be made between these will directly determine the extent and speed of how beach *fale* evolution continues. The extent to which the beach *fale* industry continues to be supported at the national level - both practically through channels such as

funding and advice, and through supportive policy and planning - will be vital to maintaining a balance between meeting tourist demands and retaining the traditional beach *fale* experience and traditional lifestyles of owners and their families.

Continuing encouragement and support of small-scale traditional beach *fale* businesses, operating alongside the larger more modernised businesses, will help families to continue to utilize beach *fale* tourism as a useful strand of diverse livelihood strategies (in line with Scheyvens, 2005c), and will act to maintain the number of rural Samoans who are in a position to benefit from tourism. This is likely to be important in relation to strong competition from larger businesses with more marketing power both within Samoa, and increasingly, with overseas travel agents. As discussed, even two or three tourists can provide increased income; and thus improve family livelihood outcomes (Scheyvens, 2005c). Ongoing business training (such as the workshops previously provided by the STA) could improve small business success, and may be useful in areas such as cash-flow management – that may help to counter suggestions that some businesses spend all income received without sufficient maintenance of the beach *fale*, or savings. This also ties closely to reports (Tafuna'i, 2003) that small businesses can result in opportunities for families to learn to manage cash that they have earned themselves, rather than relying wholly upon remittances. Some of the larger beach *fale* businesses are now crowded. In line with Lindberg & McKercher (1997), Pryer, (1997), and participant comments (SHA representative, Interview 09-03-07) this may affect the experiential sustainability of the location and assist with driving tourists to smaller beach *fale* businesses.

While the research indicates that many pro-poor livelihood benefits sought by beach *fale* owners are being obtained (such as *aiga* employment, education opportunities, improved health, cash incomes and transportation), these benefits do not appear to be extending into the community to any great extent. Community benefits from the beach *fale* in this research appear to occur largely via limited 'trickle-down' through the beach *fale* businesses; rather than through the development of independent opportunities operating alongside them. This suggests that beach *fale* businesses are limited in the extent to which they are pro-poor. The ownership of prime beach land by elite families limits the

extent to which the lower-poor can become directly involved in beach *fale* tourism. In line with Scheyvens, (2005c), the lack of extensive produce supply and ‘out-of-pocket-spending’ linkages between the beach *fale* businesses in this research and their communities are lost opportunities for families without beachfront land to benefit from the tourists in their midst – encouragement of these linkages would be a key strategy for successful pro-poor tourism development in rural Samoan villages.

Avenues for future research in this area could go a long way towards opening up pro-poor tourism benefits to rural village communities in Samoa. Further research could include investigation into reasons behind the current lack of economic linkages; and ways in which linkages could be encouraged. As discussed in the literature, economic linkages have to be facilitated and will seldom develop on their own (Bennett, *et al.*, 1999). Areas where linkages could be fostered include village-level crop production and fishing - with an aim to meeting the specific requirements (both products and volume) of the beach *fale* and a particular focus on quality of product. This could reduce the amount of fresh food acquired from Apia - although the amount of western-style food being served in beach *fale* businesses (to meet tourist expectations) indicates that imported food will continue to be required, this percentage could potentially be lowered if improved supply systems were in place within the village. Other linkages could include encouragement of local youth to develop the skills required for employment in beach *fale* businesses (including dance groups for *fiafia* nights) and the development of village-level handicraft sales to capitalise on stated tourist interest in both the availability of these items, and in ways to spread revenue out into the community through their actions as conscious consumers.

As emphasised in the discussion chapter, the foremost theme that has arisen from this research is that of balance - beach *fale* owners are trying to balance ‘the best of both worlds’. The diversity of the industry has been apparent from the early stages of this research, and has accordingly strongly affected the extent to which overarching themes could be drawn from the data. Beach *fale* businesses vary widely in a number of areas - not only in their physical appearance, but also in their approach to level of service, business management style and in their integration with *fa’aSamoa* and communities.

They also vary in the way in which their owners prioritise the livelihood outcomes they hope to achieve from running the business, and the ways in which they attempt to achieve a complicated balance between cherished traditional lifestyles and the demands of developing a successful tourism business in an increasingly globalised society.

In contrast to the way in which some of the previous literature has approached beach *fale* tourism, it is an outcome of this research that the diversity of beach *fale* is recognised and acknowledged. Conclusions may apply to some beach *fale* businesses, but not to many others. Each business therefore has to be assessed upon its own accord. The results of this research have shown that beach *fale* evolution is a rapidly occurring and dynamic process, and that some of the beach *fale* owners interviewed are continually reassessing and adapting their priorities to meet changes in their desired livelihood outcomes. Subsequently, this research is specific to the sample of eight participating businesses, and care should be taken in avoiding generalisation; both across the sample and in wider relation to Samoa's beach *fale* industry. The decisions and priorities of beach *fale* owners and their families, and their impact on the wider community, vary widely and will likely continue to do so.

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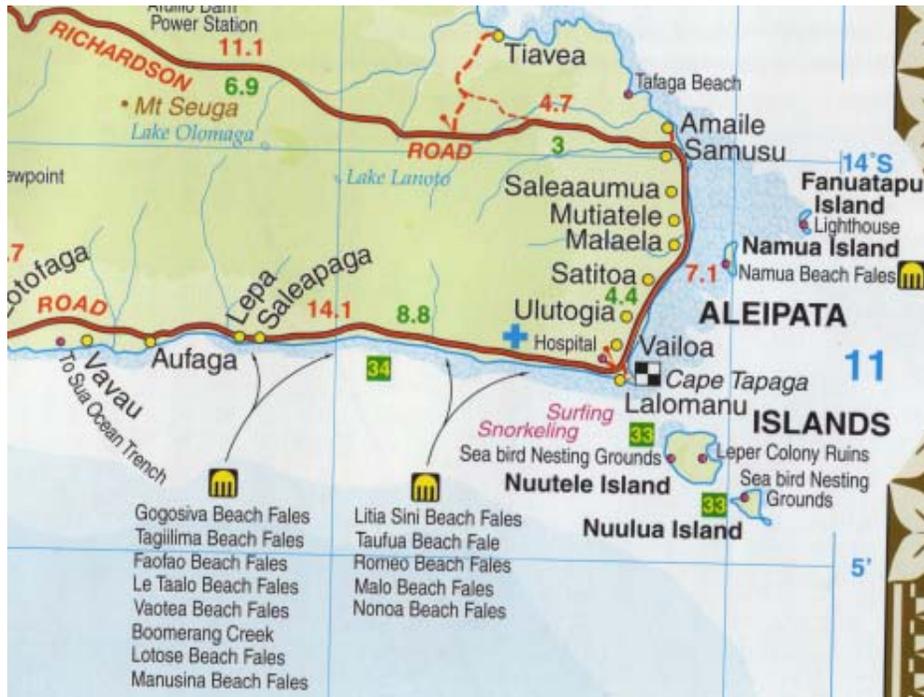
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**Appendix 1.0 Maps of the Research Locations**



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**Plate 3. Study area 1, South-East Upolu.** Source – HEMA Maps Pty Ltd, Australia.  
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**Plate 4. Study area 2 – North Savai'i.** Source – HEMA Maps Pty Ltd, Australia.  
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**Appendix 2.0 Examples of Open and Enclosed Beach *Fale***



**Plate 5. Traditional beach *fale* example (blinds up). Source – author, (2007).**



**Plate 6. Traditional beach *fale* example (blinds down). Source – author, (2007).**



Plate 7. Enclosed beach *fale*, example exterior. Source – author, (2007).



Plate 8. Enclosed beach *fale*, example interior. Source – author, (2007).

## Appendix 3.0 Semi-structured Interview Question Prompts

### Tourist prompts

Tell me about how you chose this particular holiday

- *Why Samoa?*
- *Why a beach fale instead of a hotel or resort?*
- *How are beach fale different from a holiday elsewhere?*

How much did you know about Samoa before you arrived?

- *What was your main source of information?*
- *Did anyone explain how to behave to you?*

What are the most important features that this fale needed to have for you to stay here?

- *What do you like about this fale?*
- *What do you dislike?*
- *Would you still have stayed here if the fale didn't have these features?*
- *Which are non-negotiable?*

You are staying in an enclosed (or traditional) fale. Why did you choose this type of fale?

- *Would you have stayed here if the fale wasn't (enclosed/traditional) style?*
- *What do you like most about the (enclosed/traditional) fale?*
- *What do you dislike most?*

What is your opinion on ....at your fale?

- *Exposure to Samoan culture?*
- *Facilities/entertainment?*
- *Availability of information?*
- *Staff?*
- *Privacy?*
- *Security?*
- *Value for money?*
- *Food?*
- *Activities?*

What impacts do you think beach fale tourism might cause in Samoan villages?

- *Benefits due to tourism?*
- *Problems due to tourism?*
- *How can tourists increase benefits?*
- *How can tourists reduce problems?*

## **Industry employee/business owner prompts**

Can you tell me about your /your business' involvement with beach *fale* tourism?

What do you believe *fale* owners aim to achieve from their businesses?

- *Economic/ Socio-cultural/Environmental*

What are the main benefits of beach *fale* tourism - *For owners/families?*  
*For communities?*

- *Economic/ Socio-cultural/Environmental*

What are the main problems with beach *fale* tourism - *For owners/families?*  
*For communities?*

- *Economic/ Socio-cultural/Environmental*

What do tourists expect from the *fale* experience?

- *Have expectations changed over time?*
- *Are *fale* catering for expectations adequately*
- *How could they better meet expectations?*

Beach *fale* are being modernised into enclosed units in many businesses around Samoa.

- *What factors do you believe are driving this?*
- *What do owners expect to achieve by modernising?*
- *What do you feel the effects on beach *fale* tourism might be?*

Could modernising affect the impacts of beach *fale* tourism?

- *Economic/ Socio-cultural/Environmental*

Could modernising affect the management of beach *fale* tourism?

- *Staffing/labour issues*
- *Resources*
- *Costs*

Could modernising affect demand?

- *Types of tourists*
- *Numbers*

Where would you see Samoa's beach *fale* tourism in ten years' time?

## **Beach *fale* owner prompts**

Could you tell me about your business?

- *How long have you owned/managed the fale?*
- *Who works for the business?*
- *Why did you choose fale as a business option?*

Why do you think tourists choose to come to beach *fale* instead of a different type of holiday?

- *Why do tourists chose to come to Samoa?*
- *What are the main attractions that bring tourists to your fale?*
- *What activities do tourists want to do while they are here?*

What are the main benefits to having tourists stay in your *fale*?

- *Environmental benefits?*
- *Benefits for fa'aSamoa?*
- *Benefits to family?*
- *Benefits to community?*
- *Economic benefits?*

What are the main problems due to having tourists stay in your *fale*?

- *Economic problems?*
- *Environmental problems?*
- *Problems for fa'aSamoa?*
- *Family problems?*
- *Community problems?*

How do you and your community manage these?

Some *fale* owners in Samoa are enclosing their *fale*, and some are keeping them traditional. Can you tell me about your choice to keep your *fale* traditional/enclose them?

- *Do you think it is important to have your fale in traditional/enclosed style?*
- *Would you like to make any changes in the future to the fale?*

If yes, what impacts might these changes have? (*Positive/negative*)

- *Business/family/community/culture/environment?*

If no, what would you consider to be the impacts of people choosing to change *fale*?

- *Business/family/community/culture/environment?*

Did you seek any advice from anyone before deciding whether to keep your *fale* traditional or not?

How do you ensure that *fa'aSamoa* is maintained even though you have tourists from different nationalities staying in your village?

## Appendix 4.0 Daily Activity Log

Date	Day	Time	Activity
1-Mar	Thurs	6am	Arrive Apia flight NZ62, taxi to Outrigger Hotel
		12pm	Arranged business owner interview - 9am Tuesday, 06 March.
		2pm	Arranged tour operator interview - 2pm Friday, 2nd March.
		6pm	Organising of materials, planned out timetable, refined interview questions
2-Mar	Fri	10am	Arranged NGO interview - 3pm, Monday 5 March
			Phoned business owner - agreed to interview, arrange Monday
		10.30am	Visited industry representative's office to arrange interview
		2.30pm	Pre-scheduled interview cancelled. Unable to reschedule.
		3pm	Emailing, located Apia Library, errands
			Phoned development consultant. Agreed to interview, phone to arrange
		5pm	
		7pm	Activity log, reading
3-Mar	Sat	11am	Visited Apia Library in morning, errands.
		3pm	Reading, activity log
4-Mar	Sun	8.30am	Collected by tour company for tourist day trip around Upolu
			Familiarisation with <i>fale</i> locations, wharf location, tourist sites
			Introduced myself to <i>fale</i> owners, requested participation
5-Mar	Mon	9am	Organised interview, business owner, 9.20am Wednesday.
			Message from participant - pre-scheduled interview cancelled, reschedule
		12pm	Casual discussion with tourism industry employee
		1pm	Arranged interview with industry employee, 2pm Thursday
		3pm	Interview with NGO employee
			Met briefly with development consultant, arranged interview
		5pm	5pm Wednesday.
			Created transcript data entry templates, typed interview notes, transcription
		6pm	
6-Mar	Tues	10am	Transcription work
		12pm	Reading
		2pm	Booked <i>fale</i> South-east Upolu
		8pm	Reviewed literature provided by a participant
		9pm	Revised questions for morning interviews
7-Mar	Wed	9.20am	Interview with business owner
			Joined participant during running of errands,
		10.30am	informal conversation, 3 hours.
		5pm	Interview with development consultant
		6pm	Reading and transcription work, revised questions

8-Mar	Thurs	10am	Pack, check out, book taxi for 4pm Contacted <i>fale</i> owners in Savai'i, booked <i>fale</i> Review <i>fale</i> owner/tourist questions
		12pm	Photocopy more secondary literature, ran errands. Interview with industry employee fell through unexpectedly.
		2pm	Reschedule.
		2.30pm	Interview with SHA representative
		4pm	Taxi to South-East Upolu.
09-15 Mar	Fri - Thurs		South-East Upolu - interviewed guests, <i>fale</i> owners, participated in <i>fale</i> activities, observation of <i>fale</i> businesses, casual conversation with guests. Stayed at four different businesses. Transcription work.
16-Mar	Fri	9am	Public bus to Apia, ran errands.
17-Mar	Sat	10am	Ferry, public bus from Apia to Manase Beach. Located businesses.
18-23 Mar	Sun - Fri		Manase Beach - interviewed guests, <i>fale</i> owners, participated in <i>fale</i> activities, observation of <i>fale</i> businesses, casual conversations with guests. Stayed at four different businesses.
24-Mar	Sat		Stayed small village hotel, conversation with hotel owner, staff.
25-Mar	Sun		Returned to Apia
26-Mar	Mon	10am	Ran errands, more photocopying
		4pm	Transcription work
27-Mar	Tues	9am	Apia - reading in public library, revising literature Rescheduled industry employee interview - 10am Wednesday 28th March.
		4pm	
28-Mar	Wed	10am	Industry employee interview fell through - was unable to reschedule.
		1pm	Visit to pottery school with participant and university art class
		6.45pm	Aggie Grey's <i>fiafia</i> evening.
29-Mar	Thurs	10am	Final errands, returned literature, checked out of Outrigger.
		11pm	Apia - late evening transfer to airport
30-Mar		6.30am	Flight departs for Auckland, New Zealand

## Appendix 5.0 Interview Schedule

Date	Research Method	Participant	Location	Length of interview
10	Semi-structured Interview	NGO employee	Apia	35 mins, taped
	Informal Discussion	Development consultant	Apia	20 mins, not taped
7/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	Business owner	Apia	1 hr, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Development consultant	Apia	1 hr, taped
	Informal Discussion	Development consultant (cont.)	Apia	3 hrs, not taped
8/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	SHA Representative	Apia	30 mins, taped
09-15/03	Participant observation	N/A	S.E Upolu	Observation
9/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	<i>Fale</i> employee	S.E Upolu	1 hr, not taped
10/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	<i>Fale</i> owner	S.E Upolu	45 mins, not taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	S.E Upolu	40 mins, taped
11/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	S.E Upolu	25 mins, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	S.E Upolu	20 mins, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	S.E Upolu	20 mins, taped
12/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	S.E Upolu	40 mins, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	S.E Upolu	45 mins, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	<i>Fale</i> owner	S.E Upolu	1 hr, taped
13/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	<i>Fale</i> owner	S.E Upolu	45 mins, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	S.E Upolu	40 mins, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	S.E Upolu	30 mins, taped
14/03/2007	Informal Discussion	<i>Fale</i> owner	S.E Upolu	2 hrs, not taped
15/03/2007	Informal Discussion	<i>Fale</i> owner (cont.)	S.E Upolu	30 mins, not taped
18-23/03	Participant Observation	N/A	Manase Beach	Observation
18/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	Manase Beach	25 mins, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	Manase Beach	70 mins, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Business owner	Manase Beach	2 hrs, taped
	Informal Discussion	<i>Fale</i> owner	Manase Beach	1 hr, not taped
19/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	Manase Beach	20 mins, taped
20/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	Manase Beach	35 mins, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	Manase Beach	25 mins, taped
	Semi-structured Interview	<i>Fale</i> owner	Manase Beach	1 hr, not taped
21/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	Manase Beach	1 hr, 25 mins, taped
	Informal Discussion	<i>Fale</i> owner	Manase Beach	30 mins, not taped
22/03/2007	Informal Discussion	<i>Fale</i> owner	Manase Beach	3 hrs, not taped
	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	Manase Beach	20 mins, taped
23/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	Tourist	Manase Beach	1 hr, taped
24/03/2007	Semi-structured Interview	Business owner	Savai'i	1 hr, not taped