



**A REPORT
ON INITIAL DATA COLLECTION FROM
POST SCHOOL EDUCATION AND TRAINING
PROVIDERS**

**By Sina Mualia and Easter Manila-Silipa
Human Resource Development Policy Division
February 2007**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1. INTRODUCTION	5
Background	5
Objectives	6
2. METHODOLOGY	6
3. DATA ANALYSIS	7
Types of Post School Education and Training Providers	8
Information and Data received from PSET Providers	9
Enrolment and Graduate Figures (2000-2006)	10
Types of Programs / Courses and Qualifications	17
Staff Qualifications	17
Fees charged by PSET Providers of Formal and Non-formal Education and Training Providers	17
Funding Sources	18
4. ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS	18
4.1 Record Keeping Systems	18
4.2 Facilities and Resources	19
4.3 Similar Focused Programs	19
4.4 Drop Outs	20
4.5 Gender Biased Training	20
4.6 Government Grant	20
4.7 Fees Charged by PSET Providers	21
4.8 Linkages with Programs	22
5. CONCLUSION	22
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	23

Appendices:

Appendix 1 -	HRD Policy Unit Visits Guiding Questions
Appendix 2 -	Report on PSET Interviews
Appendix 3 -	Table 2: Information and Data Received from PSET Providers
Appendix 4 -	Table 3: Enrolment Figures for the Years 2000 – 2006
Appendix 5 -	Table 4: Graduate Figures for the Years 2000 – 2006
Appendix 6 -	Table 5: Types of Programs / Courses and Qualifications
Appendix 7 -	Table 6: Staff Qualifications
Appendix 8 -	Table 7: Fees Charged by PSET Providers of Formal and Non Formal Education and Training Providers
Appendix 9 -	Table 8: Funding Sources

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A study of the current status of Post School Education and Training in Samoa is crucial as it provides Government through the newly established Samoa Qualifications Authority with the necessary information to assist in the development of new policies relating to the Post School Education and Training sector.

The main objectives of this study was for the newly established Human Resource Development (HRD) Policy Division within the Samoa Qualifications Authority to meet with a number of Post School Education and Training Providers (PSETs) that currently provided training in Samoa and to collect initial information and data for the possible establishment of a National HRD Policy Database.

Some Non-government Organizations (NGOs) and Government Agencies were also visited with the intention of exploring if some of the training they presently provided is similar or have links to the training that is currently being carried out by the PSETs visited.

The study itself was conducted through personal interviews with key personnel from these PSETs by two HRD Policy Division officers of the Samoa Qualifications Authority. A survey in the form of a check list of topics was used to guide the interview and to also extract necessary information that would give a bigger and clearer picture of each Provider.

The main findings from the interviews are as follows:

- From a total of 27 visits conducted, only two Providers (approximately 7.4 %) were able to provide all of the requested for data and information.
- Of the 22 PSET Providers visited (excluding 5 visits made to Government Ministries), 13 of the 22 (approximately 59%) have no proper record keeping systems in place.
- 18 Providers from this same 22 (or 81%), have not set up proper databases.
- All except one of these 22 Providers (excluding Government Ministries) do not conduct proper tracers (follow ups) on their graduates
- Six PSET Providers operate programs that link with programs offered by some PSET Providers overseas.
- Twelve PSET Providers visited currently receive government funding. This number excludes Ministries which are allocated annual budgets from Government for their activities. Four

from the 12 notified that they relied heavily on this funding from Government to meet their operational costs.

- The Church's involvement with how the Theological Colleges operate is quite significant.

The Study also identified some key issues: There are

- The need for PSET Providers to have proper record keeping systems in place.
- Formal PSETs lack the proper facilities and resources to effectively carry out their programs and monitor their overall performance.
- The need for programs that are of a similar focus carried out by several Institutions and Organizations to be harmonized.
- Students drop out of school early without completing the program and obtaining the award or qualification.
- Some PSETs and Organizations that offer training are quite gender biased.
- There are a number of PSET Providers who have used or still continue to use the grant from Government to supplement or pay for school fees not paid.

In relation to the issues mentioned, the following could be possible ways to address or approach these issues:

- Assistance to be given to PSET Providers to establish or set up proper record keeping systems and databases in light of registration and accreditation requirements.
- The possibility of PSET Providers co-sharing their existing facilities to accommodate for large influxes of students.
- The need for PSET Providers to work together to coordinate similar type programs offered by their Institutions.
- Instigate initiatives to encourage students to complete programs/courses and obtain qualifications.
- Instigate initiatives to encourage more females to undertake programs that are stereotyped for males and vice versa, and
- The need for Government funding to be re-directed to meet difficulties faced by the Providers.

It is clear from the interviews conducted that there are presently quite a number of issues faced by Post School Education and Training Providers in Samoa. The need for concrete data remains the

main priority for Samoa Qualifications Authority if it is to set about in strengthening the PSET Sector and direct it in such a way so as to better focus the post school education sector on achieving national development goals.

As such, the HRD Policy Unit will definitely need to conduct further research into certain problematic areas currently faced by PSETs that need more coordination and strengthening so as to assist in the development of any new policy or policies concerning the Post School Education and Training sector.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

The overall proposed and adopted functions of the Human Resource Development (HRD) Policy Division, working in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Division within the Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA) are to:

“Provide policy advice, monitor and co-ordinate all post-school education and training in support of national development goals.”

The SQA Act passed in March 2006 clearly explains these functions in detail in Section 4 where it states that the role of the Samoa Qualifications Authority in relation to post school education and training sector is as follows:

(a) Provide policy advice to Government on strategies and priorities for post-school education and training;

(b) Monitor and report to Government and the post-school education sector, on the activities, resourcing, and overall performance of the post-school education sector in relation to national strategic goals for economic, social and cultural development;

(c) Provide advice to Government and the post-school education sector on findings and implications arising from research, monitoring or evaluation conducted by the Authority or other agencies, bodies or persons;

(d) Coordinate and strengthen all post-school education and training, so as to better focus the post-school education sector on national development goals and to promote and develop articulation among programmes;

In order to go about initiating work in the area of human resource development within the SQA in accordance to the functions specified above, two officers from the HRD Policy Division set about to conduct visits to a number of Post School Education and Training (PSET) Providers. The aim was to see what data each Provider currently had available to assist the Division with the possible establishment of a National HRD Policy Database and to hopefully synthesize from this data any possible information that could contribute to addressing issues that may be commonly faced by Providers as well as to determine how they may impact on SQA's role and functions.

Objectives

1. To find out what activities each provider currently provides
2. To find out what information these providers have in terms of resources and overall performance and
3. To identify any common problems faced by these PSET Institutions that may be subject for future research by the Division.

2. METHODOLOGY

The HRD Policy Division initially identified a number of Providers to be visited through an existing SQA Stakeholders Register. This Register listed and classified a number of Providers under the sub-headings: Government, Private, Theological Colleges and Regional Institutions and so forth.

For ease of comparison, the PSETs had been re-categorized based on their role as a training provider. For example, a '*formal training provider*' conducts education and training activities that eventually lead to the participant gaining a qualification. '*Non-formal education and training providers*' conduct short-term training activities that target a specific need or issue and usually ranges from one to five days at the most.¹

¹ Refer to Table 1

Secondary data was then gathered on the names and contacts of relevant or key persons who were responsible for the daily operations of these Institutions and 30 letters were then sent out by SQA formally requesting the PSET Providers for their HRD Policy Unit officers to visit their premises.

A survey in the form of a check list of information requested from the Providers accompanied the letter.² This was used to guide the interview session as well as to extract necessary information that would assist the officers with their research.

After the appointments were made and the interviews conducted, information that was not readily available during the time of the interviews was requested by the officers and followed up via telephone, emails and eventually through a formal request that included a disk containing data about each PSET Provider. The letter requested the Providers to verify that the data SQA had already received from each of them was accurate and whether any information missed out could be inserted with the disk returned to SQA before the study was wrapped up.

NB: (1) Some data from two PSETs (USP's School of Agriculture & NUS-IoT) had been received prior to the Division's visits and have been included in Table 1.

(2) Some Non-government Organizations (NGOs) and Government Agencies were also requested visitations to explore if some of the training they presently provided was similar or linked to the training that is currently being carried out by the PSETS listed on the Register. These NGOs and Government Agencies are also included in Table 1.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

The information provided by the PSETs in relation to the operations of their Institutions during the interviews was recorded accordingly and the data collected was inserted into tables to help provide a clear statistical analysis of the data. Most of these tables are included in the Appendix of this report.

The data collected are preliminary. There is no doubt that errors and inconsistencies exist. However, it is useful for it to be examined at this stage to see if there are any common areas of interest or concerns faced by PSETs that will enable the establishment of the Unit's baseline data for identification of strategies and/or policy advice.

² Refer to Appendix 1

The Classification of PSETS is set out below:

Table 1: Types of Post School Education and Training Providers

Formal Education and Training Providers		Non Formal Education and Training Providers	
Administrative & Commerce		Non Government Organizations	
1	Pacific International Uni-Tech	1	Women in Business Foundation Inc
2	Tesese Institute of Administrative Studies	2	Samoa Umbrella of Non Government Organisation
Vocational Training		3	Small Business Enterprise Center
3	Laumua o Punaoa Technical Center	4	South Pacific Business Development
4	Don Bosco Technical Center	Second Chance Education	
5	Leulumoega School of Fine Arts		
Higher Education		5	Matuaileo'o Environmental Trust Inc
6	NUS – Institute of Higher Education & Institute of Technology	Government Ministries	
Schools of Music		6	Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour
7	Samoa School of Music and Performing Arts	7	Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development – Divisions for Youth, Women and for Internal Affairs
8	June Ryan School of Music	8	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
Arts Schools		Regional Institutions	
9	Beautiful Expression of Arts Academy	9	
Regional Institutions			
10	USP – School of Agriculture	USP – Distance and Flexible Learning, Samoa Center	
Religious Institutions		10	USP – Institute of Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture
11	Malua Theological College		
12	Piula Theological College		
13	CCJS Theological College		
14	Moamoia Theological College		
15	RHEMA Bible Training Center		
16	Nazarene Theological College		

* The June Ryan School of Music and the Samoa School of Music transcends the formal - non-formal division as they offer training to students as young as five years old as well as adults who are trained towards various qualifications in Music.

Note: The USP's Institute for Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture [IRETA] carries out both formal short-term training and mostly non-formal assistance to regional Agricultural Officers as well as to individual local farmers.

Table 2: Information and data received from PSET Providers

As indicated from Table 2

- Only Don Bosco Technical Center and the National University of Samoa's Institute of Technology managed to submit all of the information requested for.
- In general, data on Enrolments and Graduates appear to be lacking from all Training Institutions, whether it be formal or non-formal.
- Where it concerns data on all *enrolment by gender* for Formal Education and Training Providers, only 33% of these Providers were able to produce such data. 26.67% submitted partial information while 40% were not able to produce any information at all. Data from both the Music Schools were excluded because of the range of students both schools dealt with.
- With regards to data on all *graduates by gender* for Formal Education and Training Providers, 40% were able to provide such data, 26.67% gave partial information, and 33.3% did not provide any. Again, the Music schools were not included due to the reasoning above.
- For *years of enrolment* (i.e., enrolment figures from 2000 – 2006), only 40% of the Formal Education Providers submitted the required data, 40% provided partial information and 20%, none at all. It should be mentioned that for partial information received, some PSETs could only manage to provide data for this category up to 1-3 years.
- For Non-formal Training Providers, where it concerns *enrolment by gender*, 14.3% submitted the required data, 14.3% submitted partial information and 71% submitted none at all. Although some organizations provided training specifically for one gender, data was also not able to be obtained in such cases.
- In the case of *graduates by gender* for the non-formal PSETs, only one out of seven (14.3%) organizations was able to submit all of the required data in this format.
- Where it concerned tracer studies or follow up on the whereabouts of students or participants upon completion of courses/programs, the majority of PSETs (whether formal or non-formal) did not conduct any formal tracers.

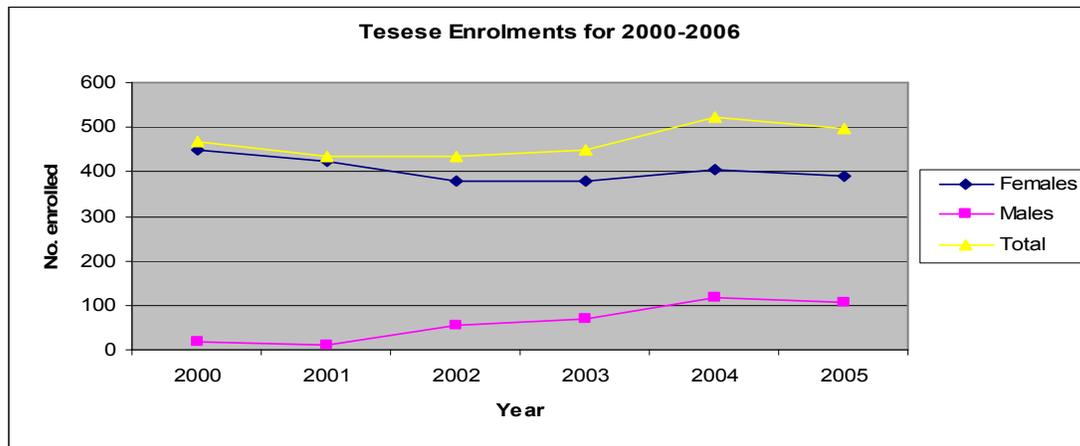
NB: Apart from statistics on enrolment, graduates and programs, most of the information sought from the PSETs was obtained during the interviews.

Tables 3 & 4: Enrolment and Graduate Figures for the years 2000-2006

As can be seen from Tables 3 and 4, only a certain number of Providers were able to have their data represented on graphs for possible trend analysis. Where gaps occurred causing a break in the sequence of data for the period 2000-2006, such data has not be graphed to avoid misleading trends. The graphs will however be interpreted with the interviews in mind.

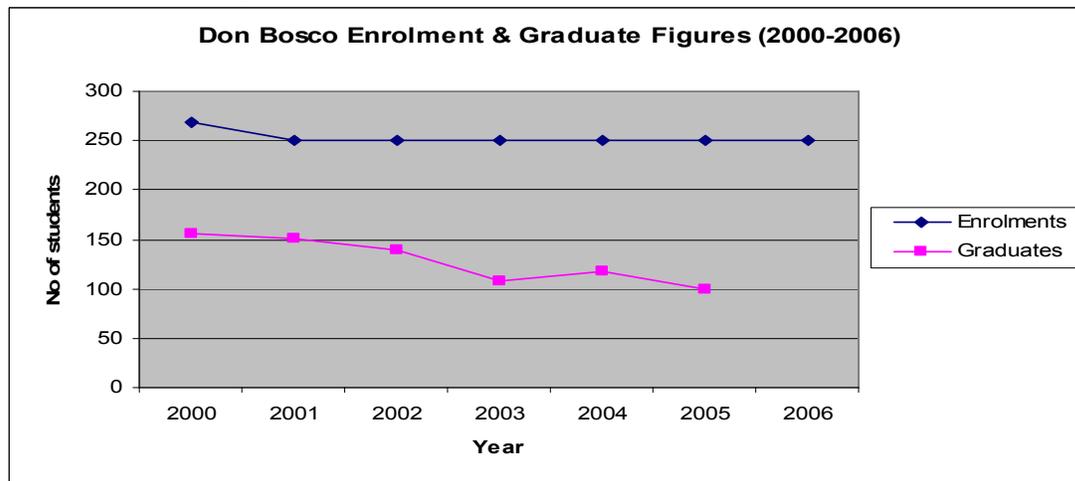
Formal Education and Training Providers

Administrative and Commerce



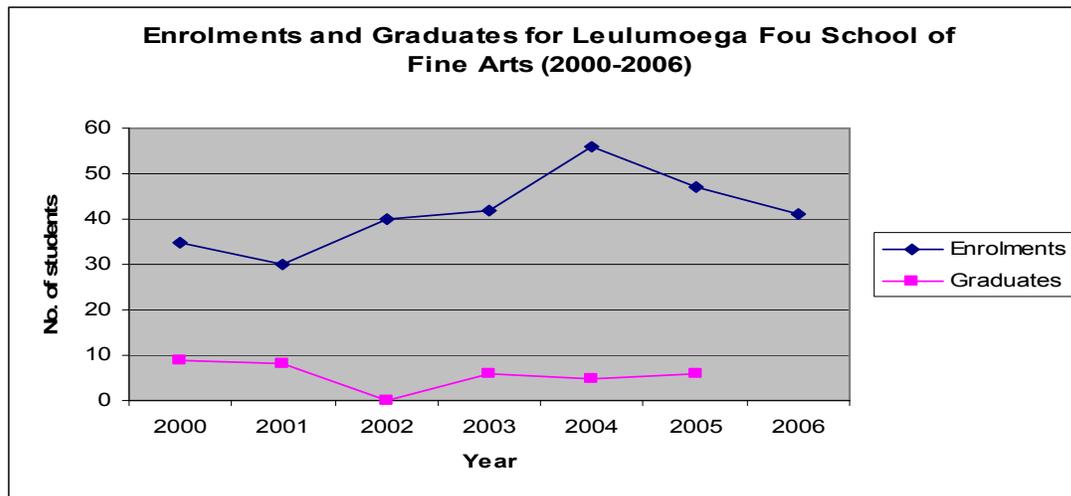
As revealed from the above graph, Tesese enrolments are dominated by females. Female enrolments over the 2000-2006 period has been somewhat steady around the 400 mark whereas in the case for males, it has increased from 19 to 106 students (82%) for the same period.

Vocational Training



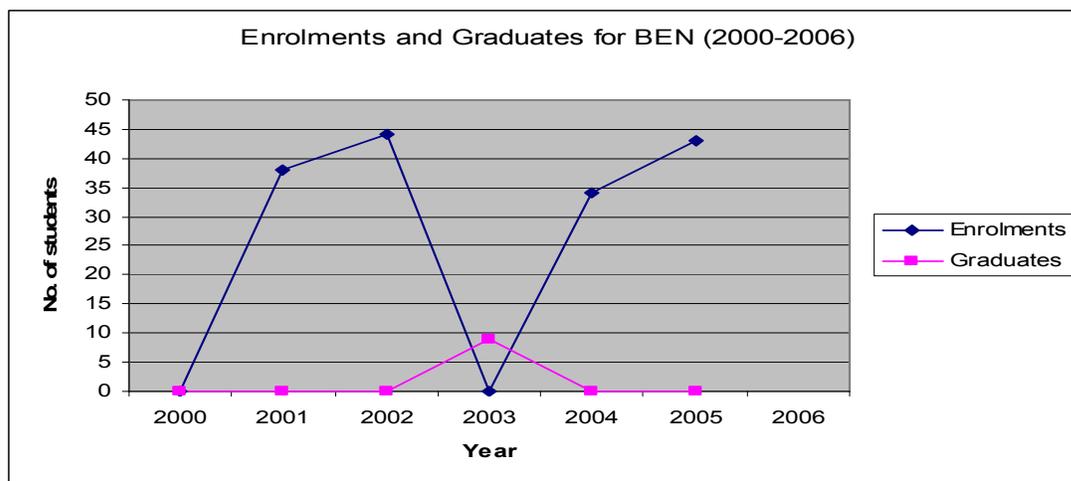
Don Bosco (DB) enrolments fell from 266 to 250 during the period 2000-2001 and remained here through to 2006 due to the cap placed by the School on the number of students accepted annually. In the case of graduates, the number of students graduating from DB over the years

has also decreased. A significant decrease (23%) occurred during the 2002-2003 period and remained around the 100 mark till 2005.



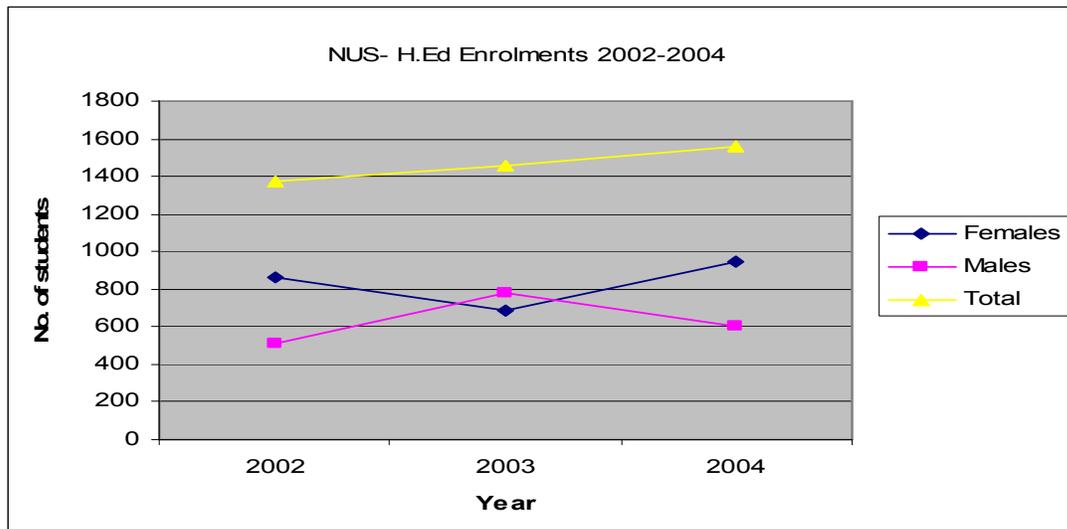
From the above graph, the gap between enrolments and graduates has widened quite a bit for the Leulumoega Fou School since 2000. Students’ inability to meet fees has contributed to the widening of this gap as well as the restructuring of the programs prior to 2002 thereby explaining why no students graduated in 2002. Of particular interest though, for 5 consecutive years, the highest number of graduates the School has produced is nine.

Art School

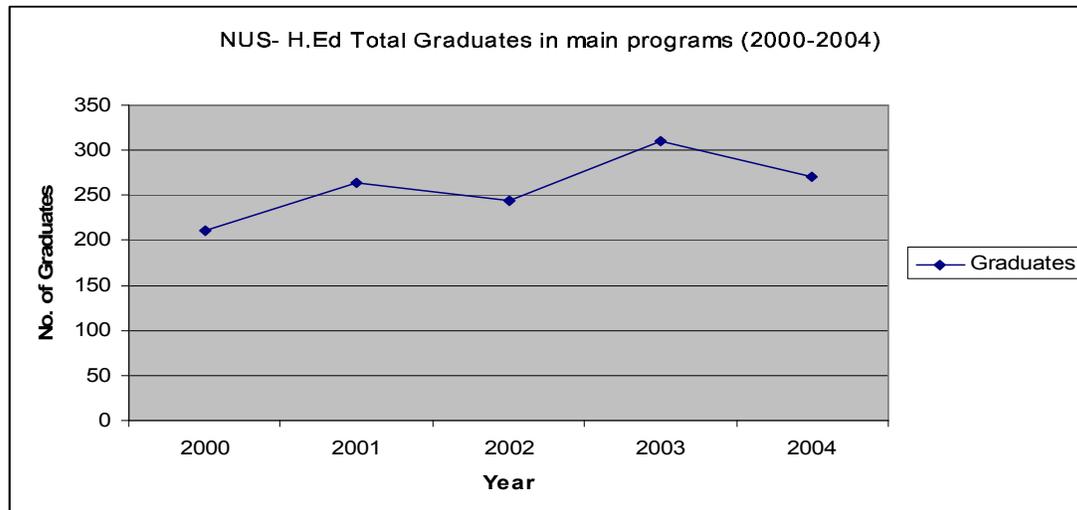


BEN has struggled quite a bit since it opened its doors in May 2000. Its first graduation in 2003 saw nine students obtaining their Certificate in Fine Arts. Such problems as sustaining consistent enrolments, unpaid school fees and students’ work ethic become important factors when taking into account the trends represented on the graph.

Higher Education

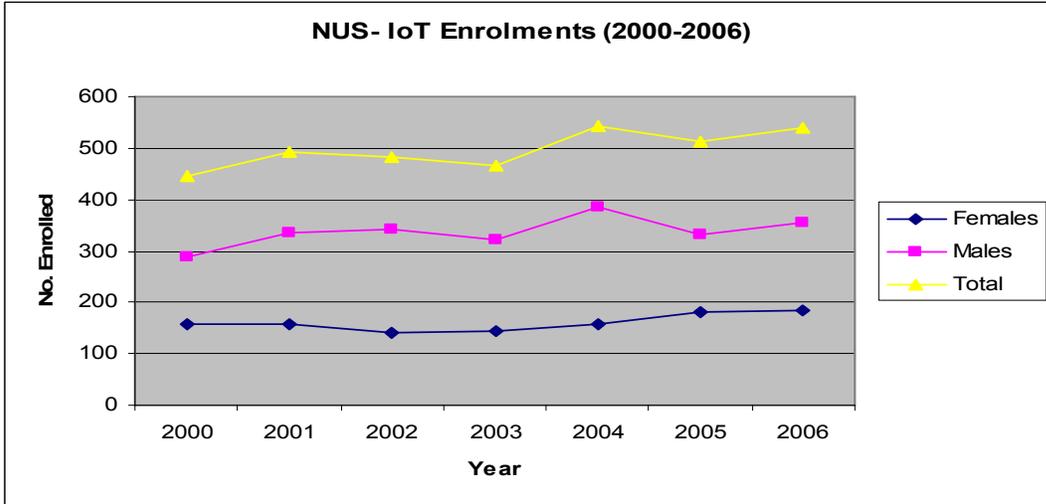


NUS-Higher Education enrolments for the period 2002-2004 indicate that female enrolments outweighed that for males for 2 years. Although it can be said from the graph that the combined total for both females and males display a higher proportion of enrolments for this PSET Provider, not much can be said about the trend due to the unavailability of data so as to indicate if this variation per annum is consistent.

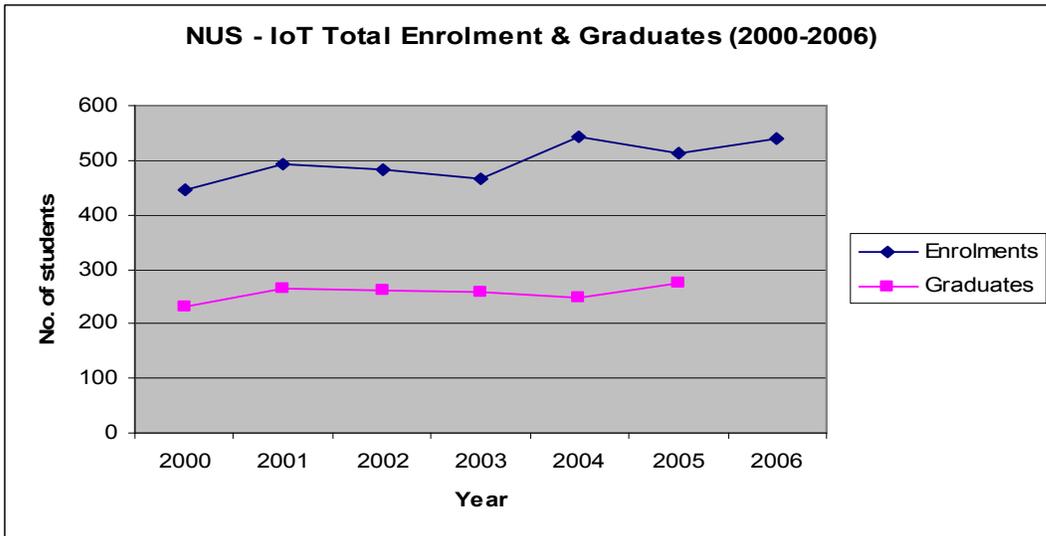


Source: Samoa National Human Development Report, 2006

In the case of total graduates undergoing the main programs such as the Certificates and Diplomas of Arts, Commerce, Computing, Maths and Nursing as well as the Bachelors of Commerce, Science and Nursing, statistics show that over the 2000-2004 period many more students were graduating. This can be seen by the upward trend over this period in the above graph. Separation of data so as to indicate which gender dominated was not readily available.

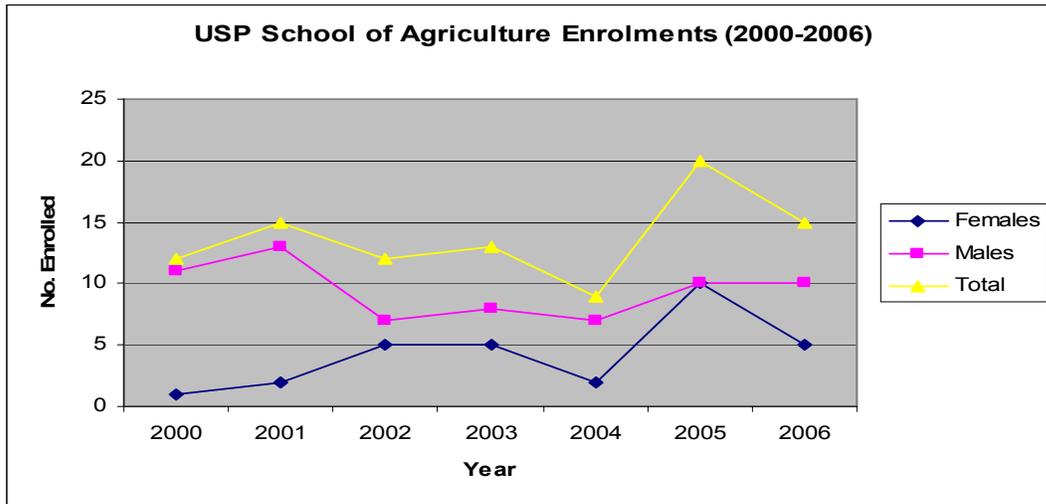


As indicated by the graph, males dominate females in terms of enrolment for IoT programs. Male enrolments for the period 2000-2006 have managed to stay above the 300 mark while enrolments by females had remained steady within the mid 100-200 range increasing slightly per annum from 2003 onwards.

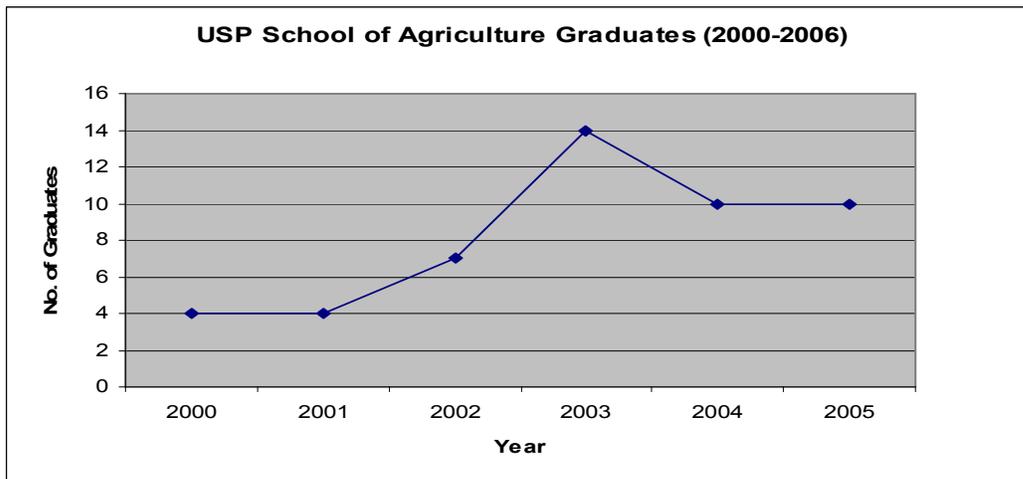


The above graph indicates that the average number of students graduating from IoT programs during 2000-2006 range around 200 plus but do not exceed 300. Enrolments on the other hand, have remained consistent above the 400 mark, increasing significantly in 2004 when enrolments shot up to 542, and remained above 500 for the next two years.

Regional Institutions

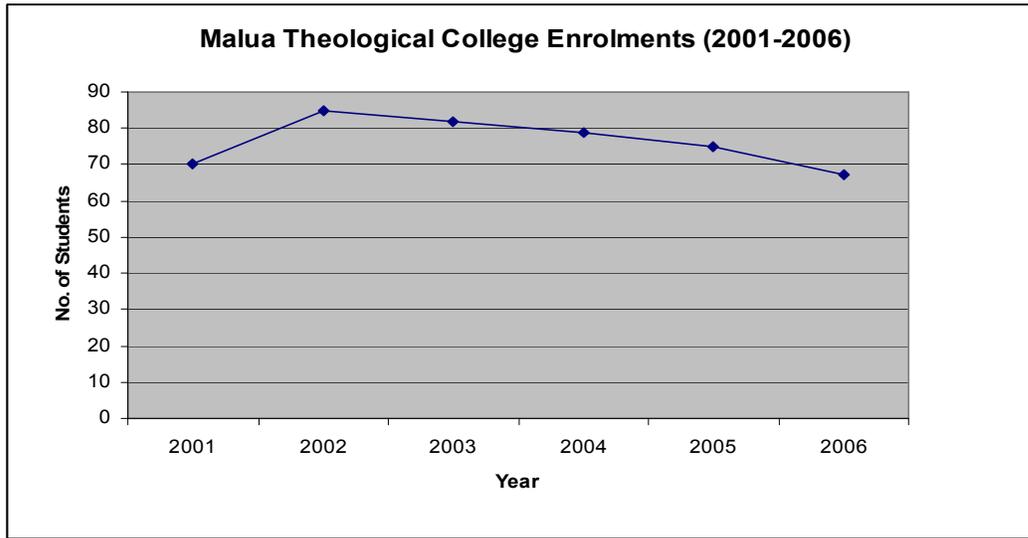


As can be seen from the graph, a huge gap existed between male and female enrolments during the 2000-2001 periods. This gap narrowed during the following two years and extended again in 2004. The School received the same number from both gender in 2005 then diverged again in 2006.

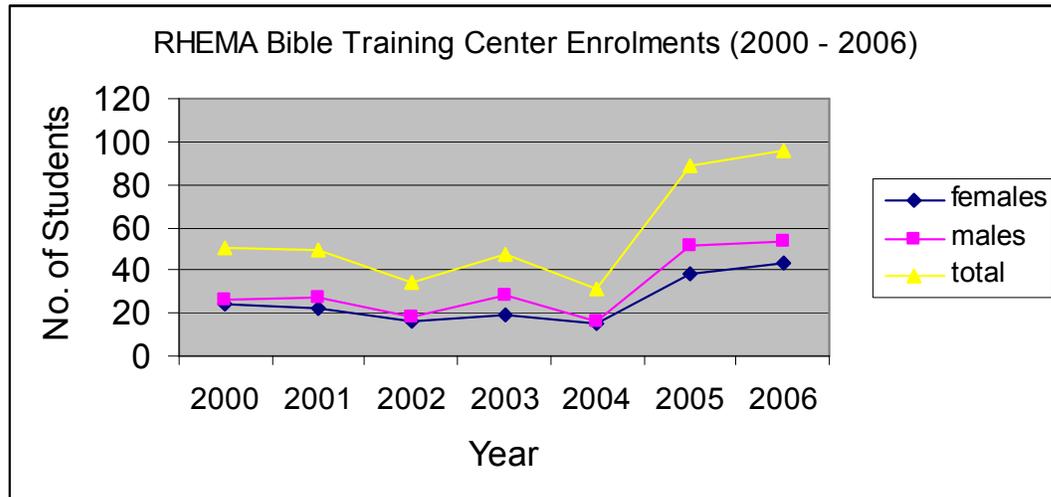


The above graph indicates that after 2001, there was a significant increase of graduates coming out of USP-SOA for the period 2002-2003. For 2002, the number almost doubled (about 75%) when compared to 2001 and for 2003, it increased by 100% when compared to 2002. In 2004, it dropped by 29% and remained at the same point for the 2005 period. Separation of data so as to indicate which gender dominated was not made available but it can be assumed from the School's Enrolment graph that males were more dominant in numbers.

Theological Colleges/ Bible Training Centers

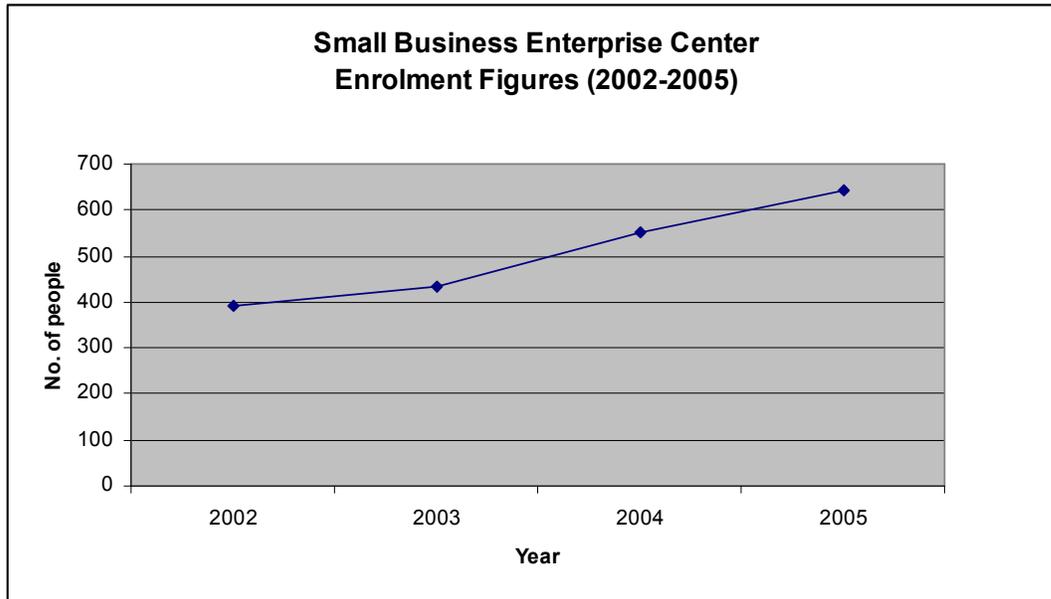


Apart from an increase in enrolment during the 2001-2002 periods, enrolments for Malua Theological College declined from 2003 to 2006. The College currently does not accept women candidates into their Divinity and Theology programs.

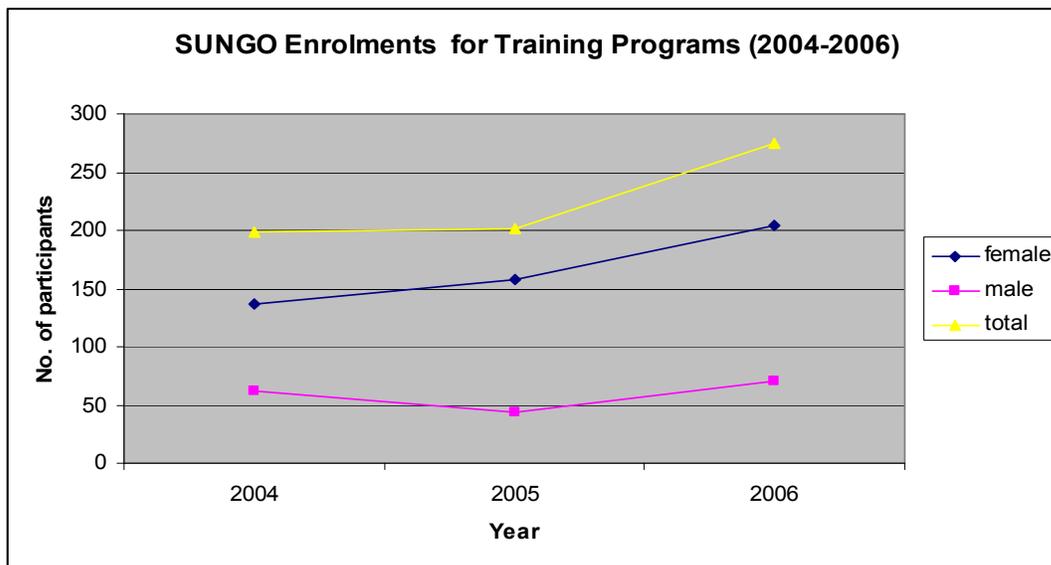


Enrolments for Rhema Bible Training Center have been consistent for both males and females around the 20 mark since it established in 2000 up to 2004. Enrolments figures for 2005 and 2006 saw a significant jump for both genders. Female enrolments nearly tripled (i.e. 186%) while male enrolments increased by approximately 230%.

Non-Formal Education and Training Providers



As seen from the graph, SBEC enrolments have increased by 64% from 391 in 2002 to 642 in 2005. Separation of data into gender so as to indicate which gender is dominant was not readily available however it can be assumed from the trend that more people are undergoing SBEC programs to improve either their business skills or gain access to their loan guarantee facility.



Attendance to SUNGO's training programs has increased by 38% from 2004 to 2006. Females are usually seen to take advantage of such opportunities in the areas of file and record management, computer skills training, proposal writing, good human resource management and administration training programs that are offered by SUNGO to its members and non members for a higher fee.

Table 5: Types of Programs/ Courses and Qualifications

Table 5 in Appendix 6 shows the various types of qualifications attained through undergoing the programs or courses offered by the PSETS visited.

As the table indicates, the majority of Formal-training Providers offer certificate level courses. This equates to approximately 52% of all qualifications offered by various PSETS in Samoa. Those Providers offering Diploma type qualifications make up 22% and the rest make up 26%.

Each Provider designs its own program/ course based on either institutional or personal educational philosophies with consideration given to industry demands and needs they cater for. Some way of standardizing this process would be most beneficial. One standard measure of ensuring this is the adoption of the credit system currently being proposed by SQA.

Below is a summary of the number of Providers that offer the following types of awards or qualifications in Samoa.

Types of Awards/ Qualifications	Offered by how many PSETs?
Basic Certificates (NUS)	1
Intermediate Certificates (NUS–IoT) - Trades	1
Certificates – receptionist, secretarial, tourism/hospitality, fine arts, business course (PIU), bible studies & women’s ministry, journalism, life skills, etc	14
Advanced Certificates (PIU, CCJS) – Business & Ministerial	2
Certificate of Due Completion (MCIL)	1
Trade Test Certificates (Grades 1 & 2) MCIL	1
Samoa National Trade Certificate MCIL	1
Certificate of Completion (SBEC, SUNGO, MinWCSD, IRETA)	4
Certificate of Participation	0
Grades 1 – 8 (for Music)	2
Diplomas – Business, Tourism, Radio Electronics, Teaching, Tropical Agric, Theology & other ministerial, secretarial	11

studies, Fine Arts, etc	
Bachelors (NUS, USP, 3 Theo Colleges) – Commerce, Arts, Agriculture, Divinity, Theology,	5
Postgraduate Certificates NUS) – Health Leadership	1
Postgraduate Diplomas (USP, NUS) – Agric, Nursing	2
Masters (USP, NUS) – MBA, Samoan Studies	2
Doctorate	0

Table 6: Staff Qualifications

Table 6 in Appendix 7 reveals the various qualifications held by staff of the visited PSET Providers. Some Providers have set a minimum qualification for staff to ensure quality service delivery, for example, NUS Institute of Higher Education. Others, however, do not have that luxury and have employed former students as teachers and tutors. Disparities with staff salaries amongst PSET providers therefore mean that Providers will always lose staff to the highest bidder.

Tables A and B below aim to summarize Table 6 by looking at the number of teachers and trainers involved in post school education and training as well as staff numbers by qualification for the year 2006.

Table A : Teachers and trainers in formal and non-formal education and training.

Total Female Teachers/ Trainers	163	42 %
Total Male Teachers/ Trainers	228	58 %
Combined Total 2006	391	100 %
Formal Education & Training (FET)		
Total Females	123	38 %
Total Males	197	62 %
Combined Total	320	100 %

Non Formal Education & Training (NFET)		
Total Females	40	56 %
Total Males	31	44 %
Combined Total	71	100 %

- Overall, males outweigh females in the PSET area given available data (Ratio 1.4:1)
- There are more qualified trainers/teachers involved in formal training & education when compared with non-formal. (i.e. ratio of 4:1)
- For 2006 staff data: males dominate in formal training teaching. This is the opposite for non- formal training.
- A possible trend analysis is difficult to conduct for PSETS overall at this stage due to the unavailability of data with the exception of the National University of Samoa.
- Statistics for the University are provided for below.
 - NUS dominate in teacher/trainer numbers. (i.e. 153 of Raw Total; ~39%)
 - Females dominant in higher education when compared to those at IoT (~4:1 in 2005; ~5:1 in 2006)
 - Gender dominance reversed for males: i.e., more in IoT versus higher education (~1.7:1 in 2005; & ~2:1 in 2006)
 - In terms of higher education female teachers, the number has increased by 17% over the 2004 -2006 period. There were no significant changes for male teachers in higher education.
 - IoT female teachers – decreased by two and vice versa for males.

Table B: 2006 staff numbers by qualification.

Staff Numbers by Qualifications	No. in FET 2006	No. in NFET 2006	Total No	%
Certificates	66	21	87	24
Diploma	48	8	56	15
Bachelors	88	35	123	34
Post Graduate Certificates			0	0
Post Graduate Diplomas	8	3	11	3
Masters	60	3	63	17
PHDs	24	1	25	7
	294	71	365	100

Table 7: Fees charged by PSET Providers of Formal and Non-formal Education and Training Activities

Table 7 in Appendix 8 provides a wide range of fees charged to students by the various Providers.

Fees range from as low as \$250 (Don Bosco) to as high as \$3274 at NUS and \$10640 at USP for undergoing part of a course/program per annum. A single year's program such as the certificate in Tourism & Hospitality (NUS) is approximately \$789. These fees differ across the board for all Providers.

Each Provider structures its fees in such a way to consider various factors such as resources necessary for delivering the courses, maintenance of the facilities, staff salaries and the market value of the qualification gained.

Regarding the duration of courses, these are usually split up into semesters or terms/year. Providers had not given in detail as to what the exact number of weeks a program is carried out. This can be a possible research subject for the Unit. However, Providers may eventually be required to do so for registration requirements under the Quality Assurance Division.

Some Providers offer courses that enable their students to sit exams leading to qualifications by external providers (i.e., those that operate overseas). For example, Tesese Institute of Administrative Studies offers courses for Certificates Levels I to III from the Australian Qualifications Framework as well as the Pittman Qualification from London.

Table 8: Funding Sources

This table gives an indication of where the Providers source their funding. As revealed from the table, apart from student fees, quite a few Providers rely heavily on the Government grant to assist with their operations. It can be seen that some Providers are adept with searching for donor funding while others are not.

It should be noted that some donors or sponsors have criterion that only allow for Providers to be awarded funding only once or twice. Other donors have criterion which require Providers to co-share with them in meeting the costs of items such as equipment

that are needed by the School to be purchased for their students. (for example, computers, books and other resource materials) as well as meet the costs of engaging the services of teacher volunteers.

4. ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The Study identified key issues for the Samoa Qualifications Authority to consider:

4.1 The need for PSET Providers to have proper record keeping systems in place.

One immediate observation from the exercise was the lack of a systematic way of capturing, storage, maintenance and retrieval of Provider information. Decision making can be difficult if institutional data upon which decisions are based is either out-of-date or not kept in a systematic way.

Clearly this will not help Providers in general if they intend to register their Institution with SQA once the registration process is in place. The findings from the visits conducted suggest that some PSET Providers will definitely require assistance in this area. It must therefore be provided somehow bearing in mind that the work requires a close partnership between SQA and the Providers themselves.

4.2 Formal PSETs lack the proper facilities and resources to effectively carry out their programs and monitor their overall performance

Obtaining the appropriate equipment and meeting operating costs of consumables and staff salaries are costly to Providers. The Providers fortunate enough to receive funding from Government to subsidize some of these costs as well as meeting unpaid for school fees were greatly assisted. Those that missed out on receiving such grants due to eligibility criterion were however assisted through the donor community and donations that helped improve the quality of facilities, equipment, as well as to help supplement staff salaries in order to retain them.

The possibility of PSET Providers co-sharing their existing facilities therefore becomes important particularly for those Providers which will not be awarded Government grants in the future. For instance, it may be worthwhile exploring the possibility of the National

University of Samoa (NUS) sharing or sub-leasing its facilities to schools such as Don Bosco to accommodate for large influxes of students. Another option would be for the NUS to initiate a bridging program for students who would like to get into their main programs but did not meet the entry criteria after finishing Year 13.

4.3 The need for programs that are of a similar focus carried out by several Institutions and Organizations to be harmonized.

From the interviews conducted with PSET Providers such as Beautiful Expression of Nature (BEN) and Leulumoega School of Fine Arts, it is clear that the content of the programs and qualifications they offer are quite similar. Because the Principal for BEN had indicated the interest of the National University of Samoa in setting up a similar type program for their University, it may pay for all of these Providers to work closely together on a possible ‘Arts’ qualification that can have the Certificates and Diplomas acquired by students from these smaller Providers cross credited to a higher NUS Qualification if the student would like to further progress in such areas and hopefully be recognized overseas. Such practice in the ‘Trades’ areas is already undertaken by Punaoa and Don Bosco whereby their programs are accepted as bridging courses for entry into the National University of Samoa’s Institute of Technology programs.

4.4 Students drop out of school early without completing the program and obtaining the award or qualification

Because of the inability of some students to pay for their fees or pressures from parents to get a job to support the family, many drop out of School without completing qualifications. Usually when the opportunity arises either through personal contacts or school work attachments, the Providers have a problem retaining students.

Providers must find a way to work closely together with employers of their students to see to it that students are able to remain in school to complete their programs while working at the same time if their skills are already needed in the work force.

4.5 Some PSETs and Organizations that offer training are quite gender biased.

It is evident from the data analysis that more females than males are graduating from the Formal PSET Institutions that do offer females the opportunity to study.

On the other hand, there is much stereotyping that goes on with programs such as sewing, cooking and handicraft making, which are generally labeled as being ones best suited for females whereas males are seen to suit 'trades' courses.

Although some Providers have attempted in the past to change the normal mindset of students or their parents when it comes to stereotyping programs, more initiatives are still needed to be put into place to help encourage both genders to opt for courses that are naturally stereotyped as those that are undertaken by one particular gender. There also needs to be more opportunities given to females for second chance education such as that being offered to males who can enroll at an Institution such as Don Bosco if they did not do well at secondary school.

4.6 There are a number of PSET Providers who have used or still continue to use the grant from Government to supplement or pay for unpaid for school fees.

There is no doubt that PSET providers found the Government grant to be an indication of government support and recognition that they are contributing in a significant way to the human resource development of Samoa. How the grant was utilized was guided by the philosophical and practical beliefs of each provider given their resource constraints.

The withdrawal of the Government grant for some PSET providers will surely impact on them particularly as it was and is currently used to supplement student fees, assist with operational and administrative costs and also supplement teaching staff salaries in order to retain them.

With the removal of such assistance, the important question for Providers then becomes one of sustainability. Furthermore, where would the people undergoing these courses go to if such Providers did not exist?

For the Providers that have become experts at sourcing donor funding, it may be worthwhile for them to assist those that are not. The Samoa Umbrella for Non-Government

Organizations (SUNGO) has also much to offer PSET Providers in terms of sourcing donor funding and training to improve PSET operations.

4.7 Fees charged by PSET Providers of Formal and Non-formal Education and Training Activities

As mentioned earlier on, Providers charge their students a wide range of fees which are structured in such a way to consider various factors such as resources necessary for delivering the courses, maintenance of the facilities, staff salaries and the market value of the qualification gained.

From the student's point of view, it would be beneficial if a common fee structure could be developed for all PSET Providers with minor variations. A common fee structure would possibly have the advantages such as:

- a) Provide a level playing field for student choices. The choice of a PSET to attend would be based on the nature of training offered rather than affordability.
- b) Allow PSET Providers to specialize in what they do best. A counter example is the CCJS Theological College going into Music as there are already a couple of well established music schools in place.
- c) Fees can also be linked to the type of qualification enrolled in. Can all Certificate and Diploma courses be offered at a certain fee level, etc?

4.8 Providers offering programs that lead onto programs offered by External Providers

The fact that some Providers offer courses that enable their students to sit exams leading to qualifications by external providers (i.e., those that operate overseas) is a good sign. Not only would it be advantageous for students should they look for employment opportunities overseas, in addition, this will certainly be something that SQA should recognize and build upon particularly with regards to registration of qualifications on its Qualifications Framework.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- The findings that have arisen from the study have clearly revealed new issues for Government that firstly needs to be addressed and clarified before developing any new policies for the PSET sector.
- During the visits, many providers welcomed what the newly established Samoa Qualifications Authority is working towards given their own efforts in trying to achieve international recognition for their awards or qualifications.
- The increased number of enrolments for PSETs each year indicates the need for more places for students in these Institutions.
- The interviews conducted with government officials from the Ministries visited have highlighted possible opportunities for some Providers to introduce courses that can be tailor made to suit the needs of the private sector and Government priority areas.
- Some PSET Providers offer courses that are either similar in nature or bridge onto other programs offered by other Providers. For example, Punaoa and Don Bosco Certificates enable students from these PSETs to enter the NUS's Institute of Technology.
- The number of student drop outs remains a concern particularly if awards are near completion. PSET Providers can work collaboratively with employers to find ways of encouraging and enabling their students to complete their programs while at the same time be able to work if their skills are already needed in the workforce.
- Many PSETS have been assisted by donor agencies in the past. The assistance received has often come in the form of grants to assist with educational programs that are beneficial for the community, equipment (computers and musical instruments), resource materials (books) and teacher volunteers.

- Government Funding has also been quite essential in helping PSET Providers meet operational costs and supplementing unpaid for school fees. A few Providers have raised their concern about the cessation of the government grant for their Schools.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It can be concluded from the study that there are quite a few areas that need to be researched into before the Authority can be in a good position to develop appropriate policies that would assist Government with decision making as well as further develop the Post School Education and Training sector.

The following are some suggested research topics that the HRD Policy Division would like to undertake based on the objectives, the findings, and the issues and considerations raised from the study.

It is recommended that these be carried out in the coming year in conjunction with activities under an Institutional Strengthening Project for the Authority that will involve the Division. At this stage, clearly undertaking more than that which is recommended will no doubt negatively impact on a fairly new SQA and its HRD Policy staff. These recommendations are as follows:

PSET PROVIDER DATABASES:

- For PSET Providers to establish or set up proper databases.
This would allow for proper monitoring and co-ordination of PSET on its activities, resourcing and overall performance. The assistance particularly includes those that will continue to receive government funding.

PSET FUNDING

- For SQA to further look into this issue and to prepare a discussion paper for the Board to deliberate on.

STUDENT FUNDING: SCHOLARSHIPS FOR PRIORITY AREAS

- To investigate the possibility of offering scholarships in priority areas such as agriculture

and for the trades.

The scholarships should be operated in such a way aiming to resolve gender balance issues and should be encouraged for full time studies or certain programs that are typically seen or stereotyped to be undertaken by a specific gender.

ASSESSMENT AND POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

- For the Authority to work closely with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour to conduct an assessment of how the current Apprenticeship Scheme is operating and for Government to consider the possibility of expanding the Scheme to include other vocational training in other priority areas such as tourism development, IT and agriculture if findings on how the Scheme is currently working are significant.