

International Conference

16–18 October 2007 • Asian Development Bank, Manila, Philippines

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Samoa SchoolNet and Community Access Project

This presentation will describe and discuss the SSNCAP pilot project. It will focus on the technical solution for connectivity, the human capacity development (training of teachers and MESC staff) and the management and future sustainability of ICT in education in Samoa. Unlike projects in many other countries, the SSNCAP project has adopted the latest technology such as wireless broadband connectivity and thin client solution for its network solution for the learning centers. The solution has adopted a WAN with a single gateway connecting the WAN to internet services which has allowed close monitoring and managing of internet access and significantly reduced internet cost, which is very expensive in Samoa. The design has provided a stable system that can easily be migrated and adapted to the evolving technical capacity and infrastructure in Samoa. The development of human resource and capacity, both in terms of using ICT and in content generation for learning, has been a challenge and the pilot study has provided useful lessons for future ICT in education projects. The SSNCAP findings indicate that the approach to capacity development should be based on the existing baseline capacities, progressively developed adopting a long-term approach. Experience in sourcing ICT content will also be discussed. Finally, the presentation will discuss the pilot experience in recognizing the significance of encouraging and supporting ownership by all stakeholders as this is critical for the sustainability of IT education interventions in small island countries.

Hitendra Pillay is a Professor in the School of Learning and Professional Studies at Queensland University of Technology in Australia. He has extensive experience in education reform in developing countries and has worked on many World Bank and Asian Development Bank funded projects in the Balkans, Central and South East Asia, and the South Pacific region. Drawing on his academic research and social sector development work, his current interest is on synthesizing the fragmented research agendas into more holistic and cross-disciplinary models of knowledge creation, innovation and global development. He was the team leader for the Samoa Schoolnet and Community Access Pilot project. His full profile is available at <http://education.qut.edu.au/~pillay>.



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Rosemarie Esera is the Principal Information Technology Officer in the Ministry of Education, Sports & Culture in Samoa. Her expertise, local knowledge, perseverance and determination to integrate ICT in education have resulted in many pilot projects currently underway in schools and the community together with the expansion of the ICT Unit within the Ministry. More importantly she has been a strong advocate in ensuring the successful use of ICT to enhance education and in seeing it as a tool to be integrated within the educational system as a whole. She is a member of the National ICT Steering Committee and was the Deputy Team Leader for the Samoa SchoolNet and Community Access Pilot Project

