

# **The opportunities and challenges of using cricket as a sport-for-development tool in Samoa**

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## **Abstract**

This study investigates opportunities and challenges associated with the use of sport – in this case cricket – as a community development tool in Samoa. This Pacific Island nation, like others in the region, has been the focus of various development programs in the post-colonial era, with developed economy neighbours like Australia and New Zealand providing aid funding. Some of these programs have involved sport as a development tool, underpinned either by funding from the national government, foreign aid agencies, or a combination of both. This paper aims to explore the use of sport as a community engagement tool by focusing on a cricket-for-development (CFD) program in Samoa. The paper examines the activities of relevant sport and government organisations, and draws upon interviews with local stakeholders involved in the CFD process in Samoa. In short, the prime purpose of this paper is to identify and interpret – from the perspective of locals – what the CFD program has brought to Samoan communities thus far. This is important because, to date, there has been an absence of qualitative inquiry into the efficacy of sport-for-development programs in Samoa, and very limited research in a Pacific Islands context.

## **Introduction**

Over the last decade, sport has become a useful tool in the quest to pursue social development issues. Indeed, sport-for-development (SFD) is now part of the strategic policy apparatus of several major international aid organisations and development agencies such as the United Nations and the Australian Government's Agency for International Development, AusAID<sup>2</sup> (Australian Sports Commission 2011). However, while SFD has grown in scope and scale as social practice, it has only recently become a focus of concerted academic research

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Khoo conducted the fieldwork for this study as a volunteer with the Samoa International Cricket Association (SICA). At the time, he was a postgraduate student at UTS. He would like to acknowledge that this study would not have been possible without the support of SICA and the advice and assistance of Samoan community representatives.

<sup>2</sup> In 2013, AusAID was supplanted by the Australian Government's program Australian Aid, which is administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

(Levermore 2008; Darnell 2012). This is all the more problematic, Coalter (2013) asserts, because in terms of policy and practice SFD is often underfunded, unregulated, poorly planned/coordinated, and typically isolated from mainstream development efforts. This criticism is particularly relevant for SFD programs implemented by external agents in developing nations; there are opportunities, but tremendous challenges in environments with limited resources and infrastructure. All that said, there can be benefits associated with SFD, but only if locals are engaged as facilitators in a development program (Schulenkorf 2012). This research stems from the lead researcher's involvement as a volunteer in AusAID's Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development program. His participation consisted of a 12-month assignment with the Samoa International Cricket Association (SICA); the aim was to build the managerial and social capacity of local staff members, particularly by using cricket as a community development tool. The present study is an exploratory study of a SFD program that is very much in its infancy; the goal here is to identify opportunities and challenges using sport as a development vehicle in a Pacific Island context. A unique aspect of this empirical investigation is the use of cricket in Samoa: this sport is particularly interesting because a local form of the game is widely practised at the community level. It is different from the sport of cricket played at the elite level and the interplay between these two forms of the game is an intriguing dimension in this study.

### **Samoa Context**

The ten islands of Samoa are located in the south west Pacific Ocean, with only four of these islands inhabited. Samoa has a population of 187,820, with 36,735 or 19.6% being in the Apia (Samoa's capital) Urban Area region (Samoa Bureau of Statistics 2011). Apia is also the hub for various sport associations and the majority of organised sport in Samoa. While there is a significant amount of informal and unstructured sport played in rural Samoa, sport teams from villages regularly travel to Apia to compete in major competitions.

Historically, Western, codified sport in Samoa is a function of European colonisation. English cricket was introduced to Samoa in 1884 by the British Royal Navy, although formal matches were not really seen until much later with the formation of the 'Wanderers' club in 1964. Significantly though, there was local adaptation to the colonial game during that

intervening period. From the example of cricket, an indigenous game called 'kilikiti'<sup>3</sup> (also referred to as 'kirikiti') was created and embraced by many in the local population. Although there is scarce literature on the history of kilikiti, this game has become part of Samoan culture; it also shares many similarities with English cricket in terms of how matches are played. Kilikiti was easily naturalised to local circumstances with large teams, a lighter and bouncier ball, longer triangular-shaped bats, and a more pronounced emphasis on festivity and communal participation (Ryan 2007). The essence of kilikiti is that it is a socially inclusive game involving whole villages regardless of age or gender. Today kilikiti is played throughout communities in Samoa in a largely unstructured way, while cricket with its more formal structure is predominately played in geographical village clusters that surround purpose-built cricket grounds.

The Samoa International Cricket Association is the formal governing body for cricket in Samoa. It is assisted in-country by a number of sports-related and supporting organisations, including the Samoan Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture (MESOC), Special Olympics Samoa, as well as numerous schools, villages and community groups. SICA has very strong links to the Samoan Government, with the Chairman of SICA being the current Samoan Prime Minister, Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi. SICA has been an affiliate member of cricket's international governing body, the International Cricket Council (ICC), since 2000. It was then that cricket was formalised as a development program in Samoa. The ICC provides annual funding support, regional and international participation opportunities, as well as professional assistance and training in cricket development programs to 106 members across the world (International Cricket Council 2007). As an affiliate member, SICA receives this support from the ICC East Asia-Pacific regional office and it enables SICA to develop and manage cricket programs with a view to growing the game. However, while sport development (participation) is a fundamental goal, the deployment of cricket as a SFD tool is a more recent initiative, stemming largely from the assistance of Australian government agencies.

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<sup>3</sup> According to the Te Papa Museum Tongarewa Museum in Wellington, New Zealand (2014), kilikiti is 'a form of cricket, played Samoan style'. The game is thought to 'have been introduced to Samoa in the nineteenth century by visiting sailors and missionaries'. It is now 'a major summer sport for Samoans'. The basic rules are as follows: 'In Samoan kilikiti each team has two wicket keepers, and numbers can range from 10 to 20 players, involving all ages, women and children. The kilikiti bat called pate, is generally made from wood from the hibiscus or breadfruit tree, and can measure up to 1 metre long. Its triangular sectioned blade adds a weight advantage, and the narrow circular handle lashed with sennit (coconut husk fibre) binding, ensures a tight grip. The rubber ball uniquely made by continuously wrapping the latex fibre is extracted from the pulu vao tree (*Castilloa elastica*) or panama rubber tree.'

Samoa relies heavily upon assistance from foreign countries to finance both sport participation and social development goals. Since the 2011-12 financial year, there has been targeted funding into Samoa through the Australian Sports Outreach Program (ASOP) – a joint strategy and agreement between AusAID and the Australian Sports Commission (ASC). The ASOP ‘aims to increase the capacity of partners (local authorities, development partner agencies and communities) to plan and conduct quality, sport-based activities which contribute to addressing locally identified development priorities’ (Australian Sports Commission 2011). In Samoa, support through the ASOP includes two programs: (i) the Pacific Sports Partnership (PSP), which involves SICA receiving financial and logistical support from the Australian Government (AusAID and ASC), Cricket Australia and the ICC East Asia-Pacific (Australian Sports Commission 2012); and (ii) the Samoa Country Program, which is a partnership between the ASC and MESC to deliver the Samoa Sport for Development Program (SSfDP) (Commonwealth of Australia 2012).

Through the PSP, Australia has allocated AU\$15 million over a five-year period to establish and support sports partnerships between Australia, Oceania regional sports federations and their Pacific Island counterparts (Commonwealth of Australia 2012a). Samoa received an undisclosed share of a pool of AU\$402,000 (for the 2012-13 financial year), which is provided by AusAID through the PSP to Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Vanuatu for cricket-specific development goals. During that twelve months, a further AU\$60,525 was invested into the Samoa Country Program to deliver the SSfDP in their multi-sport approach (Parliament House of Australia 2012). As with all SFD programs, evaluation of spend and impacts thereof are important. Thus far, the SSfDP provides a self-monitoring and evaluation framework. It was also part of an independent evaluation of ASOP Country Programs conducted in 2013 by AusAID (ASOP 2013). The present paper adds to that literature by offering an evaluation of opportunities and challenges in a Samoan CFD program.

### **Literature review**

To understand and discuss localised benefits and limitations in respect of a SFD program, it is necessary to contemplate the notion of community development. There are numerous definitions of this concept, each with a slightly different focus. One group of scholars has suggested that as an activity, community development is ‘a group of people in a locality initiating a social action process (i.e. a planned intervention) to change their economic, social,

cultural or environmental situation' (Frisby and Millar 2002). Vail (2007) believes that, fundamentally, community development involves agency – helping people improve their life conditions through a sense of shared common interests. Lawson (2005) sees community development as a concept that underpins plans and activities for building and re-building local institutions and neighbourhood structures; this being a particular priority for those living in poverty or who experience social exclusion, social isolation and either inter or intra community conflict.

Lawson (2005) points to five prominent contributions that sport, exercise and physical education programs may have on a community: (i) production and/or reinforcement of social networks; (ii) the development of collective identities; (iii) improvements to human health (including health-enhancing environments); (iv) a heightened sense of holistic well-being; and (v) the development of human capital. He asserts that the key to achieving these community benefits lies with professionals who deliver the programs being able to empower others, who are then skilled in community building and effective collaboration. These findings are particularly relevant in terms of SFD projects in the Pacific where there is a similar focus on sport professional agents building local capacity to plan and deliver sustainable community development programs. Clearly, the focus is not solely on sport development in the form of participation, but on developing people and communities *through* sport.

Research undertaken by Burnett (2006, 2009), which focused on SFD programs in South Africa, is highly pertinent to this paper. The 'Active Community Clubs Initiative' (ACCI) used a number of team sports – including cricket – to effectively mobilise social capital through network functioning and individual empowerment. The South African ACCI initiative was facilitated by the ASC and is part of AusAID's ASOP. The community benefits that were identified from this initiative included enhanced job opportunities for youth, increased social trust between coaches and participants, reduced social distance between parents and children, and increased self-esteem (Burnett 2009). The study concluded that a program such as ASOP can assist in the creation of professional opportunities for those who are involved, but also that team sports – with their focus on working in groups – can be effective in enhancing social inclusion and individual confidence in the community.

Stewart-Withers and Brook (2009) have researched the impact that rugby league can play in a SFD context in the Pacific – primarily in Papua New Guinea. They found clear evidence of community benefits from rugby league’s approach to SFD, particularly through the use of high profile players as ambassadors. Players from different indigenous backgrounds – including players of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island, Papua New Guinean and Pacific Islands descent – have been involved in initiatives to mentor individuals and promote positive life pathways and cultural awareness. Many of these initiatives – particularly targeting troubled youths – were effective in conveying a positive message; in part, this stemmed from the players’ prominence and the respect they have built within their rugby league fan base. The program encouraged health promotion, youth development and social cohesion. While this research exhibited a correlation between involvement in SFD programs and positive community outcomes for selected individuals, the longevity of the ambassador/role model approach is open to question. Therefore, follow-up research is needed, including long-term assessments regarding the sustainability of such programs.

It is indeed important to acknowledge scepticism about SFD. Some critics have argued that it is naive to assume that sport is inherently suitable as a community development tool; these scholars caution against SFD idealism and, more seriously, a ‘sport evangelist’ view where it is assumed that sport has a ‘special’ quality or power to dramatically change lives (Coalter 2010; Giulianotti 2004). For example, they have noted that this fundamentalist faith in the transformative power of sport is associated with a belief that SFD programs can almost ‘magically’ improve the quality of individual lives and address serious problems in communities under stress (Giulianotti 2004: 28; Coakley 2011). Others have argued there is no blind faith or magic about such a process; community development needs to be driven by engagement with stakeholders, understanding the nuances of their needs, an appreciation of the complexity of program context, the provision of adequate staff, ongoing funding, and so on. For SFD programs to be effective there needs to be strategic development of policies and practices that align with needs of locals, together with plans to achieve community outcomes that have the support, skills and resources needed to provide sustainability (Vail 2007; Lawson 2005; Chalip 2006; Darnel 2012; Schulenkorf & Adair 2014).

Indeed, for sport to play an effective role in gauging and delivering positive social outcomes, there must be a tailored approach accompanied by an awareness of resources and needs, as well as a strategic program structure and appropriate means of implementation (Skinner,

Zakus & Cowell 2008; Hartmann & Kwauk 2011; Schulenkorf & Adair 2014). Poor design of programs is a common issue, as has been reported in Zambia where SFD NGOs have duplicated efforts and competed against each other for scarce resources (Lindsey & Banda 2011). Similarly, a study of the Siyadlala and School Sport Mass Participation Program in South Africa showed that unequal power relations during program implementation accentuated gender and class divisions in that community (see Burnett 2006). Hence, SFD programs are not inherently successful in achieving their aim of community benefits and claims about their potential contribution to social capital should be treated with caution (Schulenkorf 2013).

According to the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2011), community development in a Pacific Islands context normally involves a grassroots approach where all members of the community are invited to participate and take responsibility (as they see it) for improving aspects of their lives in their locality. As indicated, though, the literature on SFD in a Pacific Island context is rather limited; research relating directly to Samoa is particularly scarce. Hartmann and Kwauk's (2011) study on the impact of sport-based development programs in Pacific Island communities is one of the few exceptions. The authors found that sport-based programs in Samoa often deployed Eurocentric attitudes to health, education and social development in the community, this providing significant challenges of uptake for locals. They considered that sport is generally a good 'hook' to involve the community, but questioned whether external interventions were in fact relevant and meaningful in terms of development outcomes for local communities. There are, moreover, challenges with SFD programs in terms of monitoring, evaluating and reporting, each of which is important for goals of effectiveness and sustainability.

## **Method**

This study sought to develop understanding by engaging in dialogue with stakeholders in a Samoan cricket-for-development (CFD) context. Maykut and Morehouse (1994) have emphasised that qualitative research can be a very useful exploratory tool in research of this kind, for it allows interpretations to be formed based on comments and findings from 'those who matter most' – people with the lived experience of a phenomenon under investigation. With the aim of forming a deep and thorough understanding of human experiences and attitudes, qualitative research allows investigators to discover how participants feel and relate

to certain social events, giving the researchers an understanding of what is occurring, how things are unfolding, and why they are taking place (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 1997). It should be noted that qualitative research has limitations, notably that the often small sample size of research participants results in findings that are not necessarily relevant to or reflected in a wider population (Jones 1997), and are thus not generalisable. As will now be discussed, the research undertaken in this paper drew specifically upon feedback from key locals involved in the development and implementation of CFD strategies in Samoa.

Central to this case study are the opinions, recommendations and implications of nine key informants: these were people identified as integral to the planning and implementation of CFD programs in Samoa. Semi-structured in-depth interviews with this targeted group of experts were the major source of data. This approach provided an opportunity for fluid dialogue between the researcher and the participants and added to the experiences of the researcher over a period of time (Kvale 1996; Rubin and Rubin 2005). Interviews were guided by two main areas of questioning: (i) Has cricket provided social opportunities for communities in Samoa? (ii) What have been the major challenges using cricket as a development tool? The data gathered from these interviews were integrated into the data gathered through content analysis of document analysis of relevant textual material – key program reports, manuals, brochures and websites pertinent to cricket and development in Samoa. In the process of analysis of the amalgamated data, key themes emerged. Selected data from this research is therefore presented as a combination of feedback from participant interviews, as well as information from documentary sources – salient articles, reports and statistics from public forums. That approach adds value to the interview data collected; it is fundamentally important complimentary evidence.

From a sampling perspective, the research was very focused, with participants chosen purposefully based on their level of involvement in CFD programs in Samoa. Participants were recruited from a wide spectrum of program stakeholders: an Australian diplomat to Samoa, Australian Government SFD consultants, an international cricket development specialist, a Samoan village church cleric, directors of Samoan sport organisations, and key local CFD staff members. The interviewees provided to the principal researcher their written consent for the involvement, the proviso being that they be deidentified. Data for the interviews with the nine respondents was manually transcribed and coded. Welsh (2002) asserts that manual methods of coding provide the researcher with a personal engagement

with the data, this allowing for greater sensitivity in the interpretation of data. The manual reading and re-reading of transcripts is rigorous and more iterative than software-facilitated approaches to textual analysis. The manual process was particularly suitable for this study because of the small number of interview subjects, making depth of dialogue with each respondent especially important. Ultimately, the manual process provided a tactile means of reading the data, allowing for flexibility in the identification of emergent themes.

Subsequently, the principal researcher consulted with the interview respondents to check whether the manual coding and interpretations offered were consistent with what they each conveyed during verbal dialogue.

Case studies always have limitations. This paper seeks to yield context-specific knowledge that is relevant to CFD agents and locals in Samoa. It does not seek to unravel universal truths; the uniqueness of the Samoan context flies in the face of generalist assumptions (Flyvbjerg 2006). This is a crucial point: planning for development outcomes varies significantly between countries and cultures in which programs are run (Schulenkorf and Adair 2014a). However, other programs may be able to learn from the experiences provided, and use suggestions and recommendations from this study in an adjusted way to suit their own needs.

## **Findings**

The data provided evidence of opportunities for cricket as a community development in Samoa, but it also identified major challenges. From the nine interviews undertaken there were significant commonalities. The prominent themes in respect of community engagement from CFD were: improved inclusiveness; better gender equality; enhanced social cohesion; raised health awareness; and greater travel opportunities. The main challenges identified were: inadequate resources; poor collaboration; ineffective monitoring and evaluation of programs; lack of education; and cricket's limited fit into traditional Samoan culture.

### *Inclusiveness*

Cricket is a sport that involves a wide range of people in Samoan communities. Although the national sport is rugby union, the aggressively physical nature of that game can be an obstacle to some people's involvement. Cricket, on the other hand, has a capacity for participation from a wide spectrum of the Samoan community:

Cricket just has the ability to transcend all gender, all hierarchical barriers. So even if someone has a disability they can still play cricket. Male and females – we have broken down those barriers allowing both to be able to play equally together. Also from any ages – you can have a five year old boy bowling to a Reverend and it can still be fun, or a Reverend bowling to a five year old boy. (SICA representative)

The inclusive nature of cricket, with several modified forms, can incorporate those less skilled or mobile, including people with a (minor) disability. Numerous cricket programs have been established that show collaboration between SICA and disability groups, such as Special Olympics Samoa, the Association for the Blind, as well as Senese Inclusive Education. CFD programs have actually brought disability communities together, allowing networks to grow across Samoa. A member of Special Olympics Samoa stated:

As our athletes enjoy cricket, they are encouraged by the support and excitement of our volunteers and parents within our community... This (cricket) engages everyone and anyone with or without a disability. Sessions and trainings to equip community volunteers make them feel responsible.

### *Gender equality*

Cricket was seen by key informants as a sport that can help to break down gender barriers in participation. SICA has targeted cricket to promote gender equality, placing particular importance on female participation at all levels of the game. The interviewees indicated that junior participation at a grassroots level has produced an even ratio of boys and girls and the level of support at an elite level is also equally weighted for both genders, with national teams of men and women competing at ICC-sanctioned tournaments (Samoa International Cricket Association 2014). A leading figure of the ICC East Asia-Pacific outlined the reasons for cricket breaking down gender barriers in Samoa:

I'm sure kilikiti has helped in the past but also cricket is a non-contact sport. The Samoan women's team has also been quite successful at national level and they have had some good players who are based locally (and) who have gone back to their villages to really pump things up.

Cricket has thus been successful in providing women with the same opportunity to participate in the game as men at the grassroots level. At the administrative level, though, cricket appears to be making slower progress in terms of gender equity. In a country where 73% of all jobs are taken by men (Samoa Bureau of Statistics 2011), cricket in Samoa has provided a small number of employment and professional development opportunities for females. In early

2012 SICA employed its first full-time female staff members, filling the senior roles of Development Manager and Administration Officer. One ICC East Asia-Pacific representative pointed to the positive steps that SICA are taking to promote gender equality:

...given the fact that they (SICA) have got females on their board and they have a female in a really senior role in their organisation as Development Manager, I think the gender side of things is an area they could really excel in empowering women through those villages and providing opportunities for women for professional development and employment.

### *Social cohesion and leadership*

This study of CFD identified social cohesion opportunities for Samoan communities. Key informants thought that the nature of cricket – being a team sport and non-contact – lent itself to wide access, community engagement and socialisation. The village system, complemented by strong links to church groups, has a positive impact in terms of involving community groups through cricket. A strong advocate of cricket is a local Reverend of Iva village. He encourages the youth of his village to be involved in cricket as players, officials or administrators, since he sees the values of cricket to be closely linked to his Christian beliefs:

The gentlemen's nature of cricket and the teamwork that it builds are vital factors that have a positive impact in the village. This leads to a strong and united community ... I like the youth to play cricket as they get to meet other people in the village, build relationships and work together as a team.

The exposure of Samoa's youth to cricket was seen by a number of informants as a boon to promoting them as youth leaders. Cricket programs provide opportunities for youth to be leaders as captains, team managers, coaches and officials. In these roles they become representatives of their village, church or cricket club and are thus required to show a greater level of responsibility. Prominent youth members can meet youth of other villages and, in addition to cricket, have been found to discuss wider topics and issues in respect of their communities. The opportunity for youth to build leadership skills is furthered by the regular participation of village elders, who show guidance and mentor youth while playing cricket. A representative of the Australian Sports Commission believes cricket is a sport that breaks down all age restrictions for involvement in Samoa:

I feel cricket is somewhat unique because it provides opportunities for inter-generational interaction. There aren't many sports where three generations can legitimately compete together at a club level.

The presence of cricket development programs and their planned expansion into rural areas of Samoa has also provided a small number of employment opportunities. In 2012, SICA employed the first staff member based on the island of Savai'i. This is a major step in creating sustainable cricket programs; more importantly, it suggests to community members the social opportunities that cricket can create if they are involved in promoting the game and engaging with locals in a positive way. A SICA representative described the approach to providing employment:

For cricket, this is a real goal – not just to play, but to offer help to people and spread out the game especially to help the families and community to give them a job.

Employment of staff does not solely help the individual. In a community that is very family-orientated, providing money to an extended family is an integral part of Samoan culture (Thornton, Kerslake & Binns 2010). Another SICA representative argued that employing people in rural and village areas had a positive impact on the wider community:

It [employment] doesn't just affect those staff. It affects their families and also their small communities around them, which is good for their local economies and small villages.

### *Health awareness*

A number of informants identified the role that cricket plays in targeting increased physical activity and thereby contributing towards knowledge about the prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). With one of the highest rates of overweight and obese people in the world, Samoa is facing significant public health issues; hence, the Government of Samoa has been advocating NCD prevention programs and physical activity projects. For example, with the assistance of MESC, SICA has approached villages to participate in the SSfDP, with community leaders nominating a 'Village Sport Leader' who is provided with support to run sporting programs. An international ASC SFD consultant outlined their approach to raising NCD awareness:

Village Sport Leaders self-organising large scale, ongoing physical activity in and between villages ties into key strategic areas of the Samoa National NCD strategy.

Promoting health awareness programs is something that SICA has targeted in the past, and the association continues to collaborate with health awareness organisations. SICA was awarded the 'Spirit of Cricket Initiative' in the ICC East Asia-Pacific Region Development Program Annual Awards for 2007 (Frayne 2008). That award was recognition for the 'Run

Out AIDS' promotion that was implemented in partnership with the Samoa Red Cross and Samoa Aids Foundation, combining cricket participation with HIV/AIDS awareness sessions. Similar programs including sessions with a focus on NCDs have continued since this time, and a leading SICA manager stressed the need to nurture these collaborative relationships:

In seeing that we have created a platform that we can leverage off and go forward with into the future – we are open to the opportunities to the chance to take those ideas further and get the Ministry of Health and the Aids Awareness Foundation a lot more actively involved in our programs.

### *Travel opportunities*

An interesting finding came from those who were born and raised in Samoa; these respondents specifically identified the opportunity that cricket may provide for Samoans to travel. The chance to experience life abroad is something that a local Minister encourages the youth of his church, with cricket being seen as an avenue through which they can achieve this:

Travelling to new places and meeting new people gives the youth a whole new view on life. They are able to experience other people's cultures and find new opportunities.

A SICA representative, who has experienced significant overseas travel due to her involvement in cricket as a player and an administrator, discussed the exposure that she and other female cricketers have had, which has allowed them to see various parts of the world and meet different people with different talents. She emphasised that these were experiences she would not have had if not for an involvement in cricket. That view was supported by a senior SICA representative, who stated that the ICC's involvement in SFD programs – with funding from AusAID – is aimed at supporting SICA owned and run programs by targeting capacity building as well as personal and professional development.

(We) provide opportunities for various staff to travel to Australia and New Zealand for professional development and .... lots of different courses.

### *Inadequate resources*

When questioned about the challenges associated with cricket being used as a development tool in Samoa, all informants identified a lack of resources as a major barrier. The cost of expensive cricket equipment is an impediment to participation by a majority of Samoan people. A general lack of equipment was identified as a major problem in engaging people long term in cricket programs. Informants argued that providing villages and schools with

equipment was essential to the sustainability of cricket development programs, for this would allow people to be involved regularly in the game. Fundamentally, without equipment, people may experience a one-off 'cricket experience' but will not have a further opportunity to play the game again. A SICA Development Manager explained:

Lack of equipment is hard as when you go there [to a village or school] you have to leave something for them to practice. There is a need to show them and teach them, but how can they practice if there is no equipment?

By contrast, kilikiti requires minimal equipment, and implements such as bats, balls and stumps are simply made from trees that are naturally abundant on the islands.

Cricket in Samoa faces tough competition from other sports and does not receive the same level of funding as rugby union, football (soccer), rugby league and netball. The informants raised a number of resource challenges, including a lack of equipment, facilities, transport and human resources to effectively run programs, which ultimately stem from insufficient finance. Another SICA representative mentioned the strain that limited finances has on attracting workers and volunteers to assist in running cricket programs and spreading the game across the country.

We have a problem of a shortage of workers, but in Samoa and in the villages people are willing to come join us... Our financial system is an issue as we need enough to pay people.

To get more people involved in cricket throughout Samoa, several informants mentioned the challenge faced with limited facilities and transport. One SICA representative suggested that more structured competitions are an effective way to get people involved, but this involves adequate venues and spaces. The small amount and location of such facilities in Samoa is not ideal for such a proposal. This is particularly so if transport is required for different villages and schools to compete against one another on the cricket field. The onus of providing such transport for villages and schools has fallen on SICA, which is generally a costly exercise for the organisation.

### *Poor collaboration*

With many stakeholders involved in the delivery of CFD programs in Samoa, collaboration between these groups was raised as a challenge. A key to this is communication between SICA and MESC. This is particularly important: MESC play a considerable role in

controlling which sports are played in schools, as well as sports chosen in the delivery to villages via the SSfDP. The challenge faced by poor communication in the past was identified by both parties. A leading manager of SICA stated:

I think that a lack of planning is something that prevents people working together here and a lack of communication between the Ministries and sporting bodies creates a real issue... We (SICA and MESC) had both made plans to work together for a while but due to lack of planning and communication from both sides it just did not go ahead like planned.

Outside funding into SFD has grown, particularly with the implementation of the ASOP in Samoa. However, the interviewees indicated that notwithstanding this increased support, sport organisations have tended to work separately rather than collaboratively in terms of optimising the potential shared benefits of these resources. Indeed, coordination of sport activities is fundamentally important for the participation of community members. For example, an ASC representative pointed to challenges associated with the delivery of both organised sport and physical education in school settings:

In Samoa, as well as some other PSP countries, the growth in uncoordinated activity has placed pressure on schools to give the sports access to children. Schools have reported that sports have been allowed to conduct activities at the expense of delivering the physical education and health curriculum.

This ASC representative alluded to the challenge of communicating a clear idea of the overarching purpose of the PSP. This was seen as particularly important given the diverse array of sport organisations involved in providing activities through schools. In addition, the sports organisations themselves sometimes found difficulties accessing key stakeholders in villages. This is something that the ASC is supporting MESC to address; it is assumed that improved communication will benefit all.

#### *Program outcomes*

The challenge of monitoring and evaluating the development opportunities in Samoa was raised as a concern by informants. Currently, SICA records participation data of those who are involved in cricket activities, as well as sporadic anecdotal evidence from participants. A representative of the ICC East Asia-Pacific explained that there is a need to get more and better quality data in order to provide reliable indicators as to the impacts of development programs. He stated:

There is some anecdotal evidence about social cohesion and health promotion and things like that but it's now about getting in deep and getting some qualitative data.

A representative of the ASC argued that capacity of sports organisations to administer their sport, while also trying to achieve other agendas (such as SFD), is highly variable. This makes it difficult for a small organisation with limited resources (like SICA) to be able to evaluate their programs effectively while attending to all other operational activities. He concluded:

Current monitoring and evaluation data from SICA covers participation figures but is limited in its detail around who is participating. This is a common issue amongst PSP sports and sports federations. Generally the sports are collecting participation data but don't have the tools to analyse this data in any detail.

#### *Lack of knowledge and education*

Key informants were of the opinion that, generally, people throughout Samoa have little knowledge of the international game of cricket; they are much more familiar with kilikiti, the local game. Growing up in Samoa, a SICA representative argued that educating the Samoan people about the game of cricket was a particularly difficult challenge, yet essential to getting people involved at a young age. She went on to say that it was not just the wider community but also those within the cricket community who needed more education on the game.

Within the association we also need to have more education and people with a background in cricket who know about cricket. For example, a SICA Administration Officer plays volleyball and she never played cricket, but she has the willingness to promote cricket but she needs to learn more about the game to promote it.

According to an SIC interviewee, educating the wider community about the sport of cricket is also impacted by its low media profile in Samoa. Stempel (2005) has taken a similar argument previously, identifying a positive association between sport engagement, sport spectatorship and sport participation. As the SIC informant, explained, with minimal opportunities for cricket to be shown to Samoan television audiences due to limited national involvement in high-level competitions, together with an inability to get domestic matches filmed and broadcast, elite-level cricket has a much lower profile in Samoa than, for example, rugby.

### *Cricket's limited ability to fit Samoan culture/environment*

The prominence of kilikiti – a very popular local game with basic similarities to English cricket – was generally seen by informants to be constraining the uptake of the formal game of cricket. A representative of the Australian High Commission (Samoa Post) raised the fact that the Samoan Prime Minister, Tuilaepa Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi, who is also the Chairman of SICA, had in the past proscribed kilikiti in favour of English cricket. However, a majority of those involved with SICA considered that kilikiti is a crucial building block and opportunity to develop the ICC's version of cricket in Samoa. Indeed, as one of the informants explained, the Prime Minister's stance on kilikiti has not stopped Samoans playing their local game. It has, though, seen many people identifying 'English' cricket as a threat to their indigenous game, which has negative flow-on effects on the image and reputation of cricket in Samoa.

### **Discussion**

The aims of this study were to explore perceptions of community development opportunities for CDP in Samoa and to discuss challenges that were seen to be faced in that process. This section of the paper now examines the implications of the research findings and their relevance to both SFD practitioners and researchers. It is, of course, important to keep in mind the limitations of this case study, which provides no more than a snapshot of the use of CFD in one Pacific Island nation. Yet there is virtue in such a very focused enterprise. The principal researcher, after interviewing key informants in Samoa, has created a knowledge base around opportunities and challenges for CFD in this country, an approach that is typical of SFD research globally – where case study analysis and localised data gathering are dominant methodologies (Levermore & Beacom 2009; Adair & Schulenkorf 2014a). This knowledge is limited but important: advocates of SFD are seeking to learn about the efficacy of programs in different parts of the world. More specifically, in Samoa there has been a dearth of qualitative research into either SFD or CFD. This paper makes a contribution by exploring an emerging CFD program, and by investigating opportunities and challenges associated with its inception and implementation.

### *Social inclusion, community engagement, and health awareness*

In terms of CFD in Samoa, cricket seems able to successfully promote gender equality, both in terms of participation in the sport, as well as providing limited opportunities for players to

compete at the elite level. Often, the largely domestic role that a woman plays in the family creates a cultural barrier to sport participation in Samoa (Right to Play 2008). However, cricket in Samoa has proven a challenge to this norm as 46% of the 7985 cricket participants in the 2012/2013 season were female (International Cricket Council East Asia-Pacific 2012). The village-wide style of community participation has allowed for both men and women, boys and girls, to take part in similar proportion. However, any claims of improved gender relations outside the sporting grounds need to be treated with caution (see Schulenkorf 2013; Jeanes and Magee 2014). Indeed, follow-up research will be needed to investigate if there are flow-on effects for families and wider communities in Samoa.

Social inclusion was an important theme in the data. Cricket was found to be attractive to some owing to it being a non-contact sport, which is quite different to male-dominated rugby union. Having more people from the community involved in SFD programs gives cricket potential to provide the foundations upon which to build social capital through game-specific networks, skill development in managing the game, and empowerment of individuals in key roles, such as captains and coaches. Burnett's SFD research in South Africa has indicated possibilities for achieving this, though such developments are more likely as a program is given time to mature (Burnett 2006).

Increasing health awareness is a strong priority for those involved in the design and implementation of CFD programs in Samoa. In the past, there has been positive work by SICA in relation to HIV/AIDS awareness programs, but the need to specifically target NCDs in Samoa is extremely important. Samoa shows some of the highest rates of obesity in the world with 45% of males and 67% of females over the age of 19 being classified officially as obese (World Health Organization 2012). Cricket is not physically arduous by comparison to rugby union, and to some participants this is part of its attraction. Additionally, cricket does provide opportunities for healthy levels of physical activity and exercise. On a wider community level, interviewees in this study argued that cricket offers a potential advantage over other popular sports in the Pacific Islands such as rugby and football. As a non-contact game, cricket is widely considered by locals to be gender neutral (particularly when compared to rugby) and a physically safe option, especially for juniors, the elderly, people with disabilities, and recreational participants. Of course, CFD is only relevant where the game of cricket is well known; sports with a more global in reach, such as soccer and

basketball, tend to be the focus of most SFD programs (as examples, see Hognestad & Tollisen 2004; Hartmann 2012).

Opportunities to travel were also seen by interviewees as a significant benefit of CFD programs. Indeed, the case for travel was raised by those who have lived only in Samoa, rather than those who are from non-Samoan backgrounds. The prospect of experiencing life abroad thus appears to be a strong incentive for those involved in cricket at the elite level in Samoa. Previous research in a SFD context has focused predominantly on local social and physical benefits of participation in organised physical activity (as examples, see Burnett 2006 2009; Schulenkorf & Adair 2014) without considering external aspirations on the part of those with representative ambitions. Other studies, though, have indicated that travel opportunities (and even migration) are an attractive element of representative participation in sport, whether in Samoa or other Pacific Island communities, where many locals lack the resources and opportunity to travel outside of their region (Grainger 2006; Kanemasu & Molnar 2013).

Interviewees contended that cricket is a highly inclusive sport in Samoa, particularly when targeting those with low fitness levels and people with a disability, who constitute 2.2% of Samoa's population (Samoa Bureau of Statistics 2011). The flexibility that cricket can create in providing participation opportunities to those with differing abilities, such as by modifying rules and equipment, appears to offer options to a range of participants, irrespective of age, ability or physicality. However, at present existing SFD programs do not seem to take full advantage of the potential that cricket – and indeed the local game kirikiti – might offer. A shift away from what Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) have described as Eurocentric attitudes to health, education and social development could pave away forward in making cricket (in all its forms) truly inclusive for the wider community. For this to be achieved, cooperation with local (interest) groups will be a key to making the game and its desired outcomes more relevant and meaningful to locals (see Vail 2007; Lawson 2005; Darnel 2012).

#### *Improving monitoring & evaluation*

According to interviewees, the education of staff members who deliver cricket programs is an essential element of the quest to optimise monitoring evaluation (M&E) practices in Samoan CFD. . Indeed, it is well understood that the process of M&E is fundamental to understanding the effectiveness of SFD programs (Coalter 2010; Kaufman, Rosenbauer and Moore 2014).

In line with this, the ASC has therefore implemented an M&E partner who facilitated a workshop for all sports and countries involved in the PSP – training selected members of sport organisations in the use of qualitative and quantitative M&E tools to determine program impacts. An ASC representative revealed that he is hopeful that, as a consequence of this education, M&E practices would continue to improve:

We expect this training and the establishment of formal M&E frameworks will help the PSP partners and the Pacific federations (including SICA) to better indicate the impacts of their programs including their PSP-funded activities. But at this stage this data is limited.

Further to this, the ICC East Asia-Pacific has identified three specific M&E areas that require focus: (i) establishing a Logical Framework Matrix for programs (ensuring planned outcomes are identified); (ii) budgeting sufficiently for M&E; and (iii) upskilling staff in M&E principles and techniques (International Cricket Council East Asia-Pacific 2012). The implementation of these suggested areas for improvement will require ongoing observation, for, as Kaufman et al (2014) have lamented, M&E tends to be largely underfunded and often overlooked in many SFD initiatives around the world.

### *Improving collaboration*

Poor collaboration was a major challenge raised by respondents. The common response in addressing this issue was simply to improve the frequency and quality of communication between key stakeholders. Although obvious, this is a key for progress in addressing development goals, as poor collaboration ultimately leads to inefficient and inequitable allocation of resources. This finding is consistent with Lawson (2005), who identified the need for effective collaboration to allow the prospect of community benefit. That appears to be a major issue in the Samoan context as there are a number of stakeholders who are trying to achieve similar development goals through the use of cricket, yet appear to not fully leverage off each other's efforts or resources. This is a common issue, as dealing with community partners is often problematic for those within a sporting organisation (Vail 2007). A representative of the ICC East Asia-Pacific believes that the key for cricket to expand in the future is for SICA to formalise partnerships with other stakeholders outside of MESC and the ASC. By formalising partnerships, he believes that there will be stronger relationships and a more efficient allocation of resources towards common goals. A senior SICA representative identified health awareness as an area where it could build strong relationships

with the Samoa Ministry of Health, Samoa Aids Foundation and Samoa Red Cross, to involve each of them in SICA programs and competitions.

Another area that was identified as a barrier to development was a lack of collaboration between different sports federations and conflicting scheduling with one another. Coakley (2011) asserts that many NGOs and agencies do a poor job of coordinating efforts to achieve similar development goals. In Samoa, collaboration between sports federations is loosely regulated by MESC, although this did not eliminate problems. A senior ASC representative explained that sports federations had recognised the need to clarify their schedules and have been aiming to create a unified sporting calendar, facilitated by MESC, to better coordinate the activities conducted by different sports.

#### *Improving training and education*

A major challenge identified with cricket in Samoa was a lack of local knowledge about the game itself – particularly compared to kilikiti. The need to build the capacity of local staff members and volunteers is vital. SFD programs often place significant importance on local capacity building, community development and local sustainability (Coalter 2010); concurrently a gradual reduction of input by program administrators may allow the local community to increase their involvement and sense of ownership of programs (Schulenkorf 2010). It appears from the findings of this study that learning about cricket is foremost and essential, most likely as an extension to existing knowledge of kilikiti, but further education on targeting community development strategies through cricket programs would be an equally positive focus.

It seems likely that the opportunity for people to receive training and education would assist in building the volunteer base in the cricket community in Samoa. Burnett (2006) found that through the Active Community Club in South Africa, training opportunities for potential volunteers and coaches was very empowering, giving people skills with the aims of preparing them for employment. With over 40% of the Samoan working-age population reported to be not economically active and undertaking ‘domestic duties’ (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2011), the opportunity to involve more people in the community and provide them with skills in cricket and community development seems apt.

### *Optimising minimal resources*

The need for often expensive equipment to run CFD programs and the associated high costs to purchase that hardware continues to be a barrier. The findings indicated that both SICA and MESC have difficulties in being able to provide sufficient equipment to distribute to villages and schools, although both saw this as an essential factor in the sustainability of any cricket program. Rather than SICA or MESC directly supplying equipment to villages and schools, a number of ideas were raised. These included putting the onus on villages or schools to purchase their own equipment, or using natural resources and human skills to craft cricket equipment – similar to the approach of kilikiti. Both of these options appear problematic due to the cost for villages to purchase equipment and a lack of available education on how to craft cricket equipment (as opposed to that for kilikiti). One SICA representative has suggested that the organisation should better utilise partnerships that they have with the cricket equipment donation charity Cricket4Kids, as well as the funding support they receive through the ASOP. Ultimately, it appears that a more targeted approach when allocating resources is needed in order to provide equipment that is essential to running sustainable cricket programs. As an ICC representative put it:

We can actually get more benefit out of doing more targeted programs rather than just trying to do everything at once. Then in the future as we show our governing body – the ICC – that we are able to achieve their goals we will actually be able to get more income.

The limited ability of SICA to attract workers and volunteers was identified as another barrier. With financial resources already a concern, they play a key role in Samoa in terms of reducing the costs to run programs, while the work undertaken has a high social and economic value (Coalter 2005). Their involvement is also fundamental in developing community inclusiveness (Putnam 2000; Coalter 2005). Burnett (2006) has argued that in the South African case volunteering tended to raise an individual's sense of dignity, self-worth and empowerment. She stated: 'the fact that opportunity may lead to empowerment and investment in volunteering, is a worthwhile choice for the individual' (p. 289). Highlighting the benefits of involvement to prospective volunteers could also be important in the Samoan context.

### *Embedding cricket in Samoan culture*

Interviewees each contended that similarities between kilikiti and cricket should be fostered, not stymied. Indeed, kilikiti was seen by them as an important step to continue the growth of cricket, so long as it remained sensitive to the cultural significance of kilikiti. All respondents who were questioned on this topic saw kilikiti as an essential building block for cricket to grow in the communities. As a SICA commentator observed:

From a development perspective, it is important that English/international cricket is not developed at the expense of kilikiti.

Another SICA administrator believed that incorporating cricket into more villages depended on their organisation's capacity to develop tangible links with people who play kilikiti, and subsequently inviting them to be part of SICA's CDF program – thereby allowing for the promotion of *both* sports. This is something of a dilemma: trying to promote an international game while endeavouring not to compromise the cultural importance and authenticity of a longstanding local custom. Will the global and local find a way of co-promoting and feeding off each other? There are fledgling initiatives under way: since 2011 SICA has run a 'Junior KirriKriket Program' that aims to provide an 'enjoyable introduction to Samoa's most popular bat and ball sport'. SICA has, therefore, intelligently recognised the benefits of promoting both kilikiti and cricket (Samoan International Cricket Association 2014a).

### **Conclusion**

According to the interviewees in this study, CFD programs in Samoa have shown an ability to provide tangible, even if limited opportunities for improved physical activity and social engagement. While CFD initiatives in Samoa appear to have been generally beneficial to communities, such a conclusion needs to be tempered by the embryonic nature, modest scope and limited scale of the present study. Indeed, in terms of the future, there needs to be improved planning and resourcing of CFD activities in Samoa; otherwise anticipated benefits to local communities will not be sustained. CFD events and activities in this region will not have lasting impact without community structures in place to support them: in that respect effective local management, meaningful cultural engagement and regular participation are the developmental building blocks.

This study found that modified rules and equipment can assist in creating an inclusive environment for people of all abilities to participate in a sport – in this case cricket. Samoan kilikiti also appears to have the potential to provide a culturally familiar platform for a link to cricket. However, further research is needed into the relationship between these two activities at the community level. Significantly, cricket in Samoa is largely a gender inclusive sport, unlike the dominant sport of rugby union. Kilikiti, also being gender inclusive, adds to the reputation of bat and ball games as activities for both males and females.

This paper has not claimed that it would shape the SFD literature in a new way; it has instead evaluated the opportunities and challenges of CFD as an example of SFD in practice. It has shown possibilities, limitations and problems in the case of cricket and Samoa. That knowledge, while limited to this context, is important because so many advocates of SFD programs need advice and guidance about application and practice. We therefore hope that the findings of this study will help to inform future CFD initiatives in Samoa, as well as providing insights for similar SFD initiatives elsewhere.

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