



## **Economic Development Management Advisory Group (EDMAG)**

### **ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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#### **Mr Robert Matafonua Soakai (MBS, Hon, BBS, Dip)**



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I graduated from Massey University with a Master of Business Studies with Honours and a Bachelor of Business Studies. I studied economics, specialising in international trade and finance. I also hold a Diploma of Tropical Agriculture from the University of the South Pacific (USP), Samoa.

Between 1996-2000 I was employed by the Ministry of Finance as an economist. Among my responsibilities were introducing the Asian Development Bank, World Bank and IMF public sector reform in Tonga with a particular focus on good governance. I was trained in Singapore at the IMF Headquarter on Public Financial Management and in the Australia federal government on "programme budgeting, roll-over-budgeting, input-out budgeting". While I was in Tonga I taught at the Tongan vocational community school, as well as the USP extramural programmes.

In 2001 I joined the University of Auckland as a PhD scholar and became a student mentor on the university's Tuakana and MOPAS programme. I was also involved with the Mira Szászy Research Centre for Maori and Pacific Economic Development, and fortunate enough to be invited to speak in an international conference on good governance and financial management held in Fiji.

In 2003 I joined the Pacific Business Trust and got really involved with the Pacific Island community, non-profit and profit organisations. In 2005 I resigned and set up the EDMAG group, which is currently addressing the needs of over 12 community groups.

#### **Interests:**

- Organisational assessment
  - Business planning
  - Project evaluation
  - Facilities planning
  - Financial systems
  - Fund development
  - Board development
  - Collaborations/strategic restructuring
  - Project management
  - Budget and financial development
  - Fundraising and grant applications
  - Good governance seminars and training
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