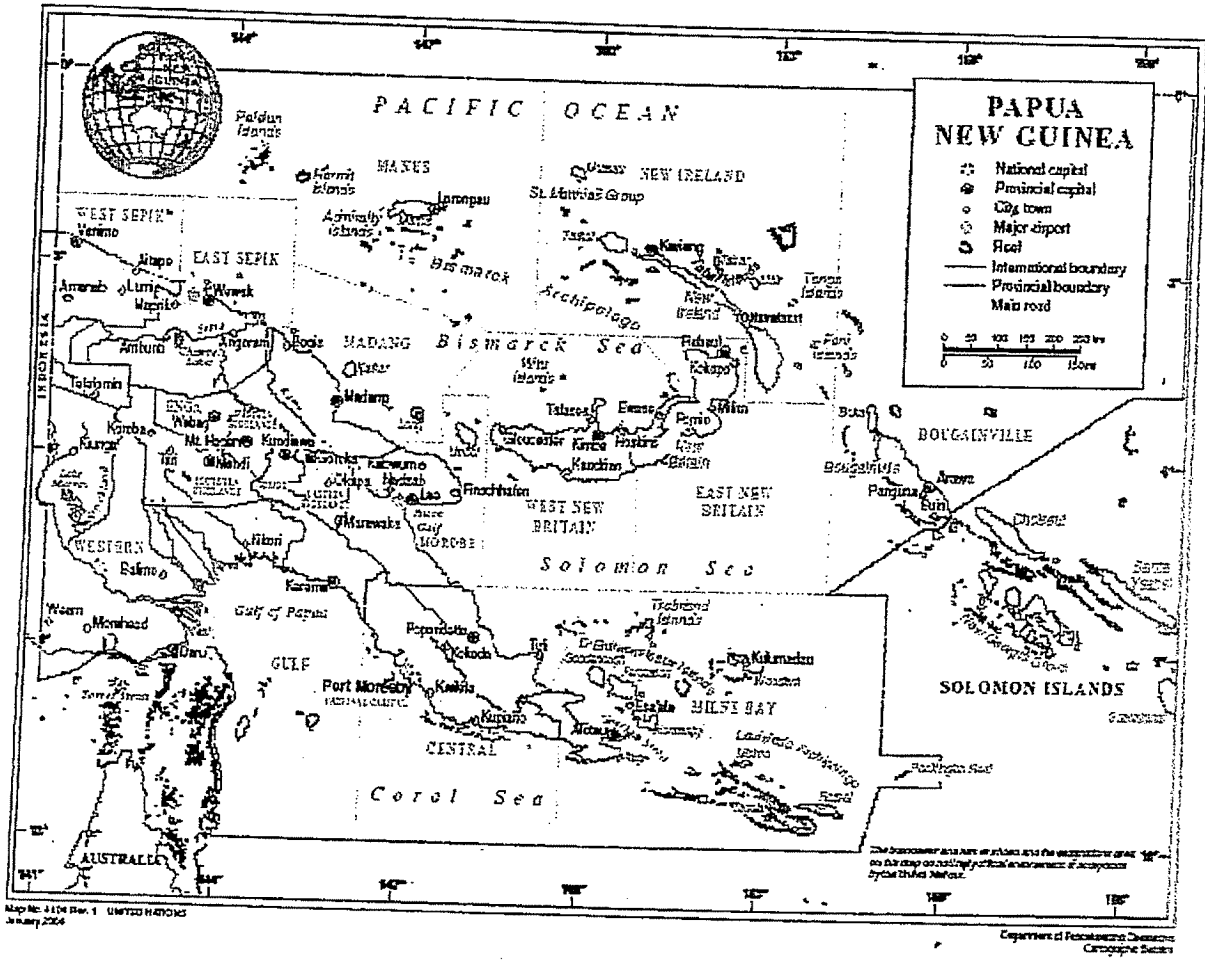


NATIONAL REPORT ON THE STATE-OF-THE-ART OF ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

-A SITUATION ANALYSIS-

Map of Papua New Guinea



A. PURPOSE

This Report aims to present the situational analysis of the development Adult Learning in Papua New Guinea. It is produced by the PNG National Commission for UNESCO in conjunction with the National Department of Education for the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning and Education with the view that large part of the material may be used for the development of a draft regional synthesis as key input to the series of regional preparatory conferences planned to be held from September 2008 to January 2009 in all the regions around the globe. Consequently, the material shall also be used to develop a Global Report on Adult Learning and Education, for which the entire programme is being coordinated by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning Office in Hamburg, Germany.

B. BACKGROUND

As part of a global effort to eradicate poverty in education and learning particularly within certain age groups of people who either do not have access to reading and writing opportunities or are merely denied of such, UNESCO has echoed support initiatives to help enhance country programmes in adult Learning and Education, particularly in the area of Literacy and life skills development.

UNESCO's Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) is a global strategic framework for collaborative actions is to enhance efforts of those member countries that show less than 50% literacy rate.

Through the LIFE process Papua New Guinea is one of the 35 countries in the Asia Pacific that is participating in the promoting of literacy for empowerment programme. This will continue for the next 10 year period.

There are those people in society, particularly in rural areas that become very vulnerable, and who have inadequate literacy skills and competencies. LIFE's goal is to enhance the empowerment of those disadvantaged and marginalized to develop necessary skills to be able to participate in development activities.

C. FACTS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The immediate outcome expected will be that national and international efforts are reinforced so that there is literacy advocated through meaningful communication. This effort must be considered through a sector-wide and development framework to strengthen and improve capacity for policy implementation and management.

UNESCO always calls for relevant partnership efforts between all stakeholders to development including the national governments, NGOs, civil society, UN agencies and donor countries. It has been very supportive of national capacity building arrangements and programmes in Papua New Guinea over many years now and this has been monitored and managed through the National Literacy Awareness Secretariat of the Department of Education.

Papua New Guinea is the largest of the Pacific Island Nations of which most are Members States of UNESCO. It is estimated to have a population of 6.2 million people (National Census, 2000) covering 46, 000 square kilometers of land. Due to the unfriendly conditions of the land people are spread and scattered in groups over the country in pursuance of arable and farmable lands.

Papua New Guinea became the Members State of UNESCO in 1976 only a year after gaining political independence from Australia in 1975. The country is culturally diverse characterized by more than 860 local languages spoken within differing cultural grouping in bundles of tribes and clans. This is like 14 percent of world's 6,500 languages spoken (Nekitel, 1998).

The government's ability to provide basic services to the people is impaired by the rapidly growing population which makes it difficult to achieve sustainable development. The large volume of the young population is exerting pressure on the limited resources available which makes it a continuous burden for the government. Henceforth, the country's human development remains a concern in that in 2006 the Country's Human Development Index ranked PNG 139 out of the 177 countries surveyed.

During the first 15 years after Independence (1975) the country made good progress against a number of social indicators. Life expectancy increased from 40 years in 1971 to nearly 55 years in the 1980, with infant mortality from 130/1,000 over the same period. However, by the year 2002 the progress slowed down against a number of key social indicators with low life expectancy of 57 years and high infant mortality of 72/1000 and high maternal mortality of 370/100,000. Poverty rates remain high, with an estimated 30 per cent of the population below the poverty line. According to a Survey done by the Education Department (2006) the average Primary Net Enrollment Rate remains at 36 per cent almost half of the provinces in Papua New Guinea.

Despite considerable attempts made by the government to improve social conditions of people PNG was lagging behind in achieving Millennium Development Goals in the Pacific (ADB 2003). Poverty is increasing in both urban and rural areas. Social indicators in health shows deterioration while in other areas such as education and gender equality there are no or little progress towards meeting the targets by 2015.

A study carried out by UNICEF (2005) highlighted the human rights challenges faced by orphans and children. About 68 percent of women interviewed live in either violent homes or communities and this rate increases in some parts of the country. Many girls at the ages of 20 move into cities and towns looking for opportunities and are at risk of sexual exploitation for commercial reasons. A huge 80 percent of the population is yet to have their births registered and certified.

After many years of sluggish economic situation, 2004 marked the beginning of upward trend in which the economy started making improvements due to governments prudent macroeconomic policies attributed to political stability like never before in Papua New Guinea.

In order to sustain this momentum of upward trend in the economy the government has devised Medium Term Development Strategy (2005 – 2010) that will be the framework for guidance under which social and economic development efforts and initiatives can be planned, implemented, monitored in conjunction with relevant development partners – the United Nations, NGOs, civil society and the donor countries.

The official language in Papua New Guinea is English and it occupies a privileged position in the country where the language is spoken at differing level depending on the levels of formal education achieved.

There are other two national lingua francas. They are Tokpisin and the *Hiri Motu* languages. *Tokpisin* is derived from English, German and *Kanua* as the main sources. It is spoken casually anywhere, everywhere across the nation, even extending to as far as Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and the Indonesian

Province of Irian Jaya. It is widely used in daily business activities particularly by the large majority of the indigenous population. As a complementing effort a weekly *Wantok* Newspaper is published in Tokpisin. Most church services are conducted in Tokpisin. Hiri Motu is spoken mainly around the southern part of the country including the Port Moresby area. It is also used in daily businesses by those few who are able to use it, however with the rapid increase in Tokpisin among the population; Hiri Motu gets confined to certain groups of people. However, attempts are being made to complement the use of this language through a monthly *Govamani Sivarai* newspaper.

Apart from the three major languages spoken widely in the country there are other core languages which are spoken within larger population of people on regional basis(Highlands, Momase, Islands & Southern).

Table 1: Regional Languages and speakers

Language	Number of Speakers	Province	Region
Enga	238, 000	Enga	Highlands
Dobu	108, 000	Milne Bay	Southern
Melpa	130, 000	W. Highlands	Highlands
Kate	86, 000	Morobe	Momase
Kuanua	71, 000	E.N.Britain	Islands
Kuman	60, 000	Simbu	Highlands
Yabem	55, 000	Morobe	Momase
Angal Heneng	50, 000	S. Highlands	Highlands
Kamano-Yangaria	44, 000	E. Highlands	Highlands
Ambulas	40, 000	E. Sepik	Momase
Hamtai	18, 000	Gulf	Southern
Buin	18, 000	N. Solomons	Islands
Kiwai	15, 800	Western	Southern

Source: Nekitel(1998) – Voices of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.

D. DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

In the 1940s the colonial administration set up education systems and a number of church systems which were run independently until 1970s when the current education system was established.

By the year 1973 there were more than 1, 000 registered education institutions in the country with 9, 000 teachers and 254, and 000 students. By 2003 the system had grown to one employing around 33, 000 teachers and almost one million students 4000 elementary schools, 3300 primary schools, 170 secondary schools and 140 vocational schools, which are governed by 20 Provincial Education Boards with respective education divisions as empowered through the 1978 and 1995 National Government Decentralization process(National Plan for Education, 2005 – 2014).

The decentralization laws have given the provinces responsibilities including planning, financing, staffing and maintaining general education institutions from Elementary up to Grade 12 level. This arrangement was part of the National Education Reform process which has been in place for a decade as implemented through the 1995 – 2004 National Education Plan.

The reform was to increase accessibility and participation at all levels of education and to support the Education For All goals of Universal Primary Education. The reform was also to revise the curriculum to be more relevant to village life, through the introduction of vernacular education and focus on life skills and curriculum, and to allow pursuing a range of post Grade 8 pathways.

Basically, as a result of the reform process 6 different and successive levels with distinct objectives are providing in Papua New Guinea. The highlight of the reform is particularly the Elementary and Vernacular Education taught in local languages.

1. **The Elementary Education:** The first stage of formal education. It consists of an Elementary Preparatory Grade (Elementary Grade 1 and Elementary Grade 2 in the language of the child's community. These three years of education prepare a child for entry into primary school at Grade 3. Enrolments have since risen to more than 300, 000 of which 46 per cent is females.
2. **The Primary Education:** This begins at Grade 3 and finishes in Grade 8 and caters for the 9 to 14 year age group. Lower Primary Education comprises Grade 3 to 5, and upper primary Grades 6 to 8. As a result of the reform the percentage of children passing from Grade 6 to Grade 7 has risen from 48 percent in 1995 and 80 percent in 2003. The rate of female enrolment was 50 percent now compared to 43 percent in 1995.
3. **The Secondary Education:** Secondary Education covers Grades 9 to 12, with lower secondary being Grades 9 and 10 while upper secondary Grades 11 and 12. Again, with the reform in place the enrolments in Grades 9 and 10 have significantly increased from 14, 205 in 1995 to 26, and 994 in 2003.

Female's participation in secondary schools improved in Grades 9 and 10 where the figure was 41 percent in 2001. In Grades 11 and 12 the figure was 35 percent. This shows little progress since 1995 when the figure was 40 percent and 34 percent respectively.

Retention is emerging as a problem at secondary level with considerable leave between grades 9 and 10. Certain part of this is due to continuous rise in school fees. About 4 percent leave before they complete grade 12.

4. **The Flexible, Open and Distance Education:** This level of education is a means of delivering education to people who cannot attend an education institution. Currently, it is offered primarily through the College of Distance Education to students wishing to complete their Grades 7 to 10 education. Although there have been increase in number of school leavers over the years since 1995, the enrolment remained at 10, 600 up to 2003, but the number of girls enrolled at these time is still below 40 per cent of the total enrolment.
5. **The Vocational Education:** This a skilled oriented education offered to students completing Grade 8, and the community at large. In variety of institutions. Number of students enrolled rose from 1995 to 2003, however decreased through the successive programmes. There has been little increase in female enrolment since 1995 which is 26 percent of the total in 2003. This form of education is also complemented by private providers offering technical courses being regulated by the of National Training Council.

6. ***The Technical Education and Training:*** This is aimed at providing skills training for students in technical areas t post secondary level and provide further opportunities for those already in the workforce. This form of education is also complemented by private providers offering technical courses being regulated by the of National Training Council.

Under the National Education Policy Framework all functions and powers are shared between the national and provincial education authorities in policy and management of education services.

As a complementary effort in each of the levels of education there is good number of education services provided by NGOs, church groups, international agencies with emphasis on life skills for which there are no data available. However, despite government efforts in establishing and promoting formal education at all sectors there seems to be little done on adult education development in Papua New Guinea directly funded and managed through the National Education System.

There have been initiatives taken by donors and international community in complementing and enhancing government programmes on adult education, however these efforts have not been sustained through the Education Systems. Much of the efforts put in was through the formal education which seem to inhibit any notion of a large scale of adult education programme.

This means that those large part of the population that have never been through the formal education process will continue to miss out as such in the long run it will create an increasing gap between the skilled and the unskilled for life.

E. GOVERNMENT POLICY

Under the National Government Medium Term Development Strategy(MTDS 2005 – 1010), consistent with the National Goals and Directive Principles integral human development is the hub in empowering the powerless in the country for an equal participation is all development efforts and opportunities. As part of this Basic Education is the first priority, vocational and technical training is the second priority with secondary and tertiary education as third and fourth priorities, respectively.

The MTDS States that;

In Education, the focus of the Medium Term Development Strategy will be to support the implementation of reform aimed at achieving Universal Primary Education. Under the goals of Universal Primary Education all children will be able to complete nine years of basic education.

At the national level, priority resources will be directed towards basic education, including curriculum reform, teacher training, infrastructure and rural education facilities, while also ensuring adequate funds are available to pay for the planned and managed increase in teachers salaries(A National Plan for Education, 2005 – 2014).

The Government of Papua New Guinea is committed to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals particularly those that target the Achievement of Universal primary Education, promote gender equality and empowerment of women in combating of HIV/AIDS and other diseases.

The government has also recognized and is committed to the Declarations of Jomtien, which were reaffirmed at Dakar(1990) include;

. Expanding and improving early childhood care and education, particularly those that are vulnerable and marginalized.

- . Ensuring that by 2015 all children have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality
- . Devise programs to make young people and adult equitable access to relevant learning and life skills.
- . Achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015.

The government policy on Education does not clearly isolate and place equal emphasis on adult education within the National Education Framework in the country. The adult education in PNG is still an issue to be isolated, defined and developed along with the formal education programme to take the centre stage.

F. CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENT

Papua New Guinea has an on going education issues to address and devise strategies to cater for literacy needs of the people. It is estimated that almost half the population is illiterate and lack basic skills in life of which large portion is adults scattered in the rural areas of the country.

The Department of Education is addressing illiteracy situation in the non formal sector through the National Literacy and Awareness Secretariat (NLAS) with established network of Bible translation Institutes, education Advocacy Networks, PNG Trust, Correctional Institution Services, Universities and other interested groups including international donors. This relates to the management and coordination issues affecting literacy initiatives, programmes and policy implementation.

It is further strengthened through our National Literacy Policy which is being implemented and further reviewed in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The government policies and efforts should now be directed towards illiterate population. PNG has an estimated population increase of 2.7% per year. This is a big comparison with other developing nations of the world. Population growth has a significant impact on the literacy situation in the country. From the National Census data 2000, PNG's literacy rate stands at 56.2 % that leaves 44 % illiteracy.

Given that 2.7 % population growth rate literacy rate is at a snail's pace at 1 % per year. This is a challenge then for the country to address in the Non-formal sector of the society which holds the imbalance.



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According to a recent research conducted by UNICEF and the Department of Education on the latest enrolment ratio as preliminary data of children in school, it is obvious that more than 60% of PNG children are not in school. In remote and rural areas children who are already in their teens are enrolled into grades 1 to 8 in (primary and community schools).

Papua New Guinea faces the challenge of retaining them to acquire basic skills and knowledge in life. The bigger picture is that is this age group can not be equipped with the necessary skills in life; PNG faces the dilemma of high population growth attributed to an increasing adult population of unskilled and illiterate people.

Unless the swaying economy improves and supports the massive drop out of grade 8s, 10s, and 12s produced under the Education Reform Programme in life skills development initiatives the implications are very obvious and serious



I *Prison adult literacy programme- NLAS files*

In Papua New Guinea the demand for literacy and community based education programmes are numerous. Data on these programmes are not readily available as many group and organizations are conducting and assisting such programmes in their own capacities not monitored, and in most cases hardly sustained within the National Education System.

However, there are some data on literacy and community based education programme which the Education Department has through the NLAS network show the following.

Table 2. Population of each Province and their Literacy rates estimates

No	Name of Province	Population	Number of Literates	Number of illiterates	Literacy rate
1	Central	183, 983	136, 255	47, 728	74.1%
2	East New Britain	220, 133	154, 109	66, 024	70.6%
3	East Sepik	343, 181	235, 562	107, 619	68.7%
4	Eastern Highlands	432, 972	120, 903	312, 069	28.9%
5	Enga	295, 031	70, 451	224, 580	24.0%
6	Gulf	106, 898	73, 604	33, 294	68.1%
7	Madang	365, 106	113, 779	251, 327	31.2%
8	Manus	43, 387	30, 794	12, 593	71.8%
9	Milne Bay	210, 412	149, 421	60, 991	71.1%
10	Morobe	539, 404	389, 986	149, 418	72.6%
11	National Capital District	254, 158	190, 820	63, 338	75.7%
12	New Ireland	118, 350	82, 808	35, 542	70.0%
13	North Solomon	175,160	122, 578	52, 582	70.0%
14	Oro	133, 065	91, 814	41, 251	69.0%
15	Sandaun	185, 741	57, 081	128, 660	31.0%
16	Simbu	259, 703	65, 771	193, 932	25.0%
17	Southern Highlands	546, 265	136, 680	409, 585	25.0%
18	West New Britain	184, 508	129, 604	54, 904	70.0%
19	Western Highlands	440, 025	108, 786	331, 239	25.0%
20	Western Province	153, 304	106, 900	46, 404	70.0%
	Papua New Guinea	5, 190, 786	2, 567, 706	2, 623, 080	56.0%

Source: NLAS, Situation Analysis (2008)

Table 3. Government spending on Literacy and Awareness programmes (US\$ 1 = PGK 0.33~)

Years	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Annual Budget for Non formal Education	K 193, 500.00	K 208, 500.00	K 205, 500.00	K 474, 100.00	K 461, 600.00
Public Expenditure on Education	K194, 285, 700	K321,857,500.00	K382,462,820.00	K436,210,700.00	K492,036,000.00
Percentage of Non Formal Education	1.2 %	2.0 %	2.0 %	4.7 %	4.6 %

Source: NLAS, Situation Analysis (2008)

Table 4. Adult Literacy Programme Participation (2001 -2005)

<i>Participants</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>
No. of registered learners	25, 030	21, 660	38, 539	78, 095	91, 867
No. of women in the programme	14, 493	12, 572	26, 231	54, 264	50, 933
No. of men in the programme	10, 537	9, 088	12, 308	23, 831	40, 934

Source: NLAS, Situation Analysis (2008)

It is obvious that the non formal education component mainly cater for the reading and writing aspect of literacy, however more community based and life skills development programmes for the large illiterate population will be a development issue for Papua New Guinea.

Table 5. Current Adult Literacy rates movement and future projections (2000-2010)

<i>Year</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2010</i>
Total	45.1 %	56.0 %	80.0 %
Male literates	46.3%	54.9%	74.9%
Male illiterate	52.7 %	45.1 %	25.1 %
Female literates	34.8%	45.8 %	65.8 %
Female illiterates	65.2 %	55.2 %	35.2 %

Source: NLAS, Literacy Estimates and Projections (2008)



Literacy advocacy 2004 – NLAS files

The National Literacy Policy is very clear on definition and the mandate of the Literacy as essence of education. The policy embodies the creation of opportunities for those that are not catered for by the formal education system in Papua New Guinea.

Literacy is not just reading or writing. It is about thinking, learning, critiquing, expanding visions and equipping people with the skills of life in fulfilling their desires.

G. FAILURES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Numerous efforts have been made to develop adult education in Papua New Guinea, however there is a tendency that much attention and resources are geared towards the formal education and 'reading and writing' literacy. There are considerable efforts geared towards adult education put in by NGOs, church groups and international community, particularly towards supporting community based education programmes with the view of developing life skills for the large majority of the illiterate population.

Despite PNG has taken on board the global goals and declaration on Education For All and is committed to ensuring that such ideals are incorporated into the National Education System, the adult learning and education aspect of education has been overlooked and received little attention even under the 10 year 'massive' Education Reform Programme.

The tireless efforts placed by the National Literacy Awareness Secretariat, Department of Education has been swaying towards literacy programmes for the formal sector, thereby inhibiting the adult education components over the years. Those programmes on adult learning and education promoted by the NGOs, church groups and the international community has received little attention or none in terms of sustaining this activities.

The fact is that the large component of the population is illiterate and unskilled for sustaining life, particularly in a modernizing world. The challenge is that the formal education system is unable to accommodate learning and adult education component. There should be clear and distinct government policy on Adult Learning and Education for Life, and should be committed to implementation with proper coordination and monitor all parties to the provision of the important skill oriented education in Papua New Guinea. .