

Interim VSO PNG Education Programme Area Summary

Country: Papua New Guinea

Programme Area: Education May 2008 – July 2010, (potentially July 2011)

What is the aim of the programme area?

The current VSO PNG Education programme is working in project form in Madang and Simbu provinces at the invitation of the Provincial Divisions of Education, and also in Goroka. The focus for the current education programme is supporting three major national education initiatives:

- The introduction of the new reform curriculum and student-centred teaching in secondary schools
- The implementation of the Teacher In-Service Plan (TIP) for the Primary sector
- The development and implementation of School Learning Improvement Plans (SLIPS) in Secondary Schools

Year 1 of the project was from 1st May 2008 – 30th June 2009. Year 2 runs from 1st July 2009- 30th June 2010, with activities being funded by our donor NZAID.

Year 2 is scheduled to focus on the following three objectives:

1. To develop the skills of teachers in 23 Secondary Schools in Simbu and Madang Provinces to implement an effective student centred approach to teaching.
2. To develop the skills of Primary school teachers, in 8-15 primary schools, in Simbu and Madang Provinces to implement an effective student centred approach to teaching.
3. To strengthen the capacity of leadership and management teams in 23 Secondary Schools in Simbu and Madang Provinces to raise standards.

Why is VSO working in this particular programme area and region?

The education system in Papua New Guinea has undergone a major period of reform over the last decade with new systems, structures and curricula being introduced. The aim of these reforms has been:

‘... integral human development achieved through an affordable education system that appreciates Christian and traditional values, and that prepares literate, skilled and healthy citizens by concentrating on the growth and development of each individual’s personal viability and character formation, while ensuring all can contribute to the peace and prosperity of the nation.’
[Achieving a Better Future 2004:17]

The new curricula has been implemented in phases, with its introduction into the lower secondary sector for 2008 and upper secondary in 2010. Madang and Simbu Provincial Divisions of Education invited VSO to support the fundamental shift in teaching and learning from more traditional methodology to a student centred one in lower and upper secondary. In order to achieve more holistic institutional changes, the VSO programme has focused both on teacher level changes through inservice and resource material support, and also school management through direct support to School Leadership Teams and development of their School Learning Improvement Plans.

Whilst the Primary sector has had longer to adapt to the new curricula, there has still been a need to strengthen the support structures and teaching methodology changes in the classroom. The Education programme has therefore supported Primary school teachers to embed the new methodology, systems and curricula into their practice. This has happened through support to the national Teacher Inservice Plan (TIP) initiative. The Millennium Development Goals and their respective agreements commit PNG to ‘Achieve universal primary education’ and ‘promote gender equality and empower women’. These goals link with the PNG Government’s plans for Education, the National Education Plan 2005-14.

In VSO PNG’s education work, we also remain mindful that the PNG Government’s revised Education for All goals are:

- Ensuring that by 2015 all children have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality
- Eliminating gender disparities in education by 2014
- Improving all aspects of the quality and excellence of education with measurable learning outcomes

Key beneficiaries and partners

Beneficiaries: Primary school students (grades 3-8) and Secondary school students (grades 9-12)

VSO PNG's current Education Partners

- National Department of Education (NDOE)
- Madang Provincial Division of Education
- Simbu Provincial Division of Education
- Madang Teachers College
- University of Goroka

Cross-cutting themes

- Inclusion, Gender and HIV & AIDS are also important themes of our work. We work with the 'Education Capacity Building Program' which is AusAID funded on TIP, which includes HIV & AIDS work in Education. We also collaborate with VSO's Tokaut HIV & AIDS programme e.g. 'Drama for all' work.

Current programme activities

Focus of International Volunteer Placement interventions at the current time are on capacity building work of individuals and educational organisations

- VSO international Long Term Volunteer (LTV) placements in Simbu Province and Madang Province.
 - At secondary level a combination of 'Professional Development Facilitators' and 'Leadership and Management Change Officers'.
 - At primary level, one Cluster In-Service Coordinator per province
- One Short Term Volunteer (STV) providing Leadership & Management IT Facilitation & Training support to Global Education Partnership & Madang School.Net schools initiative until December 2009.
- One LTV Volunteer supporting pre-service primary and secondary teacher training
- One LTV working in Madang as an Inclusive Education Adviser.

Developing a new Education Programme Area Plan

VSO International's current Global Strategic Plan 'Focus for Change' will be replaced with a new Global Strategic plan in December 2009. The next level of planning will be to develop a new 5 year Country Strategic Plan for VSO Papua New Guinea, from which we will then develop Programme Area Plans for each Programme Area for a 5 year period. This means that between June 2009 and February 2010, there will be a review of existing Education programme work, and discussions with a variety of internal and external stakeholders, partners and volunteers, before a new Education Programme Area Plan comes into effect in July 2010.

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