

## 7. STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCALISATION - THE UNIVERSITY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA\*

### Introduction

The emphasis in this case is on what issues have to be addressed by university policy makers when planning a comprehensive staff development programme. To be effective such a programme must include activities for every staff member, from the point of recruiting suitable persons for employment and providing appropriate induction programmes, to ongoing activities which help staff members maintain efficiency throughout their career as well as continued commitment to the institution. The writer points to the diversity both in the types of skills required in a modern educational institution and to the wide range of training opportunities which needs to be evaluated for possible use. Far-sighted and effective planning is essential. A careful reading of the case will reveal many points for discussion about staff development.

### The Case Study

The University of Papua New Guinea, which was established in 1965, is a rapidly growing institution of national importance in Papua New Guinea (PNG). The establishment of the University was a result of a report by the Currie Commission (1964) which recommended that there should be a university within the country to produce the high-level manpower the country needed most. The university offers a matriculation level preliminary year and courses leading to degrees in arts, economics, education, law, medicine, agriculture and science. Since its establishment, the University of PNG has grown into a very large and complex institution within the context of the country it has to serve. The teaching itself commenced at the Port Moresby show grounds in 1966 with 57 students enrolled in the preliminary year. Of these 57 students only 36 qualified for matriculation at the end of the year. The teaching of the first undergraduate courses in arts, law and science students (83) commenced in 1967, the first six Papua New Guineans in arts (education), and science graduated in 1970. But even then, the 1970 total student enrolments had grown to 772. In 1980, a total of 1,684 was reached.

In 1980, the University of PNG had about 200 teaching and research staff and some 716 administrative, library, technical, maintenance and campus staff. Currently almost 97 per cent of the non-academic staff are indigenous to PNG. In contrast, most of the academic positions are still occupied by overseas staff who come mainly from the Commonwealth countries and the USA. The University of PNG may be considered a small institution in terms of

---

\* Prepared by Tuarong Tioti, University of Papua New Guinea. This case study was prepared for discussion purposes (in September 1981). It is not intended to show effective or ineffective management.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCALISATION

staff members compared with some other institutions: for example larger government departments or statutory authorities.

The occupational specialisations of the 716 non-academic staff (of whom some 140 are cleaners and campus labourers) encompass an extremely diverse range of employment skills. These include executives experienced in the administration of a tertiary institute, the highly specialised technical and support staff required to service the different academic departments and the broad span of professional and trades staff essential to a university which must provide accommodation for the majority of its students and staff. The non-academic side of the University could be basically summed up in Table 1.

From Table 1, a general frame of reference can be seen for the practice of localisation at the University of PNG. One can also see a high degree of specialisation amongst the non-academic staff and as such a broader occupational diversity than probably most government departments and statutory authorities in the country. As a matter of national policy, since the establishment of the University, Papua New Guineans have been appointed to any advertised vacancy for which they are qualified. Of course, during the first few years after its establishment, there were some problems of attracting local staff, due mainly to the absence of knowledge of a university, of its role, and of what employment opportunities it could provide. There was a lack of integrated physical facilities, with the university's administrative and teaching departments fragmented in several locations (since there were still no permanent buildings on the present site, it was necessary to use any available buildings nearby). Due to these reasons, the understanding of a university being a potential employer to the general workforce was very low.

Until recent years, many school leavers had tended to view service with the Government Public Service as the most desirable form of career employment. Their choice reflected in part the prestige and influence of government departments in the experience of school leavers and families, their inadequate knowledge of other employment opportunities, and a lack of commitment to the training of local staff for all levels of employment by many private firms.

By 1971, six years after its humble beginnings in the sheds of the Port Moresby show grounds, the University was situated in a fine complex of buildings, beautiful flowers and gardens on three campuses - the main campus at Waigani (Port Moresby), the faculty of medicine at Taurama (Port Moresby) and the Goroka Teachers' College at Goroka in the Eastern Highlands Province. This fine complex of buildings does attract some esteem in the eyes of persons seeking new or alternative employment. So the problems of recruiting staff from within the country are no different from those encountered by any other employers.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCALISATION

TABLE 1

<u>Department/Section</u>	<u>Functional Units</u>
Central Administration	Senior Executives: Vice-Chancellor Deputy Vice-Chancellor Registrar, Bursar Planning Office, Staff Academic Appointments, Staff Development, Travel, Mail, Switchboard, Printery, Records, Audio-Visual, Photographic Computer Publication Units
Academic Administration	Student Admissions, Examinations, Faculty Secretariat, Records Units
Student Services	Dean of Students, Counsellor, Doctor and Nursing Staff
- Catering section	Superintendent, Cooks, Stewards, Scullery, Cleaning Units
Buildings and Grounds	
- Architect section	Project Architect, Drafting, Works Super- visor, Workshop and Store, Carpenters, Electricians, Plumbers, Painters, Mechanics Units
- Stores and Transport section	Purchasing, Stores and Supply, Transport, Security, Cleaners and Labourers Units
- Gardens section	Nursery, Native Plants Collection, Drivers Units
Accounts	Accountant, Budgets, Revenue, Expenditure, Internal Audits, Salaries, Accounting Machine Units
Library	University Librarian, Acquisition Catalog- uing, Readers' Services, Periodicals, New Guinea Collection, Teaching Methods and Material Centre

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCALISATION

<u>Department/Section</u>	<u>Functional Units</u>
Bookshop	Manager, Trainees, Counter Staff, Accounts Units
Academic Departments: (Ancillary staff)	Laboratory Technicians (Chemical, Physical, Biological, Medical, Electronic, Museum, Prehistory), Scientific Instrument Making, Fitting and Turning, Cartography Units
All Departments	Secretarial, Stenographic, Typing, Clerical Units

---

The task of localisation is not as simple as one would think, either in PNG or in any other developing country. A major task in a developing country is to balance the outputs of the education system with the inputs to the economy and society of the system. Irresolute planning, poor judgement by officials and short-sighted decisions at the political level, jointly or severally, can upset the balance. Papua New Guinea has been out of balance from time to time but, probably in comparison with attempted localisation elsewhere, it has a record of which it can be proud.

Until the accelerating momentum of independence in 1975 nearly all the high-level manpower in the education system was from outside the country. At the University the staff were predominantly expatriates, including the University administrators. It was therefore necessary for the University to localise as many positions as possible, within the administration especially, with the right people who had the appropriate qualifications. Since there were still not many Papua New Guineans qualified to become academics, the University teaching positions were all occupied by expatriates. So the University was faced with the task of developing a programme for staff development mainly for the sake of localisation.

Prior to 1970, the University lacked a coherent policy on localisation and training. However, as far as training was concerned, the University had always encouraged and supported staff in their endeavour to obtain better academic or vocational qualifications, primarily by the payment of course fees and by granting time off without loss of salary to enable staff to attend classes. Before the actual establishment of a formal localisation plan, most of the senior local officers in supervisory positions visited overseas universities to examine specific areas of university administration. Some other local officers were released to attend block courses and short training courses conducted by the Division of Technical Education and Administration.

By 1970, when the University was firmly established as a viable institution of higher learning, consultants were brought in to assist the University in streamlining its administration procedures. The consultants called for modern management practices and the establishment of a comprehensive

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCALISATION

training programme. They recommended a full time Localisation Officer who was to be responsible to the Registrar for the development and implementation of the University's localisation programme. So as early as 1971, the recommended localisation programme was effected. This included all areas of non-academic staff including the library, laboratory, technical and maintenance staff as well as the professional and administrative personnel. The programme at that time had these main aspects:

- the recruitment and training of Papua New Guineans through the provisions of sponsorships, scholarships and cadetships for courses of study at institutions within PNG or overseas, mainly in Australia;
- the execution of an intensive plan of training and career development for Papua New Guineans to equip them for accelerated promotion to higher levels of responsibility.

### Localisation Programme - 1971 the Early Stage to 1980

The introduction of this paper has outlined the University's establishment and growth, the basic organisational structure and occupational diversity within the non-academic staff and the formulation of the localisation policy. It is hoped that the information above will allow the reader to understand better the events that occurred from 1971 to 1980.

In the report of the consultants, a Localisation Officer was recommended who was to be directly responsible to the Registrar of the University. The introduction of such a post to the University administration required a person with not only substantial academic qualifications, but also a dedicated person who was interested in the training and welfare of the indigenous people. The case was such that the discussions and seminars on localisation were all running against time and so it was necessary to act immediately. Indeed the University accepted the advice of the consultants that however efficient the committee system was in both its scope and pursuit of any action, it would not be very effective compared to a single officer who would be reporting to the University's senior non-academic administrator. The benefits considered were that, the Localisation Officer in not being placed in the usual management hierarchy, could obtain decisions on matters of policy almost as quickly as he could write submissions. Also being to one side of the mainstream of management the Localisation Officer had access to all levels of staff which ensured reasonably good informal communications, thus allowing decisions to be made on the basis of the known realities of a situation.

The manpower budget submitted by the management consultants contained objectives concerning the recruitment and training of Papua New Guineans. For instance, one of the general proposals was that from January 1971, the University should not employ any more expatriate secretaries (typists). It was not quite possible at that time, however, to meet the objectives due to

a shortage of Papua New Guinean secretaries. At that time the University also began recruiting university graduates both from the University of Technology in Lae and the University of PNG in Port Moresby - an advancement of the target proposed by the consultants. But still the University of PNG's primary policy objective in its localisation programme was that all non-academic staff positions be localised by the end of 1980. The general objective was quite clear but the translation of that objective into action was not all that smooth. The process of localisation, however, continued until about 1978 when nearly all the non-academic positions were filled by Papua New Guineans.

The first action that made it possible for the process of localisation to succeed was the establishment of a comprehensive records system. Full records of the level of education and skill of each employee involved in the programme were obtained and maintained. So if the programme sought to identify particular local officers and groom them for promotion by pursuing specific plans, it had only to consult the record system.

The second action was a review of each functional department or section. As the Localisation Officer was already appointed, one of his first tasks was to confer with heads of each department/section and establish a working strategy for localisation. Senior executives of the University were also consulted. What were the needs of the departments and sections? Could localisation be rapid in this section or that section? If not, how long would it take to train a local person to take over and what should be involved in his training and development?

Job analysis was also applied to the formulation of the localisation plan. What were the qualifications and experience and level of responsibility involved in the positions? The view here was not to compare the expatriate incumbent with the likely local appointee but rather to see whether the local officer had the capacity to do the job and to find out the minimum qualifications and experience required for the job.

The relationship between the job analysis for any position, with its assessed minimum levels of competence, and the availability of local manpower for that position, was central to the process of localisation. Inevitably, training was going to be required: training to meet the short term demands of ensuring that the local appointee was competent to perform the specific job, and whenever possible to provide the appointee with skills other than those he would have to use in the current position. So the problem was how to identify the potential candidate? Such was the inadequacy of the record system that it was important to establish a method. Also the process was aided by the close knowledge of those around a local appointee during work; they could assess his capabilities, performance and willingness to take training.

One should probably accept that in any university, and especially those in developing countries, every endeavour should be made to minimise costs, provided the means of doing so are politically and socially acceptable

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCALISATION

within that country. Therefore, it is academically, politically, and economically desirable that the majority of those who teach and provide administrative service should be of the same nationality as the students. Of equal importance is the fact that expatriate staff of the University of PNG are transients. Against this argument for academic localisation is the view that the need for graduates in government and other employment areas is so urgent that the University should not encourage all of its better graduates to become university employees. This view may rest on the assumption that the work of a university academic involves chiefly teaching, learning and research, whereas in PNG, it would seem that an academic should actively pursue another role, that of an adviser and critic to those who seek his service in this way. For the University to continue to encourage its academic staff to seek such an interface with the Ministry, government departments and the community will surely serve to deflect any unwarranted criticism about academic localisation. So, should the University not commit itself to a planned staff development programme that provides for academic localisation too, it could be judged adversely and, at a future date, forced to compromise its chosen standards.

The Staff Officer, D W Sloper, produced a paper in 1973, Staff Development Programme, which supposedly took that step in awarding teaching fellowships to local potential graduates. This would have significant implications for academic localisation in the future.

The launching of the Staff Development Teaching Fellowship (SDTF) scheme in 1974 was the start of a vigorous expansion and major investment in national academic staff development. The scheme defines one avenue, probably the major one, for students who are thought suitable to undertake an academic career. The scheme provides an acknowledged position in the staff structure of the University, adequate financial and other support, time to complete an approved course of study (honours year, higher degree or other) and sufficient experience of academic life to allow an SDT fellow and the University to assess whether or not the career choice is an appropriate one. However, on successful completion of a Master's degree at overseas universities or in PNG, fellows are then normally offered appointments to the established teaching staff, and after a period of two years lecturers are encouraged to proceed overseas for a further period for PhD studies. In other words all of these are a form of development for the locals: the acquisition of higher degrees.

In the SDTF scheme there is also the notion of creating positions over establishment which would be available for a limited period to enable the University to appoint or to promote a Papua New Guinean who presents himself/herself at a time when no establishment vacancy exists. A Papua New Guinean might be available for appointment at a time when no vacancy exists for several reasons: he could be someone who has obtained qualifications suitable for an academic appointment other than through the SDTF; he could be an SDT fellow whose academic progress has been advanced, or retarded, at an unusual rate, upsetting planning calculated against the attrition of contract overseas staff; he might be someone whom the University wishes to

promote.

The Staff Development Programme also has a Staff Development Research Fellowship (SDRF) which is intended to accommodate a situation where the young Papua New Guinean academic finds himself in fairly constant demand as a member of committees, a consultant, an adviser, a public speaker, and probably having more involvement in national affairs than many academic staff. These committees are likely to be detrimental to further studies and to personal development stimulated by reading and research. The activity being pursued during the period of an SDRF should not be defined too closely. The SDRF is designed to be something of a "non-teaching/refreshment fellowship" administered by the University's SD Committee. Consultative or advisory work is included as these provide an important interface between the University and the community, and are a potentially satisfying experience for Papua New Guinean academics and a way in which an academic's teaching and other contributions to University life are likely to be enriched.

#### The Present Staff Development Programme

In 1981 the University had 29 national academic staff and 53 teaching fellows. Of these, 44 were overseas studying for postgraduate qualifications, of whom six were doing PhD programmes. A further seven were undertaking masters degrees in PNG, and 13 were working towards their honours and masters degrees. The wastage rate, mainly through resignations, (Planning Office, 1981) for both national academic staff and teaching fellows has been low; about seven per cent per year for the last few years. Projections, allowing for wastage, indicate that the number of national academic staff is likely to rise to about 100 by 1986, representing approximately 53 per cent localisation of the academic staff.

The Goroka Teachers' College, one of the campuses of the University, is situated in the Eastern Highlands Province - about two and a half hours flying time from Port Moresby, where the main campus and medical faculty are situated. In 1981 it had seven national teaching staff and 13 teaching fellows of which seven were studying overseas and four in PNG. Seven were teaching at the college and one former national academic was appointed as deputy principal of the college following his successful completion of a Masters Degree in Educational Administration at the University of New England in Australia. It is envisaged that the college could look forward to a comparable level and rate of localisation of its 42 teaching staff with that of the main campus.

An optimal level of localisation of the academic staff, to be about 65-75 per cent, is appropriate and is expected. It is vital for the University to continue to receive the stimulus of staff from all over the world, both in terms of striving for the highest academic standards and of preserving the international nature of the institution.

Although in the SD Programme much attention has been focused on the

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCALISATION

development of academic staff in terms of training for higher qualifications, administrative, library and technical staff are equally catered for under the programme. Library fellows have undertaken courses in the UK, Australia and PNG; administrative, accounting and technical staff have been sponsored, either full-time or part-time to undertake subgraduate or undergraduate courses in PNG, and postgraduate courses or work attachments overseas: Hong Kong, Singapore, the UK and Australia. The introduction of the SD Programme has certainly helped a great deal in the process of localisation. In the long-run the specific aims of the University SD Programme are expected to be interpreted within this understanding: it should be to raise the ability of individual nationals to manage their own professional and personal development; to improve the ability of individuals to diagnose problems and work towards their solutions; to improve the functions of the individuals within groups. Such groups can be defined as teaching departments, administrative sections, curriculum and special interest areas, or probably the institution generally. Another concern should be to improve the ability of individuals to cope with change, and especially to adjust to changing national developments. Staff development of the University should not be seen as just for the purpose of localisation but rather as contributing to a continued competence.

### How Should Staff Development Benefit the Whole Process of the University of PNG?

There is an increasing recognition of the growing importance of SD in the University. Current circumstances and anticipated future developments emphasise this growing importance, mainly for the following reasons.

1. The University of PNG has a responsibility to provide and maintain, to the best of its ability, an environment which facilitates learning; thus, teaching departments have a responsibility for self-improvement, for keeping up to date, for the pursuit of excellence. Being an academic member implies a responsibility of this kind both in scholarship and research in one's own discipline and the teaching of that discipline.
2. The professional vitality of staff is a major determinant of the effectiveness of the University. Since academic staff are the primary cost factor and the major resource of the University, it is their competence, quality and attitudes which will essentially determine both the nature of the education received by students and the contribution the University makes to the community.

Perhaps the question to ask is, what are the possible benefits of staff development that not only cater for localisation but also for continued competence? Because the University SD Programme should start looking at altering the course a little to include the development of the institution towards effectiveness in its goals - an effective organisation, this is a place where people can work and be effective contributors; a place where the people know what the job is that has to be done; and where they are

given the resources to do it well; and where they can perform the task within a high thrust/high discretion environment that provides positive plans to overcome shortfalls in skills. In the case of the University of PNG, one could probably put the benefits in three categories. There is a group of benefits which is directly associated with the staff member. Another group, while dependent somewhat on the first, focuses upon the University as an organisation composed of various sub-systems and working towards a common goal. Finally, there appears to be a set of system benefits which can be abstracted from both the University benefits and individual staff members' benefits and which possess an integrity of its own. Each will be discussed briefly.

### 1. The Individual Staff Member

One of the most basic outcomes for staff is an increased knowledge of concepts and skills related to their current job. This is true for academics and non-academics and may result immediately from SD activity. Another immediate outcome could be a more thorough understanding of the working conditions in complex organisations. Each of these outcomes may lead, over a period of time, to a number of immediate outcomes. These will include an increased confidence in dealing with students and an improvement in work performance.

There are other immediate outcomes which will be more closely related to a staff member's future concern. For instance, the provision of a firm foundation of relevant knowledge concerning career opportunities is an important benefit. Another could be the acquisition of skills and understandings not related to one's present job but relevant to some future appointment within the education system, the public service or the private sector. Therefore, in the longer term one could probably expect both these more immediate outcomes or benefits to affect:

- (a) the future responsibilities within the University which a staff member assumes on promotion;
- (b) the adaptability of the staff member in relation to various areas of responsibility within the University where the staff member works.

### 2. The University

There are two broad categories of potential benefits to the University from SD for localisation and continued competence. The first relates to the overall organisation of the University and is probably quite general in nature. Relationships between staff and between staff and the University as an institution of higher learning may be affected by the SD programme. Hence a fostering of professional contact between teaching and non-academic staff may be an immediate outcome of an activity and one which affects the relationships between individual staff members. Similarly, an understanding of one another's work in the University is likely to be an immediate benefit affecting staff relationships. Each of these may in the longer term lead to a more co-operative approach among staff in their work, a more satisfying work environment and an increased commitment to the goals of the University.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCALISATION

An important benefit to the University from the process of SD for continued competencies is its effect upon responsiveness. The responsiveness of the University will be influenced by its ability to predict changing community needs. Such a benefit will be associated with an increased awareness among individual staff of the future needs of the University and of the higher education system but will probably arise out of the integration of that awareness rather than out of individuals acting on their own.

The second benefit or group of benefits is more specific and refers to particular functions of departments or sections within the University. For instance, the following benefits would appear to fit this category and would be taught by invited experts in the particular fields:

- (a) the widespread introduction of some new practices of teaching throughout the University - instead of board and chalk talk all the time;
- (b) the effective utilisation of the library, the computer unit or the audio-visual resources in the University or some other resources which have been under-utilised for so long.

The dependence of these University benefits upon the development among staff of particular skills, understandings and attitudes concerning both their own work and that of the University is apparent. They are also likely to be dependent upon the relationship between certain groups of staff. For these reasons they will probably be longer term benefits arising from a variety of SD activities rather than any specific activity. A more effective utilisation of library resources will be influenced by the levels of expertise and general attitudes of both library personnel and teaching/administrative staff rather than one or the other. Similarly, the widespread introduction of modern teaching techniques is dependent upon the skills and attitudes of teaching staff and also those of the support staff upon whom new demands may be made.

### 3. The System

Some outcomes of the SD are not only a process towards localisation but the continuing of competencies and will probably be more system oriented or government oriented rather than related to the University or individual staff members. These benefits are generally long-term, appearing possibly five or so years later and resulting from a number of activities or the entire process of the SD Programme rather than any specific activity. Some who benefit may probably choose to utilise whatever they have learnt and understood from the programme outside of the University and this would be another form of contribution to the whole tertiary education programme in PNG. Increasingly the credibility of the University system in PNG is one such benefit.

There is also a small group of immediate benefits that concerns the system as a whole and which may result from individual activities. Two of these would appear especially important. Some activities may provide senior

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCALISATION

administrative staff with clearer perceptions of the concerns and views held by the University or higher education junior staff on certain issues. This would enable more appropriate policy decisions to be made. Other activities such as local and overseas scholarships may provide a body of research information on which policy may be formulated for the entire system.

### Conclusion

The challenge facing the University of PNG is a great one that needs the co-operation of everyone who is involved in the system. The management of the university will have to shoulder the responsibility of getting the organisation to accept responsibility for its own actions, but all staff members will be needed to help create an institutional culture which encourages and rewards high performance, meets the needs of Papua New Guineans at work and is adaptable to change. This includes both the teaching staff and non-teaching staff. And certainly this is the role of staff development in an institution like the University of PNG or for that matter in any organisation which is concerned with the development of its staff. So the alternatives are between a University management which reacts to:

the emotive pleas of those state-holders who have a political rather than operational interest in running the institution

or a management which displays:

a ready willingness to look into the needs of the institution and accept a large measure of the responsibility for meeting the needs found there

co-operation between group members which results in fitting jointly formulated solutions to organisational problems.

The second alternative will require a skilled workforce within the University management, a supportive environment, a committed staff, and a longer time span. Most important will be the need for staff members of the University to become involved in, and willing to be held responsible for plans and actions put into operation. Staff development would become the supporting process towards such plans and actions. As a case study of localisation at the University of PNG this paper has set out the broad background to localisation and then examined in detail some procedures and

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCALISATION

actions that went on after the establishment of the localisation plan. Some of the methods and procedures which have developed in response to the challenges and problems of localisation have been illustrated.

The staff development process is still going on and is still at an early stage, so its success is still in the balance.

### Postscript on Staff Development Programme (1983)

Through the programme as at mid-1983 there were a total of 42 Papua New Guineans who have completed their masters plus the first 2 Papua New Guineans to complete their doctorate degrees. Another 40 people were studying for their masters and 5 for doctorate degrees in overseas universities. These people have gone to universities in countries like Tanzania, Kenya, Jamaica, Philippines, besides the main countries of Australia, United Kingdom, U.S.A., Canada and New Zealand.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Murphy, P Analysis of Staff Development Programme 1974-1981 (Port Moresby, University of PNG, 1981).

Papua New Guinea Government White Paper, National Development Strategy (National Planning Office, October 1976).

National Education Strategy, Monograph 7, PNG Education Plan Review and Proposals 1976-1980 (Port Moresby Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research).

P.A. Management Consultants Report on Manpower Planning at University of PNG 1970-1980 (Port Moresby, September 1970).

Programmes and Performance (1) 1975-1976 (2) 1976-77 (National Planning Office, Port Moresby).

Sloper, D W, Staff Development Programme (UPNG, Port Moresby, 1973).

Strategies for Nationhood, "Programmes and Performance" (Central Planning Office, 1974).

Tuarong, T Staff Development Teaching Fellowship - The University of PNG, (Port Moresby, UPNG, 1979).

Tuarong, T University of PNG Staff Establishment - Academic 1979, (Port Moresby, UPNG, 1979)

UPNG Student Enrolment Statistics, 1970-1980 (Port Moresby, UPNG).