

**SPD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
PNGUM EDUCATION SECRETARY'S REPORT  
18<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2011.**

**Department Personnel**

The growing Adventist school system in Papua New Guinea continues to be a challenge for the Church. During the PNGUM session held at Kabuifa Adventist Secondary in November 2010, it reappointed Mr Joseph Ponduk as the Adventist Education Secretary and Mr Jim Yawane as the Associate - Primary. In January 2011 PNGUM Executive Committee appointed Mr Yoba Dame as the Associate - Primary to replace Mr Jim Yawane who was appointed as the Associate - Secondary. We welcome Mr Yoba Dame and his inclusion in the team will strengthen the department.

The Adventist Education Secretary for Sepik Mission Mr Brennan Nenek retired in December 2010 and is being replaced by Mr Segal Potang, the principal of Nuwok Primary School in Manus Province. South West Papua Mission is the only mission without an education secretary. The mission continues to face problems with shortage of teachers affecting schools and many children not having access to education.

The growing elementary sector continues to be a real challenge for the Adventist school system since the implementation of the education reform in PNG. It is an important area on its own and the department is carefully looking into it and may be recommend someone to be appointed to oversee its function.

**Government Education Department Partners with Christian Churches**

Since the Church/State summit in October 2008 Christian Churches including education partners and development partners became signatories to the partnership with the government. The national education department has already moved and seriously considered initiatives to strengthen the partnership by inviting Church education agencies and other partners to participate in conferences, workshops and seminars organized by the department.

As a partner in education, the Adventist Education Secretary was invited recently by the Government Education Secretary, Dr Joseph Pagelio to participate in the Senior Education Officers Conference which is conducted annually. The theme of the conference was "achieving quality education through private, public and Church partnerships". I was invited to present a paper on "achieving quality education through Church partnership", focusing on the value of Christian education and was well received. It was a privilege to attend such conference at this level and the secretary appreciated the Church participation and contribution at the conference.

The Adventist education secretary has again been invited to attend and present another paper at a seminar on the school of excellence concept at the end of September spearheaded by the government of PNG. The information has been forwarded to Dr Lalen

Simeon, Director of Research at Pacific Adventist University to prepare and present the paper at the seminar on behalf of the Church. This highlights the point that the government of PNG considers Churches as major partners and wants them to contribute to development of education in the country. Therefore, I have asked her to be aware of this trend because this gives us an excellent opportunity as an education system to make contribution towards education in the country.

### **Activities Being Undertaken with the National Department of Education**

- Funding for the last phase of the elementary teacher training conducted by Sonoma Adventist College 2011/12
- Formalizing of the Elementary Curriculum produced by Sonoma Adventist College approved by the PNG National Education Board of Studies in 2011
- School of Excellence concept to include Kabiufa Adventist Secondary as suggested by the government of PNG
- PNG Government Vision 2050 Initiative on Universal Basic Education focusing on access, retention and quality

### **Strategic Plan 2011-2015**

There have been consultation meetings since the beginning of 2011 with the new administration of PNGUM on strategic direction of the Union for the quinquennium. The department will develop its strategic plan in line with PNGUM, SPD Education Department strategic plan and also taking into consideration the PNG government Vision 2050 initiative because of the partnership with the Churches. The education department is focusing on Universal Basic Education for every PNG children having access, retention and quality education.

The partnership should not be looked at as an opportunity to receive guidance and financial support only from the state, but rather, it should be a joint venture for the Church educational leaders, senior education administrators and the state to seriously look at Vision 2050 and come up with realistic plans that will ensure that both Church and state schools are aiming to produce quality education in schools.

Seven key focus areas have been identified by the department and presented to the PNGUM Board of Education in March 2011. Because of the partnership with the government and the system schools joining the Unified National Education System, two of these are fundamental including the purpose of our education system and maintaining our identity. The others include, infrastructures/facilities, quality assurance, resources, leadership and liaising and networking

As the department personnel have moved around the Union, the seven key focus areas have been presented to school administrators and teachers. We hope to have the draft copy presented to the next PNGUM Board of Education in September.

### **Curriculum**

The Pacific Bible Curriculum continues to attract teachers and education administrators in PNG. The Assistant Secretary for Curriculum with PNG education department, Dr Epellis was very impressed with the lower and upper cycles of primary Bible curriculum with Uncle Arthur S. Maxwell Bible Stories series as resource material. He has directed his officers to study the curriculum because a new religious education curriculum for PNG schools is being written. He was also very impressed with the Bible Stories series and said that he would like sets purchased and distributed to all the primary and secondary schools in PNG as part of a World Bank project.

The Elementary Curriculum document developed by Sonoma Adventist College was approved by the PNG National Education Board of Studies in June 2011. This was a relief for Sonoma and PNGUM education department because of the elementary teacher training program Sonoma is currently conducting which has been an issue for the last two years not getting recognition in provinces.

### **General Initiatives by the Department**

Church Partnership Program continues to support activities initiated by PNGUM education department. Some of them include:

- Proposal writing workshops for selected teachers and members of the community taking advantage of funding from donors including PNG government
- Child Counseling Workshop for teachers
- School Reproductive Health/HIV & AIDS for secondary schools
- Good governance and financial management for principals of primary schools
- Elementary Teacher Training Program to be completed by the end of 2011/12
- Launching of Health Posters for Adventist schools covering nutrition, sanitation, basic hygiene

### **Other Initiatives include**

- Mathematics/Science Education students financial assistance
- Review of the Education Manual 2006, inclusion of new policies
- Development of Education Department website
- Encourage School Learning Improvement Plan (SLIP) in Adventist schools introduced by the government
- Development of high schools in Local Missions/Conference as a priority
- Counseling/Chaplaincy training. Chaplains in bigger and urban schools
- Local Missions/Conference education secretaries and principals appraisal
- Succession planning and mentoring of young administrators. Human resource development
- Liaise and networking with government institutions on recruitment of SDA teachers
- Education Development/Project Proposal Writer to access funding from PNG government and external donor agencies

- Rehabilitation of Educational School Infrastructures in Local Missions/Conference
- Special Character best practices in Adventist schools
- Accreditation of more Adventist schools
- Behavioral Management. Review of the discipline codes in Adventist schools aligning with the government
- School of Excellence Committee

### **Cause of Concern in Adventist Schools**

While the Adventist school system in PNG is experiencing growth and the schools are excelling attracting students and parents, we have experienced as well a number of unfortunate incidents which have been traumatizing for both staff and students in several campuses.

Mount Diamond Adventist Secondary outside Port Moresby has experienced a number nasty gang attacks in recent years. The loss of life of one of their day students who was murdered last May not far from the school caused grave security concerns to the students and staff. The biggest security threat facing the school is externally, especially with movements of staff and students to and from Port Moresby. Also at Nagum Adventist High in Sepik Mission some students assaulted the principal which resulted with a number of teachers leaving the school including the principal.

### **Conclusion**

The Adventist school system in Papua New Guinea in the early 2000's was in serious decline when the Papua New Guinea Union Mission Executive Committee (September 2003) decided eight years ago that the real solution was for the Church's school system to join the Unified National Education System. The system became a Church Education Agency for the first time in partnership with the government of Papua New Guinea. The challenge for us is having the manpower and the resources to maintain and sustain the growing system. It is a privilege for me to work with committed administrators, education secretaries, principals, teachers to see the Adventist school system move into a new era in partnership with the government of PNG, but at the same time keep focus in maintaining the vision and mission of the Church in PNG. We thank God for His leading hand on the work of education in PNGUM.