

A BETTER FUTURE THROUGH UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION

Department set to deliver major impact projects to enhance quality education

The National Department of Education is set to carry out major impact projects that will benefit and improve the quality of education in the country.

Acting Secretary for Education Dr Joseph Pagelio said 2011 is the year of implementation and has urged all stakeholders in education to continue to play their role in the delivery of education services right down to the school level.

Dr Pagelio said the Department's development budget appropriation of K375 million will cover 15 impact projects that will be carried out by various divisions in the department.

Dr Pagelio said 85% of the development budget will support the rehabilitation of infrastructure and houses for standards officers to enable the



Children in Pindiu, in the Finschafen District in Morobe Province, sing and dance to the National Department of Education officers, Morobe Provincial Government officers and villagers during the official launching of the 2011 academic year on February 7th, in Pindui.

delivery of better quality education.

The remaining 15% will provide support to, education standards through the Curriculum Standards Monitoring and Testing (CSMT) Project, upgrading the qualifications of

teachers and providing curriculum material to schools.

The Acting Secretary said each executing division will develop a detailed implementation schedule for each of their assigned projects.

"The impact projects includes

K30 million for developing, procuring and distributing curriculum materials to all levels of general education," he said.

Dr Pagelio said K20 million has also been put aside to supply science equipment and other...

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Stakeholders told to focus on UBE

THE Acting Secretary for Education, Dr. Joseph Pagelio is calling on all Provincial Education Advisors (PEAs), members of Boards of Management and Governing Councils, parents, citizens, education planners, and district education managers to focus on the implementation of Universal Basic Education Plan (UBE) 2010-2019 in 2011.

"2011 is the year of implementation and for education, I want all of us to focus on the implementation of the UBE Plan for 2010 to 2019," Dr. Pagelio said.

The UBE Plan complements the National Education Plan for 2005 to 2014.

In Papua New Guinea, UBE is defined as education from elementary to grade eight. The definition of UBE is based on the vision of providing all school aged chil-

dren equal access to quality basic education which provides them with lifelong skills in order to contribute to the development of the country.

Thus, the Plan also draws attention to accommodate the significant number of school aged children that are still out of school.

The UBE priorities capture the main purpose and objectives of education in PNG. There are three components to Universal Basic Education in a PNG context:

1. That all children complete the elementary and primary cycles of education that constitutes a basic education.
2. That all children should enter school at specified age (age six years in prep).
3. That all children reach a required standard of literacy and numeracy at the end of these years of edu-

cation. The Acting Secretary said that the implementation of UBE began in 2010 with fee free education for elementary prep to grade 2.

He added that this will continue to other grades over the coming years as it becomes feasible.

He urged all stakeholders to strategize their planning and budgeting to implement priority projects in order to achieve the targets and goals for 2011.

"I urge school authorities to strategise their budgets together with school fees and subsidies so that they spend the limited funding they have on building of classrooms, teachers' houses and purchasing basic curriculum material for students and teachers in order to make teaching and learning effective and as a result better quality of education is achieved.

Institutions commended for good start to year

THE Principals of the national and provincial institutions throughout the country have been congratulated by the Acting Secretary for Education, Dr. Joseph Pagelio for their co-operative efforts in getting their colleges and schools start on time without any major interruptions at the beginning of the 2011 academic year.

"The members of the Boards of Management, Boards of Governors and Governing Councils must be commended for up-holding their leadership at their respective colleges and schools as their continued advice and leadership have supported the smooth operations of their institutions", said Dr. Pagelio.

Dr. Pagelio said he had received reports from the various institutions that most teachers have resumed duties and students have been registered already.

However, Dr. Pagelio stated that there is room for improvement in the

future in the following areas; i) teachers' appointment to positions should be done in a transparent manner and on time so that teachers can move to their schools before they resume duty, ii) teaching programs and curriculum materials are prepared before the students start classes, and iii) new teachers are to be inducted before and during their course of duties.

He has reminded the authorities of all the national and provincial institutions to sort out any issues that relate to school building maintenance, teachers' housing and teachers' posting as soon as possible so that the students can receive maximum education in 2011.

The Acting Secretary has also requested the students of the national institutions to collect their tickets quickly from the Office of Higher Education and Secondary Branch within the General Education Services, Wai-gani in order for them to travel to their

place of studies.

In relation to transfer certificate, he warned all the national and provincial education authorities not to charge any fees to any student who asks for a transfer certificate to be enrolled at another institution.

"For elementary school fees, the students are not paying any school fees in 2011", the Acting Secretary said.

Dr. Pagelio has cautioned all the Boards of Management, Boards of Governors and Governing Councils not to charge project fees too excessively.

He said, if project fees are to be paid by the students, the fees must be connected to the plans such as, School Learning Improvement Plans (SLIP) that will be endorsed by the Boards of Management, Boards of Governors or the Governing Councils of the institutions before the plans are implemented.

Parents must not pay school fees for elementary

THE *Acting Secretary for Education, Dr. Joseph Pagelio is calling on all elementary schools around the country not to charge parents school fees.*

Dr. Pagelio made this call in response to recent media articles alleging elementary schools in some provinces were charging school fees and refusing to accept children, who did not pay to enrol at the start of the school year.

The teachers in-charge of elementary schools must not ask for any school fee from parents because this year will be the second year that the National Government and AusAID will fully subsidise elementary education.

Elementary school managers, head teachers and administration must note that this year Elementary Prep to Grade 2 fees will be fully subsidized by the National Government and AusAID, meaning that parents will not pay school fees for their children in the Elementary sector.

Dr. Pagelio also called on all elementary school authorities not to turn students away for non payment of school fees.

"School age children must not be deprived of their right to education as the National Government has made it its commitment to subsidize Elementary fees in 2011," Dr Pagelio said.

He added that parents are still required to pay for project fees, uniforms and shoes, and other important items that their children need to use when in school like stationery items.

Dr. Pagelio said elementary schools are



Acting Secretary Dr Pagelio calls on Elementary schools not to charge school fees.

allowed to ask parents to pay project fees that will fund small projects for the school but these project fees must not be excessive and must not put extra burden on parents.

He said the project fee is required by certain elementary schools for the maintenance of their classrooms or buildings and for purchasing materials for the schools operations. He added that all elementary schools are encouraged to come up with ways to raise funds to cater for operational needs and should not entirely rely on parents to pay for such needs.

Dr. Pagelio also called on parents and community leaders to assist elementary schools in coming up with ways and means to raise funds for the school, which in turn will benefit children in the community.

The Acting Secretary said the total appropriation for 2011 subsidy is K199.5

million of which the Government of Papua New Guinea has allocated K172 million while AusAID has given K27.5 million.

The Acting Secretary said, this year there will be three lots of payments; "The Elementary sector can expect their school subsidies by the end of February, while the other sectors will be paid in two payments. One will be in March while the final payment will be in August," Dr. Pagelio said.

The Acting Secretary said the 2011 Education Subsidy Policy is aimed at ensuring that the cost of education is shared responsibly between the National Government, Provincial Governments and the parents/guardians.

The Education Subsidies are provided to give more responsibilities to School Boards and School Head Teachers, Principals and Managers to make decisions that will improve access and quality of education.

It is hoped that the elimination and reduction of financial barriers will enable the parents to send and retain their children in schools.

"This year's education subsidy should reduce the burden of parents paying fees for their children. Thus, all elementary schools around the country should accept enrolments without charging school fees, because subsidy payments to all elementary schools will be ready by the end of February, 2011," Dr Pagelio said.

Higher and technical education key to a prosperous PNG

MINISTER for Planning and District Development Paul Tiensten has identified higher and technical education as the enablers that will establish PNG on a path towards prosperity.

He said higher education was an enabler for growth, laying the foundation for PNG to progress towards middle income status by 2030.

He added that the implementation of the medium term development plan 2011-15 would be the first step towards reaching the targets outlined in the PNG development strategic plan and Vision 2050 of PNG.

Tiensten said the government's medium term development plan (MTDP) was committed to developing the higher skills need for PNG's prosperity with a world class tertiary education sector.

"Over the medium term, it is the desire of the government to improve the quality of education and to produce 52,000 graduates over the medium term," he said.

Addressing students and lecturers at the official opening of Pacific Adventist University (PAU) academic year, he said the university is a key institute of

the country.

"I believe that PAU will help PNG achieve the targets set the medium term development," he said.

He added that if the government was successful in implementing the MTDP initiatives for higher education, significant economic benefits would be realised.

"An estimated additional K464 million in gross domestic product is predicted for 2015, K144 million addition tax revenue and nearly 30,000 more jobs will be created," Tiensten said.

TSC welcome message to teachers

Happy belated New Year to all the teachers throughout Papua New Guinea. You have had an enjoyable festive season and are at your schools as of Monday 31st of January 2011.

The care taker chairman – teaching services commission Jerry Kuhena said the Teaching Service Commission expects to have a staff on strength of approximately 46,000 plus teachers this year.

This is a result of our continuing rationalization efforts as instructed by the government.

He said the teachers will be expected to teach the more than 1.5 million students from Elementary, Primary, High and Primary Schools, Vocational Training Centre, Technical and Business Colleges, PNG National Polytechnic Institute, Callan Institute, Special Resource Centers, Teachers colleges and PNG Education Institute and new community college.

Mr. Kuhena said that all teachers are expected to be dedicated, disciplined and through in educating our children, the future of our country.

He further added by welcoming all the teachers to the 2011 academic year and that each and every one

of you will give quality education to the students.

Teachers are also paid to teach these children and I ask you all to be diligent in carrying out your obligation and responsibilities as teachers to these children and the state.

Teachers in all institutions under the education system resumed duty on Monday 31st January, 2011, he said.

Mr. Kuhena said all teachers are required by law to complete a resumption of duty summary sheet (RODSS) on the first day of the school year.

The teachers must first report to the Principal, Headmaster or Manager of the institution to confirm that you are actually posted to that school by National Education Board or Provincial Education Board.

He said the teachers must then complete the RODSS and this form is very important to determine continuity of the teacher's salary payment for the year.

The form must be completed properly and correctly for position numbers, employment number, employee name and date resumed duties are coded.

The care taker chairman said any errors caused in completing the RODSS will affect teachers' salary.

Mr. Kuhena said the Principal, Head Master, Manager or Senior Teacher who is available on the first day of the school must check to ensure all entries on the RODSS are completed properly and correctly by all teachers and forwarded to provincial education office for teachers in provincial institutions and to respective Assistant Secretaries at Fincorp Haus for teachers in National Institutions.

He also stated that the teachers pay increase for 2011 to 213 is being considered for approval by the salaries conditions Monitoring Committee (SCMC) which upon endorsement will be submitted for approval by Cabinet and he urge all the teachers to keep patient as the government takes careful consideration of the expected increase.

The thanked all the teachers for their dedication and all their efforts in the Teaching Service throughout 2010.

He requested all the teachers to throw away bad practices and bad thoughts with a changed attitude so that we can experience another successful year.

Digicel Foundation opens two more classrooms

THE Digicel Foundation launched its 45th elementary school double classroom last week in the Western Highlands Province.

Teng-Teng elementary school's new classrooms was launched on Friday 18th of February where they also received two kit structure classrooms equipped with 300 library books, slates, blackboards and 60 Digicel Foundation back to

school packs.

Aviamb Tun elementary school was also completed and was launched on Monday the 28th of February.

Over the past two years the Digicel Foundation has funded 88 community based projects covering 20 provinces in PNG.

To date the Foundation has put

6.5 million kina back into marginalized PNG communities which has directly impacted more than 100,000 people.

The Digicel Foundation main focus areas are Education and health.

The Digicel Foundation is the Not-for-Profit arm of mobile phone company, Digicel and was launched on 15th October 2008.

2011 is implementation year for education

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...related subject equipment that will support the new reform curriculum for all secondary schools in the country.

To develop, procure and distribute teacher and student resource materials, K3 million has also been allocated.

The teacher resource books for lower primary (grades 3-5) that are now ready for printing include Mathematics, Physical Education, Language Kit and Bridging.

He said the printing of curriculum materials will also be made easier with K1 million set aside for rehabilitating the education print shop.

This project aims to equip the print shop with the appropriate equipment.

"For the quality development of standards measurement K5 million has been set aside for the capacity building of officers and the trialling of examinations and procurement of equipment," the Acting Secretary said.

Dr Pagelio said AusAID will also be funding a project on procuring and distributing secondary school books in the country at a cost of K27.2 million.

Meanwhile, the grant agreement for the distribution of buying and distributing of reading books for classroom li-

braries in elementary and primary schools between the Government of PNG and the World Bank will be signed this month for this project to begin.

The Acting Secretary also said the televising of model lessons to selected schools in the country is a project that has been in operation for the last 10 years.

He said K1 million has been set aside to extend the project to 3 more provinces namely: West New Britain, Southern Highlands and Western Province.

He said the Department of Education recognises the importance of education training and human resource development and has appropriated K42.7 million for this purpose.

The project aims to procure and distribute curriculum textbooks to all schools throughout the country.

About 3 million textbooks have been purchased and they are now in the containers in each of the provinces ready for distribution to the schools by the 1st quarter of this year.

Dr Pagelio said standards officers will now be more comfortable and mobile when visiting schools with K5 million set aside for the construction of houses for inspectors and the purchasing of vehicles and

outboard motors for inspectors. K2 million will be spent on purchasing of vehicles, K2 million will be used for construction or renovation of houses and K1 million for other operational expenses.

The Acting Secretary said the four pioneer National High Schools in the country, Aiyura, Keravat, Sogeri, and Passam have been given K10 million each for maintenance.

He said for high schools K70 million has been appropriated for infrastructure development and maintenance of classrooms.

Of the K70 million, K35 million will be used to settle prior commitments and the remaining K35 million will be distributed to high schools but based on their work programs.

"Distance education programs will also be improved with K3.7 million to improve the capacity of our distance education to deliver distance education," Dr Pagelio said.

All Technical and Business Colleges will be expanded and rehabilitated with a budget of K10 million.

K8 million of this will be used to carry out construction and maintenance, K1 million for materials and equipment and K1 million for other operational costs.

Dr Pagelio said K10 million has also been appropriated to upgrade the qualification and skills of teachers.

"This includes ongoing in-service programs conducted by schools and provinces and ongoing skills upgrading provided by existing training providers," he said.

The acting secretary said K11 million has been appropriated to improve library facilities and ensure that they are well stocked with up to date library materials including books, films and video tapes to improve learning.

The project will cover all primary and secondary schools as well as training of school librarians.

Dr Pagelio said, due to the Government's increased support for education the Maximum School Fees Limits for 2011 will remain at affordable levels for all schools and colleges in the National Education System.

"K172 million of the Department of Education's budget has been allocated for school subsidy payments.

The Department hopes to make the first payment on Education Subsidy for Elementary by 31st January 2011 but this is subject to early release of funds by the Department of Treasury.

Provinces, teachers and parents commended

ACTING Secretary for Education, Dr. Joseph Pagelio has commended those Provincial Divisions of Education, District Education staff, lecturers, teachers, and ancillary staff of those national institutions for commencing duty on time.

He also commended those Boards of Management and Governors, Governing Councils, parents and citizens, for preparing the classrooms and the school grounds in a manner conducive to learning in preparation of the students' lessons on Monday the 7th February, 2011.

The Principals, Managers, Head Teachers, Standards Officers and Provincial Divisions of Education in the provinces are congratulated for ensuring that the teachers fill in the appropriate documents with relevant information before classes began on the 7/02/11.

Those teachers must be thanked for preparing teaching and learning programs and curriculum materials upon resumption of duty on the 30th of January, 2011, a week before the students started their classes.

Dr. Pagelio encouraged the provincial authorities to adhere to the dead-lines of the various activities as outlined on the 2011 calendar. Focusing on dead-lines will not delay important documents and other requirements that should reach the Provincial and Head Quarters on time as stated on the Secretary's Circular No. 42/2010.

The Acting Secretary encouraged the Boards of Management and Governors, Governing Councils, parents and citizens to work in partnership with the schools and their teachers this year so that the schools' plans on various projects and initiatives such as the School Learning Improvement

Plans (SLIP) are implemented and their outcomes are achieved.

He reminded all the national institutions' leaders to promote self reliance and good practices when discharging their roles and responsibilities so that the institutions' resources and facilities are used appropriately and are looked after properly for the benefit of their students.

He explained that in 2011, major impact projects to improve the quality of education in the country will be implemented and has urged all stakeholders in the education sector to be prepared so that they can provide their assistance in facilitating the education services to the school level.

On this note, Dr. Pagelio encouraged the national and provincial institutions to work hard so that they can achieve their milestones for 2011.

Public Private Partnership with Digicel Foundation

The Acting Secretary for Education, Dr Joseph Pagelio has commended the work of Digicel Foundation emphasising the importance of Public Private Partnerships.

The Digicel Foundation was officially launched on 15th October 2008 as a non profit charitable organization with the aim of empowering communities and building community spirit.

With its focus on addressing poverty among the disadvantaged population in society, the Foundation's main area of concentration is on supporting initiatives that focus on promoting Universal Basic Human Rights to education, health, and freedom from all forms of violence against women and children.

After 27 months of operations and a total investment of US \$2.5 million (K908 500) the Foundation has achieved the following milestones:

Setting up of 33 Community Learning Centres nationwide, including basic



Some of the children attending a class in one of the Community Learning Centres, founded and build by the Digicel Foundation.

school resources, and providing more than 1,500 vulnerable children with a basic education through numeracy and literacy skills. The completion of 24 primary school classrooms in rural areas catering for 800 primary school

students including access to clean water and sanitation as well as providing all students with new school benches.

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Progress on Elementary English Syllabus development

The Acting Principal Curriculum Assessment Officer, within the Elementary Section of the Curriculum Development & Assessment Division, Ms Philippa Darius has announced that the Elementary English Syllabus is in its third draft after responses were received from the consultation carried out in the two provinces of each of the four regions in PNG.

It was stated that the consultations on the draft syllabus were done through workshops.

They were held in Madang, East Sepik, Manus, Simbu, Eastern Highlands, National Capital District and Central Provinces.

The provinces have provided their feed-back on the draft syllabus and the feed-back has been prepared so that the Subject Curriculum Group (SCG) can table it in its meeting in March 2011 in order for the fourth draft to be created.

After the fourth draft syllabus is created, it will be consulted on in Gulf and New Ireland Provinces for feed-back to be obtained.

The feed-back from these provinces will complete the required feed-back that can be incorporated to improve the syllabus' content.

In September and October, 2011 the fourth draft syllabus will be deliberated on by the Subject Advisory Committee (SAC).

During this meeting, SAC will also make a recommendation for the draft syllabus to be tabled at the Elementary Board of Studies for an endorsement to be made so that the syllabus can be published and used at the Elementary schools.

Ms Darius explained that the Elementary English Syllabus will be accompanied with the English Teacher's Guide for E1 and E2.

However, she said the Elementary English Teacher's Guide has not been developed yet but the specification to write the Teacher's Guide has been done and is in its first draft.

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The completion of 44 elementary school classrooms in rural areas, including basic school materials, providing 1,000 children access to basic education and a much improved learning environment. Funding of three mobile clinic ambulances providing free health services to up to 3,000 people per month in rural areas.



One of the double classrooms the Digicel Foundation is building for schools

Construction and operations, in partnership with local churches and NGO's, of four Women's Shelters providing counselling, care and basic life skill training for victims of domestic violence. Funding, in partnership with UNICEF, of six Family Support Centres in cooperation with Government Provincial Hospitals providing professional care for victims of domestic violence

In a meeting with Dr. Pagelio, Digicel Foundation and NDoE discussed what the foundation has achieved to date and its future direction particularly in education.

Digicel foundation is trying to align its work and contributions in the education sector with NDoE policies and guidelines, thus registering more than 33 Community Learning Centres to the department as formal elementary schools.

The foundation says, that will be in line with what NDoE is aiming to achieve with its Universal Basic Education plan.

The foundation's proposed targets for Basic Education infrastructure are to construct and build 14 double class-

rooms for primary schools around the country equipped with office space, 40 school desks per classroom, a water tank, 2 VIP toilets and 2 bucket showers.

In the elementary sector, the foundation is proposing to build 20 elementary double classrooms (including office space, and 20 double school desks).

This will positively impact more than 2,000 elementary and primary school

aged children.

The 33 established CLC's are being targeted through specific community based programs, starting with pilot programs in Port Moresby (POM) focusing on sustainability and empowerment of communities.

An example is the "Isi Learning" programme which is a community based teacher training and mentoring program for grass roots CLC teachers in Port Moresby.

To date more than 40 CLC teachers are participating in this one year pilot program which is being rolled out through the foundation's partner, the Foursquare Church.

All together these learning facilities will reach an estimated 3,000 young children.

The Digicel's new focus for 2011/12 is "Special Needs Education" and the funding of Special Needs Resource Centers across the country.

There are 20 centers, one per province, in PNG and the Digicel Foundation is targeting to support at least 10 centers to improve their basic infrastructure and resources in education.

Education still priority for Morobe Province

Governor for Morobe Honourable Luther Wenge, MP affirmed his Government's continued support for education by allocating K500,000.00 to Pindiu Agro Technical High School in Finschhafen, Morobe Province.

Mr. Wenge announced his Government's support to the school during the official launching of the 2011 academic

year in Pindiu Station on Monday, February 7.

The occasion was attended by the Minister for Education, Acting Secretary for Education, Dr Joseph Pagelio, Provincial Administrator, Mr. Kemasang Tomala, Provincial Education Advisor, Mr. Murika Bihoro, senior standard officers from Lae, representatives from the media from National, Post Courier

and Radio Morobe, members and representatives of the various local level governments in Finschhafen and senior officers from the Department of Education in Waigani and Morobe Division of Education.

The Governor thanked the Minister and Acting Secretary for Education for choosing Pindiu, a sub-district of Finschhafen, to host the official launching of the academic year.

"I would like to thank the Minister for his vision in developing and bringing education right into one of the remotest parts of Finschhafen," he said.

He urged the people of Pindiu to listen carefully to what the Minister and the Acting Secretary were to say so that they can pass on the right information to people in various villages in the Hube Local Level Government which Pindiu comes under.

Mr. Wenge said his Government still prioritizes education even when there are no roads, bridges, airports or health centers.

"Education will bring the best of these services because when our children are educated, they are ones who will become teachers, doctors, carpenters, engineers, pilots and develop our districts, and villages. When we have the best education, Papua New Guinea will become powerful," said Mr. Wenge.



Minister for Education, James Marape (l) and the Education delegates behind him and Morobe Governor Luther Wenge (r) and Morobe provincial administration staff at Pindiu, Finschhafen District in Morobe for the launching of the 2011 academic year

Secretary for Education emphasizes implementation of UBE

The Acting Secretary for Education Dr Joseph Pagelio called on all stakeholders in education to focus on the implementation of the Universal Basic Education Plan 2010 to 2019.

Dr Pagelio made this call during the official launching of the 2011 academic year in Pindiu, Morobe Province on Monday, February 7.

The Acting Secretary told the peo-

ple gathered at the Pindiu Agro Technical High School that education is the way to freedom. He then called on all Provincial Education Boards and Boards of Management to unite and bring about education services to the children.

Dr Pagelio said that 2011 is the year of implementation and he urged all stakeholders to focus on the implementation of UBE. He advised school authorities to provide proper classrooms for children

to learn in and houses for teachers to live in and teach the children.

The Acting Secretary said education is children's right therefore all stakeholders must cooperate and ensure that classrooms, teachers' houses, curriculum materials and other infrastructure are in place.

The Acting Secretary welcomed the more than 45,000 teachers and approximately 1.5 million students to the 2011 academic year.

Launch of 2011 academic year in Pindiu pics



Education Delegates sharing a moment with Morobe Governor Luther Wenge



Morobe Governor Luther Wenge presenting a gift to Education Minister James Marape



Minister Marape and Education officers officially launch the 2011 academic year



NOTICES

- Term 1 for all schools started on February 7th and ends on April 21st which is 11 weeks of school.
- Term 1 holidays start on Friday 22nd April which is also Good Friday.
- All schools administration and management must send special enrolment and staffing reports to provide an update of student and teacher numbers and needs for current year 2011 to the Manager Basic Education and NCD/GES
- The first National Education Board meeting for 2011, Meeting #171 which was scheduled for February 16th—17th is going to be hosted by Western Highlands Province on March 2nd to 4th.
- Teachers wishing to appeal against the ratings given on the new 2011 reports by the rating conference must do so by the end of February.
- TSC cancellation of tenure forms due at TSC from PEAs and DoE Divisions.
- Reminder from the ICT branch at Fincorp Haus that every Friday is Flash Drives/Memory Sticks Cleansing day.
- If you have flash drives that may be affected by viruses, bring them up to ICT or select a representative to do just that so ICT can flush out possible threats.
- Days to observe in March are the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace on March 8th, the Commonwealth Day on March 9th, the National School Census Week from March 21st to 25th, National Mother's Day on March 24th and the National Day for people with Disabilities on March 29th.

Parental responsibility to pay school fees

THE Acting Secretary for Education, Dr. Joseph Pagelio, is calling on all parents and guardians of children attending schools and institutions through out the country to honour their obligation to contribute to their children's education by meeting their full share of the cost of educating their children progressively through the year.

Dr. Pagelio reminded parents and guardians that schools are not profit making bodies and therefore; they rely on school fees and funding assistance from the National Government to sustain their operations.

He added that school fees make up most of the funding needed to operate schools therefore; it is very important that parents pay their children's school fees.

The Acting Secretary said the Depart-

ment of Education recognises the problems parents face in paying for school fees, and school boards should negotiate with parents that genuinely do not have the cash to pay school fees to pay in 'kind'. That is they can arrange to make an equivalent contribution in some other way, such as by contributing food for boarding students, or by students or parents working on school maintenance duties.

Where parents have outstanding school fees to pay, schools should take corrective measures to ensure that these parents honour their obligation, since their children have received an education at the expense of someone else.

Parents who pay in installments should be asked to sign an agreement to progressively settle their part of the school fees throughout this

year.

Dr Pagelio said schools should be taking up such debt recovery with parents and not the children. Students must not be penalized for the lack of responsibility by parents in non-payment of school fees.

"The Government's goal is to provide education opportunities to all children, and that this is only possible when the national and provincial governments, school boards and parents and guardians work together to meet the costs of educating our children," said Dr Pagelio.

He said parents and guardians around the country owe schools huge amounts of money each year, due to the non-payment of school fees and has urged parents to ensure that they continuously support their children to complete their education and training.

Digicel Foundation and UBE

In 2010 free Elementary Universal Education was implemented by the Department of Education providing all elementary aged children (6-9 years) free education for the first time.

Digicel Foundation with its education programmes is trying to align what it is doing with NDoE policies and plans.

The elementary sector is fee free in 2011 easing the burden on parents and free education for all primary schools is envisaged for 2015.

The Digicel Foundation aims to increase Access, Retention and graduation rates (Retention) for elementary and primary school children through the provision of new classrooms and proper water and sanitation facilities thereby positively contributing towards the overall goal to achieve 100% Universal Basic Education by 2018 (UBE and MDG Goal).

Digicel Foundation is doing assisting through the implementation of a Community Learning Centre (CLC) Sustainability Programme whereby CLC communities can access a seed funding of US \$ 1,000 (K400) to start up an income generating community project to help sustain their CLC activities.

The foundation is also establishing a pilot grassroots teacher training programme, called "Isi Learning Programme", in partnership with a local church partner and the Government to train community based teachers in the CLC based pre and elementary schools in Port Moresby.

It will also be starting a Community Learning Centre based Capacity Building Programme, in partnership with a local NGO, providing management skills to selected CLC community leaders.



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