



# PUBLIC POLICY BLOG

## Role of government and teacher training in implementing the Standard Based Curriculum in PNG

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Papua New Guinea's literacy rate is low compared to the Pacific Regional rate. According to the [Pacific Island Numeracy Report](#) 2015, it was reported that students' proficiency level in literacy for Papua New Guinea (PNG) was 14.33 percent compared to the Pacific Regional Rate of 17.78 percent. Also, a report from the [Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education](#) and the PNG Education Advocacy Network have found from their studies in five provinces (National Capital District, New Ireland Province, Simbu, Sandaun and Gulf provinces) that literacy rate from four of the five provinces were less than 15 percent while in New Ireland Province it was 25 percent. In an attempt to address the issue, PNG has implemented several educational developments such as the following:

- Curriculum reforms as highlighted in the PNG National Research Institute [Spotlight publication](#):
  - » Objective Based Curriculum (6+4+2) to Outcome-Based Curriculum (3+6+4)
  - » Outcome-Based Curriculum (3+6+4) to Standard Base Curriculum (1+6+6)
- [National Education Plan](#) (NEP 2005 to 2014)
- [Education Sector Strategic Plan](#) 2010 – 2030
- [Universal Basic Education](#) (UBE) Plan 2010 – 2019
- [Tuition Fee Free Education Policy](#), 2012

These educational developments were meant to improve the quality of education.

The implementers of these developments are schools and the teachers. As a result of economic challenges, some schools lack proper infrastructures such as laboratories, computer labs, classroom spaces and desks. Some teachers also lack necessary education materials to effectively implement educational reforms to improve education quality.

### The role of the government

With the implementation of the new Standard Based Curriculum in 2021, the task now falls on the implementers to ensure the curriculum is effectively implemented. In the current situation where most schools are in, it would be a challenge to effectively implement the new Curriculum. Therefore, support of the government is very much needed. The PNG government and the Education department needs to:

- Conduct a Nationwide awareness in schools so that teachers, students and parents are aware of the change in curriculum.
- Ensure schools and teachers receive complete package of curriculum materials which include a syllabus, teachers guide, teachers' resources books and student resource books
- Invest in more school facilities and upgrade existing infrastructures
- Invest in teachers training

The government's role is as important as a teacher's role in effectively implementing Standard Based Curriculum and in improving the quality of education. Teachers can try their very best in ensuring that students are taught well. However, if they lack the resources, the desired outcome will not be achieved. This is where the government steps in to provide relevant assistance.

### Teacher training is important

In recent news, teacher training can assist teachers improve their ways of teaching and in implementing a new curriculum. There is a project supported by Papua New Guinea – Australia partnership and delivered by International and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency that is providing training for teachers in West New Britain. The project is known as the Pikinini Kisim (PKS) Save Project. The [PKS project](#) has been providing professional development training to teachers. Through the training, teachers can improve their capacity in preparing scripted lessons and applying literacy teaching strategies.

According to the feedback from some of the teachers that participated in the training, it assist teachers in using different teaching strategies to teach their students. It also improves the ways that teachers organizing their classrooms for teaching. They have also seen improvement in their students learning outcomes. Students can now confidently sound out and blend words to form sentences.

In the district of Ramu, the same sentiment is shared by the teachers on teacher training projects. The [Together for Education project](#) supported by Papua New Guinea – Australia partnership has conducted trainings for 40 teachers from 19 middle-Ramu

schools. These teachers were trained on the Standard Based Curriculum English syllabus which assisted them better understand how to teach the English syllabus. Feedback from some teachers regarding the training was that such training was never received before. After undergoing the training, they feel very confident in teaching the new curriculum as well as understand how to use the teacher's guide.

### Conclusion

Teachers contribute in determining the quality of education for their students. The feedbacks from teachers who participated in trainings highlight the importance of teacher training. Teachers must be well-equipped by providing them with appropriate training and resources to improve the quality of education in PNG.

The task now falls back to the PNG government and/ the Education department. More teacher in-service training is needed to equip teachers with the right skills, knowledge and materials to effectively implement the current introduced curriculum. Also, government needs to look into maintaining deteriorating schooling facilities and infrastructure.

### About the Author

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