



THE NATIONAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Office of the Director

Key message by PNG NRI Acting Director, Dr. Osborne Sanida on the launch of the research report “Key 2015 Indicators for Universal Basic Education in Papua New Guinea’s District and Provinces”.

Date: Tuesday 25 May 2021

Time: 10:30am – 11:30am

Venue: PNG NRI Conference Centre

Basic education is the foundation on which Papua New Guinea’s future development will be built on. It empowers every citizen of the country to improve their lives as well as enhances their contributions as useful members of society. The Government of PNG needs to give priority to basic education and provide opportunities for citizens to obtain quality basic education. This is a bedrock for the future development of PNG. It will provide a basis for all school-aged children to acquire basic knowledge and skills that are relevant to them when they return to live a rewarding life within their own communities or to be able to continue with further education and training. If we do not achieve Universal Basic Education (UBE), all other development aspirations documented in Vision 2050 and other plans of government will never be achieved. The aspirations of PNG’s future developments rests on the achievement of the Universal Basic Education for all.

The Report that will be launched today entitled: “**Key 2015 Indicators for Universal Basic Education in Papua New Guinea’s District and Provinces**” by Magury, Lavu and Webster, focuses on three areas at the center of the UBE plan and implementation. These areas are key to monitoring progress and informing appropriate intervention measures. These areas are:

1. **Access Rate** – To inform how many of the school-age population (six years old) are entering the first year of school;
2. **Retention Rate** – To inform on how many children that enter first year (Elementary Prep) continue schooling till the final grade (Grade 8) of basic education; and

3. ***Examination Pass Rate*** – To inform of the quality of learning, indicating how much learning was achieved by those completing basic education.

Key Indicators have been identified for use in monitoring those three areas – by district, the lowest level of administrative measure possible in PNG, and by province. The indicators are calculated from education statistics collected from schools by the National Department of Education. School-aged population data is projected based on the 2011 PNG National Population Census data and growth rate.

The UBE indicators show where each province and districts within a province are at in 2015. There is a wide variability across provinces and districts within a province and also districts across the country in terms of Access, Retention and Quality of learning.

Each district and province will feel challenged to work towards achieving UBE targets. For some, increasing access to schools may be a challenge. The challenges and solutions may vary across the country. For instance, building new schools in a locality may be a priority of one area if the access rate is poor. In another place, it may be a problem of expanding the capacity of existing schools so that more children reaching school-age can enroll. In other places, even compulsory education may be considered if schools are available but parents are not enrolling their children. The problems and solutions for retention and quality of learning will also vary across provinces and districts, and even within districts.

District education officials can also work with communities at school level to identify solutions. If communities know what the problem is, they may also offer contextually relevant solutions. Many effective interventions may not require additional, if not any financial resources at all, but just common sense and action. The aim of the UBE indicators project is to update the UBE profiles every two years. The status and narrative may change, but the format of tables and indicators will remain for comparative purposes. This can allow us to track the changes made in the districts and provinces over time.

Going forward, the project will play an important role in tracking access, retention and quality at Districts and provinces, every two years, starting with 2019. The PNG NRI considers this as an important intervention to indicate the level of basic education and the interventions needed by the Government at all levels and donor agencies to achieve universal basic education for all future PNG children.