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**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER APPOINTMENTS  
IN THE  
WEST SEPIK PROVINCE**



**NRI  
The National Research Institute**

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**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER APPOINTMENTS  
IN THE WEST SEPIK PROVINCE**

by

**Patricia Paraide, Arnold Kukari, Kapa Kelep-Malpo,  
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## ACRONYMS

BoM	Board of Management
DEA	District Education Advisor
DEO	District Education Office
PARS	Payroll and Related Services
PDoE	Provincial Department of Education
PEA	Provincial Education Advisor
NDoE	National Department of Education
NEB	National Education Board
NRI	National Research Institute
PEB	Provincial Education Board
PEO	Provincial Education Officer
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RDF	Resumption of Duty Forms
RoDSS	Resumption of Duty Summary Sheet
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TSA	Teaching Services Act, 1995
TSC	Teaching Services Commission

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Background**

The process of appointing teachers to teaching positions is outlined in the *Teaching Service Act, 1995* (Consolidated to No. 20 of 1995), the *Education Act, 1983* (Consolidated to No. 13 of 1995), and the *Teaching Service Commission Human Resource Information and Operations Manual*. However, in most cases teacher appointments are conducted outside of these legal and policy frameworks. This has largely contributed to corruption, lack of accountability and transparency, and failure on the part of the some appointing authorities to effectively and efficiently manage the process of teacher appointments.

West Sepik Province was selected to participate in the study because of its good track record in the appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions. Its inclusion allowed its teacher appointment process and practices to be examined. The strengths and challenges identified in the province's teacher appointment process can be acknowledged and reported, so that other provinces who share similar experiences in teacher appointments can learn from its experiences. Additionally, the challenges identified allowed teachers' input in the recommendations for appropriate interventions to address them. This will allow the appropriate authorities to study the recommendations and, guided by the teachers' recommendations, develop and implement appropriate strategies to improve and further strengthen the teacher appointment process in the province.

### **Aims of the study**

The specific aims of the study were to:

- understand the perceptions and experiences of teachers and head teachers of the process and practice of teacher appointment in the West Sepik Province;
- identify the strengths, if any, of the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province;
- identify the weaknesses, and the factors contributing to these weaknesses, in the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province; and
- recommend appropriate strategies to improve and strengthen the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province.

### **Methodology**

This study formed part of a larger study in 8 of the 20 provinces of PNG. The teacher appointment processes and practices of two provinces from each of the four regions were examined. The provinces were selected on the basis of their reputations in teacher appointments. Of the two provinces from each region, one was selected for its good reputation in managing teacher appointment, and the other was selected for its poor reputation. West and East Sepik Provinces were selected from the Momase Region; West Sepik Province has a good reputation, while East Sepik Province has a poor reputation in teacher appointment. This

study examined the practice and processes of teacher appointment in the West Sepik Province.

To examine teachers' lived experiences and perceptions of teacher appointment in the province, all teachers and head teachers in community and primary schools at the time of the study were included in the survey. In addition, teachers in two urban and two rural schools were interviewed about their views on teacher appointment in the province, and its personal impact on them and on other teachers.

Unfortunately, the method of delivering surveys to schools did not yield the desired results. Although surveys were delivered to schools accessible by road, delivering surveys to very remote schools was difficult. Surveys for remote schools were left with the zone or cluster leaders to distribute, collect and send to NRI. Compliance with this request was poor, and many teachers did not receive their survey forms. Also, many teachers did not complete and return their surveys. This combination of factors produced a poor response rate.

## **Key Findings**

### **1. *Characteristics of teachers and head teachers***

- i. In the West Sepik Province, the majority of teachers served in rural primary and community schools, with a large majority of the teachers serving in church agency schools.
- ii. A majority (82%) of the teachers' ages ranged from 26 and over 50 years of age. Most (55%) of the head teachers ranged in age from 46 to over 50. This suggests that older and more experienced teachers are preferred for appointment to head teacher positions in this province.
- iii. A large majority (76%) of teachers had been teaching for 6 to 40 years. Only 21% of teachers had been teaching for 1 to 5 years. This suggests that teachers who had been teaching for 6 years or more were generally preferred for appointment to teaching positions in this province.
- iv. Most of the head teachers (73%) had been teaching for 6 to 40 years. This suggests that teachers who had been teaching for six years or more are generally preferred for appointment to head teacher positions. West Sepik Province has 727 community and primary school teachers of which 450 (62%) were men and 227 (38%) were women. However, only 18% of the head teachers sampled were women, whilst 82% were men. Thirty percent of women head teachers from the sample would have been a more equitable number to that of men. This study could not establish whether the appointment of teachers to head teacher positions was done on merit. However, the data suggests that men were preferred for appointment to head teacher positions.

- v. Forty-six percent of teachers and 50% percent of head teachers had served in their current school for only three years. However, a significant number of teachers (38%) and head teachers (36%) had served in their current schools for four years or more. It is not certain if TSC had granted further extension to these teachers' three-year tenure. Tenure extension is based on teachers' satisfactory performance, which can allow them to stay on in their current schools for longer periods. If this is not the case, then the provincial teacher appointment is not acting in compliance with the tenure policy which allows teachers to stay in one school for only a three-year period.

## **2. *Appointment of teachers to teaching positions***

- i. Fifty-five percent of teachers and 48% percent of head teachers appointed to teaching and head teacher positions were from the West Sepik Province and 16% of teachers and 23% of head teachers were from East Sepik. Those from other provinces were; Manus (teachers 8% and head teachers 5%), Madang (teachers 6% and head teachers 10%), Milne Bay (teachers 2% and head teachers 14%), New Ireland (teachers 3%), and Autonomous Region of Bougainville (teachers 3%), West New Britain (teachers 2%), Morobe (teachers 2%), Simbu (teachers 2%), Western Highlands (teachers 2%), and Central (teachers 2%). This data suggests that there was a general preference to appoint teachers from West Sepik Province to teaching and head teacher positions. It also suggests that with appointment of teachers from other provinces, teachers from East Sepik, Milne Bay and Manus provinces were preferred for appointment to teacher and head teacher positions.
- ii. Less than half of the teachers (teachers 49% and head teachers 46%) were of the view that teachers were appointed through the Special Education Gazette, while 42% of the teachers and 14% of the head teachers said that teachers were appointed by the PEB. This shows that some teachers from this province were able to apply and win teaching positions through the Special Education Gazette.
- iii. Despite the existence of teacher appointment mechanisms, the general perception was that nepotism, bribery, and forced teacher appointments occurred during the teacher appointment process. A small number of teachers (teachers 6% and head teachers 18%) were of the view that teachers were forced to take up teaching positions that were not of their choice. Also, some other teachers (teachers 13% and head teachers 9%) were of the view that there was a lack of transparency in the teacher appointment process. This suggests that some anomalies were present in the teacher appointment process in this province.

- iv. There was general agreement amongst the teachers that the Special Education Gazette arrived late in the province and in the schools. This disadvantaged teachers who needed to apply for vacant positions.
- v. It was also found that the subsequent results of the late arrival of the Special Education Gazette in the province were the late confirmation of teacher appointments, late notification of teacher appointments and the absence or minimal use of written formal notifications of teachers' postings.
- vi. Teachers were generally informed of their teaching appointments through the radio and personal enquiries at the provincial education office. The reliance by the province on these informal ways of notifying teachers of their postings is in breach of TSC regulations which stipulate that teachers must be formally advised of their postings.

### **3. Acceptance of teaching appointments by teachers**

- i. In the West Sepik Province, 35% of teachers and 32% of head teachers had never refused teacher appointment, while a significant number of teachers (teachers 65% and head teachers 68%) had refused teacher appointments sometime in their career. This shows that there were elements of teacher discontentment with the teacher appointment process in this province.
- ii. Twelve percent of teachers and 41% of head teachers were most likely to take up forced appointments. Others (teachers 36% and head teachers 33%) were most likely to challenge forced appointments and 27% of teachers and 19% of head teachers were most likely to refuse teaching appointments that they viewed to be unfair or unjust. Some were most likely to resign from teaching (teachers 11% and head teachers 19%).
- iii. Personal issues (teachers 46% and head teachers 33%), forced teachers' appointments (teachers 21% and head teachers 20%), and school locations (teachers 15% and head teachers 13%) were the main contributing factors to teachers' refusal of teaching appointments.
- iv. Teachers' formal appeals against teaching appointments as stipulated under the TSC Act were generally ignored or not addressed efficiently by the teacher appointment authorities in the province.

### **4. Resumption of teaching duties**

Teachers' and head teachers' late resumption of duties is a major issue that hinders school efficient work commencement at the beginning of the new school year. Two of the major contributing factors for this are late confirmation of teacher appointments and inadequate logistical and financial support for teachers' travel to their schools at the beginning of the school year. The other major reasons for late resumption of duties included discontentment with teaching appointments,

particularly when they were forced appointments, personal and family issues, late appointments and late notification to teachers of their teaching appointments, and weather conditions.

- I. Teachers' recommendation for improving resumption of duties were that PEB and TSC should provide logistical support and funds for teachers' travel to schools, teachers should be notified of their teaching appointments before they commence the Christmas vacation, late teacher appointments should be minimised, and schools should provide appropriate teacher accommodation.
- II. The delays in the arrival of the Special Education Gazette in the provinces and schools had subsequent effects on other processes in teacher appointments. These included late appointments, late formal confirmation of teacher appointments and the late resumption of teaching duties in the new school year.

#### **5. Proposed changes to the teacher appointment process**

- I. Despite the general low opinion of the teacher appointment process, some strengths were identified. These strengths included some logistical support for teachers' travel to schools, serving teachers given priority during the appointment process, some teachers were appointed on merit, teachers were able to fight for their rights, many schools were fully staffed during the year, new graduates were screened before being appointed to teaching positions, application for teaching positions were through DEO, some teachers were willing to teach in remote schools, and some teachers and head teachers were able to retain positions in the same school for a reasonable period of time (3 yrs maximum).
- II. Even though some strengths in the current teacher appointment process were identified, a lot more weaknesses were identified. Teachers presented some recommendations for improvement.

The recommendations were that:

- the *Special Education Gazette* should be sent to the province early or in a timely manner;
- teachers' interests/welfare should be taken into consideration during the teacher appointment process;
- the correct procedures in the teacher appointment process should be adhered to;
- teachers should be formally notified of their teaching appointments early;
- transparency practices should be applied during the teaching appointment processes; and

- teachers' professional and personal data should be used to guide teacher appointments.

## **Recommendations**

### **1. Printing and distribution of the *Special Education Gazette***

#### ***Recommendation 1.1***

That the PEB initiate and foster dialogue with the TSC for a time bound **action plan** to be developed and implemented to ensure that the Special Education Gazette is printed and distributed to the provinces by the end of June each year.

### **2. Appointment of teachers to teaching positions**

#### ***Recommendation 2.1***

That the PEB and the TSC develop and implement a time bound **teacher appointment action plan** with clear deliverables for every calendar year.

#### ***Recommendation 2.2***

That the PEB must comply with all the relevant provisions of the TSC Act, 1995 in the appointment of teachers to teaching positions in the province.

#### ***Recommendation 2.3***

That the TSC and the PEB eliminate nepotism and corruption in the appointment of teachers by ensuring that all appointments are made based on merit and through a duly constituted PEB meeting.

#### ***Recommendation 2.4***

That the PEB effectively address nepotism and corruption by taking disciplinary action against officers who engage in such activities, who fail to comply with the relevant provisions of the TSC Act, 1995, and who fail to perform their responsibilities described in the **teacher appointment and logistics action plans**.

#### ***Recommendation 2.5***

That the PEB put in place a confidential and a non punitive process for teachers, head teachers, BoM, PEB members, and Parents & Citizens, in order to report cases of nepotism or corruption in the process and practice of teacher appointment.

***Recommendation 2.6***

That the PEB develop and communicate to all teachers, school agencies, BoM, parents and citizens, standard officers, District Education Advisors, Church Education Secretaries, and local leaders criteria for appointing teachers to teaching and head teacher positions.

***Recommendation 2.7***

That the PEB ensure that teachers and head teachers are appointed to teaching positions and administrative positions with due consideration of their personal welfare and interests, eligibility to promotional positions, tenure rights and potential risks to themselves and their families.

***Recommendation 2.8***

That the PEB, in collaboration with TSC, develop and maintain an up-to-date **database** of all teaching positions in the province, teachers occupying each position and their particulars, vacant positions and movement of positions from one school to another.

***Recommendation 2.9***

That the PEB consider all recommendations for teacher appointment from the Church Agency personnel, Standard Officers, and BOM on merit.

***Recommendation 2.10***

That the TSC provide increased financial incentives for teachers teaching in remote schools and that these teachers be paid on a fortnightly basis.

***Recommendation 2.11***

That the PEB prepare and present an **annual teacher appointment report** to the TSC and the NEB, by March of every year.

**3. Acceptance of teaching appointments by teachers**

***Recommendation 3.1***

That the PEB develop and implement an effective, transparent, and time bound **appeals process and an action plan**, if there is currently none in place.

**Recommendation 3.2**

That the PEB establish an **appeals board** comprising members other than PEB members, together with clear roles and responsibilities.

**Recommendation 3.3**

That the PEB develop and implement a clear, time bound **appeals process** that states clearly when the appeals will be received, how long the appeals will be heard, and when the outcomes will be communicated to the appellants.

**Recommendation 3.4**

That the PEB and the TSC abolish the teachers' "pool".

**4. Resumption of teaching duties****Recommendation 4.1**

That the PEB develop and put in place a time bound **logistics action plan** that will include all required activities such as travel costs and arrangements for teachers transferring to new positions, monitoring of teachers resumption of duty in schools, filling in and submitting the Resumption of Duty Forms and RoDSS, and reporting on the resumption of duty by teachers to PEB. The person(s) responsible for executing each activity and the required timeframe for its completion must be clearly identified for monitoring and accountability purposes.

**Recommendation 4.2**

That the PEB budget for teachers' travel costs yearly and mobilizes all resources necessary to effectively implement the Logistics Action Plan. All funds must be *acquitted* and reported in the **annual teacher appointment report**, which must be submitted to TSC and PEB for ratification by March of every year.

**5. Amendment of the *Teaching Service Act 1995* and the *Education Act 1995*****Recommendation 5.1**

That the TSC and the PEB amend the TSC Act, 1995 and the Education Act, 1995 to include provisions that will make it mandatory for PEB to develop and implement time bound teacher appointment, logistics and appeals action plans, and to produce a teacher appointments annual report for TSC and PEB by March of every year.

***Recommendation 5.2***

That the TSC amend the TSC Act, 1995 to include provisions that will allow for implementing officers to be held accountable by the PEB if they fail to carry out their responsibilities stipulated in the Teacher Appointment, Logistics and the Appeals Action Plans.

**6. Respect and strengthen church–government partnerships**

***Recommendation 6.1***

That the roles and responsibilities of church agencies in the appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions must be clearly described and communicated to all teachers, BoM, Parents and Citizen's Associations, PEB members, and all Provincial Education Officers.

***Recommendation 6.2***

That PEB must give due consideration to the recommendations of church agencies and take into serious consideration their views on teacher appointments.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Background

The process for appointing teachers to teaching positions in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is outlined in the *Teaching Service Act 1995* (consolidated to No. 20 of 1995), the *Education Act 1983* (Consolidated to No. 13 of 1995), and the *Teaching Service Commission Human Resource Information and Operations Manual*. The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) and the Provincial Education Board (PEB) are expected to comply with the relevant provisions of these laws and related policies when appointing teachers to teaching positions.

For this purpose, the TSC should prepare, print and dispatch the *Special Education Gazette* to the provinces and all educational institutions in a timely manner. The *Gazette* contains vacant teaching positions in all educational institutions under the National Department of Education (NDoE) mandate. Teachers apply for teaching positions and the PEB, in consultation with head teachers, the Boards of Management, the Boards of Governors and church agencies, processes the applications and should notify teachers of the outcome before they take their recreational leave. The PEB should effectively manage the movement of teachers to schools to ensure that they resume their duties on time and submit their Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets (RoDSS), and to ensure continuous payment of the teachers' salaries.

Unfortunately, the TSC and some PEBs have not always met these obligations, which has created and perpetuated a multitude of problems. These issues continue to reduce teachers' motivation and commitment to their teaching duties, the quality of student learning and children's access to, and participation in, schooling. The Public Sector Reform Management Team highlighted this problem in its audit of the administration of Eastern Highlands, Morobe, West New Britain and Milne Bay in 2008. The team, amongst other findings, noted a lack of compliance by some provinces with the *Teaching Service Act, 1995* (TSA) and related policies in the appointment of teachers to teaching and administrative positions (Arek, 2008).

The non-compliance with the TSA and the *Education Act* and related policies in the appointment of teachers is a common practice amongst the PEBs and, to some extent, the TSC. This non-compliance is a major contributing factor to the host of problems experienced in the appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions. These problems include delays (delay factors), late resumption of duties (resumption factors), and corruption (corruption factors). The continued failure of the TSC to print and deliver the *Special Education Gazette* to the provinces in a timely manner causes problems with teacher appointments.

The gazette should be printed and sent to the provinces in September or October each year, and provinces are expected to administer and complete their teacher

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appointments by November. However, the provinces often fail to appoint their teachers by November and delay the process until December, or later. Teacher appointments are often finalised in December or, in many cases, just before the start of the school year.

Interference in the appointment of teachers by education agencies also causes delays in teacher appointments. Arek, (2008, p. 2) in her report on the audit of four provinces, noted that the public sector audit team found “most education agencies were interfering in teachers’ postings and appointments”. Politicians were also causing delays in getting teachers to schools by meddling with the appointment of teachers by PEBs. Korugl (2008) reported that four secondary schools in the Western Highlands Province faced closure due to political interference in the appointment of teachers, particularly head teachers.

In addition, communities were also increasingly involved in the appointment of teachers. Examples include the appointment of the principals of Dregerhafen Technical and Grace Memorial Secondary schools in the Morobe Province, and Hagen Park Secondary School in the Western Highlands Province. Gumuno (2008a) reported that locals welded the Mt Hagen Secondary School gates, which prevented teachers from gaining entry to begin the school year. Locals wanted the substantive school principal to remain at the school and requested the PEB to rescind the decision to transfer him to another school.

The absence of an effective and efficient process for teacher appeals also causes delays in teachers taking up their positions. Teachers often challenge the decisions of the PEB if they perceive that their appointments do not follow the correct procedures, either on merit or according to their interests. For example, about 600 teachers in the Enga Province were unhappy with their postings because they believed that “their postings had been muddled up and not done according to the teachers’ requests and choices” (Lari, 2008, p.4).

In most provinces, lengthy delays in notifying teachers of the outcomes of their appeals often occur. In other cases, teachers wait in vain for an outcome, and therefore many decide to leave teaching or look for teaching positions in other provinces. Even when appeals are upheld, teachers often start their school years very late. When serving teachers decide to leave, schools to which these teachers were appointed either have no or fewer teachers. In such cases, provinces resort to appointing unqualified teachers (Muri, 2008) or recruit teachers from other provinces to fill the vacancies (Gumar, 2011; Kivia, 2011).

Moreover, the failure of the TSC and the PEB to ensure effective, efficient, transparent and accountable teacher appointments contributes to perceptions that the entire process and practice of teacher appointments is corrupt (Philemon, 2010; Tiamu, 2010). Philemon (2010, p.4) reported that the Morobe Provincial Education Board “has been accused of foul play, irregularities and abnormalities in the appointment of teachers ...” Further, Philemon reported that the Regional

Secretary of the Papua New Guinea Teachers Association, Mr. Mathew Pobaya, claimed “the Provincial Education Board had overlooked the tenure appointment of teachers, the reclassification of their positions, the substantive position holders and used appointments as a form of punishment”. The TSC was concerned about this situation and, in a letter to the Provincial Education Advisor, said “... you have totally ignored the legitimate processes and procedures and failed to give clear advice to the Provincial Education Board on teachers’ appointments under the *Teaching Service Act* and the *Education Act*” (Tiamu, 2010, p.6).

The above factors contribute directly to the late notification of appointments to teachers, and the late resumption of their teaching duties. Other factors contributing to late resumption of duties include poor school infrastructure (e.g. teacher housing, water supply and sanitation) (Anis, 2008; Gumar, 2008), bad weather (Manuk, 2008) and disputes over land on which the schools are situated.

The problems highlighted here have been the norm over the last decade and permeate the whole process and practice of teacher appointment and deployment. These problems, according to Kukari et al. (2011), are worsened by a lack of clarity, duplication, and division within the TSC and within the National Education Board’s role in teacher appointments stipulated under the *Teaching Service Act, 1995* and the *Education Act, 1995*. This situation creates confusion amongst teachers and is a major contributing factor to the problems with teacher appointments experienced every school year.

West Sepik Province was identified as one a few provinces with a good reputation in teacher appointments. This reputation is characterised by less claims of corruption in the process of teacher appointments, late appointments, late notification of teachers of appointments, late resumption of duties by teachers, and late submission of Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets (RoDSS) to Payroll and Related Services (PARS) for the processing of teachers’ salaries.

### **Aims of the Study**

The specific aims of the study were to:

- understand the perceptions and experiences of teachers and head teachers of the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province
- identify the strengths, if any, of the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province
- identify the weaknesses, and the factors contributing to these weaknesses, in the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province
- recommend appropriate strategies to improve and strengthen the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province.

### **Methodology**

This study formed part of a larger study in 8 of the 20 provinces of PNG. The teacher appointment processes and practices of two provinces from each of the

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four regions were examined. The provinces were selected on the basis of their reputations in teacher appointment. Of the two provinces from each region, one was selected for its good reputation in managing teacher appointments, and the other was selected for its poor reputation. East and West Sepik provinces were selected from the Momase Region; East Sepik Province has a poor reputation in teacher appointment, while West Sepik Province has a good reputation. This study examined the practice and processes of teacher appointment in the West Sepik Province.

##### ***Research approach***

A case study design was used to plan the study and collect the data. This design was used to gain an in-depth understanding of the process and practice of teacher appointment and the meaning of the process for community and primary school teachers and head teachers in the province. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Triangulation of methods improved the reliability and validity of the data.

##### ***Sample***

To examine teachers' lived experiences and perceptions of teacher appointment in the province, all teachers and head teachers teaching in community and primary schools at the time of the study were included in the survey, but only a small proportion actually completed the survey (Table 1). In addition, teachers in two urban and two rural schools were interviewed about their views on teacher appointment in the province and its personal impact on them and on other teachers.

**Table 1: Teacher and head teacher population and sample**

<b>Community and primary school teachers</b>	<b>Population (N)</b>	<b>Sample (%)</b>
Teachers	727	67 (9.2%)
Head teachers	203	22 (11%)

##### ***Data collection***

The intention was to survey all community and primary school teachers, using a questionnaire on teacher appointment. The response rate was 9%. Head teachers of all community and primary school were supposed to be given the same questionnaire and their response rate was 11%. Many questionnaires were not distributed, completed and returned because of the remoteness of many schools in some parts of the Aitape Lumi, Nuku, Telefomin and Vanino-Green River districts. Survey forms for remote schools were left with the zone or cluster leaders to distribute, collect and send to NRI. Unfortunately, many survey forms were not received by teachers. This low level of support by the Provincial Education Office (PEO) in administering, collecting and sending the questionnaires to NRI was a

major contributing factor to the poor response rate. In addition, many teachers who received questionnaires failed to complete and return them, which is possibly a reflection of teachers' poor attitude towards research.

Focus group interviews were also conducted with teachers and head teachers in two urban and two rural schools.

### ***Data analysis***

Qualitative data from the survey was categorised into meaningful themes. The surveys were then coded using a prepared code book, which contained the themes and a code for each theme. Once coding was completed, Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software was used to analyse the data. Frequencies of the coded themes in the answers to each question and variable were then generated and interpreted.

## **2. PROVINCIAL PROFILE**

This profile provides a provincial and district context for the study to help understand the process and practice of teacher appointment in the province.

### **Background**

West Sepik Province is one of four provinces in the Mamose Region of Papua New Guinea. It covers an area of 36,300 square kilometers. The capital is Vanimo (Wikipedia, 2011). According to the 2000 National Census, the province's population was 185,741 (National Statistical Office, 2002). Road infrastructure and transportation to some schools in the Nuku, Telefomin and Aitape Lumi and Vanimo Green River districts can be challenging so this can have an influence on the teachers' willingness to work in them. Teachers are generally not willing to serve in areas where basic services are not available or far away from the schools, and where transportation is an issue.

West Sepik Province produces about 8% of PNG's log export. Much of this comes from the 287 200 hectare Vanimo Timber Ltd project between the coast and Bewani Mountains. The people in Telefomin produce food to sell to the Ok Tedi mining community and many of the Telefomin people are employed at the Ok Tedi mine. West Sepik also produces a small amount of cocoa, copra, coffee and rubber (Rannells and Matatier, 2005). Such economical status in the province can have some influence on retention of teachers. If teachers are of the view that their general welfare is not adequately addressed by TSC and PEB, they can resign from the teaching force and take up employment in the mine or timber companies.

### **Districts**

West Sepik Province has four districts, namely Aitape-Lumi, Nuku, Telefomin and Vanimo-Green River. It has seventeen local level government, namely East Aitape Rural, East Wapei Rural, West Aitape Rural, West Wapei Rural 1, West Wapei Rural 2, Palai Rural, Yangkok Rural, Maimai Wanwan Rural 1, Maimai Wanwan Rural 2, Maimai Wanwan Rural 3, Telefomin Rural, Yapsie Rural, Amanab Rural, Amanab Rural 1, Almanac Rural 2, Green River Rural 1, Green River Rural 2 (Wikipedia, 2011).

### **Community and primary schools**

West Sepik Province had 203 community and primary schools in 2008. The total number of government schools was 69 (34%) and the total number of church agency schools was 134 (66%). The total student enrolment in government schools was 7, 414 of whom 4,238 (57%) were boys and 3, 176 (43%) were girls. The church agency student enrolment on the other hand, was 16, 893, of whom 9, 739 (58%) were boys and 7, 154 (42%) were girls. The overall total student enrolment at this level of education was 24, 307 of whom 13, 977 (58%) were boys and 10, 330 (42%) were girls. The total number of community and primary school teachers in West Sepik Province was 737 of whom 434 were men and 302 were

women. Out of this number of teachers, 243 (142 (58%) men and 101 (42%) women) served in the government agency schools. The church agency schools, on the other hand, had 493 teachers of whom 292 (59%) were men and 201 (41%) were women (Department of Education, 2008:13). This data shows that church agencies operated 66% of the community and primary schools in this province and enrolled 69% of primary school children population in their community and primary schools. This data also shows that three-quarters of the community and primary school teachers were serving in church agency schools. It also shows that only 42% of the student population enrolled at this level of school were girls. This suggests that girls may still be having difficulties in accessing basic education in this province. Table 2 presents data on the distribution of schools in this province.

**Table 2: The distribution of community and primary schools in West Sepik Province**

District	Government schools	Church agency schools	Urban schools	Rural schools
Aitape/Lumi	15	45	1	56
Nuku	6	35	0	41
Telefomin	20	14	0	34
Vanimu/Green River	18	37	1	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>186</b>

(Department of Education, 2008)

Some of the schools were not listed and therefore the total number of schools is fewer in the table

The data in Table 2 shows that 70% of community and primary schools in this province were operated by church agencies. It also shows that 99% of the community and primary schools are located in the rural areas. This data infers that the majority of teachers may have difficulties in accessing the Special Education Gazette in order to apply for positions they are eligible for, if copies arrive late in the province, and the teachers may not receive formal or informal communication on their teacher postings if they do not receive them before the end of the school year.

### 3. TEACHER APPOINTMENT

#### Characteristics of teachers and head teachers

The teachers' sample was only 67 of whom 34 (51%) were men and 33 (49%) were women, while the head teacher sample was 22, of which 17 (77%) were men and 5 (23%) were women. The remoteness of the schools and low level of support from PEOs were the main contributing factors to such low returns of surveys.

Teachers and head teachers were asked to indicate their gender. The main purpose for this was to understand how the teacher appointment practices in the province impact on male and female teachers in the province. Even though the sample is small, the data does indicate that there were fewer women than men teachers in this province. The study could not establish why the women teacher population in the community and primary schools is low in this province.

#### *Teaching locations of teachers and head teachers*

Teachers and head teachers were asked to indicate the location of their schools. The purpose for collecting this data was to establish the number of teachers who were serving in urban and rural schools. Table 3 shows the location of the teachers' schools.

**Table 3: Teaching locations nominated by survey respondents**

<b>Teacher type &amp; location</b>	<b>n (%)</b>
<b>Teachers</b>	
Urban	0 (0%)
Rural	67 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Head teachers</b>	
Urban	0 (0%)
Rural	22 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>

Data in Table 3 shows that all the teachers in the sample served in the rural schools. It also reflects the fact that surveys administered to urban teachers were not returned. Even though this sample was small this data does indicate that more teachers serve in rural than urban schools. Therefore, the respondents' views presented in this report about teacher appointment were those of the rural teachers.

### **Agency of primary schools in which teachers taught**

The teachers and head teachers were also asked to indicate the agency of their schools. Primary and community school teachers serve in both government and church agency schools. Table 4 shows the distribution of teachers who serve in government and church agency schools.

**Table 4: Agency of community and primary schools in which teachers and head teacher respondents taught**

Teachers			Head teachers		
Agency	N	%	Agency	N	%
Government	33	49.2	Government	9	42.9
Catholic	32	47.8	Catholic	8	38.1
United Church	1	1.5	United Church	2	9.5
Lutheran/Evangelical	1	1.5	Lutheran/Evangelical	2	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

Data from table 4 shows that 49% of the teachers and 43% of the head teachers served in government agency schools. The rest (teachers 51% and head teachers 57%) serve in the church agency schools, notably in the Catholic agency schools (teachers 48% and head teachers 38%). This data supports the data in table 2 which shows that the church agencies operate more community and primary schools than the government in this province. This also indicates that the church agencies play a vital role in the provision of basic education in this province.

### **Age of teachers**

The teachers and head teachers were also asked to indicate their ages, in order to gauge the ages of the teachers who were serving in the schools. The ages of teachers can influence how they relate to the students they serve and their general attitude towards their work and the school community. It can also infer that these teachers were married and have children. Such status generally influences the teachers' choices of the locations of schools they wish to serve in. Table 5 presents the ages of the teachers.

**Table 5: Age of teacher and head teacher respondents**

Teachers			Head teachers		
Age group	N	%	Age group	N	%
20–25	12	18.1	20–25	1	4.5
26–30	7	10.6	26–30	4	18.2
31–35	11	16.6	31–35	3	13.6
36–40	9	13.6	36–40	2	9.1
41–45	8	12.1	41–45	3	13.6
46–50	10	15.2	46–50	3	13.6
Over 50	9	13.6	Over 50	6	27.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

Data in the Table 5 shows that only a few teachers fell in the age range of 20 to 25. The majority of the teachers (teachers 80% and head teachers 95%) ranged in age from 26 to over 50 years. It also shows that 55% of the teachers ranged in age from 36 to over 50 years. The data also shows that 55% of the head teachers in the sample ranged in age from 41 to over 50 years. This data shows the province's preference of appointing much older and experienced teachers over young and relatively inexperienced ones to teaching and head teacher positions.

### ***Teaching experience of teachers and head teachers***

The teachers and head teachers were also asked to indicate the number of years they had been teaching. Table 6 presents data on the teachers' teaching experience.

**Table 6: The teaching experience of teachers and head teachers**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Teachers</b>		<b>Years</b>	<b>Head teachers</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than 1 yr	2	3.0	Less than 1 yr	0	0
1-5	14	21.2	1-5	6	27.3
6-10	7	10.6	6-10	1	4.5
11-15	11	16.7	11-15	2	9.1
16-20	11	16.7	16-20	5	22.7
21-30	16	24.2	21-30	4	18.2
31-40	5	7.6	31-40	4	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

The data shows that a very small percentage (3%) of the teachers had been teaching for less than a year. These were new graduates. Over two-thirds of the teachers (teachers 97% and head teachers 100%) had been teaching for 1 to 40 years. The data also suggests that teachers who had been teaching for many years were generally selected to teach in the schools. More than half of the teachers' (teachers 65% and head teachers 68%) had been teaching for 10 to 40 years. More than 50% (59%) of the head teachers had been teaching for 16 to 40 years. This suggests that much older and more experienced teachers were generally appointed to teaching and head teacher positions. This does not necessarily mean that these teachers were effective classroom teachers and instructional leaders.

### ***Number of years of experience of teachers and head teachers at their current schools***

The teachers and head teachers were also asked to indicate how long they had been teaching in their current schools. Teachers' duration of service in their current schools varied. Some of the teachers and head teachers who had served for less than a year were either new graduates or teachers who had transferred in from

other schools. Table 7 presents data on the duration of teachers' services in their current schools.

**Table 7: Number of years of experience of teachers and head teachers at their current schools**

Years	Teachers		Years	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Less than 1 yr	11	16.6	Less than 1 yr	3	13.6
1–3	30	45.5	1–3	11	50.0
4–6	4	6.1	4–6	6	27.3
7–9	12	18.2	7–9	0	0
10–12	6	9.1	10–12	2	9.1
13–15	n.a		13–15	0	0
16–18	3	4.5	n.a	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

More than 50% of teachers (teachers 62% and head teachers 64%) had been in their current schools for one to three years. This data seemed to indicate that the province was complying with the Teacher Tenure Policy. However, there is some inconsistency in the province's adherence to this policy. Data from table 7 shows that a notable percentage of teachers (teachers 38% and head teachers 36%) had been serving in the same schools for four or more years. The study could not establish whether these teachers held tenure positions in these schools or were in acting capacities. However, the data infers that teachers were allowed to stay on in their current schools for 4 years or more. This is in breach of the Teacher Tenure Policy which stipulates that teachers, unless they are inspected and given a good report by the Standards Officers, must not remain in the same school for more than three years.

### ***Home provinces of teachers and head teachers***

The Teaching Service Act guides all provinces on the teacher appointment processes. Provincial education administrations have variations in implementing the teacher appointment process. The selection and appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions are examples of this. Table 8 presents data on the teachers' home provinces.

**Table 8: The home provinces of teachers and head teachers**

Home province	Teachers		Home province	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
New Ireland	2	3.0	New Ireland	0	0
Manus	5	7.5	Manus	1	4.8
West New Britain	1	1.5	West New Britain	n.a	n.a
ARB	2	3.0	ARB	n.a	n.a
West Sepik	37	55.1	West Sepik	10	47.6
East Sepik	11	16.4	East Sepik	5	23.8

## 12 Teachers' Perceptions of Teacher Appointments in the West Sepik Province

Madang	4	6.0	Madang	2	9.5
Morobe	1	1.5	Morobe	n.a	n.a
Simbu	1	1.5	Simbu	n.a	n.a
Western Highlands	1	1.5	Western Highlands	n.a	n.a
Milne Bay	1	1.5	Milne Bay	3	14.3
Central	1	1.5	Central	n.a	n.a
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable

The data shows that 55% of teachers and 48% of head teachers appointed to teaching and administrative positions in community and primary schools were from this province. A smaller but notable number were from the neighbouring East Sepik (teachers 16% and head teachers 24%) and Madang Provinces (teachers 6% and head teachers 10%). Smaller numbers were from other provinces. This data suggests that the appointing authorities had a high preference for appointing teachers from this province and also its neighboring provinces to teach in the community and primary schools. The costs of logistics of moving teachers from other provinces to teach in the province and catering for their entitlements such as leave fares is a major contributing factor to the decision of provinces to appoint teachers from the province. This practice, however, limits the exposure of local teachers to interacting professionally with teachers from other provinces who may have different teaching perspectives and practices.

### Appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions

#### *How teachers are appointed to teaching positions*

The HR Policy Information and Operations Manual (2005:20) guides the PEBs and the NEB in the selection of teachers and encourages the appointment of the most suitable applicants for advertised position vacancies in the Special Education Gazette in various schools around PNG. The teachers and head teachers were of the general view that this directive was often overlooked during the teacher appointment process, especially when appointment was not done on merit.

**Table 9: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of teacher appointment**

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Through the <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	33	49.3	Through the <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	10	45.5
By PEB	28	41.7	Forced to take up positions	4	18.2
Forced to take up positions	4	6.0	Through nepotism	4	18.2
Through nepotism	2	3.0	Through PEB	3	13.6
BoM recommendations	n.a	n.a	BoM recommendation	1	4.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable; BoM = Boards of Management

Data in Table 9 shows that many teachers (teachers 49% and head teachers 46%) were of the view that teachers were appointed by applying for vacant positions advertised in the Special Education Gazette as highlighted further in this teacher's comment, *'the Special Education Gazette are sent to the schools and teachers apply for vacant positions in them'*. Others (teachers 42% and head teachers 14%) were of the view that teachers were appointed by the PEB when making acting appointment as reflected in this teacher's comments, *'PEB meets to make appointments'*. The rest were appointed through forced appointments (teachers 6% and head teachers 18%), nepotism (teachers 3% and head teachers 18%) and through BoM recommendation (head teachers-5%). Nepotism practices during teacher appointment seem to be of concern for the teachers as highlighted by this teacher's comment, *'teachers appointed are spouses of public servants and those with personal connections with the appointment authorities'*. The data shows that many of the teachers were able to apply for and win positions advertised in the Special Education Gazette. However, the data also shows that many more miss out and therefore were appointed to vacant positions by the PEB on acting basis. The data also suggests that forced appointments and nepotism practices occur during the teacher appointment process.

### **Advice of postings**

Late resumption of teaching duties is a persistent issue which is caused by various factors such as late notification of teachers of their postings for the following school year. The teachers and head teachers were asked when they were generally notified about their teacher appointments.

**Table 10: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers about advice of postings**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Teachers</b>		<b>Head teachers</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Late	36	53.7	At resumption/first week of school	6	27.3
November/December during Christmas vacations	12	17.9	January/beginning of school year	5	22.7
Always very late	8	11.9	During Christmas vacation	4	18.2
January/Beginning of school year	6	9.0	Late November/December	4	18.2
At resumption/First week of school	3	4.5	Always very late	3	13.6
A few weeks before resumption week	2	3.0	A few weeks before resumption week	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

Data in Table 10 shows that many teachers (teachers 54% and head teachers 23%) received their teacher appointment notifications in late November and early December. However, some received their teacher appointment notifications during the Christmas vacation (teachers 18% and head teachers 18%) as expressed in this teacher's response *'teachers are advised during the Christmas vocation...'*, some at the beginning of the new school year (teachers 9% and head teachers 23%), some during the resumption of duty week or first week of school (teachers 5% and head teachers 27%) and some were of the view that notification of teacher appointment was always late (teachers 12% and head teachers 14%). Such practice is in breach of the Teaching Services Commission's directive, which stipulates that teachers must be informed formally of their postings before the end of the school year so that they can arrange to get to their schools in ample time before the new school year commences (Education Department, 2001). Additionally, the late notification of appointments often creates other problems such as teachers' late arrival in their new schools, late submission of RoDSS and chaotic implementation of curricula which may lead to poor quality of learning.

### ***How teachers are notified of their postings***

One of the subsequent results of the late arrival of the Special Education Gazette in the schools is the delayed confirmation of teachers' appointments. Teachers and head teachers do not generally receive confirmation of their teacher appointments before the end of the school year. Consequently, the appointing authorities have to disseminate this information during the school vacation period. Therefore, other means of communication are used to notify teachers of their teacher postings. Written notification is generally abandoned as a result. The teachers were asked how they were notified of their appointments. Table 11 presents their responses.

**Table 11: How teachers and head teachers are notified of their appointments**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Teachers</b>		<b>Head teachers</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Through the radio	58	87.9	Through the radio	16	76.2
Through enquiries at provincial headquarters	8	12.1	Through enquiries at the provincial headquarters	3	14.3
Through others who heard about their appointment	0	0	Through others who heard about their appointment	1	4.8
By fellow teachers	0	0	By fellow teachers	1	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable

More than three quarters of teachers (teachers 88% and head teachers 76%) were notified about their teacher appointment through the radio as reflected in this

teacher's comments, *'teachers are advised of their postings during the Christmas period through the radio and by going into the district education office to see the postings list'*. Some learned of their teaching appointments through enquires at the provincial headquarters (teachers 12% and head teachers 14%), while some learned from others who had heard about the appointment (head teachers 5%) and a few learned about it from fellow teachers (head teachers 5%). None of the teachers received official written notification. This is in breach of Teaching Services Commission's directives which stated that teachers must be formally informed of their posting through written communication (Department of Education, 2001).

### ***Consideration of the interests of teachers and head teachers in the appointment process***

A section of the application form for teacher appointment encourages teachers to state their preferences to guide decisions on appointments. Teachers and head teachers were of the view that their interests were not taken into consideration during the teacher appointment process. Table 12 presents their views.

**Table 12. Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of the consideration of their interests in the appointment process**

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Yes	5	7.6	Yes	2	9.1
No	42	63.6	No	16	72.7
Sometimes	19	28.8	Sometimes	4	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

More than half of the teachers (teachers 64% and head teachers 73%) were of the view that teachers' interest and welfare were not considered during the appointment process as further highlighted in these teachers' responses, *'no'*, *'sometimes but most of the times not done'* and *'not always, sometimes we are forced to take up positions'*. Many others were also of the view that teachers' interests were considered only sometimes (teachers 29% and head teachers 18%). Only 8% of teachers and 9% of teachers were of the view that their interests were taken into consideration during the appointment process. This data suggests that teachers' interests were generally not taken into consideration during the teacher appointment process.

### **Acceptance of appointments by teachers**

#### ***Refusal of appointments by teachers and head teachers***

Teachers were asked if they had ever refused teacher appointment during their teaching career. Table 13 presents their responses.

**Table 13. Refusal of appointments by teachers and head teachers**

Responses	TEACHERS		HEAD TEACHERS		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Yes	42	64.6	Yes	15	68.2
No	23	35.4	No	7	31.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

A notable percentage of teachers (teachers 35% and head teachers 68%) had never refused any teaching appointments during their teaching career. However, more than 50% of the teachers (teachers 65% and head teachers 68%) had refused teaching appointments in their teaching career. This data infers that classes were without teachers some time during the school year. Other NRI studies have found that teacher shortages in schools was an issue faced by many schools around PNG. This is because teachers who were expected in the schools did not arrive at all (Kippel et al 2009, Kukari and Paraide, 2009, Paraide, et al 2010).

### ***Reasons for refusing appointments***

Teachers and head teachers refused to take up their teaching appointment for various reasons. Teachers were asked to give reasons for their refusal of teacher appointments. Table 15 presents their reasons.

**Table 14: The reasons given by teachers and head teachers for refusing appointments**

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Family/personal problems	22	45.9	Family/personal problems	5	33.3
Appointment not teachers' choice	10	20.8	Appointment not teachers' choice	3	20.0
Location of schools	7	14.6	Location of schools	2	13.3
Lack of government & other services	4	8.3	Lack of government & other services	2	13.3
Security concerns	n.a	n.a	Security concerns	2	13.3
Eligibility & tenure issues	4	8.3	Eligibility & tenure issues	1	6.8
No accommodation/toilet facilities	1	2.1	No accommodation/toilet facilities	n.a	n.a
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable

Data in Table 14 shows that some of the common reasons for teachers' refusal of teacher appointments were: family and personal issues (teachers 46% and head teachers 33%) as reflected in these teachers' responses, *'because of children's enrolments, and family access to hospitals, transport and urgent services'*; the appointment was not the teachers' choice (teachers 21% and head teachers 20%) as reflected in this teacher's comment *'appointment not according to my interest'*; school locations (teachers 15% and head teachers 13%), which were generally, associated with security issues and remoteness; eligibility and tenure issues (teachers 8% and head teachers 7%) and no accommodation (teachers 2%). This data supports other data in this report (Table 16) which show that one of the most common contributing factors to teachers' refusal of teacher appointments was family and personal reasons. This was associated with older children's appropriate grade in school; family members' health care, and other issues associated with older children and family financial status.

***Actions taken by teachers and head teachers if appointments are not according to their choice***

Teachers dealt with forced appointments in various ways. They were asked what they would do if they were given teacher appointments that were not of their choice. Their responses are present in table 15 below.

**Table 15: Actions taken by teachers and head teachers when appointments are not according to their choice**

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	Responses	N	%
Challenge the appointment	31	46.9	Challenge the appointment	10	45.5
Refuse to take up position	22	33.3	Refuse to take up position	9	40.9
Still take up position	13	19.8	Still take up position	3	13.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

Data from Table 15 shows that some teachers (teachers 20% and head teachers 14%) would still take up forced teaching appointments. However, many others (teachers 47% and head teachers 46%) were prepared to challenge forced teaching appointments; and some (teachers 33% and head teachers 41%) would refuse to take up the teaching appointments. This is further highlighted in these teachers' responses, *'simply refuse and make self appointment or stay on leave without pay'* and *'inform the authorities that I am not taking up the position...'*. Data presented elsewhere in this report shows that teachers accept forced teaching appointments despite their discontentment because they fear being placed in the pool. Teachers were suspended from the payroll when they were placed in the pool.

***Perceptions of other teachers' reasons for refusing appointments***

Teachers and head teachers were asked why other teachers refused their teaching appointments. Table 16 presents their responses for other teachers' refusal of teacher appointments.

**Table 16: Perceptions of other teachers' reasons for refusing their appointments**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Teachers</b>		<b>Responses</b>	<b>Head teachers</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Logistics and costs of getting to the school	18	27.3	Unhappy with appointment	9	40.9
Family & personal reasons	16	24.2	Location of school	6	27.3
Unhappy with appointment	15	22.7	Lack of government services	3	13.6
Location of school	5	7.6	Security concerns	2	9.1
			Family & personal reasons	1	4.5
Lack of Government services	5	7.6	Logistics and costs of getting to the school	1	4.5
Lack of accommodation	4	6.1	Lack of accommodation	n.a	n.a
Security concerns	3	4.5			.
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a. = not applicable

The most common reasons provided for other teachers' refusal of teaching appointments were: logistics and cost of getting to school (teachers 27% and head teachers 5%) dissatisfaction with the appointments (teachers 22% and head teachers 41%); location of school (teachers 7% and head teachers – 27%); family and personal reasons (teachers 24% and head teachers – 5%), and lack of government services (teachers 7% and head teachers 14%). This data shows that the teachers provided reasons that were similar to their own. It also shows that logistics and costs of getting to schools, and family and personal reasons had greater influence on the teachers' decision to refuse teacher appointment than head teachers. Discontentment with teacher appointments, location of schools and lack of government services, on the other hand, had influence on both teachers' and head teachers' decisions on refusal of teacher appointment.

***Perceptions of actions taken by other teachers when appointments are not of their choice***

Teachers and head teachers were asked about actions that other teachers would take if they were given appointments that were not of their choice. Their responses are presented in Table 17.

**Table 17: Perceived actions of other teachers when appointments are not of their choice**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Teachers</b>		<b>Responses</b>	<b>Head teachers</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Challenge appointment	24	36.4	Challenge appointment	7	33.3
Refuse to take up appointment	18	27.3	Refuse to take up appointment	4	19.0
Take up appointment	8	12.1	Leave teaching	4	19.0
Leave teaching	8	12.1	Swap with another teacher	3	14.3
Resume work late	6	9.1	Seek advice from Teaching Service Commission	1	4.8
Seek advice from Teaching Service Commission	1	1.5	Take up appointment	1	4.8
Swap with another teacher	1	1.5	Frequently absent from school	1	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

There was a general consensus among these two groups that if other teachers are appointed to positions that were not of their choice, many were most likely to challenge the appointment (teachers 36% and head teachers 33%); some (teachers 27% and head teachers 19%) would refuse to take up the appointment, some would still accept the appointment (teachers 12% and head teachers 5%); a few would resume work late (teachers 9%); others would seek advice from the Teaching Services Commission (teachers 2% and head teachers 5%); some would leave teaching (teachers 12% and head teachers 19%); and a smaller percentage would be willing to swap with another teacher (teachers 2% and head teachers 14%). This data suggests that teachers in this province were willing to fight for their rights in relation to teachers' appointment if they viewed them to be unjust rather than accept their teacher appointment meekly.

***Actions taken by the appointing authority against teachers who refuse their appointments***

Teachers and head teachers were asked what the appointment authorities would do when teachers refused to accept teacher appointments. Table 18 shows the actions taken by the teacher appointment authorities when teachers refused force teacher appointments.

**Table 18: Perceived actions taken by the PEB against teachers who refuse their appointments**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Teachers</b>		<b>Head teachers</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Issue threats/put teachers off the payroll	26	39.3	Issue threats/put teachers off the payroll	13	59.2
Place teachers in other positions	20	30.3	Place teachers in the pool	4	18.2
Place teachers in the pool	19	28.9	Force teachers to accept appointment	3	13.6
Give late teaching appointment	n.a	n.a	Give late teaching appointment	1	4.5
Send teachers to remote schools	1	1.5	Send teachers to remote schools	1	4.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable

Data in Table 18 shows that many teachers (teachers 39% and head teachers 59%) were of the view that they were threatened with suspension from the pay roll when they refused to accept forced teaching appointments. Other teachers were placed in other positions (teachers 30%), some were placed in the pool and consequently were suspended from the pay roll (teachers 29% and head teachers 18%), some were forced to accept their teacher appointments (head teachers 14%), a smaller percentage were given late appointments (head teachers 5%) and a further small percentage (teachers 2% and head teachers 5%) were sent to remote schools. This data is supported by these teachers' responses, *'they threaten teachers with leave without pay and not do proper consultation or investigate why teachers' refused their teaching appointments'*. This data suggests that teacher appointment authorities generally took retaliatory actions against teachers who refused teacher appointments rather than seek alternative solutions to support teachers better.

## Resumption of duties by teachers

### *Problems associated with the resumption of duty process*

Teachers' and head teachers' late resumption of teaching duties at the commencement of the new school year is an issue faced by many schools around PNG. The teachers and head teachers were asked to provide the reasons for late resumption of teaching duties. The reasons are presented in Table 19.

**Table 19: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of the problems associated with the late resumption of duty process**

Teachers			Head teachers		
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%
Inadequate logistical & financial support to travel to school	50	75.8	Inadequate logistical and financial support to travel to schools	14	63.6
Family and Personal reasons	8	12.1	Late Appointment	3	13.7
Late Appointment	5	7.6	Late/no notification of appointments	3	13.7
Late/no notification of appointment	1	1.5	Unhappy with appointment	1	4.5
Unhappy with appointment	1	1.5	Weather and road conditions	n.a	n.a
Weather and road conditions	1	1.5	Security issues	1	4.5
Security issues	n.a	n.a			
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable; RoDSS = Resumption of Duty Summary Sheets; PARS = Payroll and Related Services

Data in Table 19 shows that the most common reasons given by the teachers for the late resumption of teaching duties were: logistics and the cost of getting to schools (teachers 76% and head teachers 64%); late appointment (teachers 7.6% and head teachers 14%); late appointment notification (teachers 2% and head teachers 14%); family and personal issues (teachers 12%); discontentment with teachers appointment (teachers 2% and head teachers 5%); weather and road conditions (teachers 2%); and security issues (head teachers 5%). This data suggests that the most common reasons associated with late resumption of teachers' duties were related to the administrative organisation of teachers' appointment and deployment of teachers to their schools.

**Reasons given by teachers and head teachers for resuming their duties late**

Teachers and head teachers were asked to provide reasons for their late resumption of teaching duties. Their reasons are presented in Table 20.

**Table 20. Reasons given by teachers and head teachers for late resumption of duties**

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Insufficient logistical & cost of getting to school	50	75.8	Insufficient logistical & cost of getting to school	14	63.6
Family & personal reasons	8	11.9	Late appointment	3	13.6
Late appointment	5	7.6	Late/no notification of appointment	3	13.6
Unhappy with appointment	1	1.5	Unhappy with appointment	1	4.5
Late notification of appointment	1	1.5	Security Issues	1	4.5
Weather and road conditions	1	1.5			
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable

Data in Table 20 shows that the major reasons for late resumption of duties were: insufficient logistical and cost of getting to school (teachers 76% and head teachers 64%); late appointment (head teachers 14%); late notification of teaching appointments (teachers 2% and head teachers 14%) personal and family reasons (teachers 12%; discontentment with teacher appointment (teachers 2% and head teachers 5%); weather and road conditions (teachers 2%) and security issues (head teachers 5%). This data is further supported by these teachers' responses' *'transport problems, shortage of money to fund food and transport, housing problems, late postings or change of positions or postings, and family needs and problems'*. This data supports data in table 19 which infers that teachers generally resume teaching duties late primarily because of delayed confirmation of teacher appointments, teachers' inability to pay for transportation to their schools, and family and personal issues. Weather and road conditions are also hindrances that affect teachers' timely travel to their schools in this province.

**Other teachers' reasons for resuming their duties late**

The teachers and head teachers were asked to list reasons for other teachers' late resumption of duties. Table 21 presents their perceived reasons for late commencement of duties in the new school year.

**Table 21. Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of why other teachers resume their duties late**

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Logistics & cost of getting to school	38	56.7	Logistics & cost of getting to school	9	40.9
Family & personal reasons	12	17.9	Family & personal reasons	5	22.7
Unhappy with appointment	12	17.9	Unhappy with appointment	4	18.2
Late appointment	5	7.5	Late appointment	3	13.6
Late notification of appointment	n.a	n.a	Late notification of appointment	1	4.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable

Data in Table 21 shows that the most common reasons for other teachers' late resumption of teaching duties were: logistical and costs for getting to schools (teachers 57% and head teachers 41%), personal and family reasons (teachers 18% and head teachers 23%), discontentment with teacher appointment (teachers 18% and head teachers 18%); late teaching appointment (teachers 8% and head teachers 14% and late notifications of teaching appointments (head teachers 5%). This data further suggests that teachers generally resume duties late primarily because of their inability to pay for transportation to their schools, family and personal obligations, discontentment with teacher appointment and late teacher appointment. This shows that late resumption of teachers' duties is influenced by both administrative and teachers' personal commitments and family issues.

**Strategies recommended by teachers and head teachers to ensure that teachers resume their duties on time**

Late resumption of teaching duties at the commencement of the new school year is an issue in many schools. Teachers and head teachers presented recommendations to address the teachers' late resumption of teaching duties issue. Table 22 presents these recommendations.

**Table 22: Strategies recommended by teachers and head teachers to ensure that teachers resume their duties on time**

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
PEB & TSC provide logistical support	41	63.1	PEB & TSC provide logistical support	8	36.4
Early notification of appointment	17	26.2	Early notification of appointment	8	36.4
PEB & TSC consider teachers' personal and family issues during appointments	5	7.7	Appointment should be done according to teachers' interest	5	22.7
Avoid/minimize late appointments	2	3.1	Schools provide appropriate accommodation for teachers	1	4.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

Data in Table 22 shows that the strongest recommendations were that: the PEB and TSC should provide logistical and financial support for teachers' to travel to their schools (teachers 63% and head teachers 36%); teachers should receive early notification of teacher appointments (teachers 26% and head teachers 36%); teacher appointments should be done according to teachers' interests (head teachers 23%); PEB/TSC should consider teachers' personal and family issues during appointment (teachers 8%, schools should provide appropriate teachers' accommodation (head teachers 5%) and late teacher appointments should be minimised (teachers 3%). This data shows that teachers and head teachers are concerned about the weaknesses in the teacher appointment process and would like them to be addressed by the appropriate teacher appointment authorities.

### **Strengths and weaknesses of the teacher appointment**

#### ***Strengths of the teacher appointment process***

Even though there was a general feeling of discontentment about the teacher appointment process in this province, teachers and head teachers were able to identify some strengths. These strengths reflected their lived experiences. These strengths are presented in Table 23.

**Table 23: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of strengths in the teacher appointment process**

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers		
	N	%	N	%	
None	23	38.2	Serving teachers given priority	6	30.0
Serving teachers given priority	16	26.1	None	5	25.0
Logistical support for teacher deployment	9	14.7	Logistical support for teacher deployment	2	10.0
Many schools are fully staffed	6	9.7	Many schools are fully staffed	2	10.0
Teachers able to fight for their rights	4	6.5	Some teachers willing to teach in remote areas	2	10.0
Some teachers appointed on merit	3	4.8	Teachers able to fight for their rights	1	5.0
New graduates screened before appointment	n.a	n.a	New graduates screened before appointment	1	5.0
Teachers/Head Teachers retain a position for a reasonable period (3 years)	n.a	n.a	Teachers/Head Teachers retain a position for a reasonable period (3 years)	1	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable

Data in Table 23 shows that a notable percentage of teachers (teachers 38% and head teachers 25%) did not observe any strengths in the teacher appointment process. However, the strengths identified by others were: serving teachers were given priority in teacher appointment (teachers 26% and head teachers 30%); some logistical and financial support were provided for teachers transfer to new schools (teachers 15% and head teachers 10%); some schools were fully staff (teachers 10% and head teachers 10%), teachers were able to fight for rights (teachers 7% and head teachers 5%), some teachers were appointed on merit (teachers 5%), new graduates were screened before being appointed to teaching positions (head teachers 5%); and teachers were able to stay in one position for at least three years before they were appointed elsewhere (head teachers 5%). This data infers that even though the provincial education office did provide some logistical and administrative support in order to enable teachers to begin the new schools on time, such support for teachers

was still inadequate, which created inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the teacher appointment process practices.

### ***Weaknesses of the teacher appointment process***

The teacher appointment process was a contentious issue among teachers and head teachers. They were asked to present weaknesses in the teacher appointment process. Table 24 presents their perceived weaknesses.

**Table 24: Perceptions of teachers and head teachers of the weaknesses in the teacher appointment process**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Teachers</b>		<b>Responses</b>	<b>Head teachers</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Inadequate logistical & financial support	29	43.1	Inadequate logistical & financial support	11	52.3
Nepotism & corruption in teacher appointments	13	20.0	Teachers' rights and interests not respected	5	23.7
Teachers' rights and interests not respected	9	13.3	Late notification of teachers' appointments	3	14.4
Teachers' unwillingness to teach in remote schools	7	10.2	Teachers' unwillingness to teach in remote schools	1	4.8
Late arrival of <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	3	4.6	Late arrival of <i>Special Education Gazette</i>	1	4.8
Late notification of teachers' appointments	1	1.5	Late notification of teachers' appointments	3	14.4
PEB not concerned about teachers' welfare	1	1.5	PEB not concerned about teachers' welfare	n.a	n.a
No data to inform PEB on teacher appointments	1	1.5	No data to inform PEB on teacher appointments	n.a	n.a
Teachers occupy more than one position	1	1.5	Teachers occupy more than one position	n.a	n.a
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable; PEB = Provincial Education Board

Data in Table 24 shows that the notable weaknesses identified were: inadequate provincial logistical and financial support for teachers' transfer to their schools (teachers 43% and head teachers 52%); teachers rights and interests were not

respected during the teacher appointment process (teachers 13% and head teachers 24%) nepotism practices during the appointment process (teachers 20%); late notification of teachers' appointments (teachers 2% and head teachers 14%) teachers' unwillingness to teach in remote schools (teachers 10% and head teachers 5%), the late arrival of *Special Education Gazette* in schools (teachers 5% and head teachers 5%), perceived lack of concern for teachers' welfare during the appointment process (teachers 2%); the absence of professional and personal data on teachers to inform the appointment authorities during the appointment process (teachers 2%); and teachers appointed to more than one position in one school (teachers 2%). This data seemed to suggest that while there were some strengths in the teacher appointment process, they paled into insignificance as a result of the multiple weaknesses that teachers encounter during the teacher appointment and deployment processes.

### ***How the teacher appointment process can be improved***

Having identified the weaknesses in the teacher appointment process, the teachers and head teachers made recommendations for improvement. Table 25 presents these recommendations.

**Table 25: Suggestions of teachers and head teachers to improve the teacher appointment process**

Responses	Teachers		Head teachers	
	N	%	N	%
Strengthen logistical support for moving teachers to school	29	45.3	10	47.6
Consider teachers' interests/welfare during appointments	11	17.2	5	23.8
Appoint teachers on merit	8	12.5	4	19.0
Send <i>Special Education Gazette</i> to provinces early	4	6.0	1	4.8
Replace ineffective appointment officers	4	6.3	1	4.8
Teachers should serve out their tenure	1	1.7	n.a	n.a
Consider recommendations of Standard Officers, BoMs, church agencies and DEOs	2	3.1	n.a	n.a

**Table 25 (cont'd)**

Responses	Teachers		Responses	Head teachers	
	N	%		N	%
Consider teachers in the pool for appointment	2	3.1	Consider recommendations of Standard Officers, BoMs, church agencies and DEOs	n.a	n.a
Teachers formally notified of their appointments	2	3.1	Consider teachers in the pool for appointment	n.a	n.a
Consider teachers' eligibility/tenure during appointments	n.a	n.a	Teachers formally notified of their appointments	n.a	n.a
Schools must provide accommodation	1	1.7	Schools must provide accommodation	n.a	n.a
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

n.a = not applicable; BoMs = Boards of Management; DEO = District Education Officer

The strongest recommendations were that: logistical and financial support for teachers' transfers to schools should be strengthened (teachers 45% and head teachers 48%); teachers' rights and interests should be taken into account during the teacher appointment process (teachers 17% and head teachers 24%); teacher appointment should be done on merit (teachers 13%); the Special Education Gazette should be sent to the provinces and schools on time (teachers 6% and head teachers 19%); teachers' eligibility and tenure status should be considered during the appointment process (head teachers 5%); teachers must serve out their tenure period before transfers were considered (teachers 2% and head teachers 5%), teacher appointments should be guided by the inspectors, BoMs, church agencies, and DEO's reports and recommendations (teachers 3%); teachers in the pool should be given top priority in teacher appointments (teachers 3%); teachers should be formally notified of their teaching appointments (teachers 3%); and ineffective appointment officers should be replaced (teachers 6%). This data suggests that there were anomalies in the teacher appointment, especially in cases where acting appointments were not done on merit and teachers did not win teaching positions advertised in the Special Education Gazette.

***Changes teachers and head teachers would like to see in the present process and practice of teacher appointment***

Teachers and head teachers had expressed the desire for changes to be made to the teacher appointment process. The changes that teacher and head teacher respondents recommended address their perceived weaknesses in the teacher appointment process. This is reflected in their recommendations in Table 26.

**Table 26: Recommendations by teachers and head teachers for changes in the teacher appointment process**

Teachers				Head teachers			
Responses	N	%	Responses	N	%		
Financing of teachers' transfer costs to schools	19	33.8	Financing of teachers' transfer costs to schools	8	38.1		
Engage reliable and honest people to make appointments	8	14.3	Consider teachers' rights and interests in appointments	4	19.0		
Consideration teachers' rights and interests in appointments	7	12.5	Eliminate corrupt practices	4	19.0		
			Increase incentives for remote schools teachers	2	9.5		
Replace ineffective officers	5	8.8	Build education officers' capacity	1	4.8		
Process of appointing teachers	3	5.4	Appointment/rotation of teachers to teach in remote schools	1	4.8		
Appointment/rotation of teachers to teach in remote schools	3	5.4	Engage reliable and honest people to make appointments	1	4.8		
Increase incentives for remote schools teachers	3	5.4	Timing of teacher appointment	n.a	n.a		
Timing of teacher appointment	3	5.4	Implement better teacher tenure policy	n.a	n.a		
Eliminate corrupt practices	2	3.6					
Build education officers' capacity	2	3.6					
Implement better teacher tenure policy	1	1.8					
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>		

n.a. = not applicable

Generally the changes that the teachers and head teachers would like to see in the process of teacher appointments reflect their perceived weaknesses in the teacher appointment process and their recommendations for addressing these weaknesses (see Tables 24 and 25). Additional recommendations for changes

appeared in Table 26. This was focused on the engagement of honest and reliable people to make teacher appointments and the appointment of teachers in remote schools. It was recommended that teachers in remote schools should be rotated so that all teachers were given the experience of working in remote schools. They also recommended that the incentive for teachers in remote schools should be made more attractive in order to entice teachers to serve in remote schools and also retain them. These recommendations highlight the underlying problems in the teacher appointment process in this province. They also reflected the teachers' and head teachers' desire for changes in the appointment of teachers to teaching and administrative positions which will benefit both teachers and, most importantly, the students they serve.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the process and practice of teacher appointment in the West Sepik Province, and their impact, especially on teachers and head teachers and the provincial education system in general. Some teachers (38%) and some head teachers (30%) who were surveyed saw no strengths in the teacher appointment process and practice. On the other hand, some strengths were identified by others, which include the following:

- Serving teachers are given priority during appointments;
- Some teachers are appointed on merit;
- Some logistical support is provided for teacher deployment to their schools;
- Many schools are fully staffed;
- New graduates are screened before appointment;
- Teachers are able to fight for their rights;
- Some teachers and head teachers are able to retain their positions for a reasonable period of time (3 year maximum); and
- Some teachers are willing to teach in remote schools.

Despite these perceived strengths by some of the respondents, there was a general perception that the process and practice of teacher appointment to teaching and administrative positions in the province was weak. This was compounded by many problems including:

- Nepotism is practised during the appointment process;
- There is lack of transparency in teacher appointments;
- There is inadequate provincial logistical and financial support for deployment of teachers to their schools;
- Confirmation of teacher appointment is late;
- Notification of teacher postings is late;
- Teachers' rights, interests and capabilities are generally not respected during the appointment process;
- PEB is perceived not to be concerned about the teachers' welfare;
- Teachers are not willing to teach in remote areas for various reasons;
- There is an absence of teacher data to inform PEB during teacher appointments;
- Copies of the Special Education Gazette generally arrive late in the province and schools;
- In some cases teachers occupy more than one position; and
- Teachers are appointed to the same positions in the same schools.

The main issues perceived to be contributing factors to a weakened teacher appointment process in the province were:

- Late publication and distribution of the Special Education Gazette to the province and schools;
- Lack of compliance by the PEB with the relevant provisions of Teaching Service Act, 1995 and policies on appointment of teachers and head teachers to teaching and administrative positions;
- Weak performance by PEB and TSC in their mandated roles and responsibilities in teacher appointment;
- Absence of an effective appeal mechanism; and
- Appointment officers'/authorities' heavy reliance on informal systems to appoint and inform teachers of their teaching positions.

Teaching position vacancies in the schools are advertised through the Special Education Gazette where teachers are given the opportunity to apply for them within a certain period of time. However, the production and distribution of the Special Education Gazette continues to be done late in the year. Consequently, the process of appointing teachers to teaching positions commences very late. Subsequently, teachers are not notified of their postings before they commence recreational leave. Those teachers who learn of their postings after their recreational leave, travel to their new schools at the beginning of the school year and therefore resume their teaching duties late. Additionally, teachers who resume teaching duties later than the commencement period, may not complete their Resumption of Duty Summary Sheet (RoDSS) and have them submitted to the PEO and PARS at the national department to ensure continuous payment of their salaries. Consequently, many teachers are removed from the payroll and are only reinstated when their RoDSS are received by PARS.

The teacher and head teacher participants were of the view that the PEB and its officers on some occasions appointed teachers and head teachers to positions without complying with the relevant provisions of the TSA and Education Act, and that the criteria for appointing teachers to base level, promotional and tenure positions were not adhere to. Both teachers and head teachers were of the firm view that the appointment of teachers was not done on merit, that teachers' rights, interests and capabilities were not respected and that teachers were not supported well logistically when travelling to their schools. This noncompliance by the PEB and its officers with legal obligations in relation to the appointment and relocation of teachers was a major issue in this province.

Respect and fair consideration for teachers' rights during the appointment process was also a pressing issue. For example, teachers were more likely to refuse teaching positions or challenge PEB decisions if teachers' rights and interests were perceived to be neglected. Furthermore teachers' appeals lodged by teachers against such appointments were generally not considered and decisions on appeals were not communicated to teachers in a timely and efficient manner. The teachers concerned generally wait for the outcome of their appeals before they are able to travel to their new schools. Feedback on appeals are generally not attended to promptly, which can result in lengthy waiting periods. This practice

causes teachers to lose faith in the system and may decide to resign from teaching or move to another province.

The apparent culture of PEB officers operating outside the formal system of teacher appointment is of great concern. Such a practice breeds nepotism and corruption in the appointment of teachers as now commonly perceived by teachers and head teachers. Teachers were now of the general view that many teacher appointments were not based on merit and that teachers' interests, welfare, capabilities and rights were not given due consideration during the appointment process. Appointment of teachers outside of the formal process was a common practice. These appointments were often not vetted by the PEB. Additionally, teachers who refused their teaching appointments were threatened by PEB officers and therefore forced to take up teaching appointments for fear of losing their salaries when they were placed in the pool.

In order to improve the teacher appointment process and practice in the province, the teachers and head teachers recommended that:

- The TSC and PEB meet all transfer costs to the teachers' new schools because teachers can no longer afford such an exercise;
- The appointment authorities consider teachers' capabilities, interests and rights during the appointment process;
- Nepotism and other malpractices in teacher appointment should be eliminated;
- Appointment and formal confirmation of teachers appointments should be completed before teachers commence recreational leave; and
- Copies of the Special Education Gazettes should be in the province and schools as scheduled in order for the appointment process to commence on time.

The province can build on the existing strengths to improve the teacher appointment process and practice. The province also needs to urgently address the underlying problems and the main contributing factors to ensure good appointment practices are maintained well. These practices must be informed by, and comply with, the relevant provisions of TSC and the Education Act, and must be transparent and accountable.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Printing and distribution of the *Special Education Gazette***

#### ***Recommendation 1.1***

That the PEB initiate and foster a dialogue with the TSC for a time bound **action plan** to be developed and implemented to ensure that the Special Education Gazette is printed and distributed to the provinces by the end of June each year.

### **2. Appointment of teachers to teaching positions**

#### ***Recommendation 2.1***

That the PEB and the TSC develop and implement a time bound **teacher appointment action plan** with clear deliverables for every calendar year.

#### ***Recommendation 2.2***

That the PEB comply with all the relevant provisions of the TSC Act, 1995, in the appointment of teachers to teaching positions in the province.

#### ***Recommendation 2.3***

That the TSC and the PEB eliminate nepotism and corruption in the appointment of teachers by ensuring that all appointments are made based on merit and through a duly constituted PEB meeting.

#### ***Recommendation 2.4***

That the PEB effectively address nepotism and corruption by taking disciplinary action against officers who engage in such activities, who fail to comply with the relevant provisions of the TSC Act, 1995, and who fail to perform their responsibilities described in the **teacher appointment and logistics action plans**.

#### ***Recommendation 2.5***

That the PEB put in place a confidential and a non-punitive process for teachers, head teachers, BoMs, PEB members and Parents & Citizens to report cases of nepotism or corruption in the process and practice of teacher appointment.

#### ***Recommendation 2.6***

That the PEB develop and communicate to all teachers, school agencies, BoMs, parents and citizens, standard officers, District Education Advisors, Church

Education Secretaries and local leaders the criteria for appointing teachers to teaching and head teacher positions.

***Recommendation 2.7***

That the PEB ensure that teachers and head teachers are appointed to teaching positions and administrative positions with due consideration of their personal welfare and interests, eligibility to promotional positions, tenure rights and potential risks to themselves and their families.

***Recommendation 2.8***

That the PEB, in collaboration with TSC, develop and maintain an up-to-date **database** of all teaching positions in the province, teachers occupying each position and their particulars, vacant positions and movement of positions from one school to another.

***Recommendation 2.9***

That the PEB consider all recommendations for teacher appointment from Church Agency personnel, Standard Officers and BOMs on merit.

***Recommendation 2.10***

That the TSC provide increased financial incentives for teachers teaching in remote schools and that these are paid on a fortnightly basis.

***Recommendation 2.11***

That the PEB prepare and present an **annual teacher appointment report** to the TSC and the NEB by March of every year.

**3. Acceptance of teaching appointments by teachers**

***Recommendation 3.1***

That the PEB develop and implement an effective, transparent and time bound **appeals process and an action plan**, if there is currently none in place.

***Recommendation 3.2***

That the PEB establish an **appeals board** comprising members other than PEB members, together with clear roles and responsibilities.

**Recommendation 3.3**

That the PEB develop and implement a clear, time bound **appeals process** that states clearly when the appeals will be received, how long the appeals will be heard, and when the outcomes will be communicated to the appellants.

**Recommendation 3.4**

That the PEB and the TSC abolish the teachers' "pool".

**4. Resumption of teaching duties**

**Recommendation 4.1**

That the PEB develop and put in place a time bound **logistics action plan** that will include all required activities including travel costs and arrangements for teachers transferring to new positions, monitoring of teachers' resumption of duty in schools, filling in and submitting of the Resumption of Duty Forms and RoDSS, and reporting on the resumption of duty by teachers to PEB. The person(s) responsible for executing each activity and the required timeframe for its completion must be clearly identified for monitoring and accountability purposes.

**Recommendation 4.2**

That the PEB budget for teachers' travel costs yearly and mobilize all resources necessary to effectively implement the Logistics Action Plan. All funds must be *acquitted* and reported in the **annual teacher appointment report**, which must be submitted to TSC and PEB for ratification by March of every year.

**5. Amendment of the *Teaching Service Act 1995* and the *Education Act 1995***

**Recommendation 5.1**

That the TSC and the PEB amend the TSC Act, 1995 and the Education Act, 1995 to include provisions that will make it mandatory for PEB to develop and implement time bound teacher appointment, logistics and appeals action plans, and to produce a teacher appointments annual report for TSC and PEB by March of every year.

**Recommendation 5.2**

That the TSC amend the TSC Act, 1995 to include provisions that will allow for implementing officers to be held accountable by the PEB if they fail to carry out their responsibilities stipulated in Teacher Appointment, Logistics, and the Appeals Action Plans.

## **6. Respect and strengthen church–government partnerships**

### ***Recommendation 6.1***

That the roles and responsibilities of church agencies in the appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions must be clearly described and communicated to all teachers, BoMs, Parents and Citizen’s Associations, PEB members and all PEOs.

### ***Recommendation 6.2***

That the PEB must give due consideration to the recommendations of church agencies and take into serious consideration their views on teacher appointments.

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## 7. ANNEXES

### Annex A

#### Primary School Teachers and Head Teachers' Teacher Appointment Questionnaire

##### Instructions

This questionnaire is designed to allow you to give us your views and share your experiences of teacher deployment **in the Province you are teaching**. Specifically, we want to know YOUR views and experiences of how teacher deployment works, how it affects teachers and schools, and how it could be improved to make it more effective and efficient.

##### *Biographical Information*

1. Gender: ..... 2. Age: ..... 3. Number of teaching years:  
.....
4. Number of years teaching in current school:  
.....
5. Number of schools in which you have taught: ..... 6. Home Province:  
.....

##### *Appointment of Teachers*

7. In your own words, describe how the teachers get appointed to teaching positions in schools  
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.....  
.....
8. When are teachers advised of their postings?  
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.....  
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9. How do you get advised of your posting?  
.....  
.....  
.....
10. Is teacher deployment done with due consideration of teachers' interest?  
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.....

**Acceptance of Teaching Appointments by Teachers**

11. Have you refused to take up your teaching appointment at anytime in your teaching career? If yes answer question 14.

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12. Why did you refuse to take up your posting?

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13. What would you do if the appointment you are given is not according to your choice?

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14. Why do you think teachers refuse to take up their teaching appointments? Give as many reasons as you can.

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15. What do teachers do when they are not given the positions they apply for?

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16. What do the appointing authorities in the Province do when teachers refuse to take up their teaching appointments?

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**Resumption of Teaching Duties**

17. What might stop you from resuming your teaching duties on time?

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18. Why do you think some teachers do not resume duties on time?

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.....

19. What do you think should be done to ensure teachers start the school year on time?

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.....  
.....

20. What problems exist with the resumption of duty process?

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.....

***Strengths and Weaknesses of Teacher Deployment***

21. What are the strengths, if any, of teacher appointment in the Province?

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22. What are the weaknesses, if any, of teacher appointment in the Province?

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23. How can the above weaknesses be addressed to improve teacher appoint in the Province?

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24. If you could change one thing about the present practice of teacher deployment, what would that be?

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

## **Annex B Focus-group Interview Questions**

### **Appointment of Teachers to Teaching and Head Teacher Positions in Community and Primary Schools**

**Instructions:** The questions should be used as a guide. It is important to focus on the actual experiences of the participants of the teacher appointment process and practice in the province.

#### **Theme 1: Appointment of teachers to teaching and head teacher positions**

1. How would you describe the process of teacher appointment in the province?
2. Is teacher appointment done with due consideration of teachers' interests?
3. How has teacher appointment process and practice in the province affected you personally?
4. How can the teacher appointment process be improved?

#### **Theme 2: Acceptance of teaching and head teacher appointments by teachers and head teachers**

1. Has any one of you refused to take up your teaching or head teacher appointment any time in your teaching career? Why?
2. What would you do if the appointment you are given is not according to your choice?
3. Why do you think teachers and head teachers refuse to take up their postings?

#### **Theme 3: Resumption of teaching duties**

1. What might stop you from resuming duties on time?
2. Why do you think some teachers and head teachers do not resume their duties on time?
3. What do you think should be done to ensure teachers and head teachers resume duties on time?

#### **Theme 4: Strengths and weaknesses**

1. What are the strengths of teacher appointment in the province?
2. What are the weaknesses of teacher appointment in the province?
3. How can the weakness of teacher appointment in the province be addressed to improve teacher deployment in the province?

