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# **Bai givim mipela planti strong**

Teacher training programmes and teacher empowerment in  
Papua New Guinea

A research report presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
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## Abstract

Teachers are an indispensable component of an education system. “Teachers are one of the most influential and powerful forces for equity, access and quality in education and key to sustainable global development” (UNESCO, 2008b, para 1.). Issues of teaching training and retention are having significant impacts on the quality of education in countries of the Global South. The increased focus on education access have resulted in classroom sizes ballooning in Papua New Guinea which in turn has impacted the quality of education. Numerous donors and agencies are working in Papua New Guinea in the education space. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been filling the gaps in teacher training through programmes to support and address the quality of education. Little is known about the extent to which teachers in these programmes are empowered. Therefore, it is timely to look at the relationship between teacher training programmes and teacher empowerment.

This report uses an adapted empowerment approach as a theoretical framework to understand how teacher training programmes can empower teachers. This qualitative research draws on the case study of Kokoda Track Foundation (KTF), an education, health, and community NGO with a specific focus on the Teach for Tomorrow programmes. The project involved multiple methods to collect data, which were: *tok stori*, a culturally appropriate method of research with participants, document analysis, and a semi structured interview. The voices of participants feature teachers and an NGO employee with a strong localisation focus. Three key themes of culture, knowledge and partnership were identified from literature and form the foundation on which the empowerment lens was applied to this research.

Findings show that there was a substantial increase in the amount of trained and certified teachers through the T4T programmes. Opportunities to improve the quality of teaching were provided through professional development and training. This received positive response from participants. Recognition of existing teacher knowledge of their communities was a vital part to ensure programme content focused on adding value to teachers’ knowledge. Overall, KTF programmes are making positive changes which empower teachers professionally, personally and as member of the community.

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## **Abbreviations**

**ARoB** Autonomous Region of Bougainville

**DFAT** Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

**DHERST** Department of Higher Education, Research, Science & Technology

**ECE** Early Childhood Education

**EFA** Education For All

**GEM** Global Education Monitoring

**HEIs** Higher Education Institutions

**KTF** Kokoda Track Foundation

**MOU** Memorandum of Understanding

**NCD** National Capital District

**NDoE** National Department of Education

**NEP** National Education Plan

**NGOs** Non-governmental organisations

**PDOEs** Provincial Departments of Education

**PINs** Pacific Island Nations

**PNG** Papua New Guinea

**PNGEI** PNG Education Institute

**RPEIPP** Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative for Pacific Peoples by Pacific Peoples

**SDGs** Sustainable Development Goals

**SIDS** Small Islands Developing States

**TTPs** Teacher Training Programmes

**TFF** Tuition Fee Free

**T4T** Teach for Tomorrow

**T4TI** Teach for Tomorrow I Programme



**T4TII** Teach for Tomorrow II Programme

**UNESCO** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**UNICEF** United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

**UN** The United Nations

**UNDP** The United Nations Development Programme

**USP** University of South Pacific

**UTP** Untrained Teachers Project

## Chapter 1: Introduction

*We are so far away [from the nearest town]. To have an opportunity to complete this training we are excited and blessed.*

*We have learnt so many different strategies to use in the classroom. We have received support with qualifications and have a paper which says we are teachers.*

*One important thing we learnt was that we can use our land to make materials.*

*(Tok stori with Teacher A - Gorari, 2022)*

*If I didn't take part in the training I would miss out on getting an income and would have to sell fruit and vegetables at the market after school.*

*As a teacher we want to do everything we can to teach our pikinini.*

*(Tok stori with Teacher B - Gorari, 2022)*

These are the voices of two teachers from Gorari in Oro province with their passion for learning evident through this *tok stori* (storying). Teachers are an integral part at the heart of an education system and are the inspiration and focus for this research. This research report explores education and empowerment and will look at the relationship between teacher training programmes (TTPs) and teacher empowerment in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

UNESCO declares that not only is education a human right, but it is an empowering right and “one of the most powerful tools by which economically and socially marginalized children and adults can lift themselves out of poverty and participate fully in society”. (UNESCO 2008a). Formal education is a fundamental human right for all throughout life. It is essential to economic and social development. Education and development can transform lives and break the poverty cycle that traps so many children (UNESCO, 2010; UNICEF, 2019). A child who receives good education is

more likely to develop, so in the future they are in a position to make informed decisions, earn a better living and adopt new technologies, cope with crises and be a responsible citizen (World Bank, 2011).

The Matane Report laid the foundation for PNG's philosophy of education which "is for every person to be dynamically involved in the process of freeing himself or herself from every form of domination and oppression ... education must aim for integrating and maximising: socialisation, participation, liberation, equality" (Matane, 1986, p. 6). The report brought to attention a shift in education philosophy and the need to seek change from the formalistic approaches to schooling to a more relevant education for PNG by embracing traditional cultural values. This provided the catalyst for changes in the education system and led to the reformation of the curriculum (Matane, 1986). Education is currently influenced by PNG's Constitution and Vision 2050 (NSTF, 2011), and supported at times by development interventions. One of these are teaching training programmes by NGOs. Teachers are a critical part of this and make a significant contribution to the improvement of student outcomes with the support of school leaders and communities.

The importance of teachers is highlighted by UNESCO (2008b) who state that "teachers are one of the most influential and powerful forces for equity, access and quality in education and key to sustainable global development" (para. 1). However the issues of teacher training, recruitment, retention and working conditions are consuming and are having substantial impacts on the quality of education in countries of the Global South (UNESCO, 2008b).

In the context of Papua New Guinea the issues with the formal education system are extensive and fractured in nature. The lack of quality trained teachers due to a myriad of reasons reveals the need for an urgent focus into the teaching training programmes being offered. Irina Bokova's address in her role as UNESCO Director-General in 2010 reflecting on the first decade of Education For All (EFA) project and raised the point that "teaching has to be turned into the job of the future through training, pay, career advancement and professional support" (Bokova, 2010). NGOs have a place in supporting the training of teachers.

The importance of teaching on a global scale has been strengthened by the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all. One of the targets is for an increase in qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in countries of the Global South (United Nations, 2015). The Incheon Declaration adopted in 2015 at the World Education Forum, renewed the commitment of the education community to Education 2030 and the agenda for Sustainable Development. The Education 2030 Framework for Action provides the outline of how this will be put into action to achieve SDG 4 (UNESCO, 2015). The recognition of the importance of education as a main driver of development is a feature of this framework. The essential element of teachers being the key to achieving SDG 4 is stressed in the Education 2030 agenda in no uncertain terms: “..It requires urgent attention, with a more immediate deadline. As teachers are a fundamental condition for guaranteeing quality education, teachers and educators should be empowered, professionally qualified and supported within a well-governed system” (UNESCO, 2016, Means of implementation section, para. 3). Global Education Monitoring (GEM) reports, on developing countries since the implementation of EFA in 2000, reveal that the drive in primary student’s access to education has led to increased numbers in classrooms.

Countries experiencing low economic growth have teaching pools that lack the level of academic qualifications, especially with new teachers, and this has led to the rise in unqualified teachers. The GEM reports capture PNG as a small island developing state (SID) in their reporting. Much of the reporting and data available for this South Pacific nation is limited in nature with a focus primarily on students. This emphasises a real need to explore teacher training in PNG from an empowerment perspective.

There are many donors and agencies based in PNG working in the education space supporting PNG with SDG 4. But it is unknown to what extent the impact these programmes are having with the empowering of teachers through NGO Teacher Training Programmes (TTPs). This report focuses on the work of one NGO in this space. The focus on teacher training is important to education and development. With a focus on teacher training in primary education, this work aims to contribute further to the empowerment literature in education and development in the Pacific.

## 1.1 Research Aims, Questions & Objectives

A focus on teacher training is important to education and development. Using the empowerment Approach as the theoretical framework of analysis, the aim of this study is to explore the relationship between Teacher Training Programmes (TTPs) and teacher empowerment in PNG. By drawing on the work of the NGO Kokoda Track Foundation (KTF) teacher training programmes, this research investigates how and if TTPs empower teachers in PNG.

The research has two main questions:

1. How do NGOs support National Department of Education (NDoE) teacher related targets through Teacher Training Programmes (TTPs)?
2. In what ways do TTPs supported by NGOs empower teachers professionally, personally and as member of the community?

This study leads to four key objectives, which are:

- To describe the teacher training programmes that KTF operate and explain how they support the PNG NDoE's teacher related targets.
- To identify core elements necessary for empowerment of teachers to occur.
- To document the unique challenges faced by teachers in PNG and reflect on these alongside their experiences in the TTPs.
- To outline specific features of the NGO programmes that contribute towards teachers experiencing empowerment professionally, personally, and as members of the community.

The scope of this report will focus on selected specific NDoE targets relevant to the work of KTF. The work of KTF will be considered in relation to an adapted empowerment framework inspired by the *Solesolevaki* model (Vunibola & Scheyvens, 2019) and Community capitals framework (Kuir-Ayius, 2016) This will be examined through *tok stori* (Melanesian form of communication) and a content analysis of KTF documents.

## 1.2 Background to the Research

As an educator with experience and background in primary school and learning support, I have a particular interest in the early years of the education journey. Living

in PNG has allowed me the opportunity and privilege to volunteer and work in local primary and secondary schools in Port Moresby. Being involved in a number of roles as a teacher and a mentor supporting students and teachers provided me with insight into the professional development of teachers. Over time the interactions with school leaders, department heads, teachers, and NGOs raised the issue of teacher consistency with their pedagogy and the expectations of student achievement. The discussions often highlighted teacher training and the varying quality of programmes that teachers went through. A common theme was that teachers came from many different provinces of the country with various levels of training and were assigned to schools by the NDoE resulting in a skewed consistency. The initial spark for this research came from these interactions and from exploring online databases, which came up with limited information and research on education training in PNG.

### **1.3 Terms and Definitions**

Although the key terms will be elaborated further in Chapters 2, 3, and 4, they are defined below in order to provide clarity to the focus of this study. The terms are teacher training programmes, empowerment, teacher related targets, community, and *tok stori*.

The term 'teacher training programmes' is defined by UNESCO as "any pre-service or in-service teacher-training programme that is accredited or sanctioned by the appropriate national education authorities (e.g. Ministry of Education or teacher training agency)" (UNESCO, 2021, para. 1).

'Empowerment' is a concept which is open to interpretation and is reflected in the literature with a wide range of vocabulary used to define this concept. The potential contribution of empowerment to development and poverty reduction has been supported by global institutions such as the United Nations and development practitioners (Hennink, Kiiti, Pillinger & Rayakaran, 2012). Narayan describes empowerment as "the expansion of assets and capabilities of people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives" (2002, p. 14). The importance of agency through using resources, skills and the strength of a community is a critical feature of empowerment (Sen, 1999).

Teacher related targets are the output targets from the NDoE National Education Plan (NEP) that specifically focus on teachers and their role in education. The targets involve number of teachers in schools and provinces, enhancing of teacher professional learning and development, and access to resources and learning materials (NDoE 2015; 2020).

Community is a broad term, where the traditional meaning is defined by the geographic location of society at a local level (United Nations, 2020). The definition has been expanded to highlight encompassing connections through “norms, religion, shared interests, customs, values and needs of citizens” (p. 5). The strength of community in Papua New Guinea is tied to the tok pisin term *ples* which embodies all connections to community. “Place is around and within us, We are made of place and we make place” (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2002; Salesa, 2019; de la Torre Parra, 2021, p. 14).

*Tok stori* is a Melanesian form of communication where “learning occurs for those who share their stories and those who listen” (Sanga et al 2021, p. 378). The focus is on relatedness and connection through stories, knowledge and events (Sanga & Reynolds, 2018).

#### **1.4 Limitations of Research**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the scope in a 60 credit research report this research was desk-based and meant the researcher was only able to focus on one NGO. This provided the opportunity for deeper engagement with a small number of research participants. Research projects that are small in nature provide opportunities for in-depth discussions and can help with the dependability of information (Mayoux, 2006).

It is my intention to limit my biases by extending and building my own knowledge by exploring a range of perspectives with an extensive literature review. Having “an understanding of one’s positionality and any personal values and biases you may bring to the research is fundamental” (Stewart-Withers et al, 2014, p. 61). Recognising that whatever findings that come from my research I will need to take into consideration the context-specific nature of my findings when discussing in the education space.

## 1.5 Research Report Structure

Chapter 1 provides a background context for the study. It provides an overview of the research and the report with the aim, question and objectives outlined. It defines key terms and phrases associated with the research and takes into account the research limitations considered.

Chapter 2 provides a literature review of education in the Pacific. It will explore the Pasifika education context and will look at important principles of education in the Pacific. Following this, the focus on PNG will provide an education context, an overview of the education system and teachers.

Chapter 3 looks at development and education in the Pacific. It will explore concepts of indigenous development and focus on the key term of empowerment. Finally, a perspective on teacher training programmes in the Pacific and PNG will be provided.

Chapter 4 elaborates on the research and design methods for this study. These include *tok stori*, semi-structured interviews and a document analysis. An adapted empowerment framework will be explored and look at how this connects with key themes from the literature review and the work of KTF. A section will focus on the ethics process and look at ways that I have ensured my research is following this.

Chapter 5 discusses findings from the remote fieldwork data collected. It will provide the impacts of the programme on teachers, professional development, and the community.

Chapter 6 discusses the findings in light of the research questions raised in this study. The discussion focuses on the support of NDoE teacher related targets, and uses the empowerment framework to look at the elements of teacher empowerment through the programmes. Finally, the challenges faced and future recommendations are provided.



## **Chapter 2: Education in the Pacific & Papua New Guinea**

### **2.1 Introduction**

To understand the research, it is essential to explain the context of the research. This background chapter will firstly provide the context of Pasifika education, and secondly, describe the principles of education in the region. It introduces key information about PNG and provides a snapshot of the country's situation, which helps to provide the background to understanding the current situation in education development. Finally, the discussion will lead on to an overview of the PNG education system and look at the teaching situation.

### **2.2 Pasifika Education Context**

The Pacific Islands comprises of three main geographic regions, Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. It is made up of twenty-two countries and territories with incredible uniqueness and diversity across the region. Pacific Island countries share similar challenges and opportunities as isolated island economies. The strong beliefs, values, and customs of Pacific Island cultures are reflected in the traditional way of life, through their diverse philosophies of life, as well as through established and complex governance and livelihood systems.

To delve deeper into education in the Pacific it is necessary to gain a perspective into its historical development. Many Pacific peoples are “indigenous to the island nations in which they live in, and their cultures and education systems have existed for thousands of years” (Thaman, 2009, p.1). A key point that Thaman is highlighting is that education was not brought into the Pacific, as there have been established contexts of education for years that have flourished and thrived, to ensure stability and continuity through the generations. Pasifika societies feature three established forms of education. One form is informal education, which is focused on adults passing on life lessons and knowledge to the younger generation (Baba, 1985; Mel, 1995; Guthrie, 2015). Elders of the tribes would share stories and legends to explain history and origins and to provide a connection to their land and the importance of learning one's genealogy. This learning shapes the identity of young children, defining who they are and what it means to be a member of their community (Thaman 1997; Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001; 2002; Guthrie, 2015). Non-formal education is another form

where knowledge is shared from experts with specific skills – fishing, gardening, and hunting - to others who are learning these skills on the job (Guthrie, 2015). Learning was “pragmatic and practical” with tangible outcomes of necessities of life – food and shelter and the values and behaviours that enable survival (Baba, 1985, p. 129).

Formal education was not introduced into traditional societies until colonisation. Systems created from colonisation resulted in the establishing of a curriculum, subject areas, languages of instruction and assessment through examinations (Mel, 1995). The result of this was teaching and learning that was in a language that was essentially foreign to most students and teachers. Thaman (1997) states in no uncertain terms that “colonialism, whatever form it took, transformed not only Pacific cultures, but also the very values that underpinned educational practices” (p. 121). This transformation was in direct opposition to indigenous philosophies of learning. The concept of indigenous epistemology is defined as “a cultural group’s ways of thinking and of creating, reformulating, and theorising about knowledge via traditional discourses and media of communication, anchoring the truth of the discourse in culture”. (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001, p. 58).

The impact of an introduced education system failed to acknowledge the variety of ways that Pacific peoples communicate, interact, think, and learn (Thaman, 1997). Cultural knowledge, understandings, values, and skills are an important aspect of indigenous epistemology and feature right across the Pacific. In the highlands of PNG, the Mogeï culture in the Melpa area has meaning and significance through *noman*. The concept *noman* focuses on learning and knowledge creation in the Melpa context (Mel, 1995). The Kwara’ae people from Malaita in the Solomon Islands provide an indigenous perspective which embodies culture, tradition, and values and is passed through the generations (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001).

Over time the disconnect between Pacific communities and the formal education system has exacerbated creating a “culturally undemocratic learning environment” where the system is not only disconnecting with Pacific learners but teachers as well (Thaman, 2009, p. 2). Teachers became impacted through their own professional development and the learning of new pedagogies. Sanga (2000) further alludes to the impact school systems have where they have minimal representation of the culture in the community but represent the values of the school structure. The diversity of culture

provides the lifeblood for Pacific Islanders and the need to ensure this is reflected through learning is critical to ensure connection and sustainability.

### **2.3 Principles of Education in the Pacific**

Partnerships have been a fundamental component of education in the Pacific. The inter-woven nature of families, communities, school, and church have a strong influence on teaching and learning. The formal education pathways centre on the individualised pathways of attaining academic success which contrasts with Pacific nations who largely embrace the collectiveness of success which are context specific (Thaman, 2007). This collectiveness provides learners with educational opportunities outside of school which Sanga (2002) states “where education serves to prepare the children with skills and values that are needed for them to live and participate as members of their local communities” (p. 73). He uses the term ‘mismatch’ to describe the difference between in-school and out of school educational focus. The partnerships of families, *wantoks* (family connections), and church define this world and reveal the importance of relationships between people. These are central elements of what gives meaning to Pacific Islanders.

Formal education systems brought in through colonialism have created school environments which Thaman (2002) asserts are where “students will need to hang their cultural identities at the school gates” and “be a person that has no connections to anyone or anything” (p. 33). Ensuring the balance between in-school and out of school education focus and values is a component that teachers and schools have found challenging and at times impossible. Education, in the words of Thaman (1997; 2002), if it is to be purposeful and meaningful, is better understood within the social contexts in which it occurs.

Intrinsic connections exist between culture and education. Many Pacific peoples are indigenous to their lands with their cultures and values systems. Each indigenous culture brings their own indigenous knowledge. There have been local attempts to indigenise graduate teacher training and education in the Pacific. One of the early initiatives was The University of South Pacific (USP)-UNDP curriculum project in the 1970s which focused on producing a local contextualised curriculum for Pacific Island Nations (PINs) by local education professionals (Nabobo-Baba, 2012). Many of the

projects in the decades following were predominantly one-off and not coordinated. A number of discussions and consultations led to the emergence of a coordinated approach through the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative for Pacific Peoples by Pacific Peoples (RPEIPP). This is a movement that brings indigenous voices into the spotlight and encourage “increased ownership of education processes and re-examining curriculum processes” (Nabobo-Baba, 2012, p. 83). One of the important principles of RPEIPP was the leadership of initiatives by Pacific peoples. The establishment of the network Leadership Pacific who practice, study, and teach leadership “to enhance leadership capacity” is crucial to the sustainability of the programme. (Nabobo-Baba, 2012, p. 91).

The promotion of indigenous knowledge, ways of knowing and thinking styles of Pacific peoples is one of the approaches as part of the RPEIPP project. This approach has looked at ways of supporting teachers and teacher education. In education training, teacher trainees are a critical component of ensuring education promotes Pacific communities, culture, languages, and knowledge. The practical engagements between educational training and teachers driven by the RPEIPP philosophies provide opportunities to apply learning in indigenous contexts. The case studies of remote schools in Udu, Fiji highlight the importance of graduate teachers understanding the local context and building of relationships with indigenous peoples (Nabobo-Baba et al, 2012). This embodied an approach that was able to achieve greater transparency with communication and understanding between teachers, students, and the community.

In PNG, the *tok ples* pre-primary, elementary school programmes that were implemented by local communities in the early 1980s with the support of NGO’s and churches, were in response to the school’s approach of predominantly teaching in English and learners losing touch with their cultures. “They sit in a classroom, and they learn things that have nothing to do with their own place” (Malone & Paraide, 2011, p. 710). The *tok ples* programmes created opportunities for learners in school to learn about their customs, way of life and to be proud of themselves and their cultural roots. In summary, Thaman (2003) provides her perspective of education and position on Pacific pedagogical components of teacher education:

My vision of a responsible Pacific society therefore is one in which Pacific people are able to learn and benefit from their own cultural values and beliefs, knowledge and understandings, and wisdom; where teachers use culturally appropriate methods of teaching, including teaching in a language that students can understand, and recognizing the importance of context specific learning. (p.11).

This perspective gives us a regional understanding of education to now explore the PNG context.

## 2.4 PNG Education in Context

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is an island nation in the South Pacific and one of the most diverse countries in the world; with a population of over 8 million people and more than 800 different languages spoken (see Figure 1). The population is divided into more than 10,000 ethnic clans and is widely spread with 87% living in rural areas (World Bank, 2021). PNG is confronting increased developmental issues. The 2019 Human Development Index positions PNG 155 out of 189 countries which UNICEF (2019) emphasises the formidable challenge of converting economic growth into 'inclusive sustainable human development'. This is of considerable concern with 52% of the population below 24 years old. Education alone highlights the drastic situation with low human development in all indicators (UNDP, 2019).



Figure 1: Map of PNG. Source: Maps of the World. (2019).

Historically, indigenous people had their own traditional education system which focused on the adults educating the children to learn self-reliance, skills, and knowledge to survive in their own environment (Nagai, 2001; Rena, 2011). Western-style education was introduced to PNG by missionaries in the 1870s and 1880s with the intention of “developing indigenous societies to the standards of western civilization” (Nagai 2001, p. 67). English was the language of instruction in government primary schools which focused on “education for modern economic development and participation in the cash economy” (Le Fanu, 2013, p. 140). As mentioned earlier in the chapter, there was apprehension expressed about the relevance of ‘Euro-centric’ education offered and what the outlook might hold for PNG. Nelson Giraure, an education officer for Rabaul and a cultural director for the National Department of Education (NDoE), states in no uncertain terms that the way people lived was not important in the process of imposing this formal system of education. His personal reflections are succinctly described on a need for a cultural programme:

“We grew up in ignorance of the value of our own community. Our heritage which had been handed down for generations was allowed to die. As more children went to school the dying process was speeded.”

(Giraure 1974, p. 17).

National voices started to emerge with even greater prominence with growing dissatisfaction in the education system in the first decade following independence. The introduction of ‘*tok ples*’ programmes mentioned in the previous section signified a shift towards a potential new approach. A philosophy of education was published in 1986 and was widely known as the Matane Report. The report was commissioned to look at the future of PNG education and increasing the local traditional culture and values into the education system. The promotion of “Integral Human Development involving socialisation, participation, liberation, and equality” is an essential component of this (Matane, 1986, p.7.) The implementation of some of the guidelines from the report was exhibited with the NDoE adopting a language and literacy policy in 1989. This was to address the issue of the local language – vernacular language

and Tok Pisin in the education curriculum. This became the focus of teaching in the elementary school years (6-8 years old) to primary school in PNG (Rena, 2011).

Rural areas often had qualified teachers who were assigned to the elementary and primary schools from outside the area. Guthrie states that this led to many teachers not knowing the vernacular of the locations they are posted in, resulting in uneasy transitions and a lack of context specific examples (2015). Significant issues with language reform led to the increased “instruction of students in Tok Pisin – using broken English to transition students to full instruction in the English language” (Rena, 2011; Guthrie, 2015).

## **2.5 Education System in PNG**

PNG has an education system which originates from the British and Australian systems. The education reformation period that evolved from the Matane report (mentioned in the previous section) had the goal of implementing relevant education for all Papua New Guineans based on the Philosophy of Education (NDoE, 2020). The present formal education system in PNG was introduced in 1991 with the basic education having two levels; elementary and primary (Pham et al, 2020; Rena, 2011). Elementary education for children aged 6 – 8 years (Prep – Grade 2) and Primary education for children aged 9 – 14 years (Grades 3 – 8). Rena (2011) further mentioned that the goal of the reform was to create a ‘sustainable, quality, universal basic education’ which will therefore result in a more productive, skilled population (p. 4). The first National Education Plan (NEP) 1995-2004 led to a restructuring of the education system and a reform of the curriculum. The focus was on outcome-based education with national selection examinations at Grades 8, 10, and 12 (NDoE, 2015; Pham et al, 2020). The second NEP 2005-2014 focused on increasing access and participation at all levels of education. This aligned with the UNESCO (2000) ‘Education For All’ goal of universal primary education.

In 2012 the government abolished school fees in basic education by the introduction of the Tuition Fee Free (TFF) policy. The aim of TFF was to increase access to education and resulted in a substantial expansion with the overall gross enrolment rate at 96 per cent in 2014 compared with 71 per cent in 2000 (NDoE 2015, p. 20). Despite the successful increase in enrolment in basic education, the TFF created considerable

challenges to ensure that existing school environments can cater for the larger number of students. The third NEP 2015-2019 gives mention to the increase of school infrastructure in response to the increase in numbers, but with a whole country focus. The most recent NEP 2020-2029 outlined a significant change and revamp to the education structure to recognise the importance of early childhood education. This move will have a public-private church community partnership in delivering early childhood creating a 1-6-6 structure: 1 year for preparatory, 6 for primary and 6 for secondary. Examinations in Grades 8 and 10 are no longer used for selection but for assessment (NDoE, 2020).

There is limited attention to whether the achievement of education goals and targets is happening in each province below the national level (Pham et al, 2020). In summary, the enhanced focus on increasing access to education has led to classroom size increases, which has significantly impacted the development of schools and teachers to offer quality education programmes that enhance student learning. Little is known of the effectiveness of policy changes and what impact it has had throughout the education system. A focus on teachers will be looked at in the next section.

## **2.6 Teachers in PNG**

There are 14 registered teacher's colleges which are recognised by the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science & Technology (DHERST) and considered Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (NDoE, 2020; DHERST, 2021). Although they are recognised as HEIs, the NDoE had oversight of the administration of the teacher's colleges until recently (NDoE, 2020). The lack of a cohesive approach between DHERST and the NDoE has led to issues with the NDoE mentioning the relocation has not been smooth resulting in a committee to oversee this process (NDoE, 2020). Bureaucratic processes have had an adverse effect on the implementation of the NEP. The increase in enrolments triggered by the TFF policy created pupil teacher ratios which are higher than recommended in all sectors (NDoE 2015; 2020). A lack of reliable data for teachers in primary education has meant it is a challenge to truly assess the extent of the challenges. NDoE has expressed its need to address the challenges faced by teachers in the education system by creating teacher related targets. One of the primary targets was the importance of addressing the pupil teacher



ratio by increasing the number of trained teachers with suitable academic qualifications (NDoE, 2015; 2020).

The increase of newly trained teachers with appropriate qualifications will support the entry into the profession but does not address the current crop of teachers. Another target identified was to enhance teacher quality by providing support and professional learning. In-service training has been sporadic in nature, which NDoE admittedly highlight that limited effort has happened in this space (NDoE, 2015; 2020). The increasing of access to resources and learning materials for teachers is the third target which is important to enrich the programmes for students and to bring out the various strengths that teachers bring to the profession. Reallocation and cuts in government spending on education has caused worry amongst teachers regarding salaries and lack of professional development. The impact on future teachers is expressed by Nunn and Nelson (2019) who mention that any issues with salaries could affect people from embarking on a teaching career.

## **2.7 Summary**

This chapter provided discussion on education in the Pacific. It explored the Pasifika education context which looked at the three established forms of education: informal, non-formal, and formal education. Formal education was not introduced into Pacific societies until colonisation. The impact of this was the creation of an education system that was alien to both students and teachers with a lack of integration of culture. Partnerships and knowledge were identified as important components of education in the Pacific. Both are purposeful and meaningful when understood in Pacific social contexts. PNG faces a mountain of development challenges, including education, which has been severely impacted by colonial processes. The education system has gone through several reforms which has continued to disjoint any progress made towards the quality of education. Teachers are one group who have suffered through increased class sizes, lack of professional training and resources. The next chapter will look more closely at development and education and explore empowerment.

## **Chapter 3: Development and Education**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter places education and development in the context of the Pacific. It will firstly explore and reflect on indigenous ideas of development and how these are connected in a PNG context. From here it will look at the contested term empowerment and how this impacts development. It will later discuss teacher training programmes across the Pacific and look at a PNG perspective through the NGO KTF. An overview of the programme will be provided with an insight towards what aspects support an empowerment approach.

### **3.2 Indigenous Knowledge & Development**

A shift in approach, to look through a different lens so that outside knowledge and viewpoints do not dominate the development space, requires the need to listen and consider an Indigenous approach to development. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) asserts this point in 'Decolonizing Methodologies' by stating "reclaiming a voice in this context has been about reclaiming, reconnecting and reordering those ways of knowing which were submerged, hidden or driven underground" (p. 72). As mentioned in the previous chapter, formal education was introduced from the colonising world. This had an profound impact on the knowledge construction in the education systems for indigenous peoples.

Arturo Escobar (1997), a prominent post-development scholar, argues that development discourse has created a 'knowledge is power' approach which has established ways of doing and sustaining development. This approach has created a narrow lens towards development practices. The emphasis Escobar (1997) highlights is that in the re-focusing of development, one must consider the local environment, life, and history of the people, which are the conditions of and for change. The emergence of post-development thinking and perspectives arose from the idea that mainstream development approaches have fallen short in pursuit of their intended goals. This approach looked towards seeking diverse voices and looking towards local culture and values. McGregor (2009) adds that a post-development approach "reimagines agency and place in ways that differ from conventional development perspectives" and further adds that it generates "possibilities based on ethical decision

making, cultural strengths and community” (p. 1698). Indigenous societies have strong values that connect to a shared and interconnected approach (Richardson et al, 2019).

Place has a major influence on the identity of indigenous peoples and provides a structure for well-being. The Tok Pisin term *ples* encompasses not only the physical land space but the social and cultural values that exist in this environment (Salesa 2019; de la Torre Parra, 2021). It provides the lifeblood of community in PNG. There has been greater recognition given to the value of understanding Pacific indigenous approaches to well-being and development (Richardson et al, 2019). The concept of *wanbel* is applied to good living, wellbeing, and success in PNG. *Wanbel* translates into two words. “Wan is ‘one’ and bel is ‘belly’, stomach, or heart” (Steven, Banks and Scheyvens, 2019, p. 59). Bel is one in mind, thoughts and feelings. *Wanbel* is a concept that holds importance in ensuring the wellbeing of people and their interactions with others. The notion of *gutpela sindaun* (Cox 2006) – a good situation can only result if *wanbel* is present (Steven, Banks and Scheyvens, 2019).

Across the Pacific there are a range of well-being notions which Richardson et al (2019) identify share comparable elements to *wanbel*. The *solesolevaki* model which is focused on collective wellbeing of the community coming together for *sautu* (wellbeing) to happen in Fiji (Vunibola & Scheyvens 2019; Richardson et al 2019; Nabobo-Baba 2006; Meo-Sewabu, 2015). Kwara’ae philosophy of ‘good life’ in Solomon Islands (Gegeo 1998a) is a notion that highlights the development of the whole person – *ali-afu’anga*. Each of these concepts highlight the holistic nature of wellbeing in the Pacific. The focus of meeting spiritual, psychological, and physical needs is linked with the respective “cultural values of love, kindness, sharing and hospitality, and honesty and humility” (Richardson et al, 2019, p. 4). Values form an important part of one person’s interconnectedness with their communities and towards the wellbeing of others. Construction of knowledge has strong links to the importance of cultural values. Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2014) study with the Kwara’ae people illustrated the importance of interactions within families on the cultural values of Kwara’ae society. The teaching and learning were done by both parents and children who were learning the epistemology of important concepts, and highlight that the Kwara’ae villagers have been turning back to their own ways of knowledge construction as a basis for designing development projects.

Understanding the importance of place and the influences that outside providers in development can have has been a crucial consideration towards the well-being of indigenous peoples in the Pacific. Traditionally, Briggs (2014) along with other western scholar's state that several development agencies have attempted to include aspects of indigenous knowledge in development, but historically the issues surrounding this have been the tension between formal western science and indigenous knowledge. Development practitioners face the pressure of balancing the objectives, timeframes and monitoring of a project with ensuring the rights and voice of indigenous people are respected. There have been signs of a shift in approach from a post-development viewpoint by development agencies with the focus not only on the rights and voice of indigenous peoples but looking towards the leadership.

The RPEIPP, mentioned in the previous chapter, is an example of a project that supports and values the leadership of initiatives by Pacific peoples (Nabobo-Baba, 2012). The leadership by indigenous peoples will strengthen the localisation focus and will ensure indigenous approaches and knowledge have been incorporated into frameworks and project design. Gegeo (1998a) alludes to the fact that the inclusion of indigenous knowledge into development projects should also feature how a group conceives creating new knowledge. Taking this into account it is vital that an organisation involved in a development project ensures it gains a greater understanding of indigenous values and knowledge, in order to not just focus on incorporation but make a commitment towards centering indigenous knowledge and leadership.

### **3.3 Empowerment**

“Unless our [traditional Melanesian] values are adopted into the modern world we face a serious challenge of disintegration. A nation can remain free, united and progressive in every way, but unless it builds on the solid foundations of its ethical values, it is likely to be a soul-less entity”. (Narokobi, 1980, p. 38)

These words of Bernard Narokobi proclaim a call for the use of Melanesian values in modern society (Narokobi, 1980). The passion evident through this statement has a strong connection with culture and development. Narokobi was a central figure in

PNG's transition from Australian territory to independent nation. His messages in the 'Melanesian Way' encompass empowerment, call to responsibility and of self-confidence (Dobrin & Golub, 2020).

The words and languages of development we use can define and impact societies across the planet through our interactions (Cornwall, 2007). As Cornwall (2007) has suggested "Words make worlds (p. 471). Empowerment is one of the development buzzwords that has been captured and integrated into the rhetoric of development agencies with distinct social and political aims. The contested nature of the term and the complex factors associated with it result in the challenge of a consensus definition.

Empowerment was brought into the spotlight of development thinking by scholars who endorsed grassroots participation and local-level development (Scheyvens, 2019). Rowlands (1997) states that "empowerment is more than just participation in decision making but must include the processes that lead people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to make decisions" (p. 14). The way people experience and demonstrate empowerment is captured through three dimensions: personal, relational and collective. Each dimension has an influence on the levels of empowerment experienced by an individual (Rowlands, 1997, p. 15). The need to not quantify empowerment as a process leading to an outcome is highlighted by Edwards and Cornwall (2014). "Empowerment is not just about enlarging the boundaries of action. It is also about expanding the horizons of possibility, of what people imagine themselves being able to be and do." (Edwards & Cornwall, 2014, p. 16).

Robert Chambers, an advocate for participatory approaches to development, indicates that "people learn from the sharing of knowledge, values and having their views heard" (Chambers, 2007, p. 22). The diverse thinking around empowerment represents approaches that lend towards grassroots development and the voices of all actors involved being heard.

A Pacific definition on empowerment is presented by Gegeo (1998b) who states:

"Empowerment... a situation sought for through decolonisation...in which people have the voice, autonomy and skills to decide for themselves." (Gegeo, 1998b, p. 25).

Being able to act and respond in a way that allows people to connect with their purpose is an important aspect of empowerment (Gegeo, 1998b). The connection between cultural knowledge and values to empowerment is essential. Narokobi identifies and emphasises the moral principles of PNG society through the values of the *wantok* system, family solidity and interdependence which are a treasure that are critical to unity and progression.

“No matter how healthy a coconut seedling might be, if the soil and the climatic conditions are not right, that coconut seedling will not grow into a full bearing tree” (Narokobi, 1980, p. 150).

The metaphor provided by Narokobi symbolises the connectedness that the Melanesian people have between past, present and future. The ongoing effects of colonisation in formal education has seen a lot of Melanesian people stop using language and traditional methods of communication because of threats and violence faced from colonial masters within this education system. Nelson Giraure reflects on his formal education experiences by highlighting his humiliation “...feeling confused and frightened and then becoming a vegetable in primary school because he had to think and do things in a completely foreign way...” (Giraure, as cited in Mel, 2011, p. 119). Students became more disconnected with formal education through the acceptance of Western education as holding greater importance and “as a consequence local culture became strange, foreign and meaningless.” (Giraure, as cited in Mel, 2011, p. 119). The experience of Giraure exemplifies the conditions that Narokobi’s metaphor highlights that will impact the growth of a tree.

Paolo Freire, a Brazilian educator, and philosopher believed that education needed to change its contemporary approach. He believed both teachers and students will learn and teach each other, therefore exchanging and recreating knowledge (Freire, 1970). This approach would further allow teachers and students to unearth a new way of thinking with the purpose to bring a voice to “challenge this culture of silence and demystify reality” (Freire, 1972, p. 123). The education capacity emancipation of teachers discussed by Freire connects with the idea of empowerment in education, by opening opportunities for different voices to be heard in the classroom. Teachers can

ask questions which students can answer with an idea or another question. The opening of dialogue through this exchange will allow both teacher and student to reciprocate teaching and learning and create pathways to new ways of thinking (Freire 1973; Thaman 2013). The culture of silence that Freire mentioned will be challenged through this critical way of thinking, by allowing voices to become active and question social influences (Freire, 1972; 1973). Teachers will have a greater understanding of their situation and with the knowledge and tools they can see the capacity of education to empower and support development of learners and their communities.

The Tree of Opportunity was the Pacific's response to redefine education and empower teachers and students in a way that "seeks to ensure education promotes the survival, sustainability and transformation of Pacific communities, environments, its people, cultures, languages and knowledges" (Nabobo-Baba, 2012, p. 89). The vision of the tree of opportunity is firmly rooted in the cultures of the Pacific. A key aspect of the tree is the strength it gains from this root which provides the opportunities to grow stronger. Development partners can contribute with support in ways which does not impact the firm foundation of the tree (Nabobo-Baba, 2012). The importance of this allows empowerment through Pacific control and leadership of initiatives and promotes sustainability of projects.

Another approach which speaks to the community component of empowerment is the *Solesolevaki* model by Vunibola and Scheyvens (2019). This looks at an *Itaukei* (indigenous Fijian) approach to development, *solesolevaki* is where the cooperative nature of decision-making and a way of life with people work together for the good of the community (Vunibola & Scheyvens, 2019; Meo-Sewabu, 2015). *Solesolevaki* has foundations with traditional values and supports people with connecting between culture, land, and their people. The four components in the model are "*matavuvale* (family), *vanua* (culture, tradition), *lotu* (church), and *matanitu* (government/formal institutions)" (Vunibola & Scheyvens, 2019, p. 65). The words of Narokobi, which opened this section, foster the message which *solesolevaki* displays through values and a way of life which will provide a foundation for community development. Empowerment in the development space can provide many different interpretations.

The adaptability of the concept to different agendas results in empowerment being viewed as a process or as a goal. The question that needs to be asked is the impartial

nature of the empowerment: who defines empowerment, who defines the process of empowerment and who is being empowered. This raises questions into the goals and motives of an organization. By switching the lens to a Pacific perspective, we gain an insight into the foundations of an approach where community and culture are an invaluable part of empowerment.

### **3.4 Teacher Training Programmes – Pacific & PNG**

One of the goals of Education for All (EFA) was the provision of free and compulsory primary education. Access to basic education in the Pacific remains a challenge due to geographic isolation, absence of policies enforcing school attendance and the high costs of education (Thaman, 2015). The majority of Pacific Island nations (PINs) have achieved the EFA goal of universal primary education in the first decade (2000-2015) but there are concerns with the quality and relevance of school education. The dramatic increases in class sizes and tuition fee free policies across PINs has put a squeeze on infrastructure and human resources. Teachers are in high demand and the access to training for many aspiring teachers in rural areas and the costs associated have led to gaps in trained teachers across the Pacific. Although Fiji, Samoa and Tonga have close to 100% of primary teachers trained in teachers' colleges, there remain large gaps in other nations such as PNG, Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Vanuatu.

A significant project in the region to address this gap is the Untrained Teachers Project (UTP) which is a partnership initiative between The University of the South Pacific (USP) and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The project commenced in 2013 firstly with Vanuatu and Kiribati working collectively with USP with the focus on secondary school teachers (USP, 2017). This progressed in 2015 to include Pacific nations Fiji, Solomon Islands, and Niue and involves both primary and secondary school teachers. The UTP approach is focused on upskilling and supporting of un-trained teachers so they can achieve professional education training and preparation. It involves engagement with each of the respective governments and have been designed to cater for the needs of PINs with the goal of increasing the quality of education (USP, 2017).



Many current and aspiring teachers in PNG face the hurdles of accessing and completing formal education training due to a myriad of reasons ranging from geographic location, family, and community to economic pressures. This has led to a gap in the amount of suitably qualified elementary school teachers in the profession. As mentioned in the previous chapter the TFF policy from the government in 2012 led to a rapid increase in student numbers. The issue came to a head in 2016 when large numbers of teachers in remote and rural areas were discovered to have incomplete qualifications and were essentially volunteering. Pham et al (2020) highlight that the enhanced focus on increasing access to education in PNG led to classroom size increases which has significantly impacted the development of schools and teachers to offer quality education programmes that enhance student learning. The implementation of TTPs in PNG are being provided by several NGOs to fill this space, and provide opportunities for large numbers of teachers in remote locations. Due to the scope of this research the focus will be on the NGO - Kokoda Track Foundation (KTF).

KTF are an NGO that partnered with the NDoE and PNG Educational Institute (PNGEI) to train thousands of elementary teachers across the nation (KTF, 2016). The programme 'Teach for Tomorrow' provides mentoring, upskilling and training for elementary teachers across fourteen provinces in PNG. As a result of this programme graduates are "eligible for certification and engagement in full government or other institutions payroll teaching positions" (KTF, 2016). The next component, 'Teach for Tomorrow II', is focused specifically on the professional development of teachers. This model is a 'train the trainer' model focused on the main gaps and needs identified within the province (KTF, 2016).

### **3.5 Summary**

This chapter outlined the important aspects of development and education in the Pacific. The introduction of formal education from the colonising world impacted knowledge construction in education for indigenous peoples. Post-development thinking and approaches seek to pursue diverse voices and the inclusion of culture and values. The concept of wellbeing and place are fundamental components in the Pacific and is there is a great need for understanding the importance of this. Empowerment is an important part of development for societies. A shift in approach to

not only focus on the rights and voice of indigenous peoples but focus on leadership is critical to Pacific communities. The leadership by indigenous peoples will strengthen the localisation focus and will ensure indigenous approaches and knowledge are at the centre of a development project. The *Tree of Opportunity* and the *Solesolevaki* models were outlined to look towards Pacific perspectives of empowerment. Consideration needs to be given to ensure Pacific peoples can lead and control initiatives in order to support sustainability of a project. Large increases in school numbers in PNG have raised concerns on the quality of education. Teacher training programmes have been implemented to address this to support certification and professional development.

# Chapter Four: Research Design

## 4.1 Introduction

Literature has established the importance of understanding the localised context where development projects are undertaken (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo 2014; Sanga 2003). This research seeks to explore the relationship between TTPs and teacher empowerment in PNG. By drawing on the work of the NGO KTF with their two programmes, this research investigates how and if TTPs empower teachers in PNG. Outlined in this chapter is the methodology chosen to answer research questions, ethical considerations for this research project, the data collection, and data analysis stages as well as any limitations that were encountered.

## 4.2 Methodology

The research data discussed in this report was collected through the adoption of a qualitative approach to research. A qualitative research approach is focused on the collection and production of data in their natural setting (Denzin & Lincoln 2017; Stewart-Withers et. al, 2014). Lune and Berg (2017) add to this by stating that it “refers to meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and descriptions of things” (p. 12). A qualitative approach helps to both understand and find meaning and possibly bring about change (Stewart-Withers et al, 2014). This type of research approach is ideal for research questions that require a deep understanding of people’s lives and their social circumstances; those to which a quantified answer cannot be offered because its ultimate purpose is to understand the complexities of reality itself (O’Leary, 2017). Qualitative research is fluid and adaptable and has an approach that challenges fixed meanings through a wide range of research techniques (Lune & Berg 2017; Brockington & Sullivan 2003).

A case study on KTF will form the basis of this research. Case studies are defined by Bogdan and Biklen (2003) as “a detailed examination of one setting, or a single subject, a single depository of documents, or one particular event” (p. 54). They can provide a greater understanding of the projects, programmes and events helping to unearth information that sheds light on an issue (Merriam, 1998). Case studies have the potential to give voice to the marginalised, vulnerable, disadvantaged and excluded (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017).

#### 4.2.1 Methods

This research used multiple methods to collect data, which were: *tok stori*, a culturally appropriate method of research with participants, document analysis, and a semi structured interview.

#### 4.2.2 Research Participants

Three research participants took part in this research. Petra Arifeae is the Head of Localisation at KTF. Petra has been with the organisation since 2011 and been involved with a number of roles in the organisation from project officer, programme coordinator, through to leadership roles in project management. She has had the privilege of working in a number of roles that are involved with the partnership with experience at NDoE, and also working as a teacher at both local and international schools across a number of provinces, Western Highlands, East New Britain, Central, and National Capital District (NCD). She has extensive experience with the undertaking of service delivery from education departments and sound curriculum knowledge from her teaching career. Teacher A is the second research participant. He is a teacher at Gorari Elementary School in Oro and has been teaching at the school for 10 years. Teacher A has gone through both Teach for Tomorrow I (T4TI) and Teach for Tomorrow II (T4TII) programmes. Teacher B is the third research participant and is also a teacher at Gorari Elementary School in Oro. She has been teaching for the same amount of time and also went through both T4TI and T4TII programmes. Petra Arifeae will be identified using her name and the teachers will be identified as Teacher A and B moving forward in this research.

#### 4.2.3 Tok Stori

*Tok stori* is a Melanesian form of communication and is an essential part of everyday socialising in PNG (Sanga & Reynolds, 2018; Sanga et al, 2021). It is where “speakers and listeners become part of each other’s stories as they open their worlds through narrative” (Sanga et al, 2021, p. 379). The relatedness established through family, tribal stories, knowledges, and events shape and guide conversation. An important aspect to note is *tok stori* occurs naturally (Sanga & Reynolds, 2018). Literature on *tok stori* reveals its relative flexibility and is highlighted with examples in village contexts, special knowledge, recollection of stories, and leadership (Sanga et al, 2021). The method of *tok stori* offers “context specific and decolonizing approach to gendered

power relations” (de la Torre Parra, 2021, p. 95). My Melanesian roots and Fijian upbringing have meant that *talanoa* has been part of family life. This is especially prominent in interactions with family and close friends. *Talanoa* means conversation in several Pacific cultures – Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga where “people speak from the heart without preconceptions” (Fa’avae et al, 2016; Sanga et al, 2021, p. 379). The opportunity to live in PNG allowed me to experience the richness of connection through *tok stori*. Interactions I had between work colleagues and their families, church, and sport communities resonated with myself and my experiences. The context of the research and the cultural appropriateness of this method ensured diversity in responses from participants. *Tok stori* took place with the three research participants introduced in the previous section. A selective transcript was provided to participants to check their *tok stori* was presented correctly and that all knowledge shared was presented in an accurate manner.

#### 4.2.3 Document Analysis & Semi Structured Interviews

The information used in the document analysis were websites, documents, and interview transcripts. The main task in the analysing of data is to look for patterns and trends within the data (Laws et al, 2013). A thematic analysis was used to identify patterns and connection between data with the following words used to guide me through the analysis of websites, documents, *tok stori*, and interviews.

- 1) Culture
- 2) Knowledge
- 3) Partnership
- 4) Professional Development and Training
- 5) Empowerment

Any information found in the documents and the interviews which connected with the words I would highlight and organise into sections in a separate document. Making connections and analysing the information allows opportunities for potential themes to be explored (O’Leary 2017). The scope of this research allowed for focus to be only on KTF and NDoE documents.

A mixture of *tok stori* and a semi-structured interview was used with Petra. The flexible nature of semi-structured interviews according to O’Leary (2017) allows for specific questions initially then a natural change into dialogue. This can open the opportunity

for some interesting findings. The recruitment of participants for the tok stori and semi-structured interview was done through email with the importance of ensuring that there was a willingness and free choice of members to participate if they wish to and to ensure the cultural practices of PNG were respected.

### **4.3 Empowerment Framework**

The adapted empowerment framework in Figure 2 was created in response to initiatives and themes that emerged at the local level. Inspiration has been taken from the *solesolevaki* model by Vunibola and Scheyvens (2019) mentioned in the previous chapter. Kuir-Ayius (2016) 'Community capitals framework' provides an example of a *bilum* (an iconic Papua New Guinean string bag holding deep cultural and emotional significance) is used to represent the interactions between various stakeholders and how they support community capitals and impact community resilience in PNG. Some of the key concepts are *Pasin Tumbuna* (cultural capital) which looks at everyday life and how people connect to their environment through their beliefs. *Pasin Tumbuna* also symbolises the diversity of cultures and tribes (Kuir-Ayius, 2016). Another concept is *Bung Wantaim* (social capital) which attributes the partnerships between groups to access knowledge and skills (Kuir-Ayius, 2016).

The concept of *bilum* is used in this research to represent teacher empowerment (Figure 1) and characterizes the critical aspects of an empowerment approach. In Tok Pisin, the word *bilum* means "womb," the place from which all life springs (Hynes, 2018). Throughout the centuries across tribes and regions of PNG *bilum* weaving has been made for a variety of purposes (Kuir-Ayius 2016; Hynes, 2018). The *bilum* is a symbol of the life and breath of PNG's diverse population.

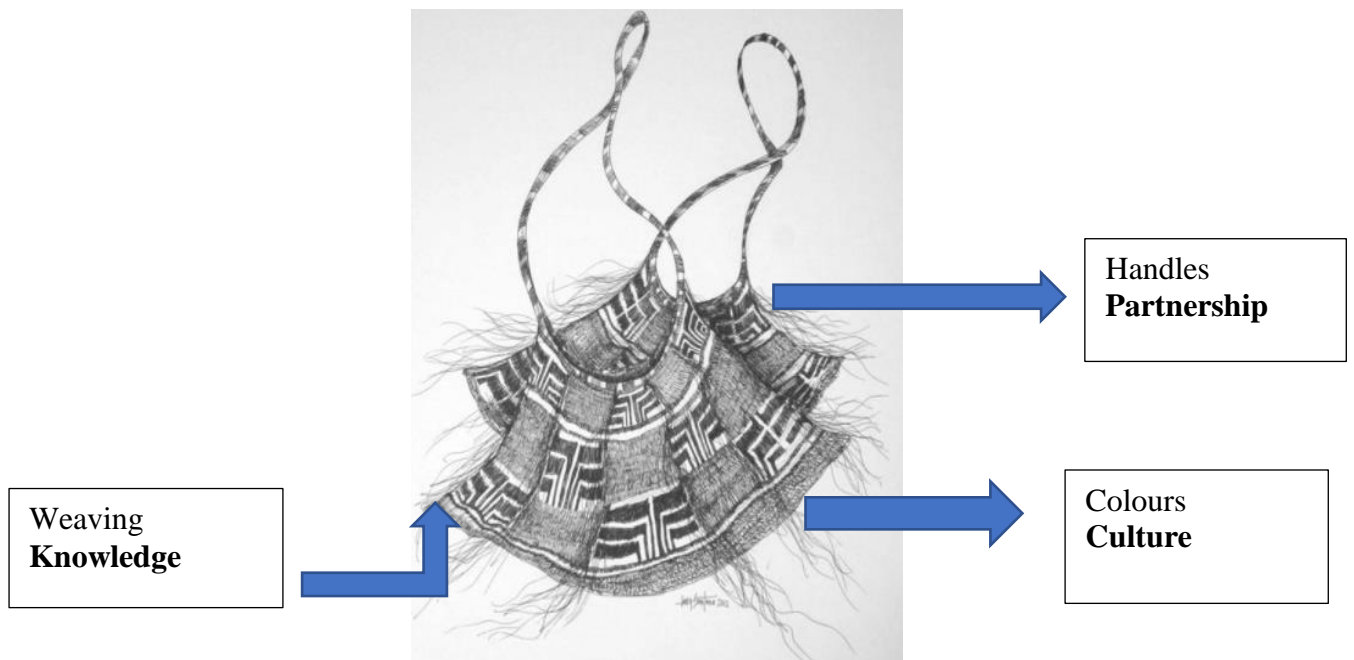


Figure 2: Madang bilum (Larry Santana – PNG Artist)

Source: <https://www.artstret.com/Papua-New-Guinea-Artwork/%27Madang-Bilum-I-%28Badam%29%27/373/27/.htm>

Inspired by Solesolevaki model – Vunibola & Scheyvens (2019) and Community capitals framework – Kuir-Ayius (2016)

#### 4.3.1 Culture

Culture is represented through the colours on the *bilums*. The colours symbolise the diversity of one's culture. One of the important components of empowerment is the contribution of culture. Culture brings life! The *bilum* is alive and has many different uses in society. It showcases diversity with every *bilum* tied to *ples* (Hynes, 2018). *Ples* embodies “notions of place of origin or home village, of kinship bonds, reciprocal relationships and mother tongue” (de la Torre Parra, 2021, p. 33). Salesa (2019) adds that place is woven from our stories. The diversity component embodies empowerment through the point that all teachers are unique as they come from a family, tribe and a province in PNG and empowerment is not the same for every teacher.

#### 4.3.2 Knowledge

Knowledge is represented through the weaving of the *bilum*. Each *bilum* has specific weaving techniques in its design and production that makes it unique to a culture. Each province in PNG has an iconic *bilum* which is special to its people. The variation in *bilum* design is connected with the notion of *ples*, which has its own identity and

with that comes knowledge that is tied and united with that community, district and province (Gegeo, 1998a). The structure of a *bilum* design must be robust to ensure it serves the purpose of use. *Bilums* are created from natural materials and all the knots that are part of the weaving process make up all the beautiful aspects of creating knowledge (Hynes 2018). Every knot involved contributes to this knowledge and this is passed down from one generation to the next. The importance of the observing of the making of *bilums* and listening to *tok stori* reveal the connections of the *bilum* to *ples* (Emkow & Knapp, 2017).

The Madang *bilum* (figure 3) showcases a striking coloured *bilum* hand woven from natural fibres. Colours used are natural ingredients such as fruit berries, plants and nature's mud. The use of the Madang *bilum* as a representation of empowerment is due to the special connection that I encountered during my time in PNG. I was very blessed and fortunate to work alongside colleagues from Madang province. We were all part of a team where we valued each other, collaborated and shared knowledge which contributed to the overall empowerment of each colleague. My *go pinis* (finish) farewell featured this *bilum* and it is something that I hold very special to me. Larry Santana who was the artist exhibited in the framework Figure 3 is someone who has a powerful story of his journey in Art and Education. I was fortunate to meet him when he visited Port Moresby where he shared snippets of this journey. His passion is painting and he displayed a style that combined imagining heritage and changing path that PNG was taking towards modernisation. Many of Santana's paintings feature the major themes of traditional stories which reference indigenous cultural knowledge and wisdom (Rosi, 2006).



Figure 3: Madang bilum (colour)

Source: <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/the-bilum-of-papua-new-guinea-ichcap/4AVx7dFUGXPnLQ?hl=en.htm>



### 4.3.3 Partnership

Partnership is represented through the *bilum* as the handles that bring the *bilum* together. The partnerships involved encompass a number of different groups; teachers, education trainers, families, community, and church. The strength of the relationships through interactions between all the components impact the strength of the handles on the *bilum*. For a *bilum* to fulfil its purpose it needs the structural integrity of the handles to not be compromised. The breaking-down or fraying of the handles lends itself to the questions of what has happened? What needs to be worked on? For empowerment to happen it is vital that constant reflection takes place on each groups actions. The wearing of a handwoven *bilum* bag in PNG is more than just the carrying of goods that fill the sack, but the history of family. The *bilum* worn is woven by a mother's hands, a family member which used the knowledge that was passed down from generation's grandmother, and great-grandmother before her (Hynes 2018). The partnerships and connections that influence a teacher give them strength in their role and form the foundations of their own learning journeys.

### 4.3.4 Summary of Bilum Framework

The purpose of the *bilum* framework is to provide a model that is able to be applied to the concept of teacher empowerment. It does not reflect all aspects involved with empowerment but is focused on some of the core components that have been identified from key themes from education programmes and review of literature. All three components: culture, knowledge and partnerships are interlinked and if one thread or part of the *bilum* is weakened it impacts the structural integrity of the *bilum* (Kuir-Ayius, 2016). To achieve empowerment all three components must be present and function together to support teachers in their roles.

## 4.4 Ethics & Positionality

Ethics is a critical component of research projects. It is crucial that projects involving people are designed and actioned within an ethical framework. As this research involved the participation of people through *tok stori* and semi-structured interviews, ethical considerations were undertaken to ensure that actions carried out did not bring any harm on participants or the researcher.

Prior to conducting interviews, an ethics process was completed adhering to the Massey University code of conduct for research involving human participants (Massey University, 2017a). The ethics process was assessed as low-risk and included considerations of confidentiality, informed consent, handling and use of information, conflict of interest, and cultural and gender concerns. Banks and Scheyvens (2014) reinforce the importance of looking at ethical concerns and potential issues in cross-cultural situations must be accounted by researchers to guide every step of their projects. They go on to further state that the research process must protect participant's rights with dignity and privacy and must provide some form of benefit to them and promote a bottom-up approach.

Taking the cultural perspective into account, the researcher has engaged with the Massey Pacific research guidelines and protocols which provide researchers guidance for research in the Pacific (Massey University, 2017b). Respect for relationships, knowledge holders and reciprocity, and the using of research to do good were key themes from this document which were taken into consideration and put into the research design. Participants gave verbal consent which was consistent with a culturally appropriate approach. Interviewees were invited to participate voluntarily and received an explanation about the purpose of the research. Ensuring the information and words provided from participants through *tok stori* and interviews were an accurate reflection, was an essential consideration during data collection. During *tok stori* I ensured that I allowed the fluid process of storying to take place without interruption from questions I had prepared.

The interviews that took place referred to selected questions when it was appropriate for participants. O'Leary (2010) states "analysis of the words needs to come from the perspective and reality of the researched, not the researcher" (p. 59). The respect for the knowledge holder and the relationship between both groups was at the forefront of the researcher's thinking.

As a researcher it is important to scrutinise the positionality in connection to the research subject. Wolf in Scheyvens et al (2003) highlights the need to "critically and self-consciously examine [your] positionality" and look at how this can have an impact on research (p. 168). Qualitative *tok stori* research "requires the researcher to actively participate in a relational knowledge generation process" (de la Torre Parra, 2021, p.

113). The need to reflect on my own story through my cultural background, gender, education history, and relationships were important to highlight my positionality. As a primary school and learning support educator, I have a passion for the primary years of education. My positionality has developed throughout the time I spent living in PNG. Positionality is relative and can adapt over time (Carling, Erdal, & Ezzati, 2014). Moving to PNG in 2019 I spent a year volunteering in local primary and secondary schools in Port Moresby where I was involved in a number of roles as a teacher and a mentor supporting students and teachers. My educational background has provided me with a privilege where I am able to access opportunities to work in a global setting. In the schools where I volunteered I was accepted, welcomed and valued. I approached my experience with an open mind and was aware coming in as an 'outsider' that I am not an education expert. The professional relationships through these experiences were reciprocal in nature through the learning and sharing of knowledge. The learning and insights of working in a country with richness in diversity and culture further ignited the passion to research an important development topic of empowerment in an education programme.

Having been blessed with the opportunity to live in Papua New Guinea I embarked on postgraduate study which evolved into undertaking a Masters research project. My roots lie in Melanesia through my Fijian mother and my New Zealand European/Pākeha father. This upbringing has meant *talanoa*, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, has been part of family life. I have felt the richness and beauty of interacting through the sharing of stories to connect with others. Through my experiences in professional and personal settings I have ensured I have liaised and connected with appropriate people. This is to ensure I respected cultural values as a married male in a Pacific setting. Reflecting on my positionality, the researcher has no conflict of interest to disclose.

#### **4.5 Limitations of the research**

Due to Covid-19, this research was desk-based. Initially, I had the intention to conduct research in the field, but this approach had to be revised to consider border restrictions at the time. The methods of document analysis and semi-structured interviews used are two well-known data collection methods in qualitative research. The potential for biases in the information provided from the interview and organisation material

presented a challenge. Looking into reducing the impact of potential biases I looked at a range of documents from KTF including a Theory of Change document which provided strategic focus, conceptualisation of education programmes with intended outcomes. By looking into a range of documents and the comparison with information received from tok stori and semi-structured interview it assisted me with reducing biases.

#### **4.6 Summary**

This chapter explained the research process of this report which aims to explore the relationship between empowerment and teacher training programmes. A qualitative approach was selected to carry out this study as this supported the focus of this research. Research methods were chosen to ensure a culturally appropriate approach was taken. This research is focused on the empowerment of teachers and is where the adapted framework identified core aspects of an empowerment approach from literature. The next chapter will look into KTF teacher training programmes and discuss impacts that have resulted from the programmes.

## **Chapter Five: KTF Case Study of Teach for Tomorrow Programmes – Findings**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This research seeks to analyse empowerment within KTF teaching training programmes. This chapter presents findings from the fieldwork data collected. It will do this by reflecting on information collected from *tok stori* and interviews of three people – Petra Arifeae, a KTF employee and two teachers who have been through the T4T programmes. It will also provide analysis of documentation from KTF. Firstly, an overview of KTF Teach for Tomorrow programmes will be provided. Following this, a case study which will look at the various impacts of the programme and the initiatives that have contributed towards teacher empowerment. Finally, the challenges faced by the programmes and teachers will be explored.

### **5.2 Overview of Programme**

Teach for Tomorrow I and II are programmes run by KTF. Many teachers in remote and rural PNG were volunteering in local community schools and without completing an education training course faced losing their careers. Teach for Tomorrow I (T4TI) aimed to provide opportunities for teachers to attain a qualification that officially certifies them as teachers (KTF, 2016). KTF partnered with Provincial Departments of Education, communities, trainers, teachers with donor agencies to deliver the programme which has been endorsed by the NDoE. T4TI was undertaken in fourteen provinces across PNG between 2016-2018 and consisted of six weeks training to complete the requirements for certification (KTF, 2019). Graduates of the programme are eligible for teaching positions in government schools and are certified on the payroll system. Changes to the required training and qualifications for elementary teachers in PNG led to a skills gap within the profession. Teach for Tomorrow II (T4TII) provided a programme that works with certified teachers to provide professional development, upskilling and mentoring to elementary teachers (KTF; 2016, 2020). Initially, it was designed to support teachers graduating from T4TI programme as well as other teachers who needed upskilling to receive professional development opportunities and in-service training to support their pedagogical knowledge. T4TII programme supported the NDoE with teacher related target of increased professional development and learning opportunities for teachers. The programme evolved in 2020

due to the launch of the latest education plan and new schooling structure to be implemented. With significant changes on the horizon, KTF is working in partnership with the NDoE and provincial education departments to support the creation of Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers in remote and rural PNG through in-service training (KTF, 2021).

The Teach for Tomorrow programmes are the focus of this case study, as they are designed to support empowerment of teachers by using knowledge and training to provide career development opportunities within communities. KTF works in collaboration with a number of local agencies and plays a role in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). KTF is able to make a valuable contribution to achieve SDGs, partnering with provincial departments of education and communities to implement programmes within a locally derived context.

### **5.3 Impacts of Programme**

The impacts of the programme were identified through an analysis of documents as well as *tok stori* and semi-structured interviews. Due to the scope of the report, the focus will be on the three key impacts identified in more detail below.

#### *5.3.1 Increased amount of trained teachers*

The first key impact identified through analysis of KTF documents and *tok stori* was the increase in trained teachers with appropriate qualifications. This was one of the three NDoE teacher related targets which the T4TI programme supported and had a substantial impact with the increase in certified elementary teachers. From 2016-2018 the programme trained 3,685 elementary teachers across 14 provinces (KTF; 2019, 2020). Partnerships between KTF and Provincial Departments of Education (PDOEs), communities, trainers, and teachers with support of the private sector were a critical component of the success of the programme (KTF 2019). KTF formed an MOU with the NDoE Teacher Education Division and this created the foundation to establish new partnerships and relationships. The project heralded a chapter which was going to honour and respect teachers from a professional perspective. Petra highlights the response from remote and rural communities:

*“There was a desperate cry for education – for the learning and upskilling of teachers to complete training so they could be correctly certified. The opportunity to be remunerated accordingly increased the level of motivation. Teachers walked days to come to training from remote locations, across flooded rivers, and risky terrain. The passion in a lot of these teachers is very evident. If we don’t do it, who else will do it”.*

*(Tok stori with Petra Arifeae, 2022)*

The first component of the KTF programmes - Teach for Tomorrow I - not only provided certification for teachers to be recognised and financially supported but also enabled graduates of the programme to grow in confidence and commitment to the profession (KTF, 2019). Teachers A and B shared thoughts on getting qualified and having an opportunity:

*“We have a paper that says we are teachers and can provide for family and our community. It gives us hope that living in the village we are not forgotten and have opportunities to learn more”.*

*(Tok stori with Teacher A - Gorari , 2022)*

*“If I didn’t take part in the training I would miss out on getting money and would have to sell fruit and vegetables at the market after school”.*

*(Tok stori with Teacher B - Gorari , 2022)*

The words of two teachers reveal a sense of pride in getting a qualification. This opportunity to get a qualification not only has a positive impact on the teachers but is providing for family needs as well. This has flowed on to other areas as well:

*“Teachers are not only confident in the classroom but have become key stakeholders with other projects in their*

*communities. They have a voice and are able to represent their community and are more involved with decisions”.*

*(Tok stori with Petra Arifeae, 2022)*

The ripple effect of this programme beyond the teaching position, has enabled participation and decision-making in other projects which lends towards an empowerment approach.

### *5.3.2 Training and Professional Development - Creating Solutions*

KTF provides professional development and training through the T4TII programme which is in support of the NDoE teacher related target to ‘enhance teacher quality by providing support and professional learning’ (NDoE, 2015). The T4TII training model is a ‘train the trainer’ model, which works in collaboration with Provincial education authorities to train provincial teacher trainers. The programme builds on T4TI and addresses the gap in teacher skills and capacity of teachers trained under the old system compared with recent training in the new system (KTF, 2020). Each programme is tailored according to the needs and gaps identified from the fourteen provinces across PNG (KTF, 2020). A key component that was evident in the document analysis and *tok stori* was the recognition of diversity in PNG through KTF’s programme delivery in the ten provinces.

Issues of resourcing in remote and rural areas of PNG has been well documented. Teachers have had to make do with very little resources and one of the document’s analysed highlighted this by stating “If a teacher has not been taught to approach resourcing creatively, imaginatively and from within their own environments then there will inevitably be a lack of ability to discover solutions in the area” (KTF, 2020, p. 27). Resourcing is an area in which KTF has made progress through the creating of solutions for teachers and communities who have little to work with (KTF, 2020). The T4TII programmes have demonstrated ways of using natural environment to “be creative and innovative in preparing lesson materials” (KTF, 2020, p. 28). The words of a teacher trainer illustrate this beautifully:



*“We’ve seen elementary classrooms full of songs, sign language, rhyming words and animals sculpted with leaves from teacher’s gardens. This creativity is at the heart and lungs of the education system in PNG. This creativity is keeping things going.”*

*(Teacher Trainer – KTF, 2021, p. 45).*

T4TII look at ways that schools no matter how remote can utilise their own resources. By being creative and improvising, teachers can use practical aspects of the natural environment to bring learning to life. Teacher B is a teacher in Oro Province and a programme participant who says:

*“..where we live, we are so far away from getting materials as well as the cost. So, learning new ways of making materials from our land, our gardens is very helpful”.*

*(Tok stori with Teacher B - Gorari , 2022)*

The creativity and improvising with use of natural environment for learning materials provided a solution which speaks towards the sustainability aspect of the T4TII programme and how strategies learnt can be carried forward into the future. Petra shares this wisdom:

*“Your bilums carry everything – use rice bag for books, go in the gardens and use your land. Embrace what you have you have”.*

*(Tok stori with Petra Arifeae, 2022)*

The metaphor of the *bilum* represents that as a teacher and educator with the support of professional development opportunities can guide and enable teachers to draw from their creativity and innovation. The education system and the limited opportunities available for teachers in the past has had a significant influence on professional growth as teachers. Teach for Tomorrow II programme has encouraged the creativity of teachers in schools.

### 5.3.3 Tapping into Knowledge of school communities

The analysis of KTF documents revealed that the T4TII programme taking place led to increased motivation and engagement of teachers due to the acknowledgement of knowledge and skills possessed (KTF, 2020). Another important factor was the roles of culture and identity and connecting this with teaching and learning:

*“There was an importance of not coming in with ‘new ideas’. They should be able to lead the use and selection of ideas as to what they believe is best suited to their students, teachers, communities and schools.”*

*(Teach for Tomorrow II Programme Manager – KTF, 2020, p. 17).*

The content presented in the programme focused on adding value to teachers existing knowledge by providing strategies to practice and implement for their school communities in their provinces. Provincial trainers who are the participants in the T4TII programmes reflected on the need to “serve and mould teachers who were under their care” (KTF, 2020, p. 17). The knowledge each programme participant has of their own community – teachers and students is invaluable which the T4TII programme supported through the ‘train the teacher trainer’ approach. This approach embodied service through the knowledge gathered being passed on to school communities.

*“You have your bilums – start filling them up with all the knowledge you have”.*

*(Tok stori with Petra Arifeae, 2022)*

The building of their own confidence for teachers to trust in their own practice when undertaking their own programmes is a vital part of fostering empowerment. The three key impacts described in this section demonstrate crucial elements that are relevant to empowerment. The themes identified from tok stori and document analysis have links to culture, knowledge and partnership.

## **5.4 Challenges and Adaptations**

KTF Teach for Tomorrow II programme aimed to support teacher trainers with ongoing professional development for improved skills, knowledge and training (KTF, 2019). The challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic had a substantial impact on the delivery of programmes and required the need to adapt and be innovative. Documents reveal that T4TII programmes were still operating during the pandemic albeit with an adaptive approach (KTF, 2021). The communicating of health messages in schools and communities through the pandemic showed the adaptability and flexibility from KTF to respond to the pandemic. Another huge challenge that KTF faces is the major changes to the PNG education system. The restructuring to a 1-6-6 structure with the phasing out of elementary phase in the system to a preparatory year (1 year), primary (6 years), and secondary (6 years). KTF is adapting to this restructuring and in the process of continuing to target remote and rural areas with the implementing of a primary teaching pathway to ensure teachers have upgraded and valid qualifications so they can remain on the payroll (KTF, 2022). KTF is also supporting PDOEs who have given a mandate to provide early childhood education opportunities for learners which is in effect creating a 3-6-6 structure. The support provided is with curriculum development, training and upskilling of current teachers (KTF, 2020).

## **5.5 Summary**

The analysis of KTF's teacher training programmes revealed several impacts that contributed to empowerment of teachers. The key impacts identified were the increase in the number of trained teachers, training and professional development opportunities and the use of existing knowledge of teachers in the programme. Important themes identified from the document analysis had strong links with culture, knowledge, and partnerships. The next chapter will discuss and analyse findings from KTF's programmes in relation to the empowerment framework.

## Chapter Six: Discussion & Findings

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and analyses findings from the literature review and KTF in relation to literature and specifically the empowerment framework to answer the two research questions. The chapter is divided into three sections. Firstly, section one will focus on research question 1 and analyse literature, KTF documentation, *tok stori* and look at the ways KTF supports the NDoE with teacher related targets. Section two will focus on research question 2 and use the empowerment framework (see Figure 2) to look at what ways empowerment is taking place through KTF's teacher training programme. Finally, the chapter will look at the challenges faced, and recommendations provided for NGOs in the empowerment space.

### 6.2 Research Question 1: Support of NDOE teacher related targets through Teaching Training Programmes

The PNG education system faces significant challenges. For the purposes of this report the focus is on the challenges faced by teachers. The drive for universal education for all school-aged children has led to schools inundated with students but with limited teachers in classes across the nation. The result of this has led to overcrowding in classrooms resulting in teachers struggling to access support, upskilling and professional development opportunities (KTF, 2019, Rena 2011).

#### 6.2.1 *Enhance teacher quality by providing support and professional learning*

KTF Teach for Tomorrow programmes provide professional development, support, and mentoring to teachers in remote and rural areas of PNG. Many of the schools in these areas rarely have professional development or in-service training delivered. The National Education Plan (2015-19) states the following:

“A more innovative approach to providing access to a universal education should take account of the challenges facing rural and remote areas...The goal of quality learning for all considers a more inclusive approach to education” (NDoE, 2015, p. 37).

“Teacher’s contributions to a more child-friendly environment are critical to improved learning” (NDoE, 2015, p. 40).

KTF T4T programmes have aligned with NDoE and worked with PDOEs to take opportunities to hard-to-reach areas. The target of enhancing teacher quality through professional learning and providing a programme that is adapted and reflects the local context has been a feature of KTF’s programmes. T4TI programme ran from 2016 – 2018 initial focus in Oro before extending to Gulf and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (ARoB). This then extended to remote and rural areas in a total of fourteen provinces. The impact resulted in 3685 teachers trained in partnership with the PNG Education Institute (PNGEI) (KTF, 2019). The T4TII programme was designed and piloted in 2017 with initial focus on teachers in Oro and Gulf provinces and ARoB. The positive response and impact from participants led to the programme being delivered in a total of ten provinces. Both T4T programmes have been an invaluable asset to the NDoE by partnering to address some of the significant challenges the education system faces.

### *6.2.2 Connection with NDoE changes*

The importance of ensuring well-trained and qualified teachers with suitable resources and support at schools is a major target of the NDoE to address these issues. Analysis of KTF documents, website and the interview and *tok stori* with Petra Arifeae (KTF – head of localisation) highlight the importance of teacher training programmes that are relevant and have the ability to “connect with the other educational requirements rather than compete with them” (KTF, 2020, p. 25). There are several reforms happening to and within the PNG education system. The main areas comprise of restructuring to Elementary-Primary-Secondary structure of schooling, curriculum changes from Outcomes Based to Standards Based curriculum, and the scrapping of tuition fees (NDoE, 2020). With teachers facing numerous changes, the T4TII programmes have been able to add value by not only focussing on teaching skills and knowledge but incorporating understanding of structural education changes to participants. Teachers have voiced their opinions by stating the practical examples and strategies for supporting them implement the new changes has been of immense value.

### 6.2.3 Covid Support

With the Covid-19 pandemic hitting PNG in the first half of 2020 there were many communities where KTF delivered programmes who were nervous and concerned. The networks KTF had established through teacher training in remote locations has helped with communicating health messages. Petra shared:

*“the connection we had with these communities helped us to share effective health information. The pandemic empowered us to educate communities about health – how to keep safe and look after our communities especially in schools”.*

*(Tok stori with Petra Arifeae, 2022)*

The NDoE’s most recent education plan 2020-2029 highlights the need for all schools to have adequate sanitation through appropriate water sanitation and hygiene facilities. Covid-19 heightened these concerns nationwide, with many schools ill-equipped to deal with a pandemic and lacking basic facilities. The uncertainty with schools opening and closing and the flow on impacts to the community meant anxiety was building. Through authentic connections with remote communities, KTF had the capacity to communicate in an honest and understanding way to support communities who did not have access to media platforms.

## 6.3 Research Question 2: Teacher Training Programmes – Empowerment

This section examines how participation in Teach for Tomorrow II contributes to experiences of empowerment for teachers and how building on these impacts could have an effect and trigger empowerment in the community. Culture, Knowledge and Partnership are three essential components that support empowerment. These components will be discussed when examining the T4TII programme alongside the challenges.

### 6.3.1 Cultural Inclusiveness

The document analysis and data collection reveal that culture is at the heart of KTF T4T programmes. “Educational outcomes in PNG will be improved by not just maintaining, but supporting and harnessing, culture, identity, natural resources and

original language” (KTF, 2020, p. 7). The importance of culture is an aspect that Petra spoke of passionately:

*“if you are working with others, it is important that you respect people’s values and cultures. Culture means everything to us. Our family, our way of life.”*

*(Tok stori with Petra Arifeae, 2022)*

Through the T4TII programme KTF acknowledges the ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach is not effective in a country with incredible linguistic diversity; 850 languages – most in the world. Therefore, the programme has a foundation of being rooted in the diversity of a teacher’s location – considering teacher’s environment, geography, skill base, availability of resources and support available from authorities (KTF, 2020). The programme is designed and adapted with support from teacher trainers and provincial education authorities to the needs and gaps identified within the different provinces. With a range of stakeholders being represented and involved in the design stage this allows opportunities for the tok pisin term *p/les* to be at the heart of conversation. Place is more than a physical or geographic location. “Place is around and within us, we are made of place and we make place” (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2002; Salesa, 2019; de la Torre Parra, 2021, p. 14).

The train-the-trainer model is a unique approach which opens opportunities for culture and *p/les* to be at the centre. Professional Development and upskilling from educators who understand *p/les* is an approach which fosters empowerment for both trainers and participants. Thaman affirms this through teachers have personal identities like their students are rooted in their own cultures and traditions (Thaman, 2009, p. 4). The importance of culture and *p/les* allows participants in the programme to not just look outwards but to look within and appreciate the environment and resources that are abundant in nature. The culture component shown through the framework is a vital element of empowerment. Culture showcases the diversity of teachers having their own bilum which represents *p/les*, who they are and this is not the same for teachers throughout the provinces in PNG.

### 6.3.2 Knowledge

A shortage of professional development opportunities for teachers is a common theme across PNG especially in remote and rural locations including the highlighted focus province of Oro. The lack of attention on supporting teachers and opportunities for upskilling from education department once they are in the classroom has led to substantial gaps in teacher training and quality of teachers (Rena 2011, KTF, 2020). KTF T4T programmes are “multi-faceted in nature” and cater for the different stages of teacher development – mentoring, upskilling, accreditation (KTF, 2020, p. 10). The importance of aligning the programmes with the education system is a key feature of the programme. The aim of T4TII is not to enforce on teachers and trainers’ knowledge, ideas or opinions from studies and literature in other contexts, “but to support PNG’s own teachers, trainers and provincial education departments to access a range of skills and experiences in teaching and learning” (KTF, 2020, p. 9). From these teachers are able to build up their own agency, make decisions around resources and skills that will be of benefit to them as teachers and their schools. Teacher A highlighted:

*“the programme helped support me with teaching and lesson materials. I felt more confident and happier as a teacher. I have more ideas and I’m even more excited about using these to help the children”.*

*(Tok stori with Teacher A - Gorari , 2022)*

After teachers got officially certified as teachers the professional support provided in T4TII allowed for teachers, Petra states:

*“to trust in their own practice”. “We have a paper that says we are a teacher” Be empowered to build up their own confidence and give a different strategy a go and improvise using your own resources”.*

*(Tok stori with Petra Arifeae, 2022)*



This has flowed into empowering of teachers to be voice in their community. The belief in the teacher's statements is evident and reflects the positive impact KTF programmes are having on teachers. The story of a teacher in Milne Bay was shared by Petra highlighting empowerment onto further education:

*“A teacher who got certified, went on to do an early childhood diploma and has now progressed onto running teacher training programmes with KTF. She has all the knowledge and experience and wants to share with others. From her she has progressed to be a head teacher at a school”.*

*(Tok stori with Petra Arifeae, 2022)*

The approach KTF has taken with the programmes has made an understanding of the context and cultural awareness to ensure new knowledge is not viewed as being superior to what knowledge there already is.

### *6.3.3 Partnership*

KTF has developed partnerships with the National and Provincial Departments of Education, training institutes and the Teacher Service Commission. The design of the programme “ensures the agenda and opinions of the education ministries in PNG are central” (KTF, 2020, p. 10). This has guided and supported KTF to establish aligning of the qualification development in the programme with NDoE requirements. The capacity to not only build relationships but genuine partnerships where both parties have a voice is vital in the process. Sanga (2003) highlights an appropriate approach is one which has context awareness and ensures “a need for active engagement with and understanding from donors” (p. 38). Both T4T programmes were piloted in the early stages and would not have progressed and delivered to 14 provinces without having this partnership in place. The *bilum* (see figure 2) requires handles which symbolise the partnership between the stakeholders. If the handles don't have a solid connection the *bilum* will not fulfil its full purpose and capabilities. A strong partnership reflects handles on the *bilum* that are strengthened to ensure they can 'carry the load' to the remote and rural areas KTF programmes are delivered. The importance of partnerships and the approach KTF has undertaken by ensuring all stakeholders are

not only consulted, but actively engaged with during programme development has supported the empowerment of teachers.

*“When rural communities have services to enrich them – people put their hearts to learn as much as they can. Teachers show passion, dedication, and commitment to the profession.*

*“You have your bilums – start filling them up with all the knowledge you have”.*

*(Tok stori with Petra Arifeae, 2022)*

The positive effect partnerships KTF have are reiterated by the words of Sanga (2003) who asserts that for a project to succeed it must have “a commitment to a common purpose and shared understanding” (p, 38). By establishing partnerships with key education stakeholders, KTF programmes have gone on to support teachers with not only teaching skills and knowledge but with relevant guidance and communication regarding NDoE structural education changes. The inspiration from the programme content has empowered teachers to channel their personal creativity and innovation in the classroom. The passion and dedication to education from teachers further strengthens the handles of the *bilum*.

#### **6.4 Challenges & Recommendations**

In conclusion, this case study provides demonstration of a programme that can have a positive and powerful impact on teachers in remote and rural areas. The T4T programmes have aligned with the education system and ensured effective partnerships with the education ministries at national and provincial level. This has supported the programme being rolled out to remote and rural areas in fourteen provinces. It is evident that KTF programmes have had an impact on the empowering of teachers professional, personally and as members of their communities. Teachers have expressed positive feedback from learning new strategies, accessing resources, getting accredited, being more confident as teachers and an active voice in their communities.

The Covid-19 pandemic has created a challenge like no other. This required a greater need to innovate and adapt to respond to this crisis. KTF have been looking at ways

of working through the pandemic to ensure they can adapt and still be effective. The need to continue to align with the PNG government plans and priorities will be essential to the sustainability of future projects.

The empowerment framework provided a useful tool to look at the core elements of empowerment. Empowerment is often used a buzzword and the nature of the term results in a struggle in agreement on a definition. There are so many different components, but by focussing on three core elements it allowed the focus of the case study to capture important aspects of empowerment for PNG teachers.

In light of what we can learn from the Covid-19 pandemic and as evidenced by KTF, it is recommended that NGOs wanting to engage in teacher training programmes have a localisation focus. Reflecting on my time as a teacher and researcher in Papua New Guinea, a localisation approach will allow for opportunities to focus on the important values and purpose of a project to make sure the roots are grounded and take into account local based experiences and methods. This will lend towards an approach that supports and values agency of communities. The connection through this focus with communities and a strong desire to work with, not just communicate with, will need to understand and put into practice the three elements essential to empowerment. Culture, knowledge and partnership are three elements that need to contribute and factor into the design, delivery, and monitoring of teacher training programmes to foster an empowerment approach.

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## **Appendices**

**Appendix 1 – Participant Consent Form**

**Appendix 2 – Information Sheet for research participants**

**Appendix 3 – Interview questions**

## Appendix 1: Participant Consent Form



### Development and Education: Papua New Guinea

#### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

This consent form will be held for 5 years.

Researcher: Joseph Ready, School of Humanities and Social Sciences – People, Environment and Planning,  
Massey University of New Zealand.

- I have had the research explained to me clearly and understand the project. I have had the opportunity to ask questions, and any questions I had were answered to my satisfaction.
- I agree to take part in an audio recorded interview.  
*I understand that:*
- I have the ability to withdrawal any information I give as long as it is prior to the completion of data collection and analysis (29/03/22).
- The information I have provided will be destroyed 5 years after the research is finished
- I understand that during those 5 years all information will be kept securely stored by the researcher and accessible only by him should he require it for future studies on the same topic.
- I have the ability to refuse to the information given by me to be used for further studies on the topic after the completion of this research and ask for that information to be destroyed upon the completion of the current research.
- I understand that the information I give will be kept confidential to the researcher and their supervisor, and I will remain completely anonymous and my responses will not be attributed to me in any way.
- I understand that the only way my name will be used is if I give explicit permission for this.
- I understand that the results will be used for a Masters report and a summary of the results may be used in academic articles and/or presented at conferences.
- I understand that this data will remain completely confidential and will be stored in a secure manner.
- My name will not be used in reports, nor will any information that would identify me.
- I consent to my organisation being identify in reports (if you answer yes, you will be referred to as a “representative from [your organisation]”, if answer no, your organisation will not be mentioned).  
Yes      No
- I would like to receive a copy of the final report and have added my email address on the following page. Yes      No

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2: Information Sheet for research participants



### Development and Education: Papua New Guinea

#### Information Sheet for Research Participants

Thank you for your interest in this project. Please read this information before deciding whether or not to take part. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to take part, thank you for considering my request.

#### Who am I?

My name is Joseph Ready and I am a Masters student in Development Studies at Massey University - New Zealand. This research project is work towards my research report.

#### What is the aim of the project?

This project will study the concept of empowerment in education and development, by aiming to answer questions on some of the teacher training programmes and the types of development being articulated and enacted in NGOs.

The work will study how the notion of empowerment and are being driven by, different development processes within selected NGOs. It will investigate the relationship between teacher training programmes and teacher empowerment in Papua New Guinea (PNG). It will explore and help our understanding on whether or not education strategies currently taking place within selected NGOs see people, families and communities achieving various development goals.

This research has been approved by the Massey University – New Zealand Human Ethics Committee.

#### How can you help?

If you agree to take part, I will interview/*stori* with you via Zoom due to covid restrictions. I will ask you questions about teacher empowerment within the relationship between education and development. I will record this and write it up later. You can stop the session at any time, without giving a reason. You can also skip any questions you do not want to answer. You can withdraw from the study prior to the completion of data collection and analysis (29/03/22). If you withdraw, the information you provided will be destroyed.

### **What will happen to the information you give?**

This research is confidential. I will not name you in any reports, and I will not include any information that would identify you if you express it is not appropriate. The transcripts, summaries and any recordings will be kept securely and destroyed 5 years after the research ends. During those 5 years all information will be kept securely stored by me, and will only be used should I require it for future studies on the same topic. Please let me know if you do not want the information you give to be used by me for further studies on the topic after the completion of this research; I will then destroy all information upon the completion of the current research.

### **What will the project produce?**

The information from my research will be used in my Masters report. You will not be identified in my report unless you explicitly state you want to be identified. I may also use the results of my research for conference presentations, and academic reports and articles. You will not be identified in any presentation or report.

### **If you accept this invitation, what are your rights as a research participant?**

You do not have to accept this invitation if you don't want to. If you do decide to participate, you have the right to:

- choose not to answer any question;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- withdraw from the study prior to the completion of data collection and analysis (29/03/22);
- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- read over and comment on a written summary of your interview;
- agree on another name for me to use rather than your real name;
- be able to read any reports of this research by emailing the researcher to request a copy.

### **If you have any questions or problems, who can you contact?**

If you have any questions, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

*Student:*  
Joseph Ready

*Supervisor:*  
Doctor Lorena de la Torre Parra

[j.s.ready14@gmail.com](mailto:j.s.ready14@gmail.com)

[L.delaTorreParra@massey.ac.nz](mailto:L.delaTorreParra@massey.ac.nz)

This research has been assessed as low risk (4000025383). However, If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the IDS Head of Programme – [R.R.Stewart-Withers@massey.ac.nz](mailto:R.R.Stewart-Withers@massey.ac.nz)

## Appendix 3: Interview Questions



### Development and Education: Papua New Guinea

#### Semi-Structured Interview Questions

##### Personal Information:

- 1) What is your name?  
Where are you from? What is the name of your village?
- 2) What are your wantok (tribal) connections?

##### Sector Information:

- 3) How long have you been working in Education and/or Development?
- 4) How long have you been working at this NGO?
- 5) What is your position and responsibilities in this organisation?
- 6) Why are you working in Teacher Training Programmes?

##### Empowerment:

- 7) What does empowerment mean to you?
- 8) How do you see the TTPs empowering teachers?
- 9) Are you able to provide any comments on whether or not the different types of education strategies supported and pursued by your organisation are helping local teachers achieving their community/village level development objectives/goals? *For example, community well-being, mobility, income generation, etc.*
- 10) Would you like to ask any questions?

Thank you very much for your contribution