

Australia's aid programs with papua new guinea



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

AusAID - Papua New Guinea Australia's aid programs with Papua New Guinea did not begin just in the recent decade, it originated from a period before World War 2 when grants of approximately \$100, 000 were made to Papua New Guinea. In 1950 the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers met in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and it was here that the Colombo plan was launched, providing aid to countries in the south/south-east Asia region. Australia provides a diverse range of aid facilities such as education scholarships, technical cooperation, training and staff assistance to countries of the region.

In 1973, when Papua New Guinea was granted full independence, Australia changed its previous perception of Papua New Guinea as a dependant nation to a capable country with many developing opportunities. However, several obstacles have arisen such as the high levels of HIV/AIDs in the country, the low literacy levels leading to poverty, around 40% of PNG's population lives on less than \$1 a day. As Australia became more of a global citizen after the 1950s, its contribution to the aid of PNG expanded rapidly. Approximately two thirds of our aid goes to PNG, making it the largest recipient of bilateral aid from Australia. Figure 1. 1) Due to Papua New Guinea's severe economic problem, Australia focuses its aid program on sustaining economic growth while moving the economy to a higher growth path. Australia believes that poverty alleviation and regional stability is dependent on fluent governance, effective service and sustainable economic growth without severe recessions. To achieve this Australia plans to build an efficient and sustainable government institutions, as well as responsible leadership which are keys to improvements of the economy and the several aspects that are tied with it such as health, education and public infrastructures.

Australia has developed the " PNG-Australia Development Cooperation Strategy" to help Papua New Guinea reduce poverty levels, promote continuous development and ameliorate the overall life quality of all Papua New Guineans. This aid program has an estimated ODA of \$389. 4 million (fig 1. 2 and 1. 3) and focuses primarily on four aspects: -Improved governance and nation building -Sustainable broad-based economic growth and increased productivity -Improved service delivery and stability A strengthened, coordinated and effective response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Governance Prior to 1997, the vast bulk of Australia's assistance towards governance was aimed at the law and justice sub-sector, putting a large focus on the police force. Since then, Australia has diverted its main focus to the support of the public sector administration and economic management, on top of improving and developing a proper law and justice system the protect the rights and freedoms of the individual. (Fig 1. 4) Education and Health

Australia contributes to the development of the Education program in PNG by offering a large number of tertiary scholarships to those in Papua New Guinea, with about over 100 graduating each year from Australian universities out of the 150 places offered each year. Australia also funds the upgrading of primary, secondary and tertiary facilities and the training of staff and teachers. In 1992 there were around 500, 000 students that attended school, in 2002 this figure doubled to approximately one million.

Health is equally weighed as education, with approximately 20% of our annual aid contributing to this. HIV/AIDS virus posts a mortal threat to the residents and raises the mortality rate severely. (fig 1. 5)By providing health

<https://assignbuster.com/australias-aid-programs-with-papua-new-guinea/>

infrastructure and equipment, immunization, health education, technical assistance and training, we have prevented a collapse in the PNG health care sector that more than likely would otherwise have occurred. (fig 1. 6)

Infrastructure

Australia contributes 27% of its annual PNG aid to the infrastructure and transport sector, this amount to approximately 500million since independence. Over 80% of this amount has been devoted into the transport sector, especially roads and civil aviation. The Australian government strives to maintain and rehabilitate roads and bridges, since the PNG government has not provided adequate funding since the late 1980s. (fig 1. 7) The current aid program covers a wide range of issues such as healthcare, transport and finance in order to reduce poverty and achieve a sustainable economy.

Residents of Papua New Guinea suffer most severely from poverty; more than 40% of the population survives on \$1 a day, a low even in the developing nations.. HIV/AIDs virus is dormant in 2% of the PNG population; however health education and improved hospital facilities have greatly improved the life-expectancy among these people, proving it to be an effective method in reducing the mortality rate. Education has also played a vital role in Australia's bilateral aid with Papua New Guinea, the literacy rate of the residents were 44% in 1975.

With the help of AusAID, this figure has increased dramatically to around 64% in 2000. As Papua New Guinea is mainly an agricultural nation, this indicates that there is an increase in the number of people moving away

from the informal economy towards a more industrialized occupation. By helping maintain infrastructures it has provided the residents with a reliable and stable transport system. Through this aid program the residents are able to experience a much better improvement in their life quality.

What Aid Programmes Should Focus on In the future Australia needs to place more emphasis on programmes in Papua New Guinea which promote the sectors such as healthcare, infrastructure, government and human capital, which is providing people with skills and labour, as an increased literacy rate means more opportunities for development. A recent drawback such as the recession has put Papua New Guinea even further under the poverty line, forcing 40% of the population to live under \$1 a day.

It is of utmost importance that the Australian government should take measures to alleviate this issue and provide relief to the nation so that it can become independent and take social-political affairs into its own hands without the help of others in the future. Bibliography http://www. ausaid. gov. au/publications/pdf/qas34_contribution. pdf <http://www. ausaid. gov. au/country/papua. cfm> http://www. dfat. gov. au/geo/png/png_brief. html [http://www. abs. gov. au/AUSSTATS/\[email protected\]NSF/Previousproducts/1301. 0Feature%20Article72001? opendocument&tabname= Summary\[\]no= 1301. 0&issue= 2001&](http://www. abs. gov. au/AUSSTATS/NSF/Previousproducts/1301. 0Feature%20Article72001? opendocument&tabname= Summary[]no= 1301. 0&issue= 2001&)

<https://assignbuster.com/australias-aid-programs-with-papua-new-guinea/>