Distance Education and Human Resource Development in PNG

D. Harinarayana, UPNG
G. Albert Prabhakar, UPNG
S. Venu Madhav, UPNG
Higher Education Impacts

- Quality of Labor and Employment
- Social Mobility
- Personality Development
- Empowerment of Women
- Economic Growth
  - GER of 30% is threshold level to sustain high rates of growth of an economy
- Who should provide a public good?
  - State or Market
PNG: Select Key Features

✓ 50% Population under 19 years of age
✓ Workers growing at 6.7% per year
✓ 6th Fastest growing economy (6% average growth for 2002-2015)
✓ GER in Higher Education 2%  
  • Male 3%
  • Female 1%
Status of HE in PNG

Public Universities 4
Private Universities 2
State Colleges* 25
Private Colleges* 10
Together supply 6000 spaces

* Mostly in Technical & Vocational Education
Market for HE in PNG

Supply of spaces: 6000 per year
Grade 12 leavers: 24000 per year
Potential unmet demand: 18000 spaces
Plus second chance learners
Post secondary absorption in HE declined from 50% in 2001 to 22% in 2013
(Kavanmur et al.)
Way Forward

✓ GER Target 11.46% by 2024 (To achieve middle income status by 2030)
✓ Student places required to reach GER Target:
  - 80,840 (2019)
  - 124,369 (2024)
✓ Quantitative expansion required
  - One University for every 100,000 population in developed country like the USA.
  - Presently PNG has one University for every 1.3 mn population.
  - 80 Universities needed in PNG.
## Targeted Shares (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2024</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Universities</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Universities</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG Open University</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Colleges</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Colleges</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of State Institutions</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>78.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of Private Institutions</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** National Higher and Technical Education Plan; 2015-2024
PNG Vision 2050

✓ First Pillar out of Seven envisages
  – Human Capital Development through
    • Easy affordable access to education for all citizens

✓ Hence, Provide cost-effective Higher Education
Cost of Higher Education in PNG

✓ Unit cost $40,000 per student in University education
✓ Add private costs
   ➢ Maintenance of the Students
   ➢ Opportunity Costs
Alternatives?

a) Private Sector:

- Promote Privatization of Higher Education
- Commodification of HE, Marketization and Pricing of education
- State to subsidise/incentivise investments into Higher education
- Investment in HE - First Generation - Financing
- Promote institutional lending to finance student fees and maintenance
- Promote Public-Private Partnership
Alternatives?

b) Open Distance Learning

✓ Philosophy

• Life long learning needs
• Access at affordable cost with quality
• Institution as a place of arrangement
• Learning independent of place, pace & time
• Recognize life cycle of a Program
• Response to market & social needs
b) Open Distance Learning

- Increase access through flexible & easy entry
- Offer education at the doorstep of the learners using ICT
  - To improve quality of education
  - To enable interactive learning
  - To realize outcomes relevant to labor market
- Adopt convergence model for learning experience on University campuses
- Charge affordable fees as fixed costs are low and unit cost of education is low
- Promote equity and gender balance
Access through ODL in PNG

State Universities supply 3000* spaces
Private Universities supply 400* spaces

ODL share in access 36%

* Estimated
Viable Way Forward → ODL

☑ Provide state/promoter funded fee reimbursement to learners
☑ Provincial Governments to strengthen Infrastructure for ODL delivery.
☑ Explore ways to use infrastructure of schools/colleges when they are free.
☑ Build ICT infrastructure for ODL delivery and support services.