

# Newsletter: Free health risks and academic pay in PNG | Australian attitudes to aid

by Development Policy Centre

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## Free health care in Papua New Guinea: challenges and risks

Free primary health care in PNG sounds like a positive development. But a [new report](#) [pdf] authored by Colin Wiltshire and Andrew Mako, based on a survey of 142 health clinics as part of the [Promoting Effective Public Expenditure Project](#), raises questions about whether the free primary health care policy, in place since February, will lead to better service delivery.

Health facilities in Papua New Guinea are mostly starved of funding and user fees are (or were) their most reliable source of revenue to deliver basic services. The report cautions that health facilities need more reliable financial support for front-line service delivery before they can move away from charging user fees. Otherwise, the quality of services will be further compromised.

The authors have summarised their findings in two blogs ([here](#) and [here](#)) and Colin [spoke to Pacific Beat](#) about the issue.

These findings were also presented at the 2014 PNG National Health Conference on 20 June to an audience of health managers and officials from across PNG.

## Academic pay and retention in Papua New Guinea

In some disciplines, especially business and economics, PNG universities struggle to retain their staff. Why? University of Papua New Guinea economist Thomas Wangi and Devpolicy Director Stephen Howes compare academic pay with that elsewhere in the PNG public sector, and also with international levels.

They find that university salaries in PNG are mainly competitive with public service ones, except at the most senior levels, but that universities can't compete with the

more attractive salary packages offered by statutory authorities and state-owned enterprises. From an international perspective, PNG academic salaries don't look bad, which makes the case for targeted rather than across-the-board increases. You can find their analysis and recommendations in their [discussion paper](#) and [blog](#).

This paper was presented at the [PNG Update](#) at UPNG in June. Research for it was undertaken by Thomas Wangi as part of his [Greg Taylor fellowship](#) earlier in the year.

### **Upcoming event: donations to NGOs and support for foreign aid in Australia**

When they are surveyed, Australians appear to be supportive of aid. But little is known about the nature of their support for aid, or the type of Australian most favourable to aid giving, whether by the government or NGOs. Are aid supporters predominantly wealthy? Or religious? Or educated? Or young? And is support coupled with particular political or ideological beliefs? Even less is known about the depth of the Australian public's commitments to aid giving—the extent to which people are actually willing to finance aid work out of their own pocket.

In an [event](#) on 8 August (Brindabella Theatre, 12.30pm), Terence Wood, Alexandra Cifuentes and Jonathan Pryke will present findings of their new paper on this subject.

### **People news**

A new semester means a new crop of interns joining us at Devpolicy HQ from the Australian National Internships Program. This semester, we welcome Adeline Clarke, a final year Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Economics student at ANU, and Rob Lamontagne, who is completing a Master of Arts in International Relations/Master of Diplomacy at ANU.

We are also welcoming Paul Flanagan, formerly a senior Australian Treasury official, including in PNG, who is joining us as a Visiting Fellow to pursue his interest in economic policy in PNG.

### **Upcoming events**

*Private sector partnerships in development: US approaches*

This event on 30 July will share findings on how the US government and private sector can work together to support development, and implications for the Australian context. [Register here](#).

*Putting our money where our mouths are? Donations to NGOs and support for foreign aid in Australia*

This event on 8 August will share findings from a new discussion paper exploring the depth of the Australian public's commitment to aid giving. [Register here](#).

*Poverty in Asia: a deeper look*

Dr Guanghua Wan of the Asian Development Bank will argue that an Asia free of poverty by 2020 looks unlikely. [Register here](#).

*2015 Australasian Aid Conference*

Our annual aid conference will be held on 12-13 February, 2015. We are now calling for papers. For more details on how to submit an abstract, [visit the website](#).

## **Blog highlights**

Matthew Dornan is [sceptical](#) about 'green growth'.

Will the BRICS bank [differ](#) from development banks of old?

Yongzheng Yang of the IMF searches for a new model of [Pacific growth](#).

AYAD volunteers brand is [retired](#).

## **Blog summary**

You can find a list of all posts since our last newsletter two weeks ago in the list below.

[Are PNG's academics underpaid?](#) By Stephen Howes and Thomas Wangi

[Inequality: should developing countries be worried? An interview with Andrew Leigh MP](#) by Jonathan Pryke and Andrew Leigh

[ICT, telecommunications and development in Vanuatu: an interview with Fred Samuel Tarisongtamate](#) by Tess Newton Cain and Fred Samuel Tarisongtamate

[If we want New Zealand aid to work we need to stop thinking big, and start thinking better](#) by Terence Wood

[Is 'green growth' just the latest development fad?](#) By Matthew Dornan

[Australian volunteers: doing better by thinking bigger](#) by Ben Davis

# DEVPOLICYBLOG

In search of a Pacific model of growth by Yongzheng Yang

Reflections on the new aid paradigm, part 2: economic development and private sector engagement by Robin Davies

Financing health facilities and the free health policy in PNG: challenges and risks by Colin Wiltshire and Andrew Anton Mako

Financing health facilities and the free health policy in PNG: challenges and risks (part 2) by Colin Wiltshire and Andrew Anton Mako

## In brief

Geldof on Australian aid

New Tasmanian Senator bids for the aid budget

Radio Australia and Australia Network 'gutted' as ABC cuts 80 staff

The new-world bank

Renewed effort needed to protect HIV gains

A few details emerging on DFAT's innovation hub

The end of AYAD: youth ambassador program retired

Tackling tax avoidance could save lives

New details from Oxfam on gender violence response in PNG

China's new aid White Paper and its surprisingly small aid program

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### Development Policy Centre

The Development Policy Centre is part of the Crawford School of Public Policy under the College of Law, Governance and Policy at The Australian National University.

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