

Papua New Guinea - Australia Joint Statement of Intent on Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Papua New Guinea



This Joint Statement of Intent by the Government of Australia ("GoA") and Government of Papua New Guinea ("GoPNG") ("the Participants") confirms their shared commitment to work together to improve outcomes from Papua New Guinea's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector and to grow the number of skilled workers to enable Papua New Guinea to seize economic growth opportunities.

The Participants acknowledge the critical contribution that education makes to national development and the establishment of a vibrant economy, and the longstanding cooperation between the two countries in education. The Participants note that TVET remains a priority under the Papua New Guinea-Australia Partnership, especially in post-COVID-19 economic recovery efforts. The Participants made a joint commitment to expand support for TVET at the 27th Papua New Guinea-Australia Ministerial Forum on 26 August 2019. The Participants recognise that the improvement of TVET across Papua New Guinea will enable more Papua New Guineans to support growing industries around the country and benefit from opportunities offered by Australia's Pacific labour mobility programs.

The objective of this Statement of Intent is to frame joint efforts to improve TVET in Papua New Guinea and to define each Participant's role and responsibilities in that enterprise:

- (i) Together the Participants commit to:
- a. Supporting the GoPNG's reform agenda for the tertiary sector, led by the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology ("DHERST"), under which joint efforts to improve TVET outcomes are shaped;
 - b. Ensuring that knowledge and research inform DHERST's policies and shape investment in the TVET subsector;
 - c. Targeting a select number of Papua New Guinea's TVET training institutions and strengthening their training programs for recognised accredited qualifications in industry relevant trades and skills in priority economic sectors;
 - d. Cooperating to ensure that women and disadvantaged or vulnerable groups are able to access and complete TVET training and, in the case of women, to gain access to qualifications and employment in industries that are dominated by men;
 - e. Ensuring that their joint programs are adequately flexible to allow adjustments that reflect performance, resource availability and emerging training needs;
 - f. Adhering to their joint agreements on targeting, financing, resourcing, managing and overseeing TVET programs funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, including support provided by the Australia Pacific Training Coalition ("APTC"), subject to annual joint reviews;

- g. Establishing joint governance arrangements that provide the Participants strategic oversight of their investments, including the placement of the GoA on the National Skills Development Agency; and
- h. Acting in good faith with open communication, including the sharing of information relevant to either Participant in facilitating both the delivery of high-quality TVET training and in ensuring that their respective investments produce their anticipated outcomes and overall value for money.

(ii) The GoA commits to:

- a. Expanding the role of the APTC in Papua New Guinea to develop a limited number of subnational TVET institutions over an agreed period, with the goal of assisting these institutions to jointly work towards an overall increase of up to 600 graduates annually in industry relevant trades and skills in priority economic sectors;
- b. Supporting, if both technically and financially feasible, via its expanded APTC program, the development of TVET training institutions including potentially in the Highlands, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and Manus;
- c. Co-financing the Asian Development Bank's scoping work to prepare the Improved TVET for Employment for Papua New Guinea project and to support adequate planning and technical design of any subsequent work; and
- d. Engaging with the GoPNG to ensure lessons learned from TVET activities are used to refine future TVET programs and improve alignment with industry needs.

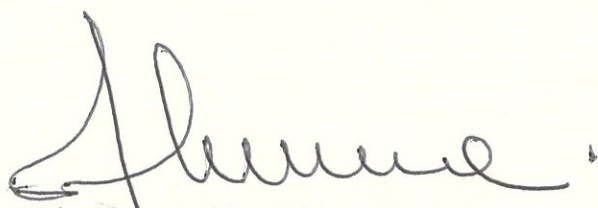
(iii) The GoPNG commits to:

- a. Through DHERST, providing leadership to ensure that policies, governance, and the operational and general TVET training environment are conducive to the Participants' joint programs and meet their objectives in a timely manner;
- b. Coordinating all development partners assistance to the TVET sector, and ensuring complementarity between internally and externally funded TVET programs at the tertiary level, including facilitating the National Skills Development Agency's role in this effort;
- c. Linking, via the National Skills Development Agency, Papua New Guinea institutions to local and national industries appropriate to course development and execution, and post-training employment of course graduates;
- d. Providing funding and other necessary support to transform the proposed facilities at the former East Lorengau Refugee Transit Centre into training facilities, and that existing assets are utilised, and ensuring that these resources are maintained and sustained over time;
- e. Ensuring that a whole-of-GoPNG commitment exists to establish, finance and maintain institutions that participate in APTC partnerships, and
- f. Making, in a timely and consistent manner, all necessary preparations for the start-up, execution and closure of the Australian-financed, APTC-supported, TVET

program in a way that ensures that the gains made in the quality and volume of TVET delivery can be maintained and improved under DHERST's ongoing resourcing and stewardship.

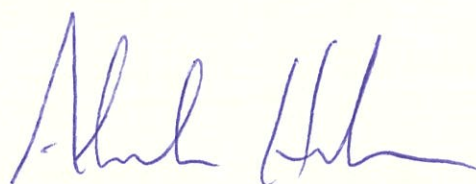
Signed in duplicate on the fifth day of August 2020 in the English language both copies being equally valid.

For the Government of Papua New Guinea

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Kuman', with a stylized, flowing script.

The Honourable Nick Kuman MP
Minister for Higher Education, Research,
Science and Technology

For the Government of Australia

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alex Hawke', with a stylized, flowing script.

The Honourable Alex Hawke MP
Assistant Defence Minister
Minister for International Development and
the Pacific