

Interview by Musawe Sinebare with Paulus Laveil, 2 October 2014

Diploma in Business Studies, University of New England, 1991; MBA, University of New England, 1996-1997



<p>[00:00:00]</p>	<p>Paulus is the managing director of Federation of Savings and Loans Societies. Originally from Manus but grew up and went to school in the highlands. Finished a Bachelor of Agricultural Science in 1985 and got a job with the Agriculture Bank of Papua New Guinea (now National Development Bank of PNG) in Mid-1986. Was posted to Goroka as a field officer. While working there he developed an interest in business and management and persuaded the bank to train him. In 1990 the bank invited him to apply for an AusAID scholarship. He applied, despite feeling unsure of being good enough academically, and was accepted to do a postgraduate diploma in Business Studies. He chose the University of New England (UNE) because he didn't want to be in a big city, like Sydney or Brisbane. He had just got married and his wife stayed in PNG.</p>	<p>Career; Childhood; Family background; Undergraduate education; Motive to study overseas; Scholarship opportunity</p>
<p>[00:03:38]</p>	<p>Early in 1991 he went and had a week's orientation at the AusAID offices in Sydney. It helped a lot in his preparation for going to the university. There were three other PNG students that went to UNE. They had another six weeks of pre-university induction and training that was very helpful. He had grown up in a rural community where whites were superiors, so it was a challenge to interact with people in Australia. The accent and slang were difficult to understand at first but he found the people in Armidale kind and more accepting than in a big city. He is a Seventh Day Adventist and the church people were mostly older and very welcoming, taking him out and inviting him to their homes.</p>	<p>Arriving in Australia; Scholarship experience; Living in Australia; Challenges; Church community in Australia</p>
<p>[00:07:09]</p>	<p>At uni he had the other PNG students but it was difficult because he had had to leave his young family behind. He was 27 or 28 and interested in sport, formed a soccer club and played rugby league. That helped him get settled and interfered, at first, with his studies – he failed a</p>	<p>Family; Studying in Australia; Socialising in Australia; Sports in Australia; Religious practice in Australia; Social network in</p>

	subject in first semester. In June 1991 his wife and son were able to join him and the family lived with Bernice, from the church, who looked after them very well. He named his daughter after her.	Australia
[00:10:27]	The scholarship stipend was good. He passed everything in second semester. The scholarship was for a year and before going home they went to Adelaide by train and stayed for two weeks with people his wife knew from Goroka. Tasted wine in the Barossa Valley. They also went to Brisbane and Cairns, where they stayed with his sister and her Australian husband. In PNG he went back to his job in Goroka but his training wasn't received well and he wasn't given accommodation so had to commute about 30km. It was difficult and his son got very sick so he asked for a transfer and he was moved to head office where he worked as an appraiser. He was promoted to senior appraiser and stayed until 1995. Then he felt he wasn't getting anywhere so applied to AusAID to do an MBA. In 1996 he went back to UNE for 18 months.	Scholarship experience; Studying in Australia; Travel in Australia; Family in Australia; Returning to PNG; Post-scholarship career; Scholarship opportunity; Returning to Australia
[00:14:33]	This time it was easier because he knew the place and many of the staff, e.g. Professor Wright, and there were more PNG students. They formed an association and helped each other. His wife and two sons joined him after two months. He settled in well and performed better than in 1991. There were eight Papua New Guinean students in the MBA program and they supported each other. The PhD students from PNG were also very supportive, and the lecturers too, and he had overcome feelings of inferiority and was able to talk with his lecturers.	Living in Australia; Studying in Australia; Connection with Australia; Family in Australia; PNG community in Australia
[00:19:12]	When he left the bank he lost contact with UNE staff but he still gets alumni mail outs from the university. He made very good friends during the course, from Fiji, Saint Vincent, Indonesia and China, but he's lost contact with them. He still has contact with three Papua New Guinean friends from the course. The first scholarship gave him confidence that he could do higher study and improved the quality of his work in Goroka. The managing director noticed his work and overturned objections to Paulus studying again in Australia.	Alumni network; Friendships; Scholarship experience
[00:22:43]	Six months after getting back with an MBA, in 1997, he was promoted to assistant divisional manager, in the bank's Business Promotion Division, and six months later to executive manager of lending, close to the top of the hierarchy of the bank. It was a challenge at first but the pinnacle of his career. Later he was	Post-scholarship career; Leadership; Professional network

	posted to the Policy Department and lastly to the Corporate Service Department. He was there for 18 years. The scholarships helped him get to those levels.	
[00:26:17]	His first trip overseas was to Australia was in 1988 when the bank sent him to do a three-week course in Sydney, funded by Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP) in conjunction with the Commonwealth Development Bank.	Existing connection with Australia; Scholarship opportunity; International mobility
[00:27:53]	In 1991 his family came for six months and his wife was involved with the church and the university had a program for families, so she wasn't bored. Over the summer in 1996 and 1997 she went fruit picking in Tamworth with spouses of other students and Paulus looked after the boys.	Family in Australia; Church community in Australia; Work experience in Australia
[00:29:43]	The highlight for Paulus was passing his subjects and being able to continue studying in second semester because he had been worried he wouldn't be able to. [Story about not being able to enjoy the travels around Australia because of worrying about not passing second semester.]	Studying in Australia
[00:33:20]	Now has five boys and a girl, two adopted to give them a chance in life. His first son went to uni and his second one is struggling to finish Year 12. He advises them that failure is not the end, that they shouldn't underestimate themselves and should keep trying with study, maybe later in life after getting work experience.	Family; Education
[00:35:49]	The AusAID orientation in Sydney helped with information about Australia, how to deal with Australians, banking, services and shops. In Armidale they were given academic preparation and how to access university services.	Scholarship experience
[00:37:48]	Discrimination had been a big question and he felt it sometimes in Australia but after living there he came to appreciate that Australians are people too and have biases just as he himself does. [Anecdote about reacting to derogatory comments during a soccer game but not blaming them and becoming friends afterwards.] Before going he had feelings of inferiority but he overcame them in Australia.	Living in Australia
[00:40:49]	Interviewer thanks Paulus.	
[00:42:27]	END	