

**Interview by Jonathan Ritchie and Musawe Sinebare with Sim Sar, Lae, 9 September 2014**

**Phd, University of Queensland, (John Allwright Fellow), 2008-2011**



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| [00:00:19] | Sim is the program manager for science and research at NARI. He did a PhD at the University of Queensland (UQ) from 2008 to 2011. His thesis was about engaging farmers in agricultural research for development. [Comments about collaborating with farmers to identify problems and do research to find solutions.]   | Career; Scholarship experience  |
| [00:03:12] | A highlight was appreciating farmers' indigenous knowledge e.g. an ant species that is an indicator of potato crop health. [Explanation about the ant's role and research he did into that, and comments about the value of a multidisciplinary approach and the importance of people-oriented research.]   | Studying in Australia   |
| [00:07:06] | The study he did in Australia opened his mind and better equipped him as a researcher. He did his PhD with a John Allwright Fellowship Scheme scholarship from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). Has been at NARI since 2001 and did his master's at UPNG before that, while working in the UPNG Department of Biology. Then joined the Department of Agriculture and Livestock and was based in Mt Hagen. His master's was with an FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) scholarship. | Studying in Australia; Scholarship opportunities; Education; Career   |
| [00:10:24] | He had been to Australia quite frequently to meet colleagues involved in entomology projects. When he arrived in Australia to do his PhD the university had support services that helped him adjust. His wife had done her master's in Australia and went to UQ to do a PhD at the same time on the same scholarship.   | Existing connections with Australia; Professional networks; Scholarship experience; Family; Church community in Brisbane; PNG |

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|            | They lived in Gatton, near the university. Sim's supervisor was at the St Lucia campus. His fieldwork was in PNG. They made good friends in Australia through the church, and they're still in touch. And there were other Papua New Guineans and the International Students Association.   | community in Brisbane   |
| [00:14:15] | They had three children, the eldest stayed in PNG, studying, but the other two went to school in Australia. His fieldwork was in Goroka.  | Family; Living in Australia; Fieldwork in PNG   |
| [00:15:17] | He continued at NARI when he came back. Studying in Australia had broadened his horizons and enabled him to engage people from other disciplines and broaden their horizons as well. The challenge now is to institutionalise the multidisciplinary approach and have it adopted by other organisations. NARI was exploring Agricultural Research for Development (AR for D) and open to the idea of participatory research. It takes time to embed new concepts in the system.     | Post-scholarship career   |
| [00:20:47] | He still has contact with his supervisors and colleagues in Australia through projects at NARI but also in writing papers based on his PhD. There is also collaborative research funded by ACIAR and AusAID. His studies in Australia enhanced those links. [Comments about the value of ACIAR funding because it enables contact between researchers in Australia and PNG.]  | Ongoing connections with Australia; Supervisor-student relationship; Collaborative research with Australia; Professional networks |
| [00:23:29] | Continued contact with international students he met in Australia? Would like to but hasn't kept in touch because of work pressures etc. Advice to other NARI staff about studying in Australia? To be focused on your studies, there are a lot of potential distractions. Postgraduate study is hard work and it's not easy to settle into a new environment but it's good to experience a new culture, meet people in Australia and learn what you can to serve Papua New Guinea. | Studying in Australia   |
| [0:27:11]  | END   |   |

