

**Interview by Jemma Purdey with Beatrice Mahuru, Port Moresby, 16 December 2014**

**Secondary school (Years 11-12), Somerville House, Brisbane, 1990-1991**



[00:00:20]	Lived in Port Moresby and went to Korobosea International School until Grade 4. Then she went to Junction Park State School in Queensland and lived with her aunt. [Comments about her father and Digicel Foundation's Man of Honour Program.] Her father was a public servant, then became his cousin's advisor and advocate when his cousin became the first Papua New Guinean Speaker in the National Parliament. Beatrice was born in 1973. Her father was a pioneering student at Sogeri National High School and a major inspiration in her life. [Comments about her father and his influence on other PNG leaders.]	Childhood; Family background; Early education
[00:03:43]	Her mother was ten years younger than her father. They met when she was working as his assistant. [Story about their courting and her mother's recent death at 60 from complications of diabetes.]	Family background
[00:07:30]	When she went to her mother's remote village to tell her grandmother about her mother's death her work with the Digicel Foundation was affirmed. Digicel now has about 31 community learning centres (CLCs) built in socially marginalised settlements in the last three years and their students are doing very well when they go to school. [Comments about the limited places in the PNG education system.]	Family background; Career; Community service
[00:10:48]	In Grade 10 she was the top student in her district and won an AusAID scholarship. When she was eight her parents sent her to live with her aunt's family in Brisbane to improve her education. After two years there she wanted to live with her parents again and her parents sent her to the Catholic boarding school that her mother went to, Our Lady of Sacred Heart High School on Yule Island.	Early education; Scholarship opportunity; Living in Australia; Connections with Australia

[00:15:17]	The first six months there were hard, they had to do a lot of manual work and grow food. Her plants all died so she was put in charge of the tools and that helped her appreciate her culture and tradition. In 1988, she had a year off school while she recovered from TB and the nuns went to the house and taught her. At first it was diagnosed and treated as pneumonia but her mother persisted in getting the right diagnosis and treatment. She finished Year 10 as dux of the school and got the AusAID scholarship.	Early education; Scholarship opportunity
[00:19:16]	Normally Australia won't let people with TB into the country but an exception must have been made for her. She had to have six monthly checks for a couple of years and by the time she came back from Australia she was clear. The scholarship was to go to an exclusive boarding school in Queensland until the end of Year 12, and she has good friends from there still.	Arriving in Australia; Scholarship experience; Studying in Australia
[00:22:53]	The PNG students were met by AusAID and stayed together for a week getting to know some Australian culture and colloquialisms; it was a bonding time. There were 17 students from PNG and after that first week they went to different schools. She went to Somerville House with Lucy Williams. She would have liked to go to university in Australia but didn't quite get the marks and was comfortable with going back to Port Moresby because her grandmother, who had raised her, was unwell.	Scholarship experience; PNG community in Australia; Living in Australia; Friendship
[00:25:39]	In 1992, she enrolled in journalism at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG), her third choice, because returning students were third priority after PNG nationals and local international students. [Story about failing one subject for non-attendance and that lecturer looking for work at Digicel.] In her final year she became pregnant and had to get married. She didn't finish the degree because of the four units she failed.	Undergraduate education; Family
[00:30:25]	[Comments about her eldest daughter and parenthood.] Beatrice is the oldest of three with two younger brothers. Her daughter was born when she was 21. Her paternal grandmother raised her because her parents travelled a lot for work. [Comments about her grandmother's, mother's and father's different parenting styles and what they have given her.]	Family
[00:35:23]	Her mentors from other organisations tell her she's in the right place but she would still like to do law, and perhaps go into politics before too long. After leaving university she got work with the National Department of Lands, where her mother worked, as a press officer. She wanted to	Mentoring; Leadership; Career

	make her own way and was recommended as a cadet journalist in the mining and petroleum ministry, with Masket Yangalio.	
[00:39:01]	For four months she was the press officer to the foreign advisor to Masket Yangalio, then his portfolio changed to finance and she moved with him. She wanted to do more than write press releases and got a job as marketing coordinator with Coca Cola. It was a good place to learn and grow. She had another daughter while with the ministry and had three months leave. Her paternal grandmother died while she was at university.	Career; Professional network; Family
[00:43:13]	Her paternal grandmother's cousin had no children of her own, treated Beatrice's father as a son, and cared for Beatrice's children while Beatrice worked. [Story about the women in her father's family caring for her when her first and second children were born.] Beatrice has six daughters between nine and nineteen, three are hers, two are her husband's and they have one together. Her husband's daughters are at high school in Brisbane, living with their mother, who is English. Beatrice's daughters live in Minneapolis with their father. She sees them when she goes to board meetings in Jamaica or LA. [Comments about access arrangements, snow in Minneapolis and her husbands: her first husband is Afro-American and her second Chinese English.]	Family; Career; Connections with Australia; International mobility
[00:49:42]	She met her first husband when he was lecturing in creative arts at UPNG. They went to live in Canada while she was working for Coca Cola. When her marriage ended and she came back to PNG and got a job with SP Brewery as PR manager. [Story about her mother-in-law introducing her to the Chinese zodiac.]	Family; International mobility; Professional network
[00:55:07]	Her husband's family had the Hird's franchise in PNG and he grew up in the Middle East, Scotland and US as well as PNG. When they met he had been divorced for a year and Beatrice had separated and was pregnant with her child who now lives on the Gold Coast. [Discussion about she and her husband both embracing the blended family and deciding to live in PNG for the time being, at least.]	Family; International mobility; Connection with Australia
[00:57:39]	After SP Breweries she moved into finance as group marketing manager at Kina Securities, then national communications manager for the Pacific Northeast Region with ANZ. After only four months her husband was promoted and transferred to Lae so they moved and she became a housewife. [Story about not being able to cook at the time she met her husband and	Career; Professional network; Family

	paying a caterer to prepare a meal to impress him.]	
[01:03:38]	Learnt a lot in 18 months of being a housewife, home schooled their daughter. Then they moved back to Port Moresby and Beatrice applied for the Digicel Marketing Manager and went to interview but was offered the Sponsorship Manager position, which she refused. She copied the CEO into her refusal and he offered her a senior project manager position and within twelve months she was CEO. [Comments about lack of education in PNG.]	Family; Career; Leadership
[01:08:08]	Digicel Foundation has five focus areas: basic education, basic health, community building, special needs and domestic violence. They devise their own programs, Digicel International recognises local expertise. They hope to influence government policy and partnered with government for the first time in 2013. Except for one in Port Moresby, Digicel programs are all in rural communities because that is where the need is.	Career; Community service; Professional networks
[01:10:46]	[Comments about outcomes of their projects and frustrating conversations with potential development partners.]	
[01:14:54]	[Anecdote about a school they built in the southern highlands and how that helped the community find a peaceful solution to a conflict so the children would have access to the school.] Schools that Digicel build are cared for because the local community need and appreciate them.	Community service
[01:17:11]	She still has friendships with women she was with at Somerville House through Facebook. It was a girls school so gender wasn't an issue. Her father made that the case too by settling land specifically on her.	Friendships; Alumni network; Family

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