

My Walk to Equality

Essays, Stories & Poetry



Papua New Guinean Women Write

Edited By
Rashmii Amoah Bell

MY WALK TO EQUALITY

2017 LITERARY PROJECT SUMMARY: OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

An overview of the 12-month literary project involving the voluntary partnership between Pukpuk Publications, Keith Jackson AM (PNG Attitude blog) and 45 Papua New Guinean women writers who produced the first ever anthology of writing by Papua New Guinean women.

MY WALK TO EQUALITY

PROJECT ACTIVITY 2017

Editor's Note

As Project chair and editor of the *My Walk to Equality* anthology, I am delighted to bring you an overview of the milestone literary project with the key aim at promoting the voices of Papua New Guinean women in the national conversation of reducing inequalities, through literature.

Project Key Dates

PHASE ONE: COMPLETED

Included the compilation, publication, distribution and community engagement of 'My Walk to Equality' in Papua New Guinea, Australia and internationally.

Start Date: 30 September 2016

End Date: 30 September 2017

Project Financials

It is important to note the Phase One was completed with minimal donor funding, particularly in the anthology compilation phase.

All administration and management costs were self-funded by the editing team. So too was marketing and public relations activities related activities (including photography services and images by Tania Basiou).

The 45 contributing writers did not receive any form of monetary payment for use of their original writing for inclusion in the anthology. All writer submitted their work voluntarily.

Project Funding Value: AU\$5,000

Based on funding used to cover:

1. publishing fees
2. purchase of paperback copies for Book Launch events
3. Book Launch events in Port Moresby and Brisbane

Project Sponsorship Value: AU\$70,000 (estimate)

Based on value of book purchase by Sponsors who paid monies directly to Amazon. At the time of writing, it is estimated that more than 3,500 paperback copies of *My Walk to Equality* was sponsor-purchased since Jan 13, 2017.

PROJECT

TEAM MEMBERS

Project Chair & Editor:

Rashmii Bell

Editing Team

Philip Fitzpatrick

Keith Jackson AM

Steering Committee:

Murray Bladwell

Bob Cleland

Philip Fitzpatrick

Keith Jackson AM

Project Photographer & Cover

Designer:

Tania Basiou

Publisher:

Pukpuk Publications

www.pukpukpublications.com

Key Words & Abbreviations

Collaborative

Social change

Literature

Papua New Guinean Women

Papua New Guinea (PNG)

My Walk to Equality (MWTE)

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2015 -2030 (SDG)

Keith Jackson & Friends: PNG Attitude blog (PNG Attitude)

Pukpuk Publications (Not-for-profit, South Australian-based Publisher)

Project Background

In 2016, a 4-member group of Papua New Guinean writers were invited to participate in a panel event at the Brisbane Writers Festival. Facilitated by the *PNG Attitude*-initiated Paga Hill-McKinnon Fellowship, three male writers were joined by Rashmii Bell to present an overview of the current state and directions of Papua New Guinean authored literature. In doing so, audience members highlighted the potential of nation-driven literature in providing authentic insight and widening the lens through which PNG is viewed by international observers. Particular reference was made to more of the nation's 'positive stories' needing to be conveyed by the indigenous writer, especially that by the women.

Curatorial Framework

Reframing the popular narrative: It has been the common trend for international mainstream media to report stories from Papua New Guinea centred around the issues of governance, infrastructure and societal breakdown coupled with the ongoing reliance with foreign intervention to address problems. Often emphasized is the victimhood of Papua New Guinean women, with reporting of citizen participation attributed primarily to men.

A narrative that highlights the daily participation and positive contributions of the women of PNG to effect social change is overdue.

United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals: The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals encourages active participation of individual citizens, globally. Its provision of several measures including colourful, simply-worded and illustrated messaging (eg; internet resources) is a step to informing individuals as to how they can implement change through; self, lobbying civil society organisations, foreign aid donors and national government.

Influential Texts: *'Development goals, peace and PNG women in parliament'* by Rashmii Bell, *PNG Attitude* blog (www.asopatypepad.com), 20 October 2015.

'Walking towards Ourselves – Indian Women Tell Their Stories', Catriona Mitchell, *Hardie Grant Books*, 2016.

Theme: 'My Walk to Equality' was drawn from Goal 10 (*Reduced Inequalities*) of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The *Goal* is one of seventeen of which Papua New Guinea is working towards achieving by 2030.

Papua New Guinean women writers were asked to submit writing that addressed contemporary daily life in PNG; where and how they had experienced inequality and; describe what action or measures had been implemented by self or others. Documenting the voices of PNG women from a diverse range of backgrounds, particularly that of rural communities,

Original, written submissions were accepted in essay, poetry and short story format with a 1000-word limit. Illustrations were also encouraged.

Submissions were received (via online) from 30 September, 2016 – 31 December, 2016.

From the outset, participants were advised that all writing submitted was voluntary and that no monetary payment would be made to individual authors at any stage of the MWTE project.

Project Significance

- MWTE is the first-ever anthology publication of writing by **only** Papua New Guinean women.
- The MWTE literary project was a voluntary, collaborative effort between *Pukpuk Publications*, Keith Jackson (*PNG Attitude*) and 45 Papua New Guinean women writers.
- Compilation and editing of the anthology was undertaken in three months (30 September – 31 December 2017).
- To date, some 7000 paperback copies have been distributed via Amazon
- In its' year of publication, MWTE has been presented at two internationally renowned Queensland literary festivals
 - *Sunshine Coast International Readers and Writers Festival 2017* (affiliated with *Ubud Writers Festival*)
 - *Brisbane Writers Festival 2017* (x2 panel event sessions)
 1. *My Walk to Equality*; Chair: Rashmii Bell. Panel: Tania Basiou, Vanessa Gordon, Elvina Ogil
 2. *Staying Power*; Chair: Emily Sexton. Panel: Kerrie Davies, Michael Sala, Rashmii Bell
- Copies of *MWTE* sold-out at both Festivals' bookshops
- The two BWF17 panel event sessions in which MWTE presented were fully booked
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Print Publication Specifications

ISBN: 9781542429245

Publication date: Via Amazon (www.amazon.com)

- 10 January, 2017: Kindle edition
- 13 January, 2017: Paperback edition

Pages: 279 pages

Key Reviewers of MWTE*

Her Excellency Winnie Kiap, *Papua New Guinea High Commissioner to the United Kingdom*

Dame Carol Kidu, *Former Papua New Guinea Parliamentarian (2002-2012)*

Roxanne Martens

Trish Nicholson, *Anthropologist, Author*

Andrea Williams, *Papua New Guinea Association of Australia (PNGAA), President*

* Also see Amazon website for customer reviews

Key Identities Engaged through Distribution of MWTE

In Papua New Guinea

Dame Carol Kidu CBE, *Former Papua New Guinea Parliamentarian (2002-2012)*

Lady Winifred Kamit CBE, *Dentons (Senior Partner)*

His Excellency Saskias Tomeo**, *Acting Papua New Guinea High Commissioner to Australia*

Dr Andrew Moutu, *Former Director National Museum and Art Gallery (Papua New Guinea)*

Jeffrey Feeger, *Painter/ Performance Artist*

In Australia

Natasha Stott Despoja AM, *Former Australian Parliamentarian (1995 -2008), Former DFAT Ambassador for Women and Girls*

Zoe Pollock, *CEO & Artistic Director - Brisbane Writers Festival 2017*

Wendy O'Hanolan, *CEO – Sunshine Coast International Readers and Writers Festival 2017*

Sharyn Gidhella** – *Television Presenter Channel 7 (Australia)*

Michael Usher** – *Television Presenter Channel 9 (Australia)*

Peter FitzSimons AM ** – *Author, Columnist (Sydney Morning Herald)*

Kerrie Davies – *Author, Journalist, Academic (University of New South Wales)*

Dr. Michael Sala – *Author, Academic (University of Newcastle)*

Drusilla Modjeska – *Author, Editor*

** *The MWTE project team wish to acknowledge the Kokoda Track Foundation for facilitating this opportunity for distribution at its' Annual Kids for Kokoda Luncheon (18 May, 2017. Brisbane). Personal book signing and hand-over was undertaken by Rashmii Bell.*

Project Sponsors & Partnerships

Please note: Sponsors finalized all payments directly to supplier/ service provider.

Sponsors (Funding)

(i) **Company:** Paga Hill Development Company, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

(ii) **Individual:** Ms Jo Holman, Gold Coast, Australia

Major Sponsor (Book Purchase and Distribution)

Australian High Commission, Waigani, Papua New Guinea

Partnerships (project values implementation)

May 2017

At the invitation of Kokoda Track Foundation, Rashmii Bell was invited to design and deliver a writing workshop to primary school students. Leading a small team of KTF staff and MWTE contributor Leila Parina, workshop content incorporating the key values of MWTE were conveyed to students.

Students, staff and community members were shown paperback print copies of MWTE.

School: Sefoa Primary School (Grade 5 – Grade 8)

Workshop Venue: Sefoa, Tufi. Oro Province

Workshop Theme: *Boys and Girls working alongside each other; The importance of PNG girls' inclusion and completion of formal schooling years (Elementary – Grade 8).*

Duration: 3 days

Outcomes: (i) Concertina Books (in-classroom resources) (ii) KTF print publication book authored by Rashmii Bell (in progress)

Project Supervisor: Dr. Andrew Moutu (Board Member, KTF)

July 2017

To commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Kokoda Track Campaign, KTF (with the support of Australian High Commission) invited Rashmii Bell to work alongside renowned artist, Jeffry Feeger to produce a children's book in collaboration with school students from PNG and Australia.

Again, Rashmii Bell designed the writing workshop that was delivered in by the small team of KTF staff, Jeffry Feeger and MWTE writer contributor, Iriani Wanma.

The workshop content was designed with several aims, primarily that of gathering inspiration and content from the Papua New Guinean and Australian school students.

From the workshop content, Rashmii Bell developed the plot and created the narrative for KTF's Kokoda Track Campaign 75th Year Anniversary Children's Book for which she titled '*Butterflies along the Track*'.

Workshop Theme: *Commemorating 75 years of the Kokoda Track Campaign; reflecting on the contributions and mateship of Australians and Papua New Guineans during the campaign and its legacy today between the two countries. Campaign*

Duration: 2 days

Outcomes: Children's book publication

Publication Title: *Butterflies along the Track*

Illustrations (book insert): Students of Kokoda Primary School and Haileysbury College

Publication date: KTF have advised that '*Butterflies along the Track*' will be launched on 2 November, 2017 (Kokoda Day).

Project Supervisor: Mr. Yahoo Serious (Co-Founding Director, KTF)

Schools: (i) Kokoda Primary School (ii) Haileysbury College (Melbourne, Australia)

Students, staff and community members were shown paperback print copies of MWTE.

Project's Audience Reach (via print and radio broadcast media)

Papua New Guinea

Post-Courier

The National

Lily PNG Magazine (*Moore Printing Limited*)

Paradise Magazine (*Business Advantage*)

Australia & Pacific

Radio New Zealand International – Sela Aholele

Radio New Zealand International, Dateline Pacific – Johnny Blades

ABC Radio Sunshine Coast – Sheridan Stewart

ABC Radio – Kerri Worthington

Reporters Without Borders – Elspeth Lee (Intern for Bob Howarth)

Noosa News – Peter Gardiner

Sunshine Coast Daily

Project's Audience Reach (via public dialogue)

Papua New Guinea

Q&A: Drusilla Modjeska interviews Rashmii Bell and Leila Parina, Tufi Dive Resort, Oro Province (May 2017)

'Be Inspired to Write' Writers Conference. National Library, Port Moresby (September 2017)

Australia

Sunshine Coast International Readers and Writers Festival 2017, Coolumb, Queensland (August 2017)

Brisbane Writers Festival 2017, Brisbane, Queensland (September 2017)

Project Milestones 2017

Request to reproduce contents of MWTE

Elizabeth Cox from Jiwaka Voice for Change as well as The Baptist Union (PNG) requested two written items to be reproduced in Discussion Tool Kits being developed for the organizations. Permission was sought and granted for 'Arranged to be Married' (Diddie Kinamun Jackson) and 'My Walk to Equality' (Joyce Onguglo) to be reproduced.

Sally Beadle from *Tok Kaunselin Helpim Lain* (ChildFund PNG) sought and was granted permission to reproduce 'Love of My Life' (Iriani Wanma).

Sunshine Coast International Readers & Writers Festival 2017

Its first year to include Papua New Guinean writers, CEO Wendy O'Hanlon, 12 August 2017

Session: My Walk to Equality, Time: 11:15am – 12:15pm, Venue: Coolumb Civic Centre

Chair: Rashmii Bell, Panel: Helen Anderson, Philip Fitzpatrick, Vanessa Gordon

MWTE stocked and sold through Sandy Pages Bookshop (Coolumb) throughout festival duration. All copies of MWTE sold out on first day of festival.

Brisbane Writers Festival 2017

Following her attendance at the MWTE Brisbane book launch event, Zoe Pollock (CEO and Artistic Director) invited *My Walk to Equality* to participate in the line up alongside Australian and international festival speakers, 10 September 2017

Session: My Walk to Equality, Time: 11:30am – 12:30pm, Venue: The Edge Lab, State Library Queensland

Chair: Rashmii Bell, Panel: Tania Basiou, Vanessa Gordon, Elvina Ogil

Rashmii Bell was also invited as a panelist in a discussion of psychological reasons as to why women stay in relationships where domestic violence prevails, 12 September 2017

Session: Staying Power, Time: 11:30am – 12:30pm, Venue: The Edge Lab, State Library Queensland

Chair: Emily Sexton, Panel: Rashmii Bell (*My Walk to Equality*), Kerrie Davies (*A Wife's Heart*), Michael Sala (*The Restorer*)

Book Sales

My Walk to Equality stocked and sold through State Library Bookshop throughout Brisbane festival duration. All copies of MWTE sold out by 10 September.

Queensland bookshop stockists (March – September 2017): Mary Ryan’s Bookshop (Park Road, Milton); Sandy Pages Bookshop (Cooloom); State Library Queensland Bookshop (Brisbane Southbank)

MWTE as a Donor to PNG Authors (via Pukpuk Publications)

The MWTE project team was pleased to donate a percentage of royalties to Pukpuk Publications’ publishing program for PNG authors.

MWTE Book Donations

MWTE project team are committed to utilizing the majority of received to purchase and deliver paperback copies of MWTE to members of the community in Papua New Guinea, Australia and throughout the Pacific.

1. Kokoda Track Foundation (10 copies)
2. Fiji Womens Right Movement (1 copy)
3. South Pacific Memories Group :Toowong, Brisbane. (1 copy)
4. Indooroopilly Writers Group: Indooroopilly, Brisbane (1 copy)
5. UPLIT, Brisbane Writers Festival (3 copies)
6. PNG Tribal Foundation (1 copy)
7. East New Britain QLD Community Group (2 copies)

Project’s Contact with Key Agencies

Australian High Commission PNG : Bronte Moules, Deputy High Commissioner

Kokoda Track Foundation: Dr Genevieve Nelson, CEO

ChildFund PNG Kaunselim Help Line: Sally Beadle

Voice for Change (Jiwaka)

Baptist Union (PNG)

PNG Tribal Foundation – *Senisim Pasin* Project: My Gary Bustin, President

Business Coalition for Women PNG: Ms Laura Lung, Incoming CEO (as of August 2017)

Fiji Women’s Rights Movement

Project Team Members

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