

School Fee Problems

by

Julian Agobe

In 2007 I completed my Year 8 at Tari Admin and passed on to Tari Secondary in the Southern Highlands Province. In Tari we used to sell things and we were able to pay the school fees. Tari is a very resourceful place, we grew crops like cabbage and sugar cane and some other staple foods to make our life easier. But due to some problems my father wanted me to go to Port Moresby to complete my grades.

When I heard that my father wanted me to go to Port Moresby I was very angry because I had heard that the city life is very expensive and at the same time I knew I was going to miss my good friends and loved ones. I thought that way, but there was no hope for me in the village because in Tari Secondary there were many problems. So I just made up my mind and came to Port Moresby.

In February 2008 I started looking for a space in some schools like Gordon's Secondary and Tokarara High School. In Tokarara High School they fitted me in. At Tokarara I finished my grade nine but I did not have any school fees to go to grade ten . At the same time my father married a young lady from the Southern Highlands.

To get by I tried my best to sell some things like betlenut and smoke to pay for my school fees but it was hard because going to school and selling things at the same time is very difficult. And at the same time, everything in Port Moresby costs money and more money.

Anyway everything was controlled by my step-mother so it was hard for me to go back to school so I just stayed home and I thought that my parents were still going to help me but they did not. When I asked my mother for some help with money she always tells me to ask my father. And when I went to ask my father for help with money he would tell me to ask my step-mother. They used to blame each other. This made me feel very sad and helpless. So there is no hope for me. I am just staying with

my two grandmothers. Both of them are also from The Southern Highlands Province.

We live together at 8 Mile Block. I stay at home and help my two grandmothers with sweeping the floor, cleaning the house and cooking the food, if they have some food. If there is no food we just eat dry scone and then go to sleep. Sometimes I go to sleep still hungry. Sometimes I go to Gordons to look for some friends to help me with some coins. But sometimes there is no luck for me and I just want to be back at 8 Mile and stay at home. I travel by bus to Gordons and then I come back to 8 Mile.

Every time I used to think, 'will there ever be some opportunity for me to have a better life?' If I had the opportunity to complete my grades, I have the heart to become a nurse and I would like to move out of 8 Mile and move to Gordons or to town.

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