

NATIONAL EXAMINATION AND STANDARD UNIT–2003

The NESU, which denotes the above title, provides professional and technical advice to the Minister through the Permanent Secretary on issues pertaining to the National Examinations, Standards, Selection Procedures and the Progression of students from the three exit points in the education system in which national examinations are administered. The NESU also advises on new developmental approaches or policies in examination and assessment taken.

Objectives

- Administer three National examinations namely SISE at grade 6, SIF3 at Form 3 and the SISC at Form 5.
- Assist in the administration of Form 6 and 7 that are directly under SPBEA qualification frame work.
- Monitor educational standards through the conduct of national examinations and other assessment devices/programs.
- Administer the promotion of students based on the selection procedures guided by the Legal Notice 9.
- Grant certification and approval for repeat and transfers.

Activities and Outcomes

Activities	Outcomes																																																																								
<i>SISE Examinations- Std 6</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three SISE Examiners executed the Examiners' Instrument accordingly and also complied with the conditions and terms thereof. • The drafts of SISE examination papers were received still rather very late this year by NESU. • The Moderators were identified and the moderation on the three SISE examination papers was executed. • The dissemination of all exams to the 10 provinces and about more than 500 primary schools was on schedule. <p style="text-align: center;">Table 1. Shows The General Enrolment Data By Gender And The Access Rate</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="427 1325 1450 1675"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Exam</th> <th rowspan="2">Year</th> <th rowspan="2">Tot Enrol</th> <th colspan="2">Total Placed by Gender</th> <th rowspan="2">Total Placed</th> <th rowspan="2">Total Unplaced</th> <th rowspan="2">Percentage Access</th> </tr> <tr> <th>F</th> <th>M</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>SISE</td> <td>1997</td> <td>9,040</td> <td>2,641</td> <td>1,732</td> <td>4,373</td> <td>4,667</td> <td>48%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1998</td> <td>9,201</td> <td>2,665</td> <td>2,075</td> <td>4,740</td> <td>4,461</td> <td>52%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>1999</td> <td>8,6692</td> <td>Crash!</td> <td>-</td> <td>No</td> <td>data</td> <td>available.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2000</td> <td>8,992</td> <td>2,779</td> <td>2172</td> <td>4,951</td> <td>4,041</td> <td>55%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2001</td> <td>8,354</td> <td>3,190</td> <td>2,715</td> <td>5,905</td> <td>2,449</td> <td>71%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2002</td> <td>7,832</td> <td>3,139</td> <td>2,653</td> <td>5,792</td> <td>2,040</td> <td>74%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2003</td> <td>7,684</td> <td>3,218</td> <td>2,667</td> <td>5,885</td> <td>1,799</td> <td>77%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="427 1703 1450 1881">1.1 General Enrolment Data By Gender And Year The variation in the enrolment from 1997 – 1999 was caused by the ethnic tension, which led to the closure of more than 50% of the primary schools on Guadalcanal. The phenomenal shortages of places in the secondary school were soon rectified and the placement escalated since the inception of Community High School (CHS) in 2000. A drastic increase in the access rate since 2001 also reveals that in the above table.</p>							Exam	Year	Tot Enrol	Total Placed by Gender		Total Placed	Total Unplaced	Percentage Access	F	M	SISE	1997	9,040	2,641	1,732	4,373	4,667	48%		1998	9,201	2,665	2,075	4,740	4,461	52%		1999	8,6692	Crash!	-	No	data	available.		2000	8,992	2,779	2172	4,951	4,041	55%		2001	8,354	3,190	2,715	5,905	2,449	71%		2002	7,832	3,139	2,653	5,792	2,040	74%		2003	7,684	3,218	2,667	5,885	1,799	77%
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5,885 students were placed in 2003 compared to 5,792 in 2002, a 2% increase. This slight but significant increase in the placement was due to the additional three Community High Schools with a total enrolment of 106 in the secondary system. The above table also reveals a higher proportion of male students' enrolment than the females' over the successive years.

Table 2. Shows SISE Candidacy On The Actual Number That Sat 2003.

1.2. PROVINCIAL BREAK-DOWN OF CANDIDACY

PROVINCE	Total	Placed	Un-placed	% Access	% Unplaced
REN/BEL	54	53	1	98	2
MALAITA	1711	1587	124	93	7
CENTRAL	356	330	26	93	7
ISABEL	389	356	33	92	8
HONIARA	823	726	97	88	12
GUADAL	961	800	161	83	17
MAKIRA/ULAW	723	582	141	81	19
CHOISEUL	460	339	121	74	26
WESTERN	1423	881	542	62	38
TEMOTU	407	245	162	60	40
TOTAL					

It is interesting to note that of the ten provinces, RenBel, Malaita, Central and Isabel have less than 10 percentage unplaced while Makira/Ulawa, Guadalcanal, and Honiara have less than 20 percentage unplaced. The rest have 20 percentage and more unplaced. Hence, it is also important to note that since the tension, approximately more than 50% or less was the number of students on Guadalcanal schools that did not register due to the closure of primary schools, resulting in only 705 students that registered in 1999 and 961 in 2003 compared to 1,560 in 1998. ((refer to Table 1)

1.3 SISE PROVINCIAL BREAKDOWN OF PLACEMENT BY GENDER.

Table 3. Shows Provincial Placement/Drop Out by Gender

PROVINCE	CANDIDATURE		PLACEMENT		DROP OUT		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
REN/BEL	35	19	34	19	1	0	1
MALAITA	971	740	904	683	67	57	124
CENTRAL	196	160	177	153	19	7	26
ISABEL	208	181	196	160	12	21	33
HONIARA	443	380	369	357	74	23	97
GUADALCANAL	544	417	445	355	99	62	161
MAKIRA/ULAW	404	319	335	247	69	72	141
CHOISEUL	239	221	182	157	57	64	121
WESTERN	675	748	410	471	265	277	542
TEMOTU	241	166	165	80	76	86	162

2.0 NATIONAL RAW MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS BY SUBJECT

2.1 Table 4 Represents Subject Means and Standard Deviations

Subject	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number
English	32.1	13.6	7328
Maths	49.2	18.2	7328
General Paper	45.7	11.4	7328

Table 3. Subject Mean and Standard Deviation

Of the three subjects, English, Maths and the General Paper; Maths appears to be an easier paper than the two with a mean of 49.2 but discriminates the students better with a spread of 18.2. Maths proves to be a better paper because it implies that students attempt the paper and simultaneously spread them into their abilities. This year, English with a mean of 32.1 was found rather difficult with a reasonable spread of 13.6 in comparison to the General Paper, which was often found in the past to be difficult with a mean of 45.7 and standard deviation of 11.4. A very interesting switch that may have been probably caused by examiner having deliberately set out to change the standard, readability of the examination.

2.2 RAW SUBJECT MEANS 2002-2003

Table 5. Shows Subject Raw Means Over The Years.

SUBJECT	2002	2003
ENGLISH	42.5	32.1
MATHS	37	49.2
GENERAL PAPER	36.7	45.7

Table 5. Subject Raw Means

While it has been the policy of the National Examinations and Standards Unit to have examiners attempt to maintain standards and quality of examinations from year to year, a number of factors may contribute to its difficulty nature. It could be argued that the examination difficulties may be caused by the pedagogical aspects in which teachers of the particular subject may have not taught or have the mastery of the particular subject well, or that the SISE cohort may have revealed weaknesses in the subject in which it could be in association with the curriculum related problems. The other probable cause may be derived from an examiner who focuses more on complex and difficult concepts or sections of the paper. Another factor may be from a highly descriptive nature of the examination with a harsh marking regime.

- Inter-subjects Correlation.

	<u>Maths</u>	<u>General Paper</u>
Eng	0.60	0.62
Maths		0.62

A very good correlation in all subjects, and in particular the General paper that correlates equally well with English and Mathematics of 0.62.

SIF3 EXAMINATION

Report Guidelines:

1. Which questions if any proved to be too easy or too difficult for the candidates?
2. Which questions if any proved to be?
3. In which areas did the candidates show particular strengths and weaknesses in this examination?

- SIF3 registration forms were sent to about 110 form 3 secondary schools in the 10 provinces and throughout the country.
- The revised Form 4 Application forms including the choices were sent with examination papers in order to reduce the postal cost.
- Two subject examiners were identified and executed the examiners' agreement.
- Two subject moderators were identified and the moderation of the English and Math's were executed accordingly. Again as in SISE, the drafts were received by NESU very late in 2003.
- The SIF3 subject markers contract was done and executed by the respective markers accordingly.

4. Additional comments concerning the candidates performance
5. In your opinion was the performance of the candidates affected by the quality of the production of the examination? (diagram., layout, photos or quality of printing)
6. Which questions if any was invalidated as a result of any error on the paper?
7. In your opinion, was the exams set and administered according with the exams regulations?
8. Was the amount of time adequate?
9. Did the papers reflect a good coverage of the syllabus?
10. Did the mark allocation (weighting) reflect the relative importance of topics? Did the paper make use of the wide range of exams question types?
11. The actual no. of cand. sat, the highest–lowest mark & total mark.
12. General comments.....

The rate per script was \$5.00. Again as in SISE, the contractual marking was found cost effective, efficient and reliable. It took an average of 12 days to complete the marking that also included the second marking and the checking. The cost for marking SIF3 was more than \$50,000.00.

- The same guideline for report writing was given to the SIF3 Chief markers. The reports were professionally written and highlight the key issues. (The Chief Marker's Report can be easily accessed).
- Total enrolment was 4,665.
- Total male students placed at Form 4 were 2,944 of which 1,666 were boys and 1,278 girls.
- The access rate for 2002 was 63%.
- There was an increase of 69 students in 2003 SIF3 enrollment from the previous year.

• The Mean and Standard Deviation were as follows:

Subject	Mean	SD	No.
English	46.9	13.5	4383
Math	40.8	21.8	4384

Again English was an easier paper than Math's and also less discriminating while maths was relatively difficult and discriminates well.

	English		Maths	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Male	46.7	13.4	44.6	22.3
Females	47.2	13.7	35.7	20.1

Both male and female student performed equally well English in English while in mathematics boys performed better than girls.

The Intersubject correlation between Maths and English is 0.44, while 1.0 is the highest correlation.

SISC – FORM 5

- The execution of the examiners and moderators' agreements were done for the four core subjects, English, Math, Science, Social Studies and the rest of the elective subjects such as Agriculture, Business Studies, Home economics, Industrial Art and New Testament Studies.
- The SISC registration forms were revised and sent to 43 out of 47 Form 5 Secondary Schools in the country. The four secondary schools that did not sit were; *Avu Avu, Siota, Tangarare, and Adaua.*
- The contractual marking was again found to be very efficient cost, effective and manageable compared to the hourly rate payment system. It is, therefore, highly recommended that the script marking is again encouraged. The examination sitting for the SISC was on schedule.
- The Chief markers and the Markers' contracts were made out and executed by the respective subject markers.
- The report guideline was given to the SISC Chief markers. The reports were professionally written and highlighted the key issues which of course can be accessed from the individual subject Chief markers' report.

Table 6. Student Enrollment

2002	2,550	317	183	500	2,050
2003	2,521	469	248	717	1,804

- Total students registered were 2,521. Students placed at Form 6 were about 469 males and 248 females. Although, the placement numbers are subject to change over time, the actual Form 6 enrollment in 2004 has shown a steady increase by 30%. This was due to the additional Form 6 schools in 2004.
- The access rate for 2003 was 28%.

- Table 7 Subject Enrollment:

<u>Eng</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>Scie</u>	<u>Soc</u>	<u>Agric</u>	<u>Bus.</u>	<u>H.Econ</u>	<u>Ind/Art</u>	<u>NTS</u>
2521	2521	2521	2521	1128	1281	431	432	1702
*225	*229	*229	*229	*128	*146	*30	*31	*265

- **Did Not Sit**

It is interesting to note that the subject enrollment for NTS and Business Studies were increasingly high compared to other elective subjects. Agriculture also appears to be very popular subject offering.

- Table 8 Combined Raw mean and Standard Deviation

Subject	Mean	SD	No
English	41.9	11.0	2296
Math	24.00	14.1	2292
Science	30.1	14.8	2292
Social Studies	43.1	14.8	2291
Agriculture	38.8	13.2	1000
Business Stud.	37.0	13.2	1135
Home Econ	43.2	13.8	401
Industrial Art	36.1	15.1	401
NTS	53.1	13.3	1434

The Science and Math have shown to be relatively difficult compared to the rest of the subjects. Although the Social Studies have shown to be relatively easier compared to the three core subjects, its spread of 14.8 revealed a good discrimination. The Math proved to be a difficult paper but also discriminates well. All subjects mean floats around the 30's and 40's except for Math and NTS.

Table 9 Inter-Subject Correlation

	<i>Math</i>	<i>Scie</i>	<i>Soci</i>	<i>Agric.</i>	<i>Art.</i>	<i>Busi.</i>	<i>H/Eco</i>	<i>Indus.</i>	<i>NTS</i>
<i>Eng</i>	0.48	0.63	0.60	0.38	0	0.46	0.63	0.26	0.52
<i>Math</i>		0.70	0.54	0.34	0	0.50	0.55	0.32	0.42
<i>Scie</i>			0.70	0.50	0	0.61	0.70	0.35	0.53
<i>Soci</i>				0.44	0	0.53	0.66	0.28	0.53
<i>Agric</i>						0.50	0.30	0.57	0.38
<i>Art</i>						0	0	0	0
<i>Busi</i>							0.65	0.10	0.47
<i>H/Eco</i>								0	0.55
<i>Indus</i>									0.41

Combinations of the following subjects have appeared to correlate well: *Math and Science*, *Science and Social Science*, and *Science and Home Economics* with all 0.70. The least correlation is between *Industrial Art and Business Studies* of 0.10.

Form 6/7

- The total number of secondary schools with **Form 6** in 2003 was **14**.
- However, the number of Form 6 places allocated this year (2004) have slightly increased due to the additional new Form 6 schools, namely;
 Luesalemba,
 Jones Adventist College
 Panatina.

The current number of **Form 6** in the country is **17**

Table 10 Form 6 Student Enrollment

2000	339			100	239
2001	316			100	216
2002	586			116	670
2003	725			207	520

- The above table reveals approximately **30% access rate at Form 7.**
- Almost twice the number was Art students compared to Science.
- The total number of Form 7 places allocated to **five secondary schools** in 2004 was **207** to the following:
 KGVI **110** **(Art 51, Science 59)**
 Betikama **25** **(" 11, " 20)**
 WNSS **28** **(Art only)**
 Goldie **25** **(Art 11, Science 14)**
 HHS **25** **(Art only)**

The selection and placement was very much influenced by the cut – off points from an aggregate of **10 (E-3B) for Science and 12 for Art**. The 11's and 12's in the science could not get the places due to the limited number of places.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **LEGAL FRAME WORK**

The Legal Notice # 9 needs to be revised to create an additional clause to be stipulated for the selection criteria for the Community High Schools. The recent development of SISTA has triggered off another concern regarding the revision of the Legal Notice # to cater the changes in the selection features.

- **National Examination and Assessment Board (NEAB)**

The revival of the Examination Board will help to alleviate some of the burdens that this unit is currently faced in some aspects of the decision-making, accountability and transparency. The revised function and membership of the NEAB has been submitted but is still awaiting approval.

- **SYLLABI/PRESCRIPTIONS**

While clearly, there is a need for the future development of subject prescriptions and subsequently the Examination Specifications for SISC, SIF3 and SISE, it is of paramount importance that due consideration is given in the revision of the current subject syllabi.

- **ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING (AFL)**

There is now a paradigm shift in the assessment framework from the **Assessment for Ranking to Assessment For Learning**. This shift will focus more in the primary and lower secondary. This AFL should be back to back with SISTA as a way to improve the students' learning and quality of teaching by teachers. This is going to be the new project administered by SPBEA.

- **NESU STAFFING**

NESU has recently recruited the Technical and Assessment personnel. We are yet to recruit another officer before we can be comfortably implementing our work programs efficiently and effectively.

- **TRANSPORT**

It is highly essential that there be transport made available for NESU during its operation. Becoming immobile will only result in the ineffective implementation of the Work Program. We have to be mindful of the fact that NESU is strictly on the time schedule – that examinations to be sat on this date must eventuate. Failing to comply with the examination regulations will only result in the invalidation of examinations. This can be very costly and time consuming.

Recommendation.

Hiring a vehicle can be very costly indeed. It is highly recommended that a vehicle be purchased for NESU to run its operations. On hiring basis, each year NESU would be spending about \$100,000.00. There are vehicles that can be purchased for \$35,000 to \$40,000.00. This option would certainly save money.

- **INDEPENDENT INVIGILATORS**

Chief Markers' reports received and summarized by NESU had revealed numerous evidences of cheating that have taken place in schools. Several schools last year were alleged of cheating. It is imperative that security measures are taken and seek legal action on those schools that were involved. **Hence, the need for independent invigilators must be addressed quickly this year before the next round of the examination sitting.**

- **OFFICE FACILITIES TO BE PAID UNDER NESU RECURRENT BUDGET.**

Quality Services cannot be achieved without proper supporting facilities. There is a need of **1 only photocopying machine, 1only scanner** needed for quality examination paper, **3 computers** and **1 only matrix printer** needed for printing out examination results. One only power point projector. (See NZAID Budget)