



PRESS RELEASE

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Grade 12 FODE students graduate from Balimo College

A total of 115 grade 12 FODE students from remote Middle Fly villages in Western Province recently graduated from the Balimo College FODE Centre after successfully completing their grade 12 studies under the FODE program.

Now in its third year of operation, Balimo College offers a second chance at education for those who (for various reasons) have slipped out of the school system. The College provides a pathway for those wishing to upgrade their exam results in order to pursue tertiary studies.



Balimo College 2021 FODE Grade 12 students.

This PNG Sustainable Development Program (SDP) education initiative is managed by the Kokoda Track Foundation (KTF). The successful partnership has enrolled 300 students from the Balimo catchment area in grades 9 to 12 each year. The College also operates two sub-centres in

Morehead and Kiunga. The Balimo College FODE program is registered under the PNG National Department of Education.

During the recent graduation ceremony, successful Grade 12 students proudly received their matriculation certificates from an official delegation including Mr Daniel Imowa, Middle Fly District Education Coordinator; Mr Kawe Biyama, Balimo Mayor; Mrs Juddy Aoae, SDP Program Manager; Dr Genevieve Nelson, KTF CEO; the FODE program's inaugural Principal, Mr Nauli Duwaba and current Principal, Mr Brian Wafia.

SDP representative, Mrs Juddy Aoae, remarked: "Our vision is to see that all our programs have a lasting benefit for the people of Western Province. We work with our partners to empower the community to take ownership and do what they are capable of doing to improve their lives. Today, the students have committed themselves to work hard to achieve recognised certificates that qualify them entry into higher education institutions in the country, including the Balimo College Teacher Training program. Given this second chance of entry into secondary education, students and parents are encouraged to take this program seriously and work towards achieving their dreams. Many people from Western Province, especially in the Middle and South Fly districts have never heard of the FODE pathway, so it was a challenging time for our students who worked so hard to achieve what we are witnessing today.

During the graduation ceremony, the students performed a celebratory dance before the 2021 College Awards were bestowed, including:



L-R: College dux, Mr Abilo Dibo and Mr Nauli Duwaba

- Principal's Award – Ms Helen Mowagi and Mr Abilo Dibo
- College Dux – Mr Abilo Dibo, Ms Shebby Kutika, Ms Helen Mowagi and Ms Jessica Siwaeya
- Most Improved Results (for upgraders) – Ms Gloria Melesa and Mr Kabase Paiwa
- Community Peer Support Award – Ms Mudato Somono and Mr David Didiga

Community Peer Support Award recipient Mudato Somono is one of two grandmothers who graduated yesterday. She said that graduating Grade 12 is "the best achievement of my life". She also encouraged others "don't let your age hold you back". As well as her academic performance, Mudato inspired staff and fellow students alike with her commitment to the College community, and volunteering to help maintain College facilities over the past two years.

Balimo College graduates now have the opportunity to progress to tertiary studies in teaching and other professions, explains KTF Head of Education, Martha Bentley.

“In an incredibly exciting development, those graduating from the Balimo College FODE program are now able to undertake tertiary studies right here at Balimo College. Thanks to SDP’s commitment to creating education opportunities in Western Province, the partnership worked closely with DHERST throughout 2021 so that Balimo College can now offer the PNG Diploma of Primary Teaching to students, the first institution in Western Province to offer this course. Our inaugural intake of 40 tertiary students, includes graduates from our FODE program. They have now embarked on a three-year study program in pursuit of their dream to become teachers in Western Province.... Balimo College is providing opportunities for people from Western Province to serve their communities as properly trained teachers.”

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About SDP

PNG Sustainable Development Program (SDP) invests in development initiatives in health, education, creating livelihoods and enabling infrastructure that provide lasting benefits for the people of Western Province.
www.pngsdp.org

About KTF

Kokoda Track Foundation (KTF) is an international development organisation operating in PNG since 2003, working to improve lives, livelihoods, and futures of Papua New Guineans. KTF works in partnership with communities to identify their needs and strengths, and together implement programs in the vital areas of education, health, equality and leadership that achieve long-term change. KTF is proud to be SDP’s implementation partner for a range of education projects in Western Province.

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