

# Promoting children's right to play using locally made playgrounds in Papua New Guinea and Tonga



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# PNG school playgrounds



# Problems with grassed areas

- Encourage competitive games like soccer and rugby
- Girls and physically less competent boys pushed to the sidelines



(Dyment, Bell & Lucas, 2009).

# Recess policy

No playing allowed at recess and lunch because

- Children should sit quietly
- Children make too much noise when playing
- Children might hurt themselves
- There has been bullying
- They get sweaty and smelly



# Few play resources available



# 1st playground site - PAU

- Primary school (Years 1 – 8) at Pacific Adventist University outside Port Moresby
- Demonstration playground site
- Large budget \$US6000
- 3 week project – consultation, design and build



Playground site before development



# Children's ideas

- Younger children (Yr 1 – 6) were asked to draw pictures of themselves playing\*
- Focus groups (Yr 3-6) with PNG preservice teachers asking what they played, where they played and what they wanted in the playground
- Older children (Yr 7 and 8) worked in groups to write down their favourite games, play activities , where they played



## Ideas

- Tunnel
- Slide
- Cell
- Swings
- resting place
- Sandpit
- Water
- tree house
- monkey bar
- flyover
- See-saw
- capture the flag bases
- house

## Games

- House house
- Police and rascals
- Touch Peggy
- Tin game
- Mois Mois
- Goal to goal
- Middle man
- Jingle jungle
- Square ball
- Capture the flag
- hopscotch
- hide and seek
- Mr Wolf
- stick relay

Children's ideas for playground and games they play

# Community consultation

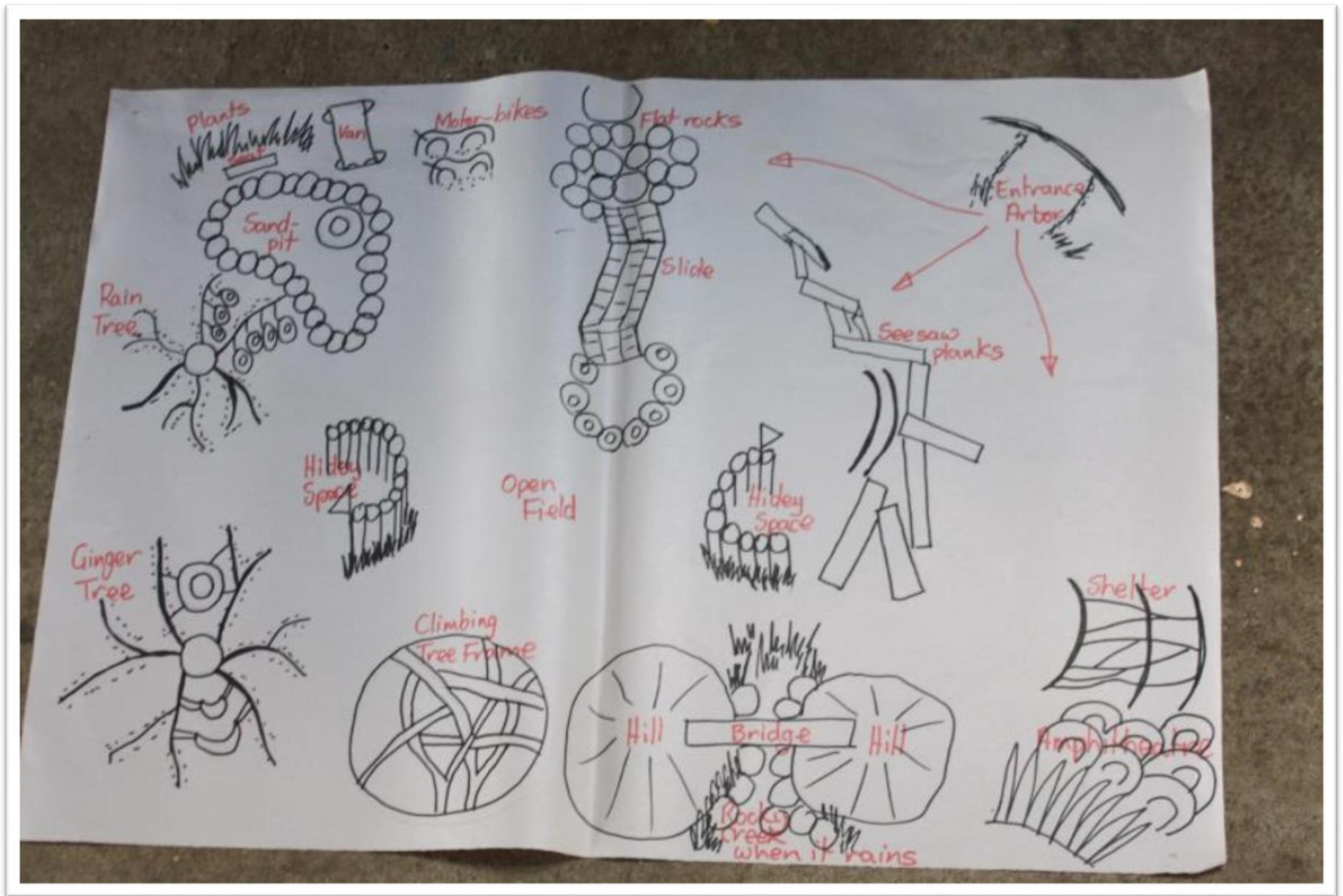
We also asked parents, teachers and community members about

- Their childhood play memories
  - What they wanted in the playground
  - Their concerns about the playground
- 
- We presented the final design after church for feedback and further clarification



Community consultation in the school hall





Plan based on children's ideas and topography





Pre-service teacher volunteers cutting tyres for the playground





170 parents and volunteers attended





Completed playground - official entrance to the playground. Student made rules.





Obstacle course made with old tyres and recycled timber





Man made hill for running and jumping with log bridge





Lollipop swing





Giant swing





Traditional house and vehicle for imagination games





Recycled ride on mower



Tyre motorbike





Giant sandpit





Natural climbing frame





Amphitheatre made with recycled water tank, steel, mangrove roots and tyres for seats





Giant slide





New ropes and shelter (older water cooler)





New climbing frame



# Children's voices

Is there anything else you would like to say about the playground? *yes*

*Sometime I am happy to come to school because of the playground.*

Year 5 girl (13 years)

Is the playground what you wanted? Why or why not? *YES because WHEN THE*

*Play ground was not yet made I was always left out.*

Year 5 boy

# Children's voices

Is there anything else you would like to say about the playground?

Playground is good  
When we play on the  
we make friend and  
-Now each other

Year 5 boy (15 years)

Is there anything else you would like to say about the playground?

It's fun and enjoyable.  
It's fantastic.  
There's less bullying  
<sup>helps</sup>  
It develop relationship with  
friends through conversation.

Year 6 girl (13 years)



# Children's voices

Is there anything else you would like to say about the playground?

The play ground makes most student who dont come to school come and also helps people make friends,

Year 6 boy (12 years)

Is there anything else you would like to say about the playground?

The playground is a enjoyable place were we ~~say~~ laugh tell stories and play, so the only thing I'll say is, ~~it~~ it's fun to play on it.

Year 6 girl (13 years)

Is there anything else you would like to say about the playground?

The Play ground is nice  
But Mrs Krany don't  
want us to play becaus  
we are big.

And also we are not  
allowed to play on wea-  
kends.

But overall the Play  
ground is good cause  
it make the small  
Kids happy.

Year 7 boy (13 years)

Is there anything else you would like to say about the playground?

well, Its fun to  
play on the play; I see  
alot of Kids always enjoy  
them selves when they  
play. And I think it  
has change ~~there~~ their  
lives.

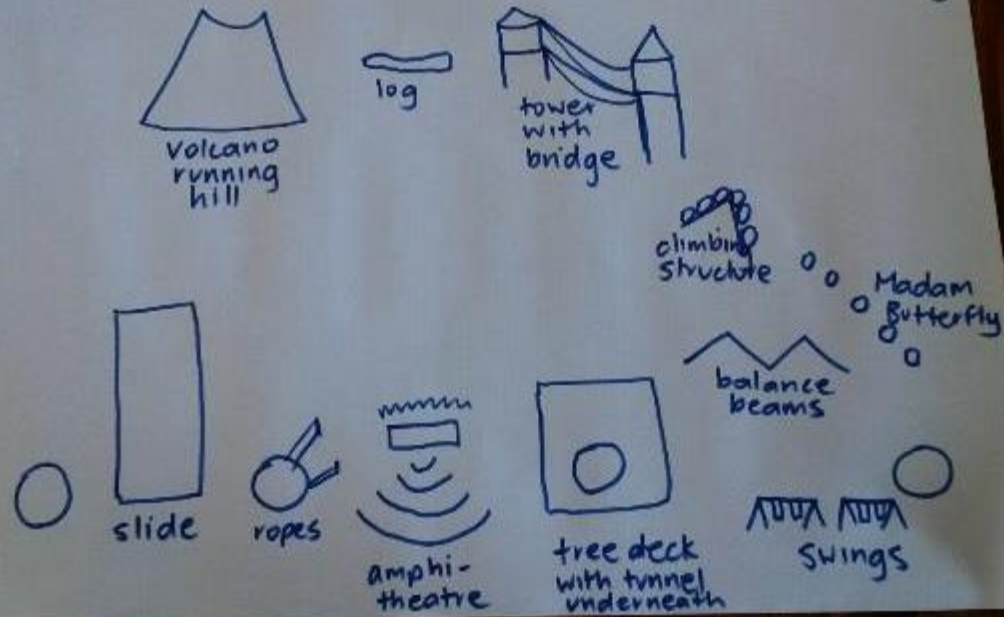
Year 8 girl (15 years)



## 2<sup>nd</sup> site playground – Sonoma

- Elementary and primary school (PreK – Year 8) at Sonoma College in East New Britain
- Much smaller budget \$US750
- Handful of volunteers (education and building students)
- Intention was to built over a one school term (10 weeks)

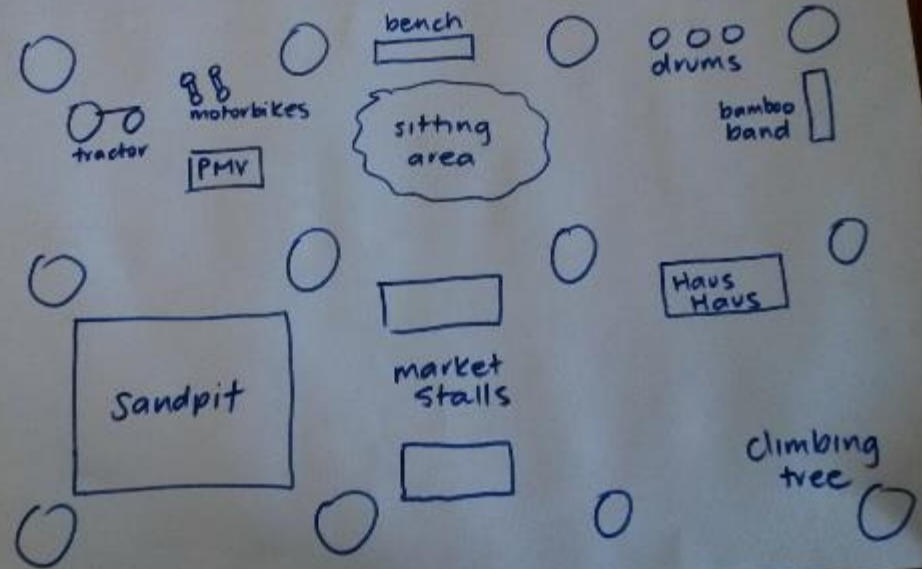
## Lower playground



○ trees  
w/ plantings

## Gully playground

## Upper playground



○ trees

## Grove playground





Original gully playground site





Playground on opening day





Rope bridge





Viewing platform





Sandpit





Haus wind (breeze house)





Tyre motorbikes





PMV (public motor vehicle)





Volcano hill to represent the Rabaul eruption in 1994

# State of completion

- Not all elements were completed - observation platform and amphitheater
- Some elements had not been started – music making, slide
- Old tractor hadn't been located

But this is a good thing as it shows how playgrounds are never finished and should keep evolving



# 3<sup>rd</sup> playground site - Tonga

- Ethics application approved for Tonga project
- Community consultation completed in February 2017
- School decided to build a car park instead of the playground
- New school identified and consultation will start next month

# Model for participatory playground development

- Phase 1 – school support
  - Phase 2 – community consultation
  - Phase 3 – playground design and planning
  - Phase 4 - playground construction
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- Playground maintenance must be factored in



| <b>Phase 1</b><br><b>School support</b>  | <b>Phase 2</b><br><b>Community consultation</b>  | <b>Phase 3</b><br><b>Playground design and planning</b>   | <b>Phase 4</b><br><b>Playground construction</b>   |
|--|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain principal support</li> <li>• Obtain school board support</li> <li>• Secure funding from school or other sources</li> <li>• Inform school community of the project</li> <li>• Find volunteers to assist with the community consultation and construction of the playground</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult parents/ caregivers and the community– ask for their ideas and concerns</li> <li>• Consult students– ask for their ideas and current play activities</li> <li>• Consult teachers– ask for their ideas and concerns</li> <li>• Invite all groups to assist with the build</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the site topography</li> <li>• Consider the abilities of the children</li> <li>• Consider the available local materials</li> <li>• Incorporate children’s, teachers’ and parents’ ideas</li> <li>• Incorporate universal design principles to ensure equal participation</li> <li>• Create a design proposal</li> <li>• Take the design proposal back to the community for feedback</li> <li>• Calculate costs of materials</li> <li>• Schedule opening date</li> <li>• Schedule working bees and notify parents</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan construction schedule allowing for disruptions</li> <li>• Prioritize playground elements to ensure key elements are completed by opening and less important elements can be built at later dates</li> <li>• Procure materials for elements</li> <li>• Allocate tasks to construction volunteers</li> <li>• Allocate tasks to be completed during working bees</li> </ul> |

# Conclusions

- Playgrounds can be inexpensive to build with local materials and community volunteers
- Playgrounds can inform parents and teachers about the importance of play
- Playgrounds afford children's right to play





# References

- Dymont, J. E., Bell, A. C., & Lucas, A. J. (2009). The relationship between school ground design and intensity of physical activity. *Children's Geographies*, 7(3), 261-276.