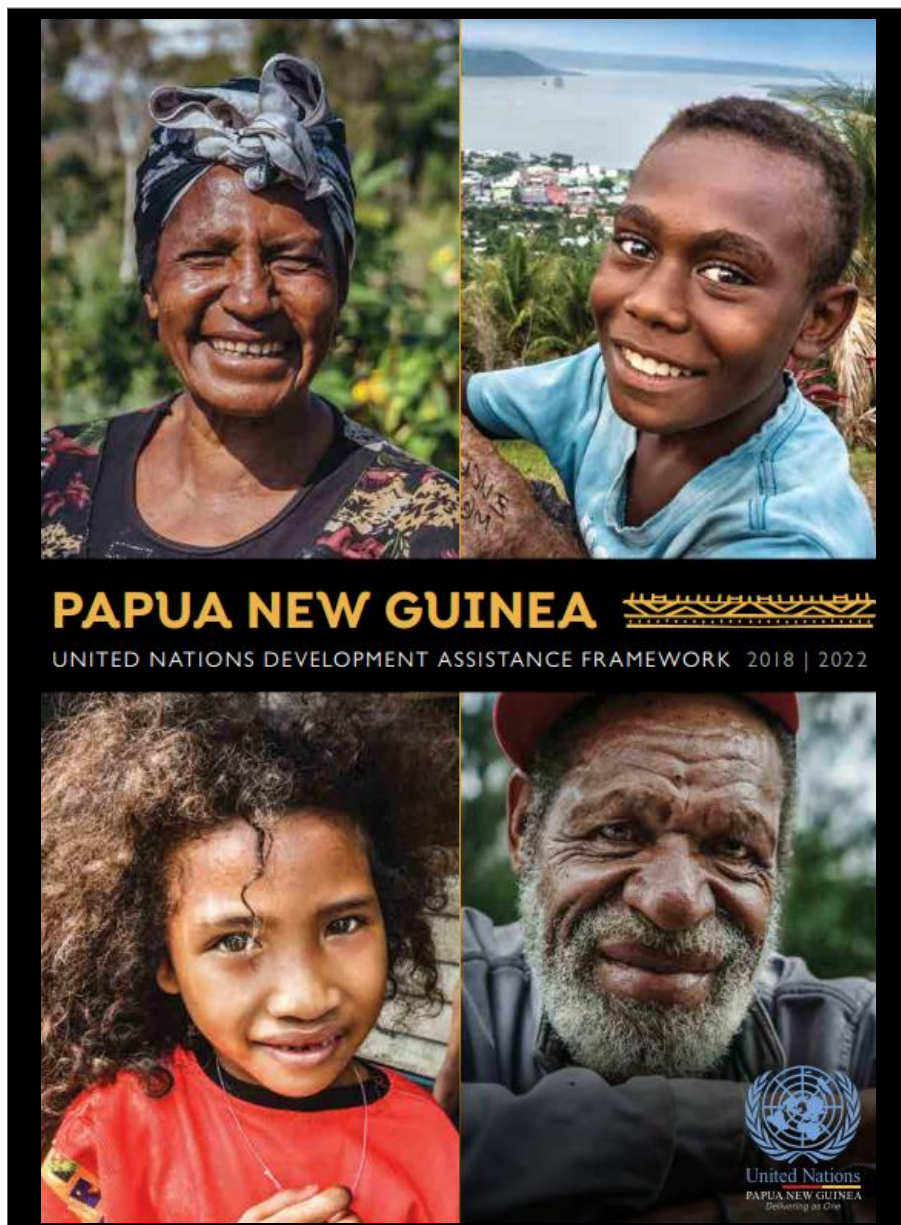


**United Nations Development Assistance Framework
for Papua New Guinea (2018 – 2023)**



**Key Evaluation Findings, Lessons Learned
& Recommendations - Summary Report
21 September 2022**

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Purpose of this Report

This report is an **Executive Summary** of the evaluation of United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Papua New Guinea (2018 – 2023). It was specifically commissioned by the United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO) on behalf of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) for the purposes of distilling a strategic perspective of the performance of the UN system in supporting Papua New Guinea’s development goals as contained in the UNDAF. It also reflects on the **key challenges** faced, the main **insights gained in terms of findings** from its implementation, and in the process identify **lessons learned and recommendations** to help inform the next planning cycle for the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) (2024 – 2029).

The evaluation covered the period of the UNDAF implementation from January 2018 to March 2022. The OECD evaluation principles of **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence¹, sustainability, and cross-cutting issues** were used as the main criteria of assessment. The evaluation methodology followed a desk review of relevant UN programmes, agencies and funds evaluations and reports, including programme and project documents and mid-term reviews. Information from this primary source was subsequently triangulated through consultations with a broad range of development partners. From the initial draft evaluation report submitted to the RCO in July 2022, this summary report has been produced with a distilled content for ease of reference for development partners and interested parties.

The UNDAF 2018 - 2023

At the highest level, the UNDAF was organised around four of the five pillars of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the following four outcomes.² The fifth pillar, ‘Partnerships’ was considered as a cross-cutting dimension, critical for mobilizing technical and financial resources for UNDAF implementation.

People	Prosperity	Planet	Peace
			
<p>Outcome 1</p>	<p>Outcome 2</p>	<p>Outcome 3</p>	<p>Outcome 4</p>
<p>By 2022, people in PNG, especially the most marginalized and vulnerable, have enhanced and sustained utilisation of quality and equitable services, food security and social protection.</p>	<p>By 2022, all people in PNG, including marginalized and vulnerable populations benefit from shared prosperity and contribute to growth and development that is equitable, inclusive, and sustainable.</p>	<p>By 2022, PNG demonstrates improved performance in managing environmental resources and risks emanating from climate change and disasters.</p>	<p>By 2022, government and non-governmental institutions demonstrate improved transparency, accountability, delivery of justice, and promotion of peace and security.</p>

¹ Including co-ordination

² Each outcome area of the UNDAF had three additional sub-outcomes.

Summary of Key Findings

Relevance

Finding 1: In overall terms the UNDAF proved to be a relevant organising strategy for the UNCT and was closely aligned to the most prominent development challenges confronting PNG. The formulation, implementation and reporting of the UNDAF continuously brought the UNCT together for collaboration. This linked the UNCT closely to the Government of Papua New Guinea's (GoPNG) development priorities and to the SDGs. The UNDAF demonstrated how the UN can support and reinforce key Government development programmes, such as in agriculture, health and nutrition, education and environmental protection. In this light, the 'People', 'Prosperity', 'Planet' and 'Peace' priority and outcome areas of the UNDAF were acknowledged by Government and development partners as aligning well to national development challenges and highly contextualized to the PNG situation. The issues of sustaining peace, humanitarian response, the delivery of quality social services for human development, tackling gender-based violence and environmental sustainability were among the most prominent national development challenges confronted through implementation of the 2018 – 2023 UNDAF (as evidenced in the box immediately below).

Relevance of the 'People' Pillar of the UNDAF to the Acute Development Challenges of PNG

As an example of **relevance**, related to the human development challenges in PNG, the UNDAF grappled with some deeply troubling baselines, some of which were amongst the worst human development indicators in the world and region. For example, as set out in the 'People' pillar of the UNDAF Theory of Change: "a staggeringly high proportion of women, girls and boys experience violence"; "almost half of children under five are stunted, the second worst rate in the region and the fourth worst in the world"; "PNG ranks in the bottom 10 countries on the Gender Equality Index"; "The Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) has not improved in the past 15 years"; "the under-five mortality rate is the worst in the region"; "PNG's access to improved water was the worst in the world"; "PNG has an adult literacy rate of 62%" [all citations from p.98 UNDAF]. The UNDAF sought to comprehensively assist the GoPNG and development partners with programmes to improve human development through improved access and quality of service delivery in sectors such as health, education, nutrition, food security and social protection.



Finding 2: The UNCT was perceived to be “dynamic, rapid and unified” in its programmatic response to the Southern Highlands earthquake of February 2018 which gave rise to an important longer-term programme of interventions. The UN humanitarian response was highly regarded by national and provincial partners interviewed and deemed to be very relevant to PNG. Operating under a UN flag, emergency operations were greatly appreciated. Although initial sources of funds were reported by some provincial partners as “taking some time to arrive”, nevertheless in terms of “boots on the ground” the initial assessment work of the UN was acknowledged as important and support provided via the UN Peace-Building Support Office (PBSO) was essential and welcomed. This opened longer-term opportunities for local peace-building initiatives, gradual structured recovery and development responses from which later UN Joint Programmes such as the SPOTLIGHT and the EU-funded STREIT project had their origins.

Finding 3: The UN played a major and highly relevant role in the Bougainville peace process which followed on from a decade-long conflict. The Executive Summary (Final Report) of the Bougainville Referendum Support Project stated the following in relation to the project’s relevance: “The project was instrumental in ensuring that the referendum happened as planned in 2019.”³ Furthermore, the project was specifically credited by the Bougainville



Referendum Commission (BRC), including its Chair, as “being highly relevant and supportive in progressing implementation of the Bougainville Referendum”.⁴ The UNRC has played an important leadership role throughout, leveraging the specialist expertise of other UN and non-UN actors. The UN has also assisted in the transition from building peace to sustaining it through additional social and economic measures.

Finding 4: Through the agency of the UNDAF, the UN was also gauged to be highly relevant in terms of its leadership, advocacy and joint programming interventions in the area of gender equality and Gender-based Violence (GBV). The UN has positioned at the forefront of gender equality and the elimination of GBV. This has taken many forms, including UN support for institutional strengthening through parliamentary processes, and national and sub-national policies and frameworks is also of considerable relevance within a seriously challenging social and human development context. The UN is strongly committed to a number of joint programmes in this regard, including the ‘Spotlight Initiative’ (2020 – 2022), an EU funded UN Joint-Programme, as well as ‘Women Make the Change’. The UN has sought to draw upon its “global theory of change and make it relevant to the PNG context”,

³ Evaluation of the UNDP Country Programme Document for Papua New Guinea (2018 – 2022), August 2022, p.20

⁴ Evaluation of the UNDP Country Programme Document for Papua New Guinea (2018 – 2022), August 2022, p.20

through the four pillars of legal frameworks, building electoral capacities for women, transforming gender norms, and support to women in gender-sensitive political institutions.⁵

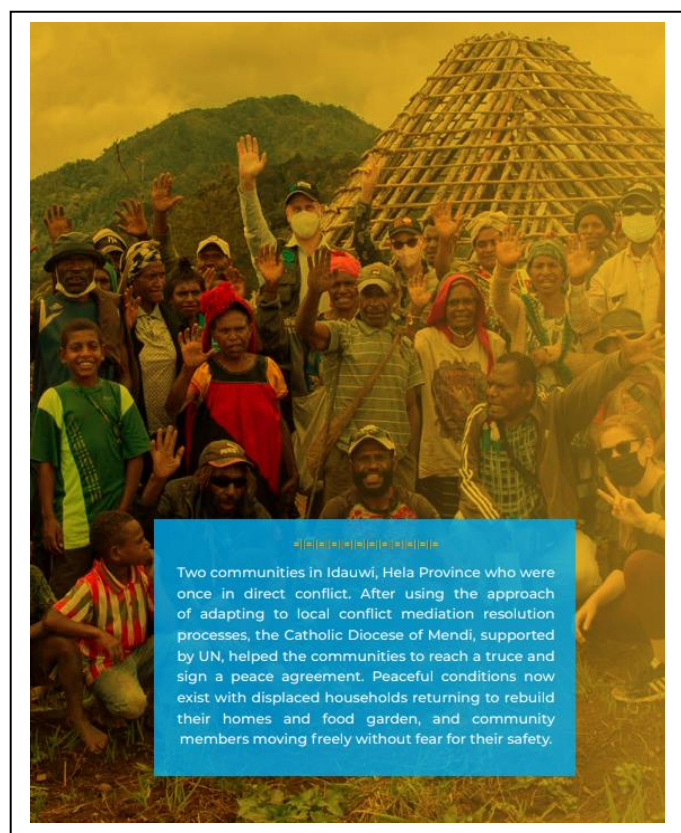
Finding 5: UN interventions were found to be relevant within the agriculture and rural development sector, supporting the education of farmers, improved production and the achievement of greater yields. Improved yields were recorded in the cocoa sector and strong improvements within the important areas of “economic mobility, productive capacity, resilience, nutrition, and gender” and to a lesser extent with respect to “market access”.⁶ The relevance of UN agencies was particularly important to rural communities, which rely heavily on the agriculture sector and for whom successful UN partnerships proved pertinent. However, the coffee sector did not see the same level of improvement, likely due to partnerships with the UN needing further development and time to mature. Within this sub-sector (coffee), one third of farmers indicated satisfaction with their UN partners, compared to 51 percent (cocoa).

Effectiveness

Finding 6: UN humanitarian interventions were viewed by development partners, provincial representatives and local communities as highly effective. As noted above, the Southern Highland earthquake mobilised a large humanitarian response which enabled attention to previously overlooked, isolated and local level inter-communal violence. UN responses were also effective in strengthening the National Disaster Centre and its provincial offices and, according to practitioners interviewed, “exemplified the Humanitarian – Development – Peace Nexus”.

Finding 7: The UN was praised for its sensitivity and effectiveness throughout the Bougainville peace process as a neutral and respected organisation to work on peace-building and electoral issues. Between 2018 – 2020 the UN

supported the ‘creation of the Bougainville Referendum Commission (BRC) and implementation of the Peace Agreement’;⁷ provided planning and training assistance to the BRC and other key institutions associated with preparations for the post-referendum process; coordinated all international assistance to the referendum process; supported political dialogue with groups, such as ex-combatants, where the unification of political factions is central to peace and stability; and maintained work across partner UN agencies to ensure women and young people facilitated key steps in the process as peacebuilders, and ensuring the participation and inclusion of both women and youth in the process.⁸ Furthermore, UN support of the referendum itself enabled it to be regarded as ‘a



⁵ Women Make the Change, Project Document, p.37.

⁶ IFAD Impact Assessment Report, Papua New Guinea, Productive Partnerships in Agriculture Project (PPAP), p. 78

⁷ UN reporting - 2018

⁸ Sustaining Peace in Bougainville, 2019, Annual Summary Report. p.7

‘peaceful, inclusive and transparent process’;⁹, with, ‘women constituting 49 percent of the total of voters’¹⁰ and a ‘meaningful contribution of young people to the referendum process’.^{11/12}

Finding 8: UN agencies were effective in increasing the numbers of children and youth in full-time education. The independent evaluation of UN agencies’ programmes report: “More children than ever before are now enrolled in elementary, primary and secondary schools.”¹³ As UN engagement continues its engagement in the education sector in PNG, it remains important to ensure that efforts are made to improve the transition rate from primary into secondary school for boys and girls. And, as noted above, whilst there have been notable improvements in children’s enrolment, there also remains a need for gender parity within schooling in PNG.¹⁴ More broadly, in regard to engaging young people, the UN has not reached the numbers of young people it aspired to through some of its programmes.¹⁵ As noted in the same evaluation: “it is essential to make the connection between social and economic aspects of development and in particular in terms of the opportunities of a demographic dividend of a large youthful population.”¹⁶

Finding 9: The UN provided exemplary and effective leadership to GoPNG on gender equality and GBV. Nowhere was this more evident than in the attendance of the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed in Port Moresby for International Women’s Day. The UN has been a determined

Effective UN Leadership on Gender Equality & GBV

In March 2020, the attendance in Port Moresby of the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed for International Women’s Day, marking the launch of the ‘Spotlight Initiative’ to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, reflects the relevance and priority attached to gender equality and the elimination of gender-based violence at all levels of the UN system.



<https://papuaneuquinea.un.org/en/37674-papua-new-guinea-welcomes-un-deputy-secretary-general-amina-mohammed-international-womens-day>

⁹ UN Annual Report 2019, p. 36

¹⁰ UNDP Project Report.

¹¹ UN Annual Reports - 2018, 2019, 2020.

¹² Semi-annual Report, Peace-Building Project, 15 June 2019, p.3-9.

¹³ UNFPA Papua New Guinea, Country Programme Evaluation, 2018 – 2022 p. 13

¹⁴ UNFPA Papua New Guinea, Country Programme Evaluation, 2018 – 2022 p. 13

¹⁵ Country Portfolio Evaluation 2020 - PAPUA NEW GUINEA, Synthesis Report, UNWOMEN, p.66

¹⁶ Country Portfolio Evaluation 2020 - PAPUA NEW GUINEA, Synthesis Report, UNWOMEN, p.66

and constant partner to the women of PNG over the UNDAF cycle. There have been a number of important gains, including the establishment of a national parliamentary committee, legislation, greater media coverage and law enforcement. An independent evaluation of one of the major UN country programmes in this regard reported “important contributions to gender equality and the empowerment of women in an extremely patriarchal and complex operating environment. This has included at the grassroots level through empowering women and men as agents of change, institutionalizing women’s voice mechanisms, and at the national level where key policies have been influenced from a gender lens”.¹⁷ Greater challenges lie ahead, and real impact is needed on a nationwide scale, yet progress is apparent (see box below for further details).

Finding 10: The UN’s rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic was also considered largely effective in supporting national efforts in their response and recovery effort. This included extensive assistance for health emergency and humanitarian coordination, clinical management and procurement, risk communications and community engagement, protection and secondary impacts, as well as the collaborative UN socioeconomic impact assessment and recovery planning. UN involvement also saw the distribution of more than 700,000 doses of vaccines, training on testing, personal protective equipment (PPE) distribution, and the development of multimedia content to promote vaccination and non-pharmaceutical interventions.

Below: Combined UNCT ‘in-person and on-line’ meeting shortly after COVID restrictions had been lifted.



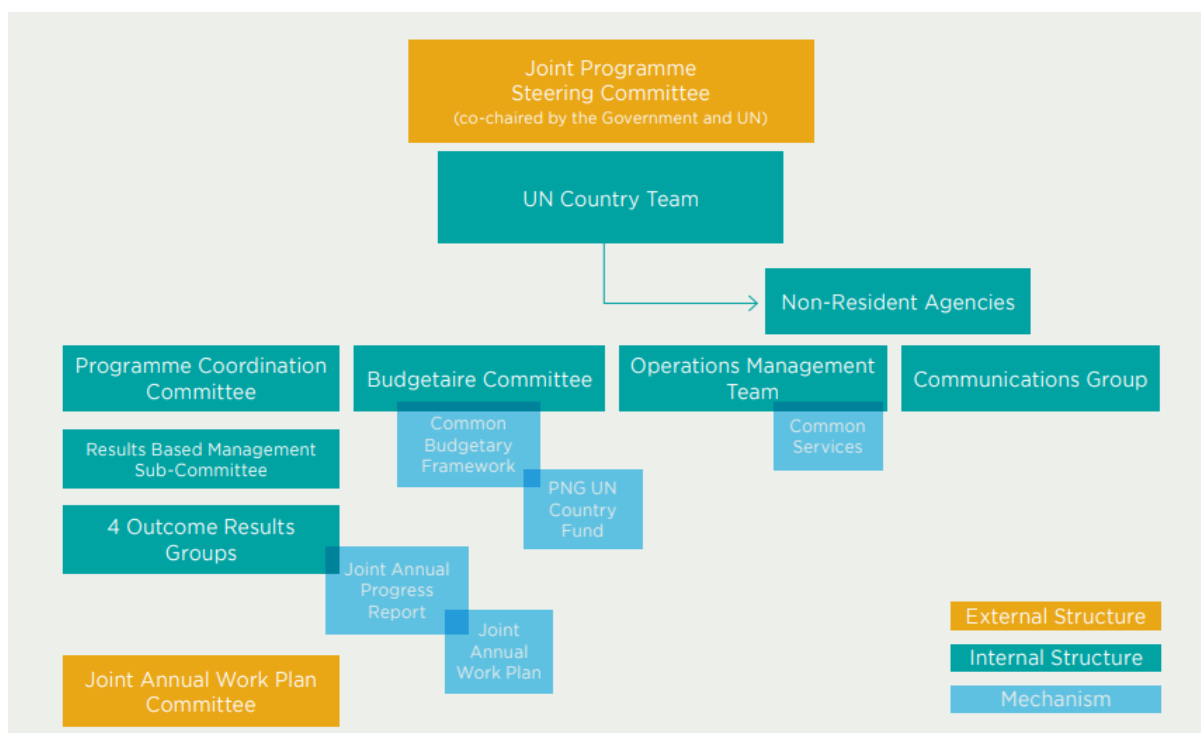
Finding 11: In terms of development effectiveness, the UNDAF outlines a commendably strong theory of change, with sub-outcomes, indicators and targets all befitting of a strategic development framework. The UNDAF RRF and TOC logic underpinning it was considered strong by the evaluation team. In terms of RRF design, arguably, 14 is too many indicators in Pillar one, as compared to 6 (Pillar 2), 5 (Pillar 3) and 4 (Pillar 4). In addition, it is not clear if the sub-outcomes listed in the RRF were intended to be measured against. Nevertheless, the sub-outcomes served as reasonable sub-titles for distinct areas of UN intervention. When tracking for overall progress it is clear that the UN has supported the Government of PNG in advancing some important legislative, policy and regulatory instruments, for example, in Gender/GBV, expenditures on health as a percentage of GDP, frameworks for peace and non-violence, climate change and disaster risk reduction (DRR). What is not so evident is the impact arising from these at the local level, perhaps with the exception of the Bougainville Peace process.

¹⁷ Country Portfolio Evaluation 2020 - PAPUA NEW GUINEA, Synthesis Report, UNWOMEN

Efficiency

Finding 12: The evaluation found that the UNDAF brought about greater information sharing, increasing reporting and transparency between UN agencies, which in turn laid the foundations for a large number of Joint Programmes which came into being during the cycle of the current UNDAF.

In addition, Annual UNDAF Reports, facilitated by the UNRC/UNRCO were regarded as helpful and useful from a communications perspective and illustrative of the contribution being made by the UN as a whole in supporting PNG's development. The UNCT met regularly and was perceived to be an efficient and collegiate vehicle for coordination and coherence among the UN. The transition to on-line platforms for consultation during COVID-19 was also appreciated as being an efficient way of doing business within the crisis. Indeed, the UN supported some key Government partners to do the same. The operating structure for oversight, annual planning, budgeting and reporting, as set out in the original UNDAF (see immediately below) was also deemed to have served the UNCT well.



Finding 13: One challenge that the UNCT will continue to grapple with is that of matrix management, in so far as reporting and accountability requirements are “two-ways” – that is, horizontally towards the country and UNCT, and vertically towards their own Head Offices. On the one hand, the UN can be a very decentralized organisation, adjusting to highly variable development contexts, such as PNG. On the other, agencies can be pulled back into their very technical silo's or constrained by their own individual operational policies. This presents an organisational challenge that can, if not checked, see agencies deferring towards greater individuation and less coordination and cooperation, which some observers to the current evaluation pointed out. As such, the evaluation found that whilst good progress is witnessed in UN joint programming, more could still be accomplished to advance the aspiration of “One UN” in order to further improve operational efficiencies, in particular around common functions as services, e.g. monitoring and evaluation, finance, communications, human resources, IT etc. Two areas were identified for particular improvement - monitoring and evaluation/learning, and utilizing the UNDAF for greater collaborative resource mobilization.

Finding 14: A further factor impacting operational efficiency of the UNDAF relates to the high rate of staff turnover.¹⁸ Several agencies and NGOs participating in the evaluation observed that UN staff turnover appeared to be high, as did the number of absences or gaps in the organograms of UN agencies, coupled with ponderously slow recruitment, as well as complications in carrying out operations. These factors all conspire to adversely affect delivery and impact efficiencies. The UN is not alone in this dilemma as high turnover amongst senior GoPNG officials and Ministers also contributed difficulty to continuity and predictability in the design and implementation of development programmes, and ultimately to their sustainability. Interviewees to the evaluation noted that “the GoPNG were not always held accountable for the delivery of its national plans and visions, which, on occasions, the UN often seemed to be carrying out independently”. Hence the UN, aware of this issue, will need to continually invest in GoPNG capacity building for the long haul in order to ensure meaningful long-term sustainability and effectiveness. It should also be noted that operational challenges are set within an unusually demanding geographic and logistical environment within which capacities and infrastructure of all kinds are limited.

Coherence & Coordination

Finding 15: Participants to the evaluation acknowledged that the UNDAF and its operating structure created opportunities for integration and collaboration across different UN agencies, which contributed significantly to improved coherence and coordination. For example, UNDAF formulation, annual planning and UN collective accountability for implementation facilitated greater coherence and coordination. The UNDAF operating structure (see previous page) created the mechanisms and conditions conducive for the production of joint programming, joint annual workplans and joint reporting, and which, according to participants in this evaluation generated “mutual benefits from that joint action”. Joint programming, when commenced from a common starting point i.e. from the beginning of concept planning, was also found to maximise coherence between the UN and GoPNG agencies.¹⁹ The evaluation found that Joint Programmes have been pursued in some highly significant areas of the UNDAF and include the Spotlight Initiative, Peace in the PNG Highlands, Support to Rural Enterprise and Trade (STREIT), etc. UN collaboration on joint programmes was greatly appreciated by GoPNG counterparts.

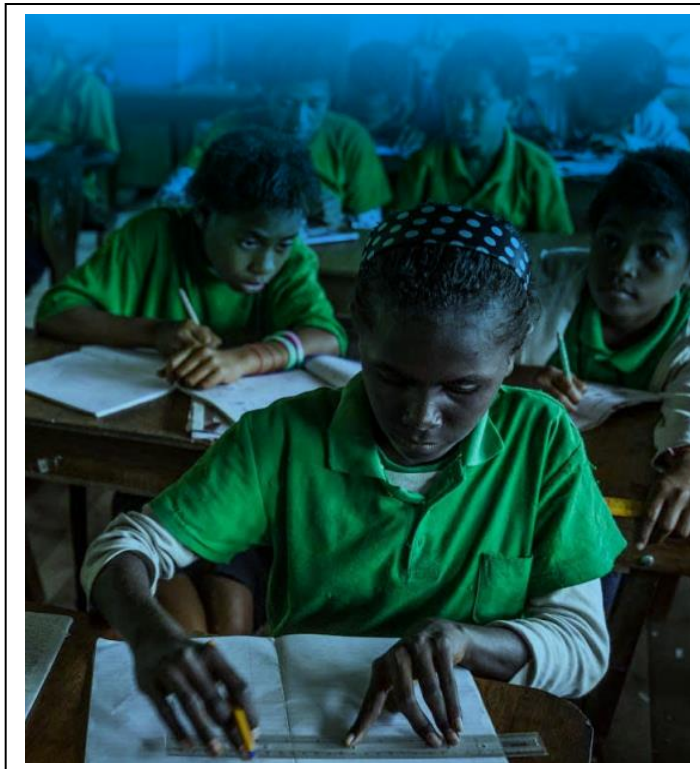
Finding 16: Challenges to coherence, coordination and communication do however remain. For example, some agencies reported that the UNDAF brought duplicative reporting to their own individual agency programmes as well as that required to individual donors. Meanwhile some partners operating at the provincial level perceived they had been overlooked as the UN “worked to its own agenda”. Hence, opportunities to improve coordination, cooperation and communications at all levels are apparent, including with GoPNG agencies and development partners generally. In addition, there was a perception in some quarters that the UN SDGs were often seen to be “imposed on GoPNG”, and that “more emphasis could be placed on the needs of the people of PNG”. This would need to be squared off with the fact that GoPNG has robustly integrated the SDGs within their national plans and strategies, and perhaps represents more of a communication issue regarding the role and importance of the SDGs as a catalyst for development and poverty reduction.

¹⁸ This item was recorded in a number of the UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, IFAD and UNDP, independently evaluated Country Programmes.

¹⁹ UNFPA Papua New Guinea, Country Programme Evaluation, 2018 - 2022

Sustainability

Finding 17: UN programmes supporting national institutions and priorities within a long-term development horizon appear to be well placed for sustainability. The most likely candidate programmes for assured sustainability included those in support of legislation, policies and regulations, through which UN builds longstanding partnerships and platforms, and invests in advocacy for political leadership and momentum. Most clearly this appears to be the case in the health and education sectors, gender equality and GBV, environmental sustainability, climate change, DRR, and in sustaining peace (Bougainville and the Highlands especially).



Finding 18: Where solid partnerships and relationships had been invested, in the foundations for sustainability were stronger. This finding follows the previous one and was generated largely from a number of positive responses from non-UN bodies, such as NGO partners, who reported good operating relations with their UN agency funder. Where the UN had spent time building the local capacities of GoPNG provincial offices in parallel with local NGOs and CBOs, there was more chance that development initiatives and gains could be perpetuated. This must also be set against a number of observers who were more cautious in their belief that national or provincial financing would be forthcoming without continued UN or donor support. In overall terms, the evaluation learned from participants that the presence of the UN in PNG “brought significant benefits” even if not all interventions could be fully sustained.

Finding 19: GoPNG co-financing of projects beyond their exit strategy was varied. Participants, especially those who had worked in close proximity with the GoPNG, remarked that GoPNG capabilities to operate programs, budgets and to allocate funding beyond the end of initial project prosecution was “vulnerable” or “weak”, in some cases due to “unclear or uncertain links with the UN”. Over the UNDAF timeline, efforts had been made by the UN to strengthen national and provincial GoPNG public sector financial management capacities and budget lines within the national budget reporting framework, enabling receipt of funds when needed. Observers suggested that more guarantees of co-financing and ongoing financing from GoPNG needed to be secured during programme design as an indicator of GoPNG commitment to sustainability beyond the initial life of the project. That said, a number of UN agencies had managed to secure co-financing for programmes operating from GoPNG at the provincial level.

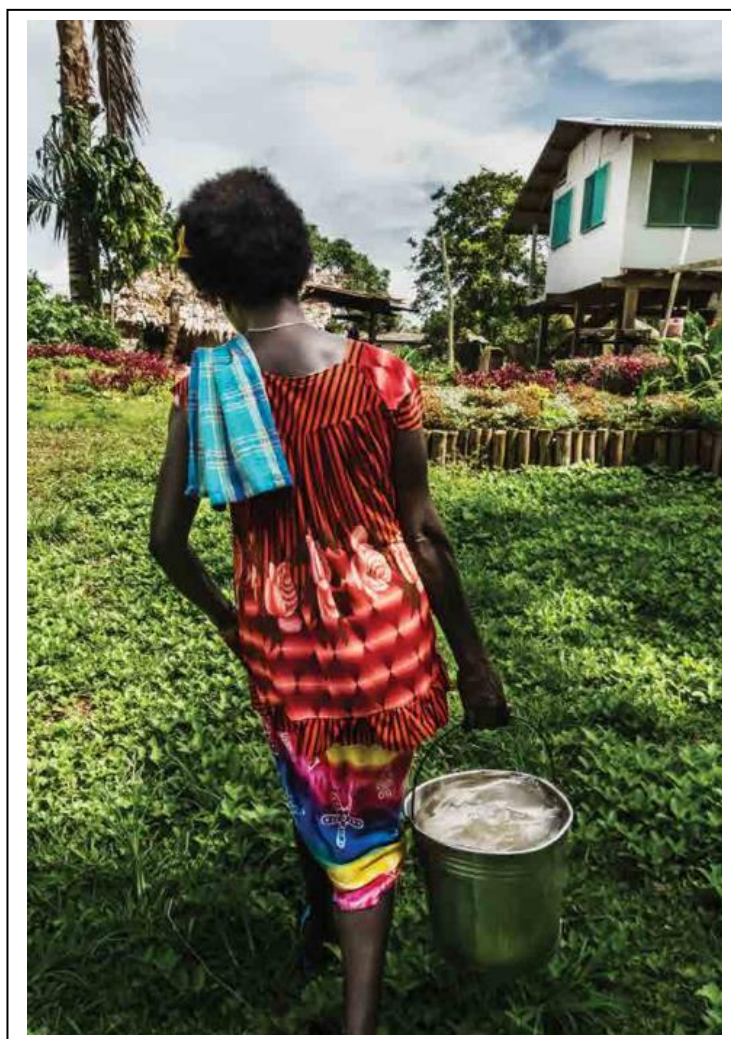
Finding 20: Further challenges to sustainability related to weak data/data management systems.

Monitoring implementation of the UNDAF was also a challenge due to the paucity of accurate data, allied to the fact that many agencies, especially GoPNG, do not have professional M&E staff. Provincial interviewees working within UN agency programs, upon self-reflection, felt that closer UN/GoPNG collaboration on M&E would be beneficial and contribute to more consistent data collection and interpretation. Accurate data is a critical resource for appreciating the baselines and progress required for making evidence-based decisions as to whether to continue to invest in a project, and thereby its sustainability.

Cross-Cutting Issues

Finding 21: Human rights and gender equality featured prominently throughout UNDAF implementation.

Participants to the evaluation provided positive responses when quizzed about the extent to which human rights and gender contributed to UNDAF design and implementation. Interviewees confirmed these issues to have been “effectively incorporated”, including through agency programmes. Climate change, youth and sustainable development were also considered to have been well integrated as cross-cutting issues. Among some partners environmental sustainability issues and climate change should be further escalated. In addition, considerations of people with disabilities were included in some agency initiatives at the design stage, however this inclusion does not always sufficiently translate into programme implementation.²⁰



Respondents were generally satisfied

with the level of UN reporting on human rights and gender issues across the raft of related UN programmes, as per the following example extracted from a UN evaluation: “The CO has demonstrated how an holistic, long-term approach grounded in national ownership and institutionalization, as exemplified under the area of work on ending violence against women (EVAW), can help to move the needle up on the dial of gender equality and empowerment of women in PNG”.²¹

Although it was noted that human rights were not considered a widely held or internalised as an area of concern for GoPNG. Within GoPNG different departments were seen as placing varying degrees of emphasis on human rights within the rule of law. Hence, human rights and the application of the centrality of equality within a consistently applied human rights framework for GoPNG activities

²⁰ UNFPA Papua New Guinea, Country Programme Evaluation, 2018 - 2022

²¹ Country Portfolio Evaluation 2020 - PAPUA NEW GUINEA, Synthesis Report, UNWOMEN

require additional development. The Gender Scorecard was viewed by a number of close partners as a helpful tool for ensuring that gender and equality were embedded in programming.

Finding 22: Development partners raised concerns about the need for the UN to do more in relation to the levels of violence in society. This ranges from addressing intimate partner violence, to issues of social and electoral violence, including the general low levels of public safety that appear to exist. These issues feed into issues of social cohesion, tension and conflict, and may need to be considered more closely within the next UNSDCF cycle. As noted in one UN agency evaluation: “Addressing violence requires a long-term approach”.²²

Finding 23: Child protection was improved during the period of the UNDAF. This was demonstrated by a fall in “violence, abuse and neglect of children” as a result of advancements in the knowledge and skills of parents, supported by UN interventions.²³ A number of UN agencies programmes were deemed to be successful in this regard,²⁴ however, greater coordination with GoPNG would help to ensure more thorough implementation of programmes, allocation of necessary resources and synergies between the child protection agenda and other linked agendas including “health, education, labour, social protection, rural development, law and order and local self-governance”.²⁵

Finding 24: Multiple UN agencies found that improving transport networks and access to community facilities, markets and services was very important for programme success. Challenges with safe and reliable transportation routes most gravely affected rural communities and markedly hindered women’s access to safe spaces and health facilities,²⁶ as well as the receipt and distribution of agricultural products, goods, services and resources.²⁷ The development of effective transportation and safe access would also support women owned businesses thereby supporting female financial empowerment. Stronger communication and dialogue between project implementation agencies and relevant sub-national governments was found to be important to enable GoPNG to provide support funding for roads.²⁸ Local development partners encouraged the UN should do more in this regard.

Lessons Learned

Lesson Learned 1: PNG’s national and human development indicators during the period of UNDAF implementation commencing from the year 2018 show modest yet incremental gains. See the trends in the Human Development Index below²⁹, with particular attention to the period 2018 and 2019, which show fragile incremental gains. These gains however are at risk from outbursts of violence, as witnessed during the 2022 parliamentary elections (admittedly outwith the period of the evaluation – yet pertinent), the growing risk from climate change, natural disasters, and not least, the impact of disease, such as COVID-19, which, when accurate data prevails, will undoubtedly have unravelled some of PNGs hard won development gains.

²² Evaluation of the UNICEF Parenting for Child Development (P4CD) Programme in Papua New Guinea, 17 December 2021, p. 70.

²³ Evaluation of the UNICEF Parenting for Child Development (P4CD) Programme in Papua New Guinea, 17 December 2021, p. 69.

²⁴ For example, UNICEF’s Parenting for Child Development (P4CD) Programme in Papua New Guinea

²⁵ Evaluation of the UNICEF P4CD Programme in PNG, 2021, p. 70.

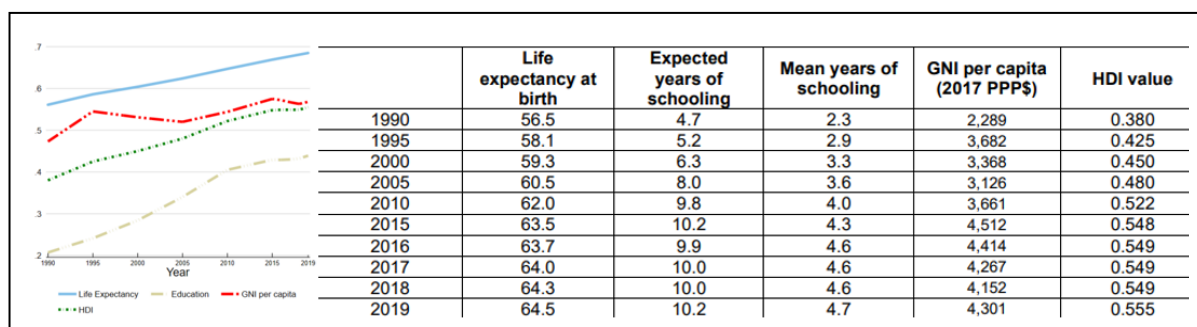
²⁶ UN Women. Country Portfolio Evaluation 2020, Papua New Guinea.

²⁷ UNFPA Papua New Guinea, Country Programme Evaluation, 2018 - 2022

²⁸ IFAD. Productive Partnerships in Agriculture Project. Project Completion Report, 2021

²⁹ UNDP data.

Box item below: PNG’s national and human development indicators:



Lesson Learned 2: The UNDAF and UNCT becomes strategically more relevant to PNG when it not only combines agencies in joint programming, but also where it combines its development functions. For example, in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus, with a strong focus on human rights and gender, and the combination of functions such as advocacy, legislative reform, partnership development, policy formulation, promoting platforms, capacity building and technical assistance could also increase strategic relevance.

Lesson Learned 3: The UNDAF can also be used as a more effective resource-mobilization tool. According to partners internal and external to the UN system, the UNDAF was deemed to have been under-utilized as a strategic vehicle for resource mobilization. Opportunities exist for greater development effectiveness through sector-wide approaches linked to the four outcome areas of the UNDAF around which development partners could rally. Such an approach would help to retain focus on joint programming, maximize the synergies, capabilities and leverage of the entire UN system. In this way, strategic support to GoPNG leadership and the relevance of the UN is also enhanced.

Lesson Learned 4: The position and role of the UN in promoting sustainable development and its engagement with the private sector to enable a smooth and just transition to a low-carbon economy is under-explored. Participants to the evaluation noted the UN’s unrivalled position as custodian of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Yet the voice of the UN in facilitating national development dialogue on the relationship between sustainable development and natural resource-based economic growth is not being sufficiently heard. Linked with this, UN engagement with the private sector on issues of sustainable economic transformation and sustainability financing for PNG has yet to properly take off.³⁰

Lesson Learned 5: Increased engagement between the UN and provincial development partners would further enhance the impact of provincially oriented programmes. As noted in the findings section above, the UN generated real humanitarian

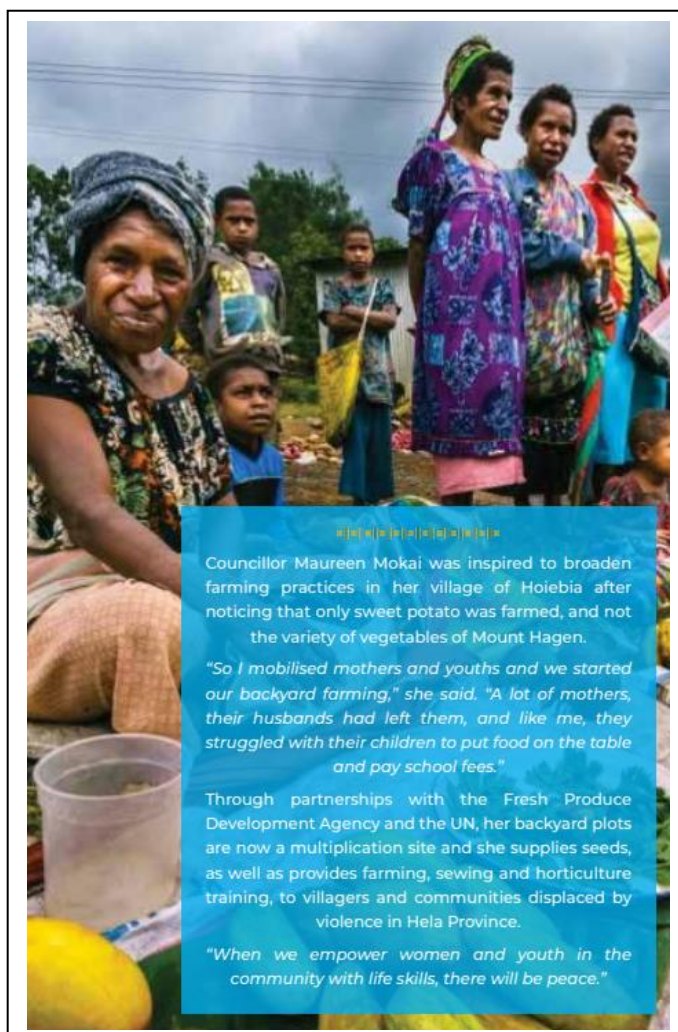


relief and health support, significantly impacting PNG during disasters and emergencies through interagency coordination and the use of UN global expertise, including access to financing from the PBSO. A lesson learned from commentators in this regard and arising from several UN agency

³⁰ Regarding the need to better harness the potential of the private sector - Evaluation of the UNDP Country Programme Document for Papua New Guinea (2018 – 2022), August 2022

programme evaluation is that increased engagement and coordination between the UN and provincial development partners would further enhance the impact of provincially oriented programmes.³¹

Lesson Learned 6: UN humanitarian and peace—building programmes cannot end as soon as the initial work is complete. They need to contain a subsequent phase that look for ways that enable the transition of humanitarian and peace-building activities into social development and economic initiatives in order to reap the peace dividend, but also contribute to conditions that enable sustainable livelihoods and jobs to be created, especially among unemployed youth and women. This will help strengthen resilience against future shocks and set-backs. A strong element of community capacity building is required in line with local cultural and traditional systems of knowledge and development. Reaching a shared and unified understanding of the activities and role of the UN within the context of national, provincial and local actors is important, including for managing expectations and the division of labour.



Lesson Learned 7: Sustainability is enhanced in areas where the UN's normative framework and mandated programmes correspond with national priorities that roll over from cycle to cycle, thereby ensuring continuity with each programme building on and succeeding its predecessor, often through long-term investments in institutions, systems and organisational capacities. This was especially evident in the current UNDAF cycle through high-profile initiatives, such as Bougainville, and GBV, as well as longstanding programmatic interventions in the social sectors of health and education. These 'flagship' programmes appear to stand a far greater chance of sustainability due to the political will invested in them by national counterparts as well as strongly committed development partners, including stable long-term partnerships.

Lesson Learned 8: Whilst some important legislative and policy advances were made, for example with regard to gender equality and GBV, the next cycle of programming must ideally witness those gains beginning to translate into impact. The current UNDAF has done well to position the 'People' dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, yet much more is needed to be done to place human rights, gender equality and the needs of young people centrally within the next UNSDCF cycle, including to take full advantage of the demographic dividend. Human rights have a particular place in a peaceful society anchored on the rule of law. An understanding and realization of the

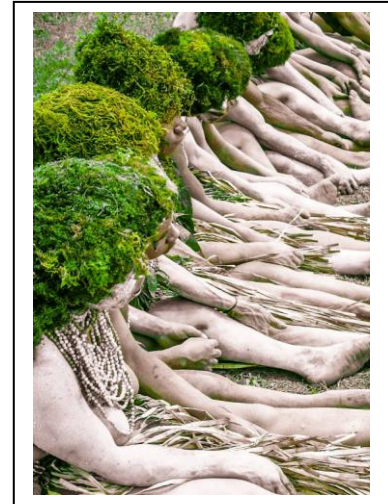
³¹ This item was a recurrent feature appearing in the majority of UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, IFAD and UNDP, independently evaluated Country Programmes.

concept of ‘equality’ needs deepening into and across PNG society and extending to all PNG citizens regardless of sex and gender, disability, or age. As noted in the findings and lessons learned above – this is a long-term area of support for the UN.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. The UNCT should continue to reflect and build on the advantages demonstrated through the current raft of joint programmes into the next UNSDCF cycle.

This would continue to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of UN interventions, in particular around peace (and the reduction of all forms of violence), gender/GBV, social services (health, education and social security/protection), poverty reduction/LNOB and environmental sustainability. Continued pursuit of joint programming at the level of principle would also accelerate the “One UN” approach under a further unifying UNSDCF, including through enhanced provincial coordination. Careful attention by the UNRC and UNCT should also be paid to incorporating smaller UN agencies into collaborative ventures and programming to ensure the full comparative advantage of the UN is secured. Opportunities for advancing UN reform should also be explored through mapping and aiming to reduce the number of potentially duplicative functions employed by each agency, including for example, monitoring and evaluation, finance, communications, human resources, IT, where it makes sense to do so.



Recommendation 2. Within the next UNSDCF the UN can look to further enhance its leadership role in supporting PNG to be the custodian of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This can be done, for example, by the UN promoting a series of national development dialogues in partnership with Government and development partners, on themes closely allied to the SDGs, national priority areas and outcome statements of the next UNSDCF. This would serve to position the UN more centrally within the national development consultative landscape and also launch the various component parts of the next UNSDCF and serve to increase UN influence. Along similar lines, an annual development results conference can be facilitated by the UN in partnership with the Government and close development partners for the purposes of reflecting on lessons learned and for showcasing break-through initiatives that have shown innovation or promise.

Recommendation 3. The UN should seek to engage in a more strategic partnership with the private sector in PNG, for the purposes of pursuing collaborative approaches for economic growth, sustainable development, the transition to a carbon neutral economy, natural resources management, sustainability financing, the blue economy, preserving bio-diversity, as well as on human rights and gender equality.

Strengthening the positioning of the UN as a neutral and impartial player at the critical intersection between economic growth and sustainable environmental management may help broker a new series of partnerships necessary for securing a sustainable development pathway for PNGs future, whilst leaving no one behind. This is critical for mobilizing the buy-in of the private sector in PNG for realization of the SDGs.