



Papua New Guinea Church Partnership Program

A Case Study of Sustained Investment in Church Development Capacity

Prepared by ADRA Australia

1. Papua New Guinea Church Partnership Program (PNG CPP)

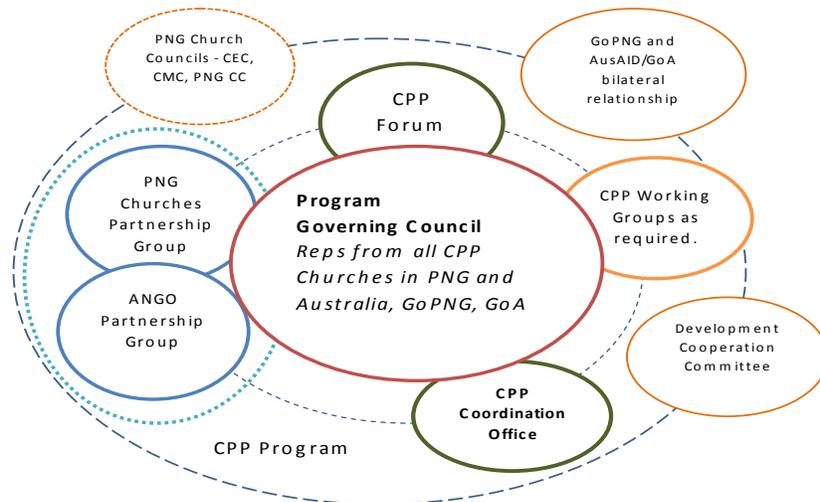
a. Purpose

The purpose of the PNG CPP is to build the institutional capacity of PNG churches to engage as civil society actors and improve their contribution to health, education and social service delivery in PNG. The program seeks to contribute to three outcome areas:

- Improved services delivered by PNG Churches to local communities.
- Strengthened PNG Churches institutional capacity for development.
- Enhanced PNG Church involvement in improving public sector governance.

The program is a partnership between seven PNG churches and their counterpart Australian church-based NGOs (ANGOs), as well as with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Government of PNG. Within the partnership the ANGOs are DFAT's primary intermediary organisations, responsible for management and financial administration of the program. The PNG churches are responsible for program development and implementation. The role of DFAT is to provide funding for capacity building and support of health, education and other activities and to guide overall strategy and linkages with other DFAT programs. The Government of PNG brings to the partnership government policy directions, strategies and plans. The CPP is managed through a range of representative bodies and a coordination office governed by a charter. The different stakeholders and their relationships within the CPP are mapped in the diagram on the following page, which serves to highlight the relative complexity of the program.

PNG CPP Stakeholder Relationships



The design and operation of the program is based on the following principles:

- **Local ownership** - promoting local participation in setting priorities and managing implementation
- **Inclusiveness** - ensuring that all PNG communities have equitable access to the benefits of the program irrespective of gender, religious beliefs or ethnicity
- **Partnership** - developing and maintaining transparent relationships that are based upon values of honesty, confidentiality, mutual support and respect.
- **Local Sustainability** - Maintaining integrity of PNG responsibility: ensuring that the program does not detract from the mandate of the Government.
- **Commitment to learning and flexibility** - share experiences, lessons, understanding of the context and desires for change throughout the program.
- **Innovation, experimentation and risk taking** - recognising that the context requires some new approaches and new methods of engagement and action.
- **Diversity** - acknowledging the wide variety of local cultures and contexts.
- **Trust and accountability** - mechanisms of accountability will build a sense of trust between partners, recognising that all the partners are acting in good faith.
- **Realism** - the expectations and aspiration of the partners and the program should reflect a realistic understanding of the context.
- **Holistic development** - the development of the whole person is understood to embrace their physical, emotional, spiritual, community and political well-being.
- **Supporting existing institutions, networks and structures** - recognising the strengths and capacities for change which exist in the context.
- **Building partner capacity** - fostering the primary development and capacity of indigenous Papua New Guineans.
- **Lessons Learned** - sharing and disseminating the lessons learned and experiences of this program to the broader aid community.
- **Relationships** - each organisation accepting the strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures of each member of the group.

b. Partners

Seven mainstream churches were identified for participation in the program, based on their contribution to development and stability in PNG. The partnership arrangement involves the ANGOs taking responsibility for management and financial administration of the program, and the PNG churches taking responsibility for program development and implementation.

PNG Church	Accredited Australian NGO	Link between Australian NGO and churches
Anglican Church	Anglican Board of Mission	Anglican Church organisation linking Australian Church with Anglicans around the world
Baptist Church	Baptist World Aid Australia	An activity of, and accountable to, the Baptist Union of Australia
Evangelical Lutheran Church	Australian Lutheran World Service	The overseas aid and resettlement agency of the Lutheran Church of Australia governed by an appointed board
Roman Catholic Church	Caritas Australia	Catholic aid and development agency
Salvation Army	Salvation Army Australian Development Office	Salvation Army Church development office
Seventh Day Adventist Church	Adventist Development and Relief Agency Australia	Adventist Development and Relief Agency Papua New Guinea
United Church	Uniting World	Agency of Uniting International Mission under the Uniting Church in Australia

c. Context

The CPP operates in context where development challenges remain entrenched, particularly in remote and rural areas. And in which government capacity to deliver health, education and social services remains limited by a variety of factors. PNG is also Australia's closest neighbor and a key diplomatic and economic partner for Australia, which is reflected in its status as the largest recipient of Australian aid. Beyond these factors PNG society is largely religious and as such Christian churches are important social actors that play a significant role in the country. As shown in the table below the seven churches that are involved in the CPP represent approximately 78% of the population.

Religious communities in PNG (% of the population)			
Roman Catholic	29%	Baptist	3%
Evangelical Lutheran	20%	Anglican	3%
United Church	12%	Salvation Army	< 1%
Seventh Day Adventists	10%	Other Christians	9%
Pentecostals	8%	Other religions	1%
Evangelical Alliance	5%		

Source: Table sourced from the ECDPM discussion paper *Ringing the Church Bell: the role of churches in governance and public performances in PNG* [24. Ringing the Church Bell, p.6].

In addition churches in PNG also play a significant role in the provision of health and education services as shown in the following table.

Health services	Education services
46% of all health facilities	47% of elementary schools
60% of rural health services	53% of primary schools
5 out of 8 nursing schools (62.5%)	30% of secondary schools
All 14 community health worker schools	41% of vocational schools
24 Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) centres for HIV/AIDS	67% of teacher education institutions
HIV awareness raising programs across the county	2 of the country's 6 universities (33%)

Source: Table sourced from the document *PNG Church Partnership Program – Phase II Concept* [12. CPP concept note, p.5].

d. History and Future

The history and design of CPP emerged from peer research undertaken by three Australian church-based ANGOs together with their PNG church partners in 2003. Together they examined the effectiveness of the programs delivered by PNG churches, and how the ANGOs might better support and enhance this work. This research formed the basis of a proposal developed and submitted by the three ANGOs to AusAID to fund the service delivery work of the churches in PNG. ANGOs at this time recognised that they needed to be at the table together, to demonstrate they could work together and engage with critical actors in service delivery. At the same time, AusAID was interested in the role churches played in service delivery in PNG and wanted to support programs that would promote the role of civil society in promoting good governance. In 2004 AusAID agreed to support a long-term program with the churches and to provide resources to develop the partnership between the PNG churches and their ANGO partners.

The program commenced implementation in 2004 for an initial five year period with funding of AUD\$25 million. The primary focus of phase one was on institutional capacity building for the PNG church partners. Following positive findings from a Mid Term Review conducted in 2007 and an Outcomes Evaluation conducted in 2009, a design process for a second phase of the program was undertaken and funded beginning in July 2010 with a proposed end date of June 2016 and funding of AUD \$50 million. Phase 2 intentional built on the achievements of phase 1 by adding in outcomes areas related to service delivery and good governance. Following additional independent evaluations and reviews of the program a design phase has been launched in June 2015 with the stated intent by DFAT to fund a thirist five year phase of the program at a similar funding level to phase two to begin in July 2016. It is intended that phase 3 address identified challenges in relation to management and governance as well as results measurement and joint programming.

2. Challenges Achievements and Learning

a. Challenges

The long-term engagement in funding and implementing the CPP by all partners indicates a highly valued and successful program. However, there have been a number of challenges encountered in the course of the last ten years of the partnership.

Several of these are outline below:

- **Measuring Results** – the intentional flexibility built into the design of the CPP in which the overall program does not have specific common objectives, but rather broader thematic areas of engagement has meant that aggregating program results across the seven church partners has been challenging. In particular quantification of results across the program over time is limited. Significant improvements have been made during phase two but will require further improvement in phase three.
- **Engaging PNG Government** – the role of PNG government has always been considered important in the CPP design. However it has been challenging to obtain consistent engagement from government in CPP planning and decision-making processes. This has included challenges in coordinating CPP activities with other related initiatives in governance, health and education.
- **Joint Programming** – while the CPP has demonstrably improved partnerships and collaboration between churches the CPP still fundamentally consists of seven separate sets of development activities by the church partners. This is in part reflective of a trade-off associated with leveraging existing church structures and programs.
- **Management and Governance** – the management and governance mechanisms of the CPP reflect, in terms of complexity and function, the large number of partners and the fact that each brings its own perspective to the program. In particular establishing an effective coordination office has been challenging.

b. Achievements

In spite of the challenges outline above, the CPP has largely been successful in achieving its intended outcomes. Five key achievements over the course of the program that were highlighted in a recent independent evaluation are outlined as follows:

- **Relevant and Effective** – the CPP remains a relevant and effective element of DFAT’s overall development cooperation program in PNG. It is building partner church capacity to support pro-poor development and also directly supports improved service delivery by churches. Given the churches’ established presence in remote rural areas of PNG, they have the ability to reach some of the poorest communities who are currently not adequately covered by basic government services.
- **Leverages Church Capacity** – the CPP is also a relatively efficient way to deliver support, given that it primarily works with and through established (or emerging) PNG church institutional structures. CPP supports the more efficient and effective use of other existing church financial and human resources for pro-poor

development work, and is helping partner churches to access additional funding through demonstrating their improved professionalism in program/project planning and management.

- **Changes Within Churches** – the churches are increasingly active in promoting gender equality and other social inclusion strategies, with CPP support. They are supporting significant HIV/AIDs awareness, counseling and testing support programs, both stand-alone as well as integrated into other activities such as adult literacy programs. The development of a broadly accepted ‘Theology of Development’ is helping to further establish the churches’ development work as a core part of their mission.
- **Increased Church Capacity** – it is considered that the institutional strengthening support provided through CPP is the most effective element of the support provided to date. This is building church capacity to more effectively plan and manage pro-poor development activities over the long term.
- **Dialogue and Collaboration** – the CPP is effectively supporting ongoing dialogue, information sharing and relationship building between participating churches through the Church Leaders Council (CLC), the Program Partnership Council (PPC), the Forum meetings and Joint Working/Reference Groups.

c. Learning

The following lessons are drawn from reflection by partners on ten years of collaboration through the CPP:

- **Churches as starting place not just a means to an end** – churches seen as deeply embedded and already contributing to development outcomes in PNG and therefore not a means to an end for DFAT but rather key partners who had a shared goal for development outcomes but could be better resourced to carry this out effectively.
- **Consistency of funding over a lengthy period** – with current funding of over AUD\$75 million stretching from 2004 to 2016 with plans for an additional 5-6 year phase underway PNGCPP represents a rare case of an institutional government donor providing substantial funding over a period long enough for developmental outcomes in terms of both changes in church capacity and culture as well as results from development initiatives.
- **Consultation and learning on a regular basis** – all partners meet formally multiple times per year with smaller sub-groups meeting more often. Over time this has built stronger relationships between the different churches as well as the ANGOs and DFAT. This allows challenges to be addressed openly and honestly and in a supportive, culturally appropriate way.
- **Development expertise and translation** – the role of the ANGOs such as ADRA Australia in mediating between the language and culture of church and DFAT has been important to enabling ongoing activity and results.