

# ANU-UPNG Partnership: 2022 Semester 1 Report

<b>Name of Organisation:</b>	Development Policy Centre, Australian National University
<b>Project title:</b>	ANU-UPNG Partnership
<b>Project objectives:</b>	To help realise a stronger UPNG School of Business and Public Policy, as well as a deeper and lasting relationship with ANU.
<b>Reporting period:</b>	First half of 2022

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## Implementation progress – first half of 2022

### Stream 1: Strengthening SBPP teaching and the student experience

#### Faculty changes

Research Fellow Dr Nayahamui Michelle Rooney accepted a permanent role at another school within ANU at the beginning of this year. As a result, the Partnership welcomed two new short-term lecturers. Dr Terence Wood, a political scientist and leading expert in PNG elections, delivered the Governance and Institutions course in Trimester I. In Trimester II, Dr Melanie Pill, Research Fellow at the Institute for Climate, Energy and Disaster Solutions, ANU was lecturer for Quantitative Research Methods. Both courses were taught remotely.

Associate Lecturer/Project Coordinator Dek Joe Sum left the Partnership at the end of June. Recruitment for this position has been finalised. Andrew Anton Mako will join the Partnership team in September 2022. Andrew completed his undergraduate studies in economics at UPNG and graduated from the ANU Master of International and Development Economics in 2012. He was a Research Fellow at the National Research Institute (2012-14) before moving to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat as Economic Officer.

Dr Nemat Bizhan relocated to PNG in June 2022 and recommenced in-person teaching.

Short-term lecturer Dr Martin Davies relocated to PNG to deliver Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy in Trimester II. Dr Davies will have an extended stay in PNG until August 2023 to conduct research and teach again in Trimester II, 2023.

Dr Manoj Pandey concluded his role as a Lecturer in August 2022. Dr Toan Nguyen has joined the Partnership and will start teaching in Trimester III. He will be teaching in person at UPNG for the first two weeks of the trimester, and continue teaching online this year. He will be based at UPNG to deliver his courses in-person in 2023. Prior to joining the Partnership, Dr Nguyen was a Research Fellow at the Development Policy Centre, working on labour mobility. Toan has held academic appointments at the University of Queensland and Curtin University and his primary research interests are in labour economics (migration) and family economics.

Returned ANU Scholar, Kelly Samof will teach the Monetary Economics course in Semester 2.

## Teaching

Three ANU lecturers and four ANU-trained lecturers taught 11 courses with 255 female and 502 male students (757 in total) in Trimester I and Semester 1. Courses were taught through a mix of online and in person lectures and tutorials. A list of all courses taught is provided below.

	Course	Lecturer	Semester /Trimester	Students			
				F	M	People with a disability	Total
1	Foundation Economics	Dek Joe Sum	S1	123	190	0	313
2	Cost-Benefit Analysis	Dek Joe Sum	S1	8	23	0	31
3	Public Economics	Manoj Pandey	S1	8	22	0	30
4	Principles of Microeconomics	Jollanda Mathew	S1	38	55	0	93
5	Econometrics I	Kelly Samof	S1	8	22	0	30
6	International Economics	Kelly Samof	S1	10	22	1	32
7	Advanced Microeconomics	Maholopa Laveil	S1	10	23	1	33
8	Quantitative Economics I	Maholopa Laveil	S1	19	46	1	65
9	Natural Resource Economics	Bobby Kunda	S1	8	22	0	30
10	Quantitative Research Methods	Manoj Pandey	TI	11	38	0	49
11	Governance and Institutions	Terence Wood	TI	12	39	0	51
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>757</b>

Every course was evaluated, and the average course and lecturer scores were 4.1 and 4.3, respectively out of 5.

UPNG hiring processes have been slow, but three out of the four ANU-trained lecturers are now on a permanent contract.

## MEPP

The Master of Economic and Public Policy (MEPP) is a major focus of the project. ANU staff teach into the project, supervise research students, and help coordinate the program as a whole.

Key progress and challenges:

- This year we have over 50 students in total, beating our 2021 record. This shows the increasing and continuing demand since the inception of the program with only nine

students in 2017, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in the last two years.

- The significant increase in the number of students also came with some challenges. In particular, the increased teaching load on lecturers raised some concerns around the quality of teaching and sustainability of the current format of the program. Additional tutoring and marking support was provided to lecturers as a temporary measure. Despite the challenges faced, the average scores of MEEP course and lecturer evaluations remained high – 4.4 and 4.6 respectively out of 5. Possible long-term solutions have been discussed with UPNG, which include:
  - Limiting the number of students to approximately 40, and
  - Introducing an additional merit-based selection process.
- In April 2022, 20 students graduated, 17 with master's degrees and 3 with graduate diplomas, bringing the total who have graduated to 36. A focus on regular follow-ups with students remained the key to maintaining the completion rate.



*2022 MEPP graduates*

- A research grant of K1,500 was introduced by the Partnership in 2021. Four students, who received the first round of the grant successfully completed their research projects – three of the students graduated in April 2022 and the fourth is scheduled to graduate next year. For the 2022/2023 round, five students submitted research proposals, and ANU and UPNG researchers have been assigned to each project as a supervisor.

### **Initiatives to improve teaching**

- **Lecturer and tutor guidance:** The four returned ANU Scholarship recipients were mentored by ANU lecturers, as were three economics tutors.
- **Tutor induction workshop:** Due to the delayed start of Semester 1 and staff changes within the Partnership, the tutor induction workshop was not held in Semester 1. We will review the workshop format before implementing it again as part of the 2023 program.

- **Mobile internet:** At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Partnership started providing a monthly data allowance of 50GB to the ANU supported lecturers and tutors to help with online teaching. This continued in Trimester I and Semester 1 2022, which allowed lecturers and tutors to share course materials effectively via Google Classroom and Moodle. As most of the courses are now being delivered in-person in Semester 2, this support will be reduced from August 2022.

### Improving the student experience

- **Film discussion nights:** UPNG economics lecturer Kelly Samof continued to lead the coordination of the UPNG Inspired in Semester 1 2022. The number of attendees continued to grow, and one of the screenings attracted more than 170 attendees. In Semester 2, 2023/2024 ANU Scholarship recipient, David Poka will be assisting Kelly with the coordination.



*Screening in March 2022*

- **Student associations:** The Partnership provides financial support to the Economics Student Society (ESS) and Public Policy and Management Student Association (PPMSA) up to K5,000 per semester (K2,500 each). Both ESS and PPMSA continued their activities in Semester 1, some of which were supported by the Partnership.





*ESS Orientation Day*



*PPMSA Orientation Day*

- Sir Mekere Morauta Award:** The Sir Mekere Mourata Award was inaugurated in 2021 with support and funding from the Partnership in memory of the former esteemed PNG Prime Minister who died in late 2020, and who was the first economics graduate from UPNG. At the 2022 graduation in April, the Award was presented by the UPNG Chancellor Robert Igara to the top female and male economics graduates, Esther Marinjambi and David Poka.



*Robert Igara and David Poka*



*Esther Marinjambi*

- Alumni association:** As part of the Partnership's effort to maintain contact with UPNG alumni, the Partnership is continuing to promote and expand the Partnership's economics alumni Facebook page for recent graduates. A separate WhatsApp group and LinkedIn page are also being used to further expand this effort. The three channels are used as platforms for sharing information about economic research, job opportunities, and other outreach activities.
- Career talk and alumni sharing workshop:** A workshop was held in May for third and fourth year SBPP students to give them an insight on working life after university and to build connections with the SBPP alumni. The workshop was attended by 30 students, and speakers were invited from government departments and organisations in PNG, which included the Department of National Planning and Monitoring, Department of Treasury, and Bank South Pacific.





*Some of the workshop participants and speakers at the Career talk and alumni sharing workshop*

## Stream 2: Collaborative research and outreach

### Staff

Alyssa Leng joined the Partnership team in February as Research Officer. She is currently studying the Master of International and Development Economics at ANU and previously worked as a Research Fellow and Economist at the Lowy Institute.

### Books

We continued working on two flagship ANU-UPNG books. The edited volume, *Papua New Guinea: Government, Economy and Society*, was published by ANU Press in March 2022. The book will be launched at the 2022 PNG Update, and is free to download online (<https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/series/pacific/papua-new-guinea-government-economy-society>). Significant progress has been made in the second round of drafting of the PNG economic history book.

*State Fragility: Case Studies and Comparisons*, edited By Nematullah Bizhan, which includes a chapter on PNG, is scheduled to be published in September 2022, and is currently available for pre-order <https://www.routledge.com/State-Fragility-Case-Studies-and-Comparisons/Bizhan/p/book/9781032286143>.

### PNG Central Banking Act Review: second phase

ANU project director, Stephen Howes has been part of the three-person Independent Advisory Group to review the PNG Central Bank Act since 2021. Research support to the review is being provided by both ANU and UPNG economics staff.



The second phase of the review focuses on the financial sector, including the commercial banks and both the superannuation and insurance sectors.

The Partnership continues to be responsible for the Review website:

<https://pngcentralbankactiag.org/>.

### **ANU-UPNG seminar series**

We continued the monthly seminar series co-hosted by ANU and UPNG throughout Semester 1. The hybrid seminars were held across two venues – ANU Crawford School of Public Policy and UPNG School of Business and Public Policy – and via Zoom. The events were well attended with more than 60 registrations for each seminar. We plan to continue this monthly seminar throughout this year.

Dr Martin Davies' presentation on 'Real wage growth in Papua New Guinea over three decades' in June was covered by media: <https://www.abc.net.au/radio-australia/programs/pacificbeat/png-wage-increase-new-research/13949222>

The seminars provide a platform for research supported through the Partnership and to invite guest speakers. We were pleased to be able to include a seminar delivered by Laura Nettuno, 'Financial inclusion in Papua New Guinea'. Laura is a PhD scholar from Vanderbilt University who has been collaborating on this research with Dr Martin Davies.



*Laura Nettuno presenting on 'Financial inclusion in Papua New Guinea'*

## PNG Update

Organised by the UPNG and ANU, the annual PNG Update is the premier forum for the discussion of research and analysis relating to contemporary economic and public policy issues in PNG.

The 2022 PNG Update will be held at UPNG SBPP on 20–21 October. This year's conference theme is 'Pathways to development amid COVID-19 and beyond PNG's 10th election'.

The call for papers and submissions closed on 19 August and over 100 submissions were received. The conference program will be released on 23 September.

The Asia Foundation has been confirmed as a PNG Update sponsor and will support PNG and Pacific Island postgraduate students to travel to and present at the conference.

## PNG Project

Research is being pursued under the headings of economics, governance and elections, service delivery and gender. Highlights include:

- Research article, '[Thinking incrementally about policy interventions on intimate partner violence in Papua New Guinea: understanding 'popcorn' and 'blanket'](#)', by the collaborative team of researchers from ANU and UPNG supported by the Partnership, Dr Nayahamui Michelle Rooney, Dr Miranda Forsyth, Joshua Goa, Dunstan Lawihin, and Dr Dora Kuir-Ayius.
- Discussion paper, '[What has limited preferential voting changed in Papua New Guinea?](#)' by Dr Terence Wood, Maholopa Laveil and Michael Kabuni.
- Discussion paper, '[Do DSIP funds help PNG MPs win?](#)' by Maholopa Laveil and Dr Terence Wood.

## SBPP librarian

The project continued to fund a UPNG librarian in 2022 to maintain a dedicated library in the SBPP building. Over 3,000 books are now available for more than 500 library membership holders, which include both students and staff.

## PNG Databases

During Semester 1, we kept our PNG databases up to date.

- **PNG Budget Database** (<https://devpolicy.crawford.anu.edu.au/png-project/png-budget-database>): The database was updated with the 2021 Final Budget Outcome. The sixth ANU Scholarship recipient Kingtau Mambon worked on updating the database as a Greg Taylor Scholar during the semester break. The Greg Taylor scholarship is provided to PNG and Pacific scholars to undertake research at the ANU Crawford School of Public Policy as part of the Development Policy Centre on a topic relating to the economic development of PNG and the Pacific.
- **PNG MP Database** (<https://devpolicy.org/pngmps/>): We updated the database regularly during the 11th parliamentary elections to provide up-to-date information about MPs elected.
- **PNG Elections Database** (<https://devpolicy.org/pngelections/>): To be updated as new data becomes available from the 11th parliamentary elections.

- **PNG Economic Database** (<http://devpolicy.org/pngeconomic/>): The database was updated to include 2021 values for series including GDP, CPI, and fiscal indicators from the 2022 Budget and 2021 FBO, and 2020 values for the balance of payments.
- **PNG District Level Database**: No update needed.

### PhD supervision and examination

Dr Manoj Pandey, Dr Nemat Bizhan, and Dr Grant Walton are supervising UPNG PhD candidates and academic staff have been involved in the examination of PhD theses by SBPP candidates.

### Research workshops and training

- **Reading groups**: This series of reading groups was introduced in 2021 to provide UPNG students and staff members with an opportunity for discussions outside the classroom. Unlike other research workshops, reading groups are small and informal, and aim to have a high level of participation and engagement from attendees. Since Dr Rooney left the Partnership, Maholopa Laveil, took over the coordination of the reading groups, with assistance from Jollanda Mathew. Maholopa and Jollanda are both former ANU Scholarship recipients and current UPNG lecturers. The two reading groups were held in a hybrid format (online and in person) in Semester 1, focusing on political instability in PNG. The first session held in June looked at three papers on fluid parliament politics, and the second session in August discussed papers on high MP turnovers. The reading groups were attended by UPNG students and invited experts on the topics. The series is planned to continue in Semester 2.
- **Training**: Training scheduled for Semester 1 was postponed to Semester 2 due to the delayed start of Semester 1, as a result of the late student registrations at UPNG, and also due to Partnership staff changes.

Training title	Led by	Expected month
STATA training workshop jointly with International Food Policy Research Institute and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)	Toan Nguyen	October
Workshop on research methods and free data sources jointly with ABS	Toan Nguyen	October

### Research collaboration and mentoring

This occurs via our research projects, such as the book, visiting lecturers and via the co-authored Devpolicy Blogs.

- **KW Taylor Pacific Research Award**: Maholopa Laveil has been appointed as the first recipient of the KW Taylor Pacific Research Award granted by the Lowy Institute. Maholopa will undertake research on economic resilience and development in the Pacific region on secondment with the Lowy Institute for one year from November 2022. Maholopa was an ANU scholarship recipient through the Partnership, returned to take up a position as Lecturer at UPNG and was recently acting as the Head of Economics Division.



## Outreach

- **The Devpolicy Blog:** Devpolicy.org is the online public outreach portal for the Development Policy Centre at ANU. In the second semester, Devpolicy.org continued to publish a number of posts related to or directly on PNG. Many of those blogs were authored or co-authored by Papua New Guineans. These blog posts are widely read in PNG, and those focusing on PNG are often republished in PNG newspapers. The Blog Incentive Scheme continued in the second semester to encourage blog submissions from UPNG staff and students and other PNG writers (authors are paid K200 per published blog).
- **PNG project newsletter:** The newsletter provided regular Partnership-related updates every four weeks during Semester 1 and highlights PNG-related research, blogs and events, and currently has over 1,300 subscribers.

## Stream 3: Student and faculty exchanges in economics and public policy

### Masters' students

- **ANU scholarship:** Five ANU scholarship recipients have completed their studies at ANU and returned to lecture in economics at UPNG. Four are now working as lecturers; tragically, one died. Three out of four lecturers are now on permanent contracts. The first recipient, Maholopa Laveil was acting as the Head of Economics Division in July–August 2022. The sixth recipient, Kingtau Mambon successfully completed the first semester of the Master of International and Development Economics (MIDEC) in June. We were unable to have a scholarship student in Canberra for the 2021/2022 round, so for the 2023/2024 round we selected two students, one male and one female. The recipients, David Poka and Anna Kapil successfully completed their first semester of tutoring at UPNG. We commenced preparations for their travel to Australia in 2023 and their ANU admission.
- **UPNG MEPP scholarship:** In 2020, we started providing scholarships to two tutors in public policy, Kenneth Baliwasa and Moses Sakai, to undertake the MEPP and then teach public policy at UPNG as lecturers. Both Kenneth and Moses successfully completed the program and graduated in April 2022. They are currently teaching at SBPP. The 2022/2023 recipients, Raymond Dorum and Loretta Dilu, completed the first trimester successfully. We have also initiated the selection process for the 2023/2024 round.

### ANU Summer School

The selection process for the 2023 Summer School has been completed, and ten candidates (five females and five males) have been selected from the Economics and Public Policy Management divisions.

In Semester 2, we plan to finalise the Summer School program and organise students' travel.

## Stream 4: Project management

### **Partnership management arrangements**

With Dek Joe Sum stepping down from his Project Coordinator role at the end of June, Research Officer Alyssa Leng relocated to PNG to fulfil the project coordination tasks from May–July 2022, followed by Program Officer Arichika Okazaki who filled the gap until August. The new Project Coordinator/Associate Lecturer Andrew Anton Mako will start in September.

### **Management priorities**

Our priority for Semester 1 was a safe relocation of staff members to PNG. We conducted a Work Health Safety Hazard and Risk assessment for each Partnership team member travelling to PNG to ensure appropriate measures could be implemented and to minimise risks.

Due to the 2022 National General Elections, there were some unexpected security issues and concerns for staff and students. Partnership staff maintained frequent contact with the Abt Security team and to ensure the safety of PNG-based staff members.

Facilitating a smooth on-boarding process for new staff members was another area of focus in Semester 1 due to Partnership staff changes. We revised our staff and teaching guidelines to ensure that new staff members and short-term lecturers have access to the information required for their roles. This will remain our management priority in Semester 2 as new Partnership staff join in August and September.

We continued to have monthly meetings with the UPNG team during the semester to facilitate effective communication and collaboration.

## Performance

### Reporting against partnership objectives

The project judges its progress against several important indicators as set out in each annual plan. Performance against these using a 'traffic light' rating system is summarised below. The rating considers the fact that many functions, such as holding events were constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions.

INDICATOR	RATING	COMMENTS
<b>Strengthening SBPP teaching and the student experience</b>		
ANU lecturers in place and teaching at UPNG (in person or virtually)		Australia-based lecturers continued teaching online with minimal disruption, and the PNG-based lecturer continued teaching at UPNG in person.
Virtual lecturing		Semester 1 and Trimester I were successfully completed with minor technical issues.
Teaching evaluations		The lecturers and tutors managed to maintain high evaluation scores. Average course score of 4.1 and lecturer score of 4.3.
ANU-UPNG annual exam in economics		The exam was conducted with 27 students attending.
Induction and mentoring programs		The tutor induction workshop was not held in Semester 1. ANU lecturers provided teaching and mentoring support to four UPNG lecturers and three UPNG tutors.
MEPP		20 students successfully graduated, 17 with Master of Economic and Public Policy and 3 with Diploma in Economic and Public Policy; a record number since the inception of the program. More than 50 students enrolled in 2022, another record. The program is running well.
Undergraduate programs		Positive feedback from course evaluations.



<b>Collaborative Research and Outreach</b>		
Research outputs		<i>Papua New Guinea: Government, Economy and Society</i> was published in March. Significant progress made on the second draft of the economic history book.
ANU-UPNG research collaboration		Both major books, seminar series and other smaller projects show a high level of collaboration.
Seminars/workshops/presentations at ANU/UPNG		Six ANU-UPNG seminars and one workshop.
<b>Student and faculty exchanges in economics and public policy</b>		
ANU scholarships		The current ANU master's student successfully completed Semester 1. Four other ANU Scholarship students are now lecturing at UPNG. The two ANU scholarship recipients for the 2023/2024 round are tutoring at UPNG.
<b>Program management</b>		
COVID-19 safety		COVID-19 action plan under implementation.
Adequate M&E and risk management		Timely reporting. Risk management adequate.

## Challenges, risks and lessons learnt

With Australia and PNG adapting to life with COVID-19, we have shifted towards having three Partnership staff based in Port Moresby. Building on our experience in the last two years, we have also been able to incorporate online teaching into regular course deliveries, which offers the flexibility needed when teaching is disrupted by unexpected events.

We have recommenced key activities that were on hold due to COVID-19, including the ANU Scholarship, PNG Update conference, and ANU Summer School. Overall, the project is going well and on track to complete its deliverables. However, some risks and ongoing challenges remain:

### **UPNG**

- The completion rate of MEPP has improved greatly, however, ongoing close attention to the progress of individual students is needed.
- While the increased number of students enrolled in MEPP is positive, the selection process needs to be tightened to maintain the sustainability and quality of the program. Managing the cap on student numbers is a challenge.
- Many reforms are needed at UPNG, and they are not happening or not happening fast enough. For example, delays in the salary payments of temporary lecturers cause high levels of stress and undermine morale of lecturers.
- Safety for women, and vulnerability to sexual harassment at UPNG, continues to be an issue that needs to be addressed by university management.

### **The Partnership**

- With Partnership staff returning to PNG, it has been important to keep updated on the security and safety conditions in Port Moresby, particularly during the elections period. We will continue to maintain good communication with the Abt Security team for support.