

# UPNG-ANU Partnership: H1 2019 Six Monthly Progress Report

## Summary table

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| <b>Name of Organisation</b>              | Development Policy Centre, Australian National University  |
| <b>Project title</b>                     | UPNG-ANU Partnership   |
| <b>Project objectives</b>                | Faculty strengthening, collaborative research and outreach, faculty and student exchanges and partnership management |
| <b>Grant reference #</b>                 | PGF-2016-0018  |
| <b>Grant Value</b>                       | \$9,033,685.00   |
| <b>Reporting period</b>                  | 1 January – 30 June 2019   |
| <b>Budget for reporting period</b>       | 1,251,781.50   |
| <b>Budget Spent for reporting Period</b> | 1,136,142.77   |
| <b>Budget spent over Grant</b>           | 6,936,099.63   |

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## Section 1: Overview

### Selected achievements from 1 January – 30 June 2019

- **Second annual summer school a success** The second annual UPNG-ANU Summer School was a great success, receiving positive feedback from the students.
- **Scholarship students** Our two scholarship students at ANU did extremely well, passing all courses with some grades at the credit and distinction level. Two past students have graduated and taken up teaching roles back at UPNG.
- **MEPP numbers at sustainable level. With** Australian aid program-funded sponsorships for ten Masters of Economic and Public Policy students, and greater publicity, MEPP student numbers are now at a sustainable level at more than 30.

## Executive Summary

### Faculty strengthening

Nine ANU and ANU-supported staff members convened 12 courses, teaching 99 female and 310 male (409 total) students. Student evaluations continue to showcase the high overall level of teaching.

Enrolment numbers have been boosted in the Master of Economics and Public Policy (MEPP) course, where the Australian Aid program has now funded ten scholarships. The first student graduated from the MEPP.

### Collaborative research and outreach

The partnership continued to support significant PNG-related research in the first half of 2019 under a large research program on a wide range of economic and public policy issues. The UPNG Blog Incentive Scheme, which encourages UPNG staff and students to write submissions for the Devpolicy Blog, has continued and grown. Three blogs have been published under this scheme in the first half of 2019.

### Faculty and student exchanges

The second Summer School took place in January and February this year and received positive feedback from the students. The selection process for the 2020 Summer School is now underway. Our third scholarship student completed his third semester at ANU. Our fourth scholarship student, and the first female awardee of the scholarship, commenced her first semester at ANU. Arrangements are being made for a fifth scholarship student to commence studies in 2020. Planning took place for the 2019 PNG Update, which was successfully held on 8-9 August 2019 (details forthcoming in next half year report).

### Partnership management

A plan and budget for 2020 was submitted. The Phase II proposal was submitted, and plans and budgets for various funding scenarios were prepared as requested.

## Examples of innovative approaches / collaborations

- **ANU-UPNG-Unitech-Femili PNG collaboration.** One of the strongest collaborations in our project brings together UPNG, Unitech and ANU researchers, working with a PNG NGO, Femili PNG. In the past, this research project involved interviews with women in urban settlements about the subject of gender-based violence. A book chapter was recently published on this research. In the first half of 2019, a second phase of this research commenced to include research on men's perspectives of gender-based violence.
- **MEPP scholarships** By working collaboratively between Abt, ANU, UPNG and AHC, ten scholarships were arranged for the Masters of Economics and Public Policy, which has made this course more readily available to the top PNG public servants, as well as protecting the future of the course itself. In 2019, the first MEPP scholarship holders commenced, boosting the course numbers significantly.
- **The 2019 Summer School** The second annual ANU-UPNG Summer School took place in January-February 2019, and was a great success. Ten final year undergraduate students from UPNG came

to study at the Crawford School in pre-sessional Masters preparatory courses. A number of extra-curricular and social activities were held, giving the students a chance to visit different parts of Canberra, meet key stakeholders in the Australia-PNG relationship and develop their leadership skills. Students also attended the 2019 Australasian Aid Conference, giving them exposure to a wide range of research and networking opportunities. The feedback received from students was very positive.

- **Tax experiments** Through the partnership, the Crawford School has been able to bring its expertise to bear to assist PNG IRC with experiments to improve tax compliance, now being undertaken through a separate contract with Abt.

### Cross-cutting issues (gender, disability, child protection and equity)

- Extensive research is being undertaken on gender as part of the partnership.
- Gender equity measures within the program meant that the Summer School cohort for 2019 had six females and four males. The group leaders for the summer school cohorts (one each for economics and public policy) were both female, to encourage access to peer leadership opportunities for female students. The first female scholarship student also commenced at ANU this year.
- The child protection policy that was created last year has now been implemented across the program.

### Key challenges, gaps and lessons learned

- **Future of the project** The uncertainty over the future of the project was a concern during the reporting period. IT has been diminished somewhat with an extension for 2020, but future beyond that unclear.
- **Instability and lack of reform at UNPG** Uncertainty around the selection of the new Vice Chancellor earlier in the year, and changes to the University Council by the Education Minister, led to the delay of the PNG Update, which was moved from June to August. The competitively-recruited Vice Chancellor, Professor Frank Griffin, is now in place and the situation appears to have stabilised. However, progress requires an acceleration of reform.

## Risk Management

- **SBPP capacity and fiscal constraints** Inadequate UPNG capacity in economics remains the program's most serious risk. Fiscal constraints prevented hiring in the last couple of years, but hiring has now opened up. Two of our scholarship students have returned to UPNG in 2019 to teach, and one is now on a short-term contract, and has applied for a longer-term permission.
- **Reputational risks** Reports of sexual harassment involving UPNG staff have now been made public, and threaten to undermine the reputation of UPNG, in addition to doing serious damage to the students involved. We continue to speak out against such practices, and to urge and support the university to do more. The new Vice Chancellor has flagged this as a priority issue to resolve.
- **Need for university reforms** There is a lack of progress on university-wide reforms (such as investing in PNG land, requiring lecturers to undertake evaluations, improving student registration and other services). The new Vice Chancellor is speaking strongly about reforms, which is promising.
- **Disruptions to teaching** Between 4 and 7 March, teaching at UPNG was disrupted as a result of the strike called by the UPNG National Academic Staff Association. Courses taught by ANU staff were not directly affected and teaching was carried out as usual, but such strikes are a reminder of the potential for disruption to teaching and activities.

## Case studies

- **Revival of the Public Policy Management Student Association** After being inactive for the past three years, with the support and guidance of ANU academics, the UPNG's Public Policy Management Student Association (PPMSA) held their first orientation event on April 5. About 30 undergraduate students attended the event, of whom 10 were females. The five ANU-UPNG public policy summer school students attended and share their recent experiences studying at ANU, and their presentations were positively received by their student peers.
- **2019 Summer School** The 2019 Summer School, held in January/February 2019, was a great success. Ten students from UPNG completed courses in the pre-Masters preparatory program at the Crawford School, and attended a variety of meetings with guests such as the Acting PNG High Commissioner, Mr Sakias Tameo, and Mr Chris Elstoft, Assistant Secretary, PNG Branch, DFAT. The students also had the opportunity to attend the 2019 Australasian Aid Conference. During the program, centre staff provided academic and pastoral care support for the students. The feedback received from the students was very positive.

## Section 2: Implementation progress

### Implementation Progress: 1 July to 31 December 2019

#### Strategic output/outcome 1: Faculty Strengthening

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| <b>Status of activity</b> | On track |
|---------------------------|----------|

#### Faculty changes

Once again, Associate Professor Martin Davies joined the project for the May to August period. Dr Nemat Bizhan joined the project in January 2019, replacing Dr Lhawang Ugyel. Dr Marcel Schoder also joined the project from May to August to fill a teaching gap with the upcoming departure of Dr Amanda Watson (end August 2019).

#### Teaching

Five ANU lecturers and four ANU-supported lecturers taught 12 courses with 99 female and 305 male (404 total) students. A list of all courses taught is provided below.

|    | Course                               | Lecturer | Year Level | Semester/Trimester | Students |     |          |       | Course evaluations |                        |                          |
|----|--------------------------------------|----------|------------|--------------------|----------|-----|----------|-------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
|    |                                      |          |            |                    | F        | M   | Disabled | Total | Response rate (%)  | Ave. course score (/5) | Ave. lecturer score (/5) |
| 1  | Econometrics                         | Pandey   | UG4        | S1                 | 7        | 21  | 0        | 28    | 64%                | 4.7                    | 4.9                      |
| 2  | Advanced Microeconomics              | Nguyen   | UG3        | S1                 | 3        | 22  | 0        | 25    | 80%                | 4.4                    | 4.5                      |
| 3  | Principles of Microeconomics         | Sum      | UG2        | S1                 | 36       | 62  | 0        | 98    | 85%                | 4.6                    | 4.9                      |
| 4  | Comparative Public Sector Management | Bizhan   | UG3        | S1                 | 11       | 31  | 0        | 42    | 79%                | 4.6                    | 4.6                      |
| 5  | Quantitative Economics I             | Nguyen   | UG3        | S1                 | 6        | 50  | 0        | 56    | 95%                | 4.3                    | 4.7                      |
| 6  | Governance and Institutions          | Watson   | PG1        | T1                 | 8        | 27  | 0        | 35    | 80%                | 4.8                    | 4.9                      |
| 7  | Quantitative Research Methods        | Odhuno   | PG1        | T1                 | 7        | 23  | 0        | 30    | 83%                | 3.5                    | 3.5                      |
| 8  | PNG Economic and Policy Issues       | Ezebilo  | PG2        | T1                 | 0        | 3   | 0        | 3     | 100%               | 4.7                    | 4.9                      |
| 9  | Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy    | Davies   | PG1        | T2                 | 7        | 21  | 0        | 28    | NA                 | NA                     | NA                       |
| 10 | Global and Economic Policy Issues    | Schroder | PG2        | T2                 | 0        | 3   | 0        | 3     | NA                 | NA                     | NA                       |
| 11 | Issues in Public Sector Management   | Bizhan   | PG1        | T2                 | 7        | 21  | 0        | 28    | NA                 | NA                     | NA                       |
| 12 | Qualitative Research Methods         | Watson   | PG1        | T2                 | 7        | 21  | 0        | 28    | NA                 | NA                     | NA                       |
|    | TOTAL/AVERAGE                        |          |            |                    | 99       | 305 | 0        | 404   | 83%                | 4.5                    | 4.6                      |

Note: MEPP T2 courses will also be reported on in the next report, as they were not completed by 30 June.

The average course evaluation score was 4.5. By comparison, ANU college averages for learning experience at ANU range from 3.6 to 4.2. The average evaluation response rate was 83%, which is very high. One course (a MEPP course, Quantitative Research Methods) showed a disappointing student evaluation. This has been discussed with the lecturer concerned, and remedial measures put in place.

### Initiatives to improve teaching

- **Curriculum development** Two new courses, Monetary Economics and Public Economics, were due to commence in 2019, however this was postponed due to the uncertainty in the first semester. A new course, Labour Economics, will be taught by Manoj Pandey in Semester Two.
- **Textbooks and SBPP librarian** The project funded SBPP to hire a librarian in 2017 to establish a dedicated library. In May 2019, the library was opened.

### Engaging students and building links

- **Film discussion nights** These film nights were put on hold in H1 2019 due to the university-wide disruptions, however will return in the second half of the year. There continues to be interest in the film nights, with the Facebook page maintained by Rohan Fox. Dr Bizhan will take over coordination of the upcoming film nights after Dr Watson's departure.
- **Student associations** The partnership has allocated a budget of up to 5,000 Kina per semester for the Economics Student Society (ESS) and the Public Policy Association (PPA). Funding is subject to the submission of a formal budget and the approval by the Dean SBPP. The ESS had their annual day on March 28 to celebrate the new incoming committee members, and held their annual orientation night on April 10. After being inactive for three years, with the support and guidance of ANU academics, the PPSMA had their first orientation event on April 5. About 30 undergraduates attended, of whom 10 were female. At both the ESS and PPSMA orientation events, the 2019 summer school students attended their respective associations to share their recent experiences studying at ANU, which was positively received by their peers.
- **Guest lectures** Partnership staff gave or arranged 7 guest lectures.
- **Facebook advertising** In PNG Facebook is one of, if not the only, website which is free for users to browse on mobile phone (i.e. no data costs). For this reason Facebook has become highly utilised and a very important and powerful tool to connect people and share information. The Devpolicy PNG Facebook now posts articles from the Devpolicy Blog, entirely hosted by Facebook, so that more PNG users can access them without data subscriptions. With the addition of advertising of around \$30 per month for six months, the Devpolicy PNG Facebook site has gone from around 100 subscribers to over 10,000. Mr Rohan Fox has taken carriage of this project.

### Graduate outlook, outcomes and links

On 28 April, the 64<sup>th</sup> UPNG Graduation Ceremony was held. A highlight of this ceremony was that Mr Charles Wapinien became the first student to graduate from the Masters of Economics and Public Policy

course, a flagship program under the partnership. SBPP produced 449 graduates, many of whom have been taught by the ANU-UPNG academics across the different courses offered by SBPP.

The annual ANU Economics exam will be conducted in the second half of the year.

## Strategic output/outcome 2: Collaborative Research and Outreach

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| <b>Status of activity</b> | On track |
|---------------------------|----------|

### The PNG Project

The PNG Project is a program of research on PNG. In the first half of 2019, academics continued working across 28 projects under the headings of: economics; governance and elections; service delivery; and gender.

Funding for PNG Project research comes from a variety of sources. In addition to the Moresby-based faculty, in H1 2019 the Partnership funded 100% of the costs of Research Fellow Michelle Rooney; 25% of the costs of Research Fellow Dr Terence Wood; and 100% of a Research Officer Rohan Fox. Dr Grant Walton, who had gone off the project in H2 2018 to complete other work, returned and 50% of his costs were funded by the partnership in H1 2019.

### PNG Project databases

- **PNG Elections Database website:** The database has now been completely updated with 2017 general elections data and is [available online](#). A peer-reviewed discussion paper on the 2017 election was published to accompany the launch of the data.
- **PNG Budget Database website:** The [PNG Budget Database](#) was updated for a fourth time in the first half of 2019 and published.

### Publications

Eight publications were supported by the partnership in the period, as shown in [Annex Table 3](#).

### Research, policy and training workshops

The Development Policy Centre organised or supported 11 PNG-related research, policy and training conferences and workshops, 8 at UPNG and 2 at ANU.

### Conference and seminar presentations

Project staff made 20 seminar and conference presentations.

### Outreach

- **The Devpolicy Blog** [Devpolicy.org](#) is the online public outreach portal for the Development Policy



Centre at ANU. This website is used for communicating and discussing much of the development, economic and public policy research relating to PNG undertaken by ANU. The partnership grant supports editorial work on blog posts about PNG. In the first half of 2019, Devpolicy.org published 58 blog posts related to PNG, with 32 directly on PNG and 26 covering broader Pacific issues. Fourteen of these blogs were authored or co-authored by Papua New Guineans, and 22 by women. These blog posts are widely read in PNG, and often picked up by the PNG media.

- The **UPNG Blog Incentive Scheme** has continued, which encourages blog submissions from UPNG staff and students. The scheme offers 200 Kina for blogs written by UPNG staff and students that are published on the Devpolicy Blog. In the first half of the year, three blogs by UPNG staff and students have been accepted and published on the blog.
- **Engagement with media and other public outreach.** Engagement with media and other public outreach in the period included 19 media engagements.
- **Other engagement** Project staff participated in a variety of other workshops and meetings with the government, donors, private sector, some 49 meetings.
- **The Devpolicy PNG Newsletter** provided regular PNG partnership related news every four weeks. Mr Rohan Fox coordinates this newsletter, which covers partnership related research and blogs, and provides general partnership related updates. The newsletter is now also [available online](#).
- **2019 PNG Update** planning took place during H1, with the conference itself falling in H2.
- **Outreach via Facebook** In PNG Facebook is one of, if not the only, website which is free for users to browse on mobile phone (i.e. no data costs). For this reason Facebook has become highly utilised and a very important and powerful tool to connect people and share information. The Devpolicy PNG Facebook now posts articles from the Devpolicy Blog, entirely hosted by Facebook, so that more PNG users can access them without data subscriptions. With the addition of advertising of around \$30 per month for six months, the Devpolicy PNG Facebook site has gone from around 100 subscribers to over 10,000. Mr Rohan Fox has taken carriage of this project.

### Strategic output/outcome 3: Faculty and Student Exchanges

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| <b>Status of activity</b> | On track |
|---------------------------|----------|

#### Masters students

Two long-term ANU scholarship recipients have completed their studies at ANU and returned to teach at UPNG in Semester 1 2019. A third student continues his studies at ANU, and a fourth student, the first female recipient of the scholarship, commenced her studies at ANU in H1 2019. Preparations are being made for a fifth student to commence his scholarship in 2020.

#### Summer school

The 2019 ANU-UPNG Summer School was a major success. A report was completed and submitted not long after its conclusion, and it is not repeated here. Preparations have commenced for the 2020 Summer School.

### **Staff exchanges**

A number of ANU staff and other Australian researchers visited UPNG for research, and some UPNG staff participated in the Pacific Update (USP, Fiji) conferences.

### **Strategic output/outcome 4: Partnership management**

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| <b>Status of activity</b> | On track |
|---------------------------|----------|

### **Partnership management arrangements**

Ms Madeleine Flint finished up as Program Officer for the partnership in March 2019. Ms Hanna Selesela Faaaliga and Mr Arichika Okazaki are temporarily filling the Program Officer role on a casual/job share arrangement until more permanent arrangements are made. Ms Sachini Muller, who was 0.1FTE for the partnership to edit the blog, moved to a new role in April 2019 and has been replaced by Ms Holly Lawton.

### **Management priorities**

A proposal for a second phase of the project was submitted, and budgets and plans were drawn up as requested for various extension scenarios.

## Section 3: Performance

### 1. Logframe / Theory of Change

- **The project takes a long-term approach.** Aid funding for this partnership may wax and wane (and we hope it waxes) but the project has been set up to be here for the long term, at least a decade. Of course, there is no guarantee it will last for a decade, but that is the intent: there is little point to setting up a shorter-term project.
- **The concept of partnership is critical.** Both parties have skin in the game. Both have made a long-term commitment to the partnership. Both are prepared to discuss and resolve issues in a transparent manner.
- **The benefits of the project are both direct and indirect.** Perhaps the most important, certainly the most tangible, benefits of the project are for the students who otherwise might receive no teaching, and certainly a lower quality of teaching. These are the future leaders of PNG after all. But there are also important indirect benefits – the systemic changes, the research and outreach. This dual approach serves as both a risk mitigation approach and as a way to maximise project value.
- **The project has and requires strong support from the highest levels.** Australia’s former Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, initiated the expansion of the project during a meeting in mid-2014 with the then ANU Vice Chancellor. It is strongly supported by ANU and UPNG at the highest levels. Given the difficulty of the project, this is critical for success.
- **The project has strong UPNG ownership.** The project is as much a UPNG initiative as an ANU one. It was the UPNG VC’s initiative to seek a new MOU with ANU, and it was his drive that brought that into fruition. The SBPP Dean plays a critical role in providing day-to-day support to the partnership and its various initiatives. Without this, the project would undoubtedly falter.
- **The project takes an adaptive, learning-by-doing, and adjusting-as-we-go approach.** This is the only approach that makes sense. We learn as we go, documenting what we learn along the way.
- **The project values continuity.** To develop good relationships, and to learn to be effective, staff need to be in place for as long as possible. Long-standing relationships between ANU and UPNG faculty are key to the success of the partnership. If project staff do well, we want them to stay for as long as possible.
- **The project is based on realistic expectations and seeks incremental gains.** It would be foolhardy to wish away the systemic challenges that UPNG faces in a range of areas. No external intervention can turn UPNG around, or even a part of the university. However, an external intervention can make a difference, and be judged a success, provided realistic expectations are maintained.

### 2. Reporting against Partnership Objectives

The partnership undertakes a number of M&E exercises. Evaluations are undertaken for every course and show positive results. An economics exam is set annually to monitor student learning (this will be held in the second half of the year). Positive results from the Summer School evaluation were received and have been circulated separately.

The project also judges itself against a number of important indicators as set out in each annual plan. Performance against these using a “traffic light” rating system is summarised below.

| INDICATOR  | RATING | COMMENTS  |
|--|--------|---|
| <b>Teaching improvement (Faculty strengthening)</b>  |        |   |
| ANU lecturers in place and teaching at UPNG  |        | While there is some turnover, overall it remains low. We expect over five years, the five available positions to be filled by eight staff, implying an average tenure of three years. Temporary arrangements have been made to cover classes for departing staff. Risks may emerge in the final year of the project, where it will be difficult to replace staff. |
| Positive student evaluations of courses taught by ANU lecturers  |        | Overall positive. Average course score of 4.5   |
| Masters in Economics and Public Policy established, with last year's cohort able to complete their second (final) year of this program   |        | Greater enrolments in 2019 due to AHC scholarships and greater publicity thanks to Abt. However, issues around the research project threaten to halt completion and need to be resolved.  |
| Improved teaching: increased use of course websites; improved availability of textbooks and/or notes to students; increased use by students of computers in the course of learning; increased use of evaluations |        | Wireless data storage devices have been purchased and it was intended that these would be used from Semester 1 2019. There have been some technical difficulties in using the devices, which has led to a delay in these being rolled out. Better facility has made a huge difference, but security set up makes it harder for staff and students to interact.    |
| ANU-UPNG annual exam in economics shows increased number of students doing well  |        | NA – this exam will be held in S2 2019.   |
| Opportunities for students to link with employers  |        | Limited progress in this area.  |
| Increased number of SPBB staffing positions filled   |        | SBPP Division of Economics increased to three full- time faculty members. However, one is on short-term contract.   |
| Greater emphasis in courses on critical thinking, development of problem solving skills, and PNG-related content where appropriate.  |        | Continued course improvements.  |
| <b>Research and outreach</b>   |        |   |
| Number of Discussion Papers and blogs produced on PNG  |        | In the first half of 2019, 32 PNG-related blogs were published; 14 were by PNG co/authors. In addition to blog posts, there were eight other publications.  |
| Extent of participation by UPNG staff in partnership research activities and output  |        | UPNG and ANU staff jointly presented and collaborated on a number of research projects (see Annex 3).   |
| Number of papers and attendance at PNG Update  |        | NA – PNG Update will be held in H2 2019.  |
| Number of seminars/workshops at UPNG   |        | 4 seminars/workshops held   |
| Presentations relating to PNG at ANU   |        | 2 conference sessions/seminars  |
| Number of UPNG staff presenting at PNG Update  |        | NA – PNG Update will be held in H2 2019.  |
| <b>Staff and student exchange</b>  |        |   |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Number of ANU staff visits to UPNG   |  | ANU staff members made numerous visits to UPNG in the period.   |
| Number of UPNG staff visits to ANU   |  | Lack of travel by UPNG staff to ANU in first half year, but did happen in July. However, UPNG staff travel to Pacific Update (an ANU event) and further travel planned in second semester   |
| Progress of Masters Students   |  | Both Masters students did very well in S1 2019, with some grades at credit and distinction level.   |
| Successful 2019 summer school and planning for 2020  |  | Planning is on track for the 2020 summer school, with the interview process underway.   |
| <b>Program management</b>  |  |   |
| Timely and comprehensive M&E and reporting   |  | All reports have been submitted on, including comprehensive M&E.  |
| Project able to acquit and report expenditure on a timely basis  |  | All reports have been submitted on timer.   |
| Visas and all logistics managed in a timely basis to visiting faculty (short- and long-term)               |  | The axing of the multiple entry business visa and the closure of the Canberra embassy for short-term visas has meant that we have had to spend a lot of time investigating visa options for staff. We are now using the online system for most visas, which is slightly more expensive, but is the only option for many visiting staff. We are also investigating other visa options. |
| All required hiring undertaken in a timely manner, and staff turnover managed without excessive disruption |  | Done.   |
| Strong filing and documentation to reduce risks associated with staff turnover                             |  | We continue to maintain our strong documentation practices and are continually updating guidelines and processes to avoid any knowledge being lost with staff turnover.   |
| Clear policies in place to guide project management and to ensure contractual compliance.                  |  | Done  |



