

ANU-UPNG Partnership: 2024 Annual Plan

25 January 2024

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Introduction

The second phase of the ANU-UPNG Partnership project commenced in 2021 and runs to 2026. However, for the next two years, project funding has been cut and the cap on positions in Port Moresby reduced. This plan seeks to build on successes achieved and foundations laid in the previous years bearing in mind the reduced budget. The project philosophy is outlined in [Annex 1](#).

The main objective of the project is to address critical weaknesses within SBPP and help realise a stronger SBPP. The project also aims to build a deeper and lasting relationship with ANU. The project has four work areas or “streams” to achieve these objectives. They are:

1. Strengthening SBPP teaching and the student experience;
2. Collaborative research and outreach;
3. Student and faculty exchanges in economics and public policy/public administration; and
4. Project management.

While the project only has two years to run, we think there is value for a third phase beyond 2025. We will start to work on this in 2024.

Stream 1: Strengthening SBPP teaching and the student experience

Teaching

- In 2024, project staff and associates, and returned ANU graduates will teach about 24 courses. This will be among the largest number of courses taught yet, and with the lowest ratio of expatriate to PNG lecturers, consistent with our philosophy of localisation.
- ANU staff will undertake a mix of online and in-person teaching (given the two-person cap).
- Andrew Anton Mako, who joined the Partnership as a new Project Coordinator/Visiting Lecturer in September 2022, taught two courses in 2023, and will teach them again in 2024. He will remain our only fulltime Port Moresby staff. Other staff will visit POM as per the lecturing schedule.
- To maximise in-person teaching and to promote sustainability, we are increasing the number of PNG staff we will have teaching MEPP programs, with two new staff to be trialled this year. Both are ANU PhD graduates, thereby retaining the link with ANU.
- Five returned ANU-graduates will be lecturing at UPNG in economics, a record. **Table 1** provides indicative teaching based on initial discussions with UPNG.

Table 1: Undergraduate teaching

No.	Course name	Lecturer/s name	Year Level
Semester I (Feb-June)			
1	Foundation Economics	Andrew Anton Mako	1
2	Cost-Benefit Analysis	Maholova Laveil and Jollanda Mathew	4
3	Public Economics	Kingtau Mambon	4
4	Principles of Microeconomics	Jollanda Mathew	2
5	Advanced Microeconomics	Jollanda Mathew	3
6	Quantitative Economics I	Kelly Samof	3
7	International Economics	Kelly Samof	3
8	Natural Resource Economics	Bobby Kunda	4
Semester II (July-Dec)			
9	Monetary Economics	Kelly Samof	4
10	Principles of Macroeconomics	Andrew Anton Mako	2
11	Advanced Macroeconomics	Maholova Laveil	3
12	Quantitative Economics II	Kelly Samof	3
13	Economic Policy	Jollanda Mathew	4
14	Economic Development	Bobby Kunda	4
15	Environmental Economics	Bobby Kunda	4

Postgraduate teaching (MEPP)

No.	Course name	Lecturer/s name	Year Level
Trimester I (Feb-May)			
16	Quantitative Research Methods	Thomas Wangi	1
17	Governance and Institutions	Terence Wood	1
Trimester II (May-Aug)			
18	Issues in Public Sector Management	Nematullah Bizhan	1

10	Qualitative Research Methods	Almah Tararia	1
20	Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy	Martin Davies	1
21	Global Economic and Policy Issues	Eugene Ezebilo	2
Trimester III (Aug-Dec)			
22	Applied Cost-benefit Analysis	Toan Nguyen	1
23	Development Thinking and Policy	Nematullah Bizhan	1
Yearlong course			
24	MEPP research papers	Nematullah Bizhan and Lawrence Sause	2

Initiatives to improve teaching

- **Lecturer and tutor mentoring:** ANU staff will provide teaching and mentoring support to the returned ANU Masters graduates (Maholopa Laveil, Kelly Samof, Jollanda Mathew, Bobby Kunda and Kingtau Mambon) and four UPNG economics and public policy management tutors. In 2023, monthly informal meetings were introduced and convened to mentor and support the returned ANU Masters graduates and four UPNG tutors in teaching and research. This will continue in 2024.
- **Tutors:** The Partnership will continue to support SBPP with tutors as in previous years. In 2024, six tutors who are/were sponsored by the Partnership will teach various undergraduate courses at SBPP, including in the economics and public policy management divisions.
- **Mobile internet:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Partnership provided lecturers and tutors a monthly allowance of 50GB to help with online teaching and activities. However, as most of the courses will be delivered in person this year, this support will only be provided to those UPNG staff assisting with online teaching and project activities that require internet connectivity. Due to the instability of the power supply and internet at SBPP, providing this additional support is essential for smooth running of online teaching and activities.
- **Economics exam.** In the last two years, performance has declined in the economics (3rd and 4th year) exam. We have come up with an action plan to reverse this and will implement it.
- **MEPP.** A merit-based selection process will be implemented in 2024 for the selection of the 2025 cohort.

Improving the student experience

- **Student associations:** In 2024, the Partnership has allocated a budget of up to 5,000 Kina per semester for student-led learning and outreach initiatives in economics and public policy. Funding to the Economics Student Society (ESS) and the Public Policy and Management Student Association (PPMSA) will require submission of a formal budget and activity plan to Partnership staff and head of divisions. Students can access the grant only upon approval of the budget and activity plan.

- **Alumni Association:** As part of the Partnership’s effort to maintain contact with UPNG alumni, we will continue to promote and expand our economics and public policy alumni Facebook and LinkedIn pages for recent graduates and use a WhatsApp group for discussions and contacts to also provide them with a platform to stay better connected after the completion of their study at UPNG.
- **UPNG Inspired film discussion nights:** This has been one of the key activities of the Partnership, and something we are now handing over to the university. As in 2023, we have started to operate this in partnership with UPNG’s Public Relations and Marketing department in coordination with Port Moresby-based diplomatic missions to also showcase films.
- **Reading workshop:** Last year, we shifted the focus of this to the undergraduate level. As in 2023, in 2024 we will hold a series of reading workshops to provide SBPP undergraduate students with an opportunity to practice reading and analysing academic papers on PNG-related issues. ANU Scholarship recipient, Jollanda Mathew will lead the coordination of the series (with the support of Andrew Anton Mako and Jezreel Kassam), and plans to hold a workshop two times per semester.
- **Career talk and alumni sharing workshop:** Building on the success and positive feedback from the previous years, we will hold another career talk and alumni sharing workshop in August/September, in partnership with the UPNG Economics Students Society. In this workshop, third and fourth year SBPP students will learn career development skills from invited speakers from both public and private sectors, and job-searching tips from UPNG alumni.
- **Job placement:** The Partnership goes to considerable efforts to help graduates find jobs. We will continue providing this support in many ways, which includes collecting CVs and transcripts of all the final-year students and sending them to various government departments.

Stream 2: Collaborative research and outreach

The PNG Update

- In 2024, the PNG Update is proposed for 21-22 August at SBPP. The Partnership staff will work closely with SBPP staff for the conference organisation. Based on the generally very positive feedback from the 2023 conference, for the next Update we will aim to:
 - Continue to encourage submissions from female researchers, especially from PNG;
 - Continue to ensure one or preferably more female keynote speakers;
 - Improving the handling of logistical issues on conference days e.g. the reliability of the PA system and time management; and
 - Increasing the survey evaluation response rate from participants.

The PNG Project

- Collaborative research will continue to be pursued. Key research projects include the following:
 - **Student views:** We plan to survey the views of students more systematically.
 - **PNG MP business links:** The research led by the sixth ANU scholarship receipt, Kingtau Mambon and Professor Stephen Howes examines the business links of individual MPs elected

- in the 2022 elections
- Another **student tracer study** will be conducted.
- **Gender research**, including on GBV and polygamy, will be published.
- **Economic and social commentary** will be published through the Devpolicy Blog and national newspapers.
- **The PNG economic history book**, *Struggle, reform, boom and bust: An economic history of Papua New Guinea since independence*, has been sent to the publisher and will be revised based on comments received.
- **Independent Advisory Group on Central Banking Act**: The final report is expected to be published in early 2024.

PNG Databases

We will keep our five databases up to date.

- **PNG MP Database** (<https://devpolicy.org/pngmps/>)
- **PNG Budget Database** (<https://devpolicy.crawford.anu.edu.au/png-project/png-budget-database>)
- **PNG Elections Database** (<https://devpolicy.org/pngelections/>) [Subject to data availability]
- **PNG Economic Database** (<https://devpolicy.org/pngeconomic>)
- **PNG District Level Database** (https://figshare.com/articles/dataset/Untitled_Item/14456229) [No updating required.]

We will expand the PNG Budget Database to include provincial-level fiscal data.

Research support

- **SBPP librarian**: We will continue to support a Port Moresby-based librarian located in the SBPP to improve the research environment for staff and students.
- **Supervision of research students**: We will continue to supervise MEPP research students and PhD research students.
- **Blog Incentive Scheme**: The Blog Incentive Scheme, launched in 2018, will continue. This scheme encourages blog submissions from UPNG staff and students, and occasionally other PNG writers. The scheme offers 200 Kina for blogs that are published on the Devpolicy Blog.

Outreach

- **ANU-UPNG seminar series**: The ANU-UPNG seminar series was introduced in 2021. The series provides a platform for research supported through the Partnership and to invite guest speakers who are also working on issues in PNG. The seminars are run in a hybrid format (in-person and online), and held in two venues – ANU Crawford School and UPNG SBPP – simultaneously. This series will resume in February/March 2024.
- **The Devpolicy Blog**: Devpolicy.org is the online research outreach portal for the Development Policy Centre at the ANU. This website is increasingly used by UPNG and other PNG researchers. Many blog

posts are republished in the PNG media, expanding the readership further to inform policy debates and discussion. This will continue in 2024. 'Devpolicy Blog PNG' Facebook page will continue to make full-text versions of blog posts available, to increase access to this work among people based in PNG who are able to access Facebook, but not webpages such as blogs, without additional data costs through their mobile providers.

- **Devpol PNG Project News:** The newsletter is sent out to subscribers every four weeks to provide Partnership-related updates, and research and blogs on PNG.

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

Masters students

- **ANU scholarship:** The Partnership has a long-term ANU scholarship program to support the most promising UPNG graduates in economics through postgraduate study of a Master of International and Development Economics (MIDEC) at ANU. Upon the completion of their study, the scholarship recipients return to a faculty position at SBPP. In 2024 we will support three scholarship recipients: David Poka and Anna Kapil and Masidah Tonaim to study MIDEC at ANU. Masidah joined Anna and David in January 2024.
- **MEPP scholarship:** To support the development of public policy faculty, the Partnership supports two public policy tutors to study the MEPP at UPNG per year. The 2024/2025 recipient, Molly Yokko, the School Librarian, will commence her study in Trimester I this year.

ANU Summer School

The annual ANU Summer School is a four-week intensive program held at ANU. The program supports the learning and development of UPNG's top ten undergraduate performers in economics and public policy. It prepares them to achieve their highest potential in their final year of study. In 2024, we will undertake the 2024 Summer School (underway at the time of writing) and prepare for the 2025 Summer School. Candidates for the 2025 ANU Summer School will be selected during Semester 1 of 2024. Due to the delays that we experienced in students' passport and visa applications in 2022, we again plan to start the preparation earlier than previous years.

Stream 4: Project management

Partnership management

The Partnership management will continue to provide vital remote logistical and team support to ensure an effective and smooth project delivery. We will continue to monitor any changes in the security and COVID-19 situation in PNG to ensure staff members' safety, by maintaining regular contact with the Abt team in PNG. We will continue to have regular meetings with the UPNG team during the semester to facilitate effective communication and collaboration.

Child Protection (CP) and Protection against Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH)

- All staff are required to sign the Abt Code of Conduct.

- All staff sign a voluntary code of conduct that binds them to the highest standards.
- Staff are also bound by the ANU Code of Conduct, which covers, among other things, the prevention of discrimination, harassment and bullying.
- At a staff meeting in the second half of last year, Project Director Professor Stephen Howes went through the codes of conducts and reiterated the importance of the various principles contained therein.
- The project has a Child Protection plan agreed to with Abt.

Risks

The proposed approach faces several risks. [Annex 2: Risk management matrix](#) outlines the risks identified and mitigation strategies.

Gender and inclusion

Promoting gender equity and inclusion is important for the Partnership. The following measures are being taken:

1. Balanced gender participation in the summer school.
2. Balanced gender participation in top-student awards.
3. Affirmative action in selection of women for scholarships.
4. Focus on gender and inclusion in our research program.
5. Promotion of gender equity within the UPNG context.
6. Balanced gender participation in the PNG Update.

Performance

The Partnership undertakes several M&E exercises, which include the following:

- Student evaluations on course and lecturers.
- The annual economics exam, an integral part of assessing the students' academic progress. We aim to increase the exam participation to improve from the substantial decrease last year.
- A survey will be conducted with final-year undergraduate and postgraduate students to collect information on their employment expectations and reflections on their coursework at UPNG.

The Partnership will examine its progress against several important indicators in this annual plan. Performance against those specified indicators will be accessed and will be reported in two six-monthly progress reports.

INDICATOR	Measures
Strengthening SBPP teaching and the student experience	
ANU lecturers in place and teaching at UPNG (in person or online)	Number of staff teaching each term or semester at UPNG; number of courses by program and number of students taught.
Online lecturing	Successful use of Zoom/UPNG e-learning/Google classroom in online lectures.
Teaching evaluations	Average scores of all ANU lecturers and all courses taught by them.
ANU-UPNG annual exam in economics	High participation in the annual exam with better performance.
Induction and mentoring programs	Number of staff mentored, and tutor induction workshop conducted.
MEPP	Number of students participating and graduating; feedback of students; smooth running of program.
Undergraduate programs	Feedback from students via exit survey indicating improvement at SBPP.
Collaborative Research and Outreach	
Research outputs	Textbook and economic history book at advanced stage of publication.
ANU-UPNG research collaboration	Extent of participation by UPNG/PNG staff in Partnership research activities and outreach.
Seminars/workshops/presentations at ANU/UPNG	Number of seminars/workshops/presentations on PNG at ANU and/or UPNG.
Student and faculty exchanges in economics and public policy	
ANU scholarships	Current master's students successful completion of first year of study at ANU and progress on MEPP scholarship holders at UPNG.
Program management	
Adequate M&E and risk management	Timely and comprehensive M&E and reporting; Adequate measures to manage risks.

Annex 1 Project philosophy

This project philosophy has been carried over (with appropriate updating) from the first phase of the project.

- **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. Focusing on longer-term outcomes enables us to adapt to the many surprises and unanticipated twists and turns along the way, including, most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **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, 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 Julie Bishop MP initiated the expansion of the project during a meeting in mid-2014 with the then ANU Vice Chancellor. The high-level champion of the project is currently the PNG Treasurer. Given the difficulty of the project, high-level support 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 former 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 recent incorporation of online teaching into regular course deliveries is a good example of the project’s flexibility and evolution.
- **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.

Annex 2 Risk management matrix

In this matrix, we seek to define risk mitigation strategies that are flexible and responsive. The list below identifies what we believe to be the key risks for the successful implementation of this project for 2023 and beyond.

KEY:

low	medium	High
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Risk	Likelihood of occurrence	Potential impact if risk not mitigated	Stakeholders responsible for mitigation	Mitigation strategy
Country/government-Level Risk				
COVID-19 threatens health of ANU staff based in POM			ANU	Follow COVID-19 advice and restrictions appropriately
Online teaching does not proceed smoothly			UPNG, ANU	Focus on troubleshooting; additional infrastructure support, more staff recruited to help
Political interference in the university			PNG Government	UPNG performance improves, reducing the scope for interference
A loss of support by the Australian Government impacts adversely on the Precinct and/or ANU-UPNG Partnership		Cancellation of project or reduction in funding for Partnership staff that makes it difficult to achieve stated goals.	ANU and UPNG, AHC/DFAT, PNG Government	Maintain effective liaison with all stakeholders
A loss of support by PNG Government impacts adversely on the Precinct and/or ANU-UPNG Partnership		Cancellation of project or significant political interference from the PNG Government in project.	ANU and UPNG; PNG Treasurer.	ANU and UPNG to ensure effective implementation of project and maintain effective liaison with VC and UPNG Executive. Support Precinct-wide efforts at coordination and liaison, and efforts to liaise and engage with PNG government agencies and Ministers.

Risk	Likelihood of occurrence	Potential impact if risk not mitigated	Stakeholders responsible for mitigation	Mitigation strategy
The PNG Government's fiscal position deteriorates to the point where SBPP performance fails to improve, and perhaps deteriorates.		Fund shortages leading to staff vacancies, risk of WHS issues, ongoing internet problems etc.	PNG Government, UPNG, PGF, AHC.	Encourage UPNG to fill vacancies. Encourage UPNG to use its property to generate cash. Maintain effective liaison with VC UPNG, Dean SBPP, PGF and AHC. Monitor WHS and cover costs of critical infrastructure repair, if required.
Economic factors result in an upsurge in insecurity in Port Moresby, making life in Moresby difficult or impossible for our staff.		Incident(s) of (violent) crime that directly affect staff member(s) or their dependent(s).	ANU, PGF, UPNG, RPNGC	All ANU staff and their dependents always follow PGF and UPNG security protocols and advisories. ANU, PGF and UPNG take an inherently conservative approach with respect to the safety and security of project staff. Involvement of police, as appropriate.
Policy change in PNG results in new conditions – or exclusions – for foreigners working in certain sectors in PNG.		Cancellation of visas for project staff. End to collaborative teaching program for an indeterminate period.	PNG Government, UPNG, AHC.	Maintain effective liaison with all counterparts, including PNG government.
Staff recruited internationally into the project have problems obtaining permits to work for the ANU (i.e., Australian temporary work visa). That UPNG staff or students have problems obtaining visas for short- or long-course study in Australia.		New project staff members or students are delayed in their deployment to UPNG or Australia. In some cases, staff or students may be unable to obtain visas.	ANU, PNG Government, DFAT, Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection.	Maintain effective liaison with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby, to keep them apprised of all aspects of the project, including staffing, staff/student exchanges and other challenges.

Agency (SBPP/UPNG) Level Risk

Risk	Likelihood of occurrence	Potential impact if risk not mitigated	Stakeholders responsible for mitigation	Mitigation strategy
Student discontent with UPNG or PNG policies leads to protest.		Protracted student / staff strike might force a cessation to teaching at UPNG.	UPNG and ANU, PNG Government.	ANU partnership staff are active in support of their colleagues and counterparts at UPNG. Maintaining close communications and good relations with all stakeholders and always working in a collaborative, open manner is key.
Lack of broader change at UPNG leads to inability to diffuse benefits from the project to the SBPP and broader university (e.g., no adoption of regular course evaluations, continued internet problems).		Benefits from project still real but reduced in scope.	ANU, UPNG, AHC.	Continued dialogue with UPNG around the importance of advancing university reforms.
Project benefits are unsustainable.		Loss of capacity in key areas of collaboration. Possibility that new initiatives cannot be sustained.	ANU and UPNG.	Sustainability measures put in place.
The focus on academic and research support for only two of the eight Divisions within the SBPP may be too narrow and have adverse consequences.		Undermining of support for the project.	ANU and UPNG.	The Partnership seeks to engage staff from across SBPP and UPNG more broadly where possible, particularly in workshops and training courses.