

## Buzz: Evaluation | Papua New Guinea

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Here's a quick round-up of some of the stories that have created a buzz or otherwise caught our attention over the last week.

### Mapping the aid world

For some interesting illustrations of the aid world, check out Global Humanitarian Assistance's [map of humanitarian aid players](#) and [map of aid delivery](#).

### UK's new trade and investment framework

Last Wednesday the UK government launched its trade White Paper entitled *Trade and investment for growth*. In Dirk Williem te Velde's ODI blog [post](#):

- *UK trade, investment and migration policies*: Whilst the paper is good on trade and investment openness, from an economic perspective it is incredible that a paper focusing on growth fails to cover migration... importing skills can be just as important as importing cheap goods.
- *Multilateral trade negotiations*: The Paper prioritises the conclusion of the WTO Doha Development Round and [commissioned a paper from trade experts](#) to regain momentum. Perhaps [other trade and non-trade economic issues](#) are more important for the poorest countries.
- *Aid for Trade*: Trade will become a central. There is much attention on supporting regional integration, with an overemphasis on advocating for *new* regional structures. Does this suggest new ways of providing blended development finance?

It would have been worthwhile for the paper to examine the future of trade and investment policies in times of increased resource scarcity and climate change.

### **Aid and security**

The [UK Government](#) has decided to focus more of its aid budget on '[fragile states](#)'. Samir Elhawary [investigates](#) whether greater aid spending in fragile and conflict affected states will lead to a securitisation of aid. As DFID tries to win over sceptics and emphasise value for money, it must shift from simplistic rhetoric that assumes development and security are mutually reinforcing to more considered policy-making on whether aid can [effectively create stability](#), and if so, whether this compromises development outcomes and principles.

### **Impact evaluation: Makes sense if you don't think about it too hard**

Dan Palotta, in his Harvard Business Review [blog](#), challenges direct program funding and the focus many foundations have on evidence-based grant-making. He claims:

- The most powerful ideas may not show results for years.
- The way to maximize impact is not to fund an effective program but the revenue engine that multiplies the dollars

(HT Chris Blattman)

### **Do financial incentives for teachers improve student performance?**

Increasing student performance through financial incentives to teachers is an increasingly popular education policy. Roland Fryer's [paper](#), using a school-based randomised trial, suggests that teacher incentives may decrease student achievement. The paper concludes with a speculative discussion of theories that may explain these results.

### **Gender and disadvantage**

Last week was International Women's Day. In response, David Roodman writes [The Downside of Focusing on Women and Girls](#), an important article if we are to avoid the dangers of overly simplistic thinking about the poor. He says 'A focus on the marginalized, regardless of their sex, ethnicity, location, or other essential characteristics will do far more to combat poverty than a blind focus on women and girls'.

### **PNG's political drama**

The fate of Papua New Guinea Prime Minister Michael Somare hangs in the balance, as a leadership tribunal considers misconduct allegations dating back as far as 1992. If you want to follow all the twists and turn, check out [PNG Attitude](#) and [Malum Nalu](#).