

**Re-Appraisal
National Education Plan 2015-2019: Quality Learning for All, And
An Addendum**

20 August 2018

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Overall recommendation: The National Education Plan 2015-2019 can be endorsed by the Local Education Group.

Disclaimer: The information and views set out in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Local Education Group.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) was established in 2002 to facilitate coherence and coordination across development partners assisting developing country governments in education reform. A country must actively join the GPE with a plan to improve education. The Local Education Group (LEG), headed by the Government and made up of development partners working in a country, endorses the plan declaring their intentions to provide systematic and coordinated support for education reform. The development partners choose a coordinating agency to lead the LEG with the Government. LEG member organisations often serve on GPE's Global Board and can represent the country's interests at that level.

Countries with endorsed sector plans also receive financing from the GPE to implement their plan. This financing serves as an incentive for sector reform. Before a sector plan is endorsed by the LEG, the GPE requires an independent "appraisal" of the plan to ensure that the plan is evidence based and can adequately and effectively direct the work of the sector toward reaching key educational outcomes. The appraisal also serves to reassure members of the LEG regarding the quality and credibility of the plan and its readiness for endorsement.

Papua New Guinea (PNG) joined the GPE in 2010 with the "National Education Plan, Achieving Universal Education for a Better Future 2010-2019." The current sector plan "National Education Plan, Quality Learning for All 2015-2019" finalised in 2014 was appraised on behalf of the LEG in PNG by Alberto Begue-Aguado in December 2017. The LEG received the GPE Secretariat's feedback to the appraisal report also in December 2017.

The appraisal of the National Education Plan (NEP) 2015-19 Quality Learning for All and the GPE Secretariat response, highlight several issues. The appraisal presented the LEG with two options to improve the sector plan. The first option was to revise the entire NEP. The second option was to develop an Addendum to the NEP that tackles the concerns raised. These same suggestions were reiterated by the GPE Secretariat's response to the appraisal. The LEG chose the second option, which was to develop an Addendum to the NEP, which would be re-appraised before the NEP was endorsed by development partners (DPs). Accordingly, the Addendum was completed in July 2018. The LEG organized a re-appraisal to confirm that the endorsement of the sector plan could go ahead.

Similar to the original appraisal, this re-appraisal is guided by the IIEP-GPE Guidelines for Education Sector Plan Appraisal (2015) but is focused primarily on the Addendum. The re-appraisal report was shared with GPE Secretariat for Quality Assurance purpose before it was shared with the National Department of Education (NDoE) for further fine tuning of the NEP Addendum. This re-appraisal considers the country's almost three-year effort at ensuring that this plan is credible and meets minimum standards for the LEG and the GPE Secretariat.

Since the appraiser is based in PNG and understands the education sector in this country, no formal interviews were conducted to complete this re-appraisal. Minor revisions are

suggested to improve the Addendum. The recommendation is for the LEG to endorse this NEP. The re-appraisal concludes with a list of suggestions that can inform the preparation of the next sector plan, which is going to commence early next year.

2. SUMMARY OF THE APPRAISAL AND GPE SECRETARIAT'S RESPONSE (DECEMBER 2017)

PNG joined the GPE with an NEP covering the period 2010-2019. No reference is made by the appraiser or the GPE Secretariat response to the appraisal to this sector plan that is now in the GPE website.¹ The existing endorsed plan is a significant improvement from earlier plans that did not include any data or specific interventions. The endorsement of this plan enabled PNG to receive US\$ 19.2 million for its implementation. The endorsed plan was not out-of-date and according to GPE policy would have qualified the country to draw down on the next GPE allocation (US\$ 7.2 million) for plan implementation.² Before beginning the re-appraisal, it would be useful to summarise the NEP appraisal completed in December 2017 and the GPE Secretariat feedback.

The NEP appraisal begins with a discussion of the country context and the challenging financial circumstances that surround PNG's economy since 2016. The appraisal also gives a description of the administrative structure and the functions of the (school) education sector. The method used to conduct the appraisal (literature review and interviews with various government officials and donor representative) is also summarised. The plan was re-appraised according to the five areas outlined in the IIEP-GPE Guidelines³:

- Leadership and Participation
- Soundness and Relevance
- Equity, efficiency, and learning in basic education
- Coherence
- Feasibility, implementability, and monitorability

The key issues raised in the appraisal surround plan financing and monitoring and evaluation. These issues cut across several of the five areas listed above. There are suggestions for a risk analysis and for the NEP to be accompanied by an Annual Implementation or Action Plan. Added concerns outlined by the GPE response include the need for "more details" on equity, efficiency, and learning. The response also highlights the need to change MDGs to SDGs.

¹ The decision for the development of NEP was taken by NDOE in consultation with DPs in 2013/14.

² According to the NEP Appraiser (and GPE Secretariat Mission Summary Report, March 2016) the NEP was validated by the Government of PNG, printed, and implemented for a year (Appraisal Report, Pg. 5)" by 2015. It was assumed that the GPE Secretariat would have recommended the continued use of the existing plan until a holistic and effective plan development process was introduced. This guidance was particularly important considering the country's policies of decentralisation and the time and effort needed to develop provincial education sector plans.

³ The GPE response to the appraisal mentions seven standards and that the NEP addresses three of them. While the three areas are listed, the remaining four are not spelt out. Since the seven standards are not aligned to the five areas in the IIEP GPE Guidelines for sector plan appraisal, it is not possible to assess the Addendum on these seven standards.

The expectations of both the appraiser and the GPE Secretariat response on the content of an Addendum are, to an extent, challenging. It would not be possible for an Addendum to outline a detailed budget and financing framework, set up baselines and a proper decentralized implementation or action plan in a space of a few months. Since so many years have already been spent on this plan, it would be demoralising for the government and development partners to spend any more time on this plan. Moreover, the education sector is significantly decentralised in PNG and would involve working with 22 provinces, including the National Capital District as well as the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and 89 districts. Capacity, logistic and resource challenges would make this a very difficult task.

3. RE-APPRAISAL

The Addendum that will go with the NEP consists of the following chapters:

- An Introduction;
- Education Sector Analysis update;
- Update on national priorities and strategies;
- Staff and student projections and financing; and
- Action Plan.

Similar to the appraisal, the re-appraisal will discuss the five areas in the Guidelines. Under each heading, descriptors for the review are given in italics.

❖ Leadership and Participation

Participatory planning, ownership and opportunities for capacity building

A LEG is in place to structure the participatory process. The Coordinating Agency is the UNICEF. Developing the Addendum was a participatory process with government and donors involved in addition to a broader participation of the development partner community. The shortcoming in the appraisal report of INGOs perceiving that they were not included in the planning process were addressed. The appointment of an INGO (Save the Children) as the Grant Agent for the GPE implementation Grant also helped this participation. The LEG meeting held on 6 August where the NEP Addendum and related documents were discussed and endorsed included the National Board of Disabled Persons, the PNG Education Advocacy Network, the National Catholic Education Secretariat, the PNG Teacher Association, and Save the Children. Most importantly, this process of working on an Addendum has enhanced the understanding of the significance and role of situation analysis in a sector plan and the importance of having an action plan that can help monitor implementation. In this way, this request for an Addendum has played a capacity building role for the LEG.

❖ Soundness and Relevance

Evidence base for policies and programs, plan financing and implementation or action plan

Evidence base: (Availability and effectively used)

The Addendum includes the analysis of key educational outcomes in elementary, primary, secondary, and technical/vocational subsectors. In addition, there is a section on the administration. Each of the subsectors includes an analysis of admission rates, enrolment rates, teachers, and pupil-teacher ratios, learning and schools. Net Enrolments Rates (NER) are also provided, which is of questionable reliability considering the absence of birth certificates for most of the school age children. Data is disaggregated according to gender and province; and schools are disaggregated according to management. Information covers a six-year period (2011-2016). The analysis of learning is detailed at the primary level with the results from the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment disaggregated according to gender and province. At the secondary level both Grade 10 and Grade 12 examination results according to gender and subject are discussed.

Some of the subsectors have a section on system strengthening, which mentions the serious issues with accountability and decentralisation. Schools are not able to account for funds received and the inspectorate is dysfunctional due to lack of funding and direction. Followed by the analysis of each subsector, the analysis of administration begins with a section on decentralisation and the division of responsibilities across NDoE, province and local government. A few lines follow on each of these areas – policy and planning, financial management, and human resources. The section concludes with a section on finances, which examines the national support for education. The section on provincial budgets deal with teacher salaries, function grants and teachers' leave fares. While the evidence base is strong and robust on student enrolment and to some extent, learning, the analysis of all the process areas such as local management, administration, system strengthening, etc. and the impact on service delivery needs to be built in preparation for the next sector plan. An analytical base in these process areas is particularly important for improving learning. The need to build a database on processes to plan and design interventions is shared by most other GPE countries.

Policies and Programs (Strategic relevance and empirical basis for policies and programs)

Policies and Programs are discussed in six focus areas. Each area includes a list of indicators, which are useful. The list specifies whether the indicator has a baseline.

(i) **Access and Equity.** Equity is discussed below. An explanation is provided for the strategies in the NEP that will improve access to schooling (Strategy 1, 11, 12, 66, 14, 10, 2, 13, 6, 5, 3, 8, 4, 9, and 7). This area has 11 indicators. The indicators include schools, and classrooms that are functional in addition to WASH facilities and libraries. Percentage students in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and special needs are also indicators. Except for ECCE enrolment and handwashing, indicators do have baselines. There are two NER indicators for Grade 8, which should not be included considering the limited reliability of NER values. The Addendum discusses reasons for the lack NDoE control over ECCE. ECCE is handled by the Department of Community Development and Religion. At this stage, since this subsector lies

under the authority of another department, it would be better to include a single indicator on ECCE policy (and not ECCE enrolment). This re-appraisal suggests that the indicator for ECCE in this plan period is the development of a coherent and coordinated ECCE policy, an implementation plan, and a monitoring framework.

(ii) Teachers and teaching: Strategies (15 to 17, 19, 20, 67 and 68) relating to teacher training are examined. Indicators for this include increases in the number of teachers with qualifications and those accessing in-service training. Percentage teachers with minimum teaching standards, and those provided with housing are also listed but with no baselines. This re-appraisal suggests that for the indicator teaching standard, which would have the most impact on improving learning, the focus during this plan period is on developing minimum standards and ensuring every provincial government understands these standards.

(iii) Learning: This section discusses NEP strategies 21 to 31. Indicators around this area focus on inputs such as the use of Standards Based Curriculum (SBC) for which there are no baselines. Proportion of students receiving Grade 8 and 10 certifications is also included and this is the only variable with a baseline. This focus area lacks clarity as there is confusion between learning, which is an outcome and learning as a program area. Instead, this area should be entitled “Teaching and learning” or “Instruction”. Critical interventions and indicators associated with learning are missing such as, the availability of instructional materials, continuous student evaluation, increasing time on task etc. These will need to be effectively incorporated in the next plan.

(iv) Alternative pathways: Strategies 32, 33 36-42 and 68 are explained. Enrolment in various types of institutions are indicators and all have baselines. Since the evidence base is enrolments, programs in this area are empirically based. In future, understanding the qualitative impact of technical and vocational programs would be critical.

(v) Local Management: The Addendum discusses several areas that are directly connected to school governance (Strategies 43 to 49) such as Tuition Free Fund (TFF), National Quality School Standards Framework (NQSSF), Boards of Management and School Learning Improvement Plans (SLIPs). Baselines exist for SLIPs and principal’s financial management training. Empirical analysis associated with these programs is weak or non-existent. For some of these critical indicators, situation analysis and establishing quantitative and qualitative baselines could be the target in this plan period. For example, schools just having a SLIP will not help improve teaching and learning. SLIPs are critical especially, in the light of their responsibilities for school management. It would be important to understand whether SLIPs on the one hand, are making the right choices to support learning in schools and on the other hand, actively monitoring learning in schools. Piloting the NQSSF, receiving feedback and finalising an implementable quality monitoring system that separates performance monitoring of personnel from institutions could be the focus of this plan period.

(vi) **System Strengthening:** Strategies 51-65 are discussed. The indicators are those connected with TFF, inspection, financial reporting, payments made, and student assessments. Except for a competency framework for school leaders, all the other indicators have baselines. The baselines for these indicators are binary (yes or no). For some of the indicators such as the TFF and financial reporting, binary information reflects the effectiveness of the indicator. However, this would not be enough in the case of inspection. The effectiveness of Inspection, which is directly related to quality improvements and learning, would depend on what is inspected, how often, its connections with NQSSF and BOM functioning and most importantly, what are the consequences of an inspection. It might be useful, instead of “percentage of schools inspected in this period” to ensure that there is a robust baseline on inspection in preparation for the next sector plan.

Overall, the policies and programs are connected where relevant to the analysis of outcome indicators in the situation analysis. Access interventions, especially, are based on empirical evidence on enrolments. In addition, the policies and programs are centred around national topics rather than at the subnational level. Policies and programs surround the implementation of the SBC curriculum, and preservice and in-service training. The limitations lie with the absence of any analysis on how schools function, teaching and learning and management processes and governance. It would be advisable for this plan period to concentrate on preparing the evidence base in these areas for the next sector plan. For those areas that need policy development the focus should be – policy and program design – before proceeding with measuring progress (for example, enrolment).

Financing (adequacy and credibility)

The Addendum includes financial data and projections. Projected increases in staff and students are provided. This chapter includes an analysis of whole of government and education expenditure. The tables presented include recurrent and capital expenditure and commitment from donor partners. Considering the timeframe in which this document needed to be prepared, the authors use a practical approach to the analysis of sector financing. They have explored all the financing available from various sources (recurrent, development, national transfers to provinces, other department budgets and development partners financing) and distributed these funds across the NEP six focus areas and across subsectors.

Projections until 2020 are made for each of the six focus areas. Unit costs are calculated based only on infrastructure. Recurrent and development budgets are also presented for each of the focus areas. The development budget is based on the financing available for capital costs. The total budget displays the gap in financing based on resources available and what could not be procured due to insufficient resources.

This pragmatic approach brings together, as requested in the NEP appraisal and GPE response, the planning and financing frameworks. The resulting tables reflect the reduction in financing to the education sector. Since this is not a simulation model leading to a comprehensive costing/financing framework, there are no assumptions made. Therefore, financing gaps and projected financing requirements for implementing the NEP need to be treated with caution. It is not clear whether these tables relate only to school education or whether it includes all the subsectors in education. Table 84 on provincial transfers such as PSIP and DSIP is not clear. If the proportionate funds allocated for education in the PSIP and DSIP are not known, are the amounts displayed rationale estimates?

A serious disconnect is represented in the indicators provided in the discussion on policies and programs which do not have an associated cost allocation. It is not clear how the interventions associated with these indicators will be implemented. It might be useful to separate those that have a financial allocation from those that will be implemented, if sector financing improves.

Action Plan (soundness of the operational framework)

The Addendum includes an Action Plan. The Action Plan is difficult to assess as the links with policies and programs referred to in the Addendum is not entirely clear. This situation could be because there is tension in the Plan between connecting just with the NEP or with the Addendum or with both. It would be useful if the numbering in the Action Plan is aligned to the strategy numbers in the Addendum (which is also the same in the NEP). Alternatively, the Action Plan could also be aligned with the key indicators in the Addendum that will be financed. So, if there is no financing allocated (in the chapter on financing) to a particular indicator, it could be said that at this point in time the interventions associated with that indicator would not be implemented. The Action Plan is also incomplete without the activities and timeline. This is understandable as the activities would be implemented by each province according to its own schedule. It might be worth stating this and specifying activities and timeline, which is under the control of the NDoE.

4. EQUITY, EFFICIENCY AND LEARNING

Robustness and relevance of the strategies and results framework

Equity in an education sector can be considered in several ways – gender, location, and social groups (e.g. certain tribes and children with disability). The Addendum, in a section entitled “Access and Equity,” gives an analysis of enrolment disaggregated by gender for each of the subsectors. There are tables on the highest and lowest GPI. In the updated Education Sector Analysis, there is a clearer, more detailed analysis of the geographic and gender disparities across PNG. Disaggregated transition rates, retention rates and graduation rates are also provided. The situation analysis in the addendum addresses the need for more details highlighted by the NEP appraisal and GPE Secretariat around equity, efficiency and learning.

The Addendum also includes an entire section on cross cutting issues – gender, out of school children, urban and rural disparities, and special and inclusive education. The section on gender summarises issues across sectors highlighting the low participation of girls in TVET. The analysis of out of school children is comprehensive based on a recent study that was completed. Data is disaggregated according to province. The study lists the causes of non-enrolment and dropout. For about half the children it is family/personal issues that prevent them from attending school. School related and financial issues cause the most number of dropouts. This section summarizes the issues with gender based violence. Enrolment of children with disabilities by age and gender is list as well as disaggregated data by province on school accessibility for children with physical disability. The rural urban divide is also shown and rural students are more at a disadvantage. This section is detailed and comprehensive and can serve as an effective baseline for monitoring equity in the country.

Policies and programs in the Addendum do not have a specific discussion of equity. Since the targets in Action Plan are disaggregated and the situation analysis has detailed information on equity dimensions, this may not pose an issue in the short term. However, if progress is not recorded over the plan period on disaggregated indicators, it will be critical for the next plan to introduce targeted interventions associated with improving equity.

PNG is just turning its attention to improving student learning. One of the first tasks undertaken in this area is to focus on establishing the SBC curriculum. The NDoE is developing curricular materials and teacher guides to support this curriculum. Examinations are also being revised to align with the SBC. The NQSSF is being piloted to monitor school quality. Due to declining resources in PNG, there is a commitment to ensuring efficiency in the use of available resources. Transferring TFF funds directly to schools is facilitating local decision making and expenditure on dimensions that support learning.

5. COHERENCE

Coherence across policies and programs, financing, and results

In this re-appraisal, results are taken to be synonymous with outputs and outcomes. The results framework is understood to comprise activities, inputs, outputs, and outcome targets sets for each indicator, and the means of verification. The results framework would be the same as a monitoring and evaluation framework.

The Addendum reflects a more realistic consideration of what can and cannot be achieved. The Addendum has brought more coherence and specificity across the situation analysis, policy and programs, financing, and results. The Action Plan includes the results framework with activities, indicators and targets listed. There is a reduction or revision of indicators and the targets, which makes the sector plan more realistic. Some of the targets, though, could be further revised. For example, it is unlikely due to the limited financing available that the 100% schools will receive the SBC curriculum and if they do not have the materials, teachers cannot be expected to use this curriculum. Similarly, without adequate funding, it is unlikely

that 100% teachers across the nation will receive in-service training. When considering targets, it would be important to consider the cost and expertise required to measure these targets in a meaningful way. The discussion on SLIPs is an example of meaningful measurement, and the costs for monitoring the impact SLIPs would need to be considered.

The discussion on policy and programs above includes suggestions for greater coherence by rethinking indicators that are trying to measure progress when the policies, framework and structure for the intervention are yet to be established. For example, there is an indicator to monitor participation in ECCE when the area is yet to put in place a policy and monitoring framework. There would be greater coherence, if a more realistic lens is applied to this area and the indicator redefined appropriately. There are many areas, which will need to be addressed in preparation for achieving greater coherence in the next plan, particularly with improving quality and increasing learning. These areas are discussed in detail below.

To ensure greater coherence, before the Addendum and Action Plan are shared publicly, it would be useful to separate the indicators in each of the six focus areas into those that have the financing and those where financing will be explored. The same indicators would appear in the Action Plan with those receiving funding separated from those that are not financed. Those that are not financed should have “to be determined” (TBD) for targets and those that are financed, an incremental improvement.

6. FEASIBILITY, IMPLEMENTABILITY AND MONITORABILITY

Financial, system capacity, governance and accountability, risks and robustness

The Addendum is a significantly more feasible plan with indicators that are identified and can help monitor plan implementation. A separation of indicators with and without baselines and the magnitude of financing available also helps increase confidence in plan implementation. System capacity, governance and accountability at the national level is known and appears sufficient to implement those activities that are under NDoE control and financed by the national government. This includes the TFF, preservice education and some of the SBC curriculum and in-service training. This is not the case at the subnational level where an assessment of system capacity has not yet been undertaken. The implications and feasibility of parts of the plan, which focuses on governance and accountability for implementation at the provincial and local levels are not known.

The Addendum includes a risk analysis. This analysis outlines the risks to each of the outputs listed in the NEP according to consequences of the risk materialising and the probability of the risk. Consequence and probability multiplied offers a risk rating and mitigation strategies. Again, as this is pitched at the national level, and not a composite of provincial level risk, both the rating and mitigation strategies are general. The highest risk to plan implementation is the differential capacities and lack of information regarding accountability for service delivery at subnational levels. As provinces implement the NEP, this will have to be closely monitored, analysed, and elaborated for the next plan.

Though the NEP was set up in 2014, it is only this year that there is a functioning LEG. The process to be followed in the current plan period to strengthen the functioning of the LEG is described in the Addendum under the heading administration. The LEG with broad membership is going to be chaired by the Secretary of Education and will meet quarterly. The LEG is expected to set up Technical Working Groups and monitor plan implementation. These activities described for the LEG will depend on the availability of enough finances. If there is sufficient commitment and finances available for regular meetings, the LEG can be more effective and coordinated in organising the preparation activities for the next sector plan, which will begin in the next few months.

The Addendum highlights the consistency of the plan with the fourth, fifth and sixth SDG.

7. CONCLUSION

The NDoE and partners have worked tirelessly over the last six months to ensure this NEP with Addendum, on the one hand, is credible to the LEG and on the other hand is a document that can direct the activities of the sector. This community in PNG must be commended for persevering and sustaining this effort to complete this document satisfactorily against insurmountable odds. These odds include very few in-country donors, a sudden and significant decline in national resources, a harsh and rugged terrain, very limited mobility across the country, serious security issues, decentralisation and reorganisation, lack of data and limited computerisation and Wi-Fi capability, and serious shortage of technical capacity. All of this accompanied by limited exposure to the mechanics of government ownership and sector coordination.

In light of all these challenges and the remarkable coordination of the development partner community in PNG to address the demands of the appraiser and the GPE Secretariat, resulting in the production of an Addendum to accompany the NEP, this re-appraisal recommends the LEG endorsement of the NEP with the Addendum. The following minor revisions could be made to improve the Addendum. (i) Separate the indicators that do not have any financing with a note indicating possible sources of financing in the future. (ii) Revise indicators that are measuring progress when the policies and framework for implementation are not yet in place. Revise these indicators so that the focus of this plan is on setting up policy and framework. (iii) Replace the indicator on NERs with equity GERs. (iv) Ensure coherence between Action Plan and Strategies/Indicators. (v) List NDoE activities for the four quarters in the Action Plan with a note on decentralisation and the next plan focus on subnational planning and monitoring frameworks.

To assist the LEG, this conclusion to the re-appraisal highlights key requirements for PNG to develop a realistic, robust, feasible and effective sector plan starting at the end of this plan period in 2021.⁴

- (i) **Holistic Plan:** The next sector plan must include all subsectors in education. It will not be enough to make the argument that the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science, and Technology has its own sector plan. There are two reasons why the GPE requires a holistic sector plan. First, education expenditure and the financing gap can only be effectively understood when it includes allocations to all subsectors. Second, when all subsectors are included the critical inter-connections and impact are better understood. For example, the strength of secondary education will depend on the quality and quantity of science graduates produced by higher education.
- (ii) **Sector analysis and interventions:** It is critical for the sector plan interventions to evolve from a sound situation or sector analysis. This enables plan interventions to be relevant and appropriately positioned to work on sector constraints and weaknesses. In the 1990s and into the 2000s, sector analysis or situation analysis that formed the basis for plan interventions focused on precisely what the Addendum has done, which is mainly student enrolment, retention, and dropout. This lent itself perfectly to designing activities to improve access.

The global learning crisis has highlighted the need to expand sector analysis to include not just outcomes but also critical process dimensions associated with improving education quality and learning. Examples of these dimensions in basic education are how schools, teachers and teachers-in-charge are managed, status of time-on-task, existing quality of teaching and learning, and how SLIPs are implemented and monitored. Understanding these areas cuts across national and subnational entities. This kind of sector review will allow crucial connections across institutions, resources, personnel, and inputs to be explored – fundamental to promoting learning. For example, how would PTRs influence the requirements for pre-service trained teachers so learning gains are sustained or what would be the resources needed to improve time on task.

⁴ This section is influenced by a background paper written by the author of this re-appraisal for the 2017/18 Global Education Monitoring Report Accountability in education: Meeting our commitments. The title of this paper is “*Making use of assessments for creating stronger education systems and improving teaching and learning*”. Background paper prepared for the 2017/18 Global Education Monitoring Report. Accountability in education: Meeting our commitments. ED/GEM/MRT/2017/P1/6. (UNESCO: Paris). This paper analyses the experience of countries that have been successful in improving learning as well as GPE sector plans.

- (iii) **Decentralisation:** Decentralisation in PNG devolved a sizeable number of responsibilities to provinces and to local government. It will be critical for NDoE to set up guidelines for provinces to develop their own sector plans in addition to outlining a framework for monitoring and evaluation at subnational levels. The sector plan would need to consolidate provincial and NDoE plans.
- (iv) **Financing Framework:** Three aspects can be put forward in constructing a financing framework for education in PNG in the next plan. Firstly, considering decentralization and the devolved responsibilities for school education (elementary, primary, and secondary), it is appropriate that financial analysis for the sector begins at the provincial level. Secondly, since approximately 50% of the services in education are provided by churches, these contributions must be accounted for in an appropriately costed sector plan. Thirdly, costs for implementing the sector plan and the financing gap can only be accurately obtained if the percentage of GDP allocated for education is considered and the analysis includes all sub-sectors in education and supported by different government departments.⁵ These aspects –provincial level financing of education, the contribution of churches and all subsector financing—in the next iteration of the sector planning will be critical for any future cost simulation modelling.
- (v) **Monitoring and Evaluation:** A realistic and plausible monitoring and evaluation framework is crucial for a sector plan. In this framework, indicators are specified that can lead to quality outcomes and targets that are achievable within the plan period. Targets would be realistic and represent a gradual progression based on progress made in previous years rather than dramatic increases in values. It is better to have targets that are reachable when compared to targets that are unachievable and in the end, will reflect failure of the planning process. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework decides on measurement of targets taking into account the costs for measuring progress and the timelines for doing so.
- (vi) **Participation and the Action Plan:** The Implementation or Action Plan, which includes the timeline for implementing plan activities and monitoring is critical. The Plan includes activities for implementing the monitoring and evaluation framework. For sustainability and ownership in this process, it is crucial for national think tanks and academic institutions to be integrally involved with

⁵ The IIEP-GPE Guidelines do not recommend any thresholds for financing. Earlier EFA FTI indicative framework (2004) is useful in this regard. The recommendation was between 14-18% of GDP for education; 20% of a countries recurrent budget and about 42-64% of the education budget allocated for basic education. See Education for All Fast-Track Indicative Framework March 30, 2004. https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/methodology-education-all-fast-track-initiative-fti-ec-guide-200403_en_2.pdf

monitoring and reporting on plan implementation. The deliberate expansion of the LEG to include entities that can play this role would be beneficial for the government and development partners.

Documents reviewed

- ❖ National Education Plan 2015-19: Quality Learning for All
- ❖ National Education Plan 2015-19: An Addendum
- ❖ Appraisal Report: National Education Plan the Education Sector Analysis in PNG
- ❖ GPE Secretariat – LEG correspondence