



United Nations
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
Delivering as One

REVIEW REPORT

Highlands Joint Programme (HJP)

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

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DISCLAIMER

The authors' views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the participating UN agencies.

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ACRONYMS LIST

CFT	Community Facilitation Team
CM	Community Mobiliser
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPDPs	Community Peace for Development Plans
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAL	Department of Agriculture and Livestock
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GE	Gender Equality
GPAT	Grassroot Peace Action Team
GYPI	Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative
HA	Humanitarian Assistance
HR	Human Rights
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
KII	Key Informant Interview
LEP	Learning Empowerment and Protection
LLGs	Local Level Governments
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NIM	National Implementation Modality
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
PCC	Project Coordination Committee
PLWD	People living with disabilities
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSU	Programme Support Unit
PUNO	Participating United Nations Organisation
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
RDP	Review and Design Plan
RR	Resident Representative
RRF	Results and Resource Framework
RT	Review Team
SARV	Sorcery Accusation Related Violence
SC	Steering Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SHP	Southern Highlands Province
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

UNFPA

UNICEF

UN Women

United Nations Population Fund

United Nations Children's Fund

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction and Context

The report, commissioned on behalf of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as the convening agency, reviews the UN's experience developing, implementing, and monitoring the Highlands Joint Programme (HJP) in Southern Highlands and Hela Provinces 2020-2022. Other participating UN organizations (PUNOs) are the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). The purpose of the review is to learn towards developing a Phase II. The primary audience is the UN Country Team (UNCT) and the HJP Steering Committee (SC).

Programme Overview

The three-year HJP was developed to sustain peace and development gains from the UN's post-earthquake humanitarian and recovery efforts in the Highlands. The HJP was developed over 2019 and early 2020. The programme document, signed in July 2020, outlined a USD 30 million effort; actual funding for joint projects, UN agency projects, and other activities included under the HJP has been USD 15 million through 2023.- Four expected outcomes were developed:

1. Communities affected by conflict in the Highlands have increased capacity to promote and demand peace and social cohesion.
2. Highlands' communities and households have improved resilience to manage risks and mitigate shocks from conflict and man-made/natural disasters.
3. Traditional/non-traditional leaders and service providers have enhanced knowledge and skills to integrate peacebuilding strategies into service delivery in conflict affected areas in the highlands.
4. Public institutions in the Highlands have people-centred, proactive and transparent/accountable systems to support effective leadership that promotes peace and security.

The main funders for the projects under the HJP have been the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

Methodology

An international and national consultant conducted the review through participatory methods, including fieldwork in the highlands in 2023. The review was organized through and answered questions set by the HJP and PUNOs at the outset of the consultancy. Plans for the review were developed and approved through a draft and final inception report, which were then executed. Successive rounds of comments on the initial draft from different UN reviewers led to three other drafts and this final Review Report.

Findings and Conclusions

Relevance: The HJP was clearly relevant to the context of the Highlands. The conceptual scope of the HJP was seen as appropriate, but the territory covered and time of implementation was not seen as enough

to address the deep issues in the two provinces. The HJP was designed as only a start to addressing these longstanding challenges.

Coherence: The formal governance structure was seen as appropriate; however more efforts were sought from the HJP as a coordinating mechanism to have more effects from projects under the HJP. Additional coordination needs were identified for UN agencies (including by UN agency heads in the UNCT), government partners, and implementing partners. Planning and coordination arrangements supported implementation, but partners and stakeholders sought additional UN staff on the ground in the Highlands for the HJP and projects under it to have more and wider effects.

Effectiveness: Key results come from projects within the HJP and in coordination and collaboration across PUNOs as well as building the capacity of trusted local actors to mediate conflicts and greater engagement of women and youth. Projects under the HJP have successfully capacitated and supported IP mediation and negotiation teams that have been able to help conflicting communities reach and maintain agreements. These achievements under the HJP are seen by stakeholders as only the start of building conditions conducive to peace and development.

Efficiency: The HJP has managed the risks of working in the Highlands but can improve going forward.

Sustainability, Human Rights and Gender Equality: Important investments have been made through the HJP; but with the scale of the issues, there has not been sufficient investment through the HJP to make enough of a positive difference in empowering youth and women and girls as key local actors in peacebuilding processes in the Highlands to date. This is not surprising; the HJP and projects under it were designed as initial catalytic investments to start addressing the longstanding issues in gender as well as peacebuilding in the Highlands rather than a comprehensive, full approach to resolving them. Partners and stakeholders of the HJP understood that projects and activities under the HJP were designed to start addressing issues but were not large enough to be able to address the scale of needs and issues in these provinces. The HJP was designed to test and pilot ideas and approaches to start building the potential for peace and stability and to draw in additional donors and non-UN actors to extend peace and development beyond what had could be achieved in the initial years of the HJP.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Output measurements demonstrate progress. Outcome measures are few; Measures for the outcomes proposed in the HJP Document and the outcomes outlined in many of the projects under the HJP have not been developed or measured, leaving outcomes not measured.

Towards Phase II: the priorities of the HJP remain key peace and development priorities the two provinces. It is feasible to develop activities for Enga Province, but this requires stakeholder and donor engagement.

Lessons Learned

UN Agencies in PNG can productively operate through a joint programme in the Highlands. Activities implemented under the framework of the HJP can demonstrate results. Active UN Agency management and strong collaboration across Agencies is needed at the field and country office/UNCT level to animate the HJP. Partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries appreciate and value HJP coordination and the interventions under the HJP. SHP and Hela Province remain at early stages in building the conditions for peace and development. Substantial work remains in peacebuilding and development to help reduce fragility in SHP and Hela Province. Substantially fewer specifics are known on conflict, peacebuilding and development in Enga province as UN Agencies have less engagement in the province, including because Enga was not included in the 2020-2023 HJP. UN agencies and implementing partners have gained significant experience developing, implementing, monitoring, and reporting on programming in the Highlands. The UNCT and donors have opportunities to carefully build on and replicate/extend the Phase

I experience in Phase II. The HJP and UN Agencies need additional staff, funding, coordination, implementing partners, and government partners to strengthen HJP development, extension, implementation, and sustainability. Approaches of national government ministries and provincial governments in Hela, Enga, and the Southern Highlands that focus on law enforcement and take a strictly securitized approach have not been sufficient to support peace in the Highlands nor facilitate development.

Recommendations

Strategic recommendations towards shaping the scale, scope, funding, and top management of joint programming in the highlands are:

1. The RCO and UNCT should consider developing a Phase II for the HJP.
2. The RCO and UNCT (with UNDP as convening agency) should gather more information and decide on Phase II parameters based on anticipated funds available and UN priorities.
3. The RCO should consider developing an Agency-head level coordinating body to enlist and maintain regular Agency support for and management of UN programming in the highlands.
4. Since the problems in Enga appear similar and linked, the UNCT should form a team of interested UN agency staff to conduct a thorough assessment of the potential to work in Enga province in the HJP.
5. Since more coordination and collaboration is needed, the RCO should consider working with the national government and provincial governments to develop a regular high-level coordination structure for the HJP beyond the steering committee to strengthen partnerships with government at these levels in the HJP. UNDP could be the convening agency for the structure.

Recommendations for implementation of potential HJP Phase II project for participating UN agencies and HJP Coordination Team staff are:

6. PUNOs should consider building on to Phase I achievements to expand the pool of partners and engaged stakeholders towards growing the HJP in two ways: by reaching more communities as well as engaging with government and using UN agencies and partners to provide additional concrete peace dividends in order to strengthen peace implementation and the replication of agreements.
7. The HJP should consider developing a platform within the HJP coordination team to use to network and monitor LEP Centres and other CBO partners.
8. PUNOs should consider holding more training and capacity building events within highlands provinces.
9. HJP PUNOs should consider developing trainings towards building existing and new implementing partner capacity to work with the UN.
10. The HJP Coordination team should consider developing a local IP partner ecosystem to link these strengthened IPs with each other and help support their communication and networking with government stakeholders.
11. The HJP should consider a standard practice of developing a working group of UN agency staff, IPs, and provincial, district, and LLG government staff to share information and strengthen implementation through better coordination.
12. The HJP should consider developing a liaison and working group to coordinate with peace and good order committees, law enforcement organizations, and development partners that work more closely in Rule of Law to better integrate HJP work within communities on peacebuilding with the roles of state institutions.

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

UNDP as the convening agency of the joint programme, commissioned on behalf of the UN a review of the UN's experience developing, implementing, and monitoring the Highlands Joint Programme (HJP) over 2020-2022. The HJP is an initiative that links the UN agencies in PNG to plan, implement, and monitor a set of their projects and activities in two volatile provinces in the Highlands of PNG: Southern Highlands Province (SHP) and Hela Province. UNDP is the lead agency in the HJP. Other PUNOs are FAO, IOM, UNCDF, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women.

The purpose of the review is to learn from the design, implementation, and results of the HJP 2020-2022 towards developing a Phase II of the HJP. The review team (RT) was tasked with reviewing the current design, implementation, and results of the HJP to date. This includes assessing the Results and Resources Framework (RRF) and the theory of change (ToC) of the HJP in light of the PUNOs', partners', stakeholders' and beneficiaries' experiences with the implementation of the programme since July 2020. The HJP has been extended for a year through 2023.

The primary audience for the review is the UNCT and the HJP SC; secondary audiences are donor partners, including UN funding mechanisms such as the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), and government stakeholders at the national and provincial levels.

The RT reviewed documents and conducted interviews with knowledgeable UN agency staff, HJP partners, and HJP stakeholders and drafted and finalized this review report on achievements and lessons learned from the design and implementation of the HJP as at the end of 2022. In-Country fieldwork for the review was done over a two-week period at the end of January/start of February 2023, with additional interviews conducted remotely through the end of March 2023.

The review assesses whether current project objectives and outcomes remain relevant in the fragile socio-economic, political and conflict context of Hela and the SHP. Per the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the RT consultants, the review assesses the HJP in eight key areas: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, human rights (HR), gender equality (GE), and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The review examines programme reach, how resources were utilized, the coordination of activities and challenges and opportunities in the design, implementation, and coordination, as well as for M&E and reporting of the HJP. The review thus tells the story of the HJP from programme materials and from interviewing staff, partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries about what the HJP been able to achieve, what the programme planned to do but was not able to accomplish to date and why, how stakeholders and beneficiaries have been impacted by the HJP or activities under it, lessons learned from this experience, and recommendations for interventions in a Phase II of the HJP. The review assesses the analysis of the risks identified during programme conception and how those risks were managed in implementation as both cultural and political influences made security a volatile, sensitive issue in the highlands.

Based on the review, the RT has drafted a potential design for Phase II of the HJP that considers the feasibility and criticality of expanding the geographical scope of the programme to include Enga province. Based on the findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations from the draft Review Report, the draft Phase II Programme Document has retained the framework from the first phase. The proposed Phase II design has retained the conceptual framework from the joint UN/World Bank report Pathways for Peace used in Phase I

to identify priorities as well as empirical data on the highlands to target areas for potential interventions.¹ The potential Phase II design for 2024-2026 takes into consideration the experience of the current HJP, the work of UN agencies in the highlands (within and outside of the HJP), the specializations and capacities of PNG-based UN Agencies, and interviews with stakeholders in Enga, Hela, and Southern Highlands Provinces for the review.

Fragility and conflict pose multi-dimensional challenges to economic and human development in Southern Highlands and Hela provinces. These challenges gained attention after the 2018 7.5 magnitude earthquake that caused great damage in the highlands, leading the UN country team (UNCT) to respond with urgent humanitarian assistance (HA). Based on this experience, which clarified the tremendous needs in Hela and the SHP above and beyond those amplified by the earthquake, the UN developed the HJP as a joint area-based programme in these two provinces. Fragility and conflict pose challenges across the highlands beyond these two provinces. Thus the ToR tasked the review to consider the applicability and feasibility of implementing the HJP in Enga Province; The review report has briefly analyzed the potential for the HJP to be extended to the adjacent Enga Province.

The context for implementing the HJP 2020-2022 was affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic, which added complexity to cooperation, planning, and developing activities between UN agencies, national and provincial officials, implementing partners, and beneficiaries. The pandemic also made it more challenging to implement activities under pandemic conditions due to mobility and travel restrictions and the need to not raise risks of COVID spread in the highlands (where vaccination rates have been low and medical facilities are extremely limited). HJP implementation was also affected by the 2022 PNG general election campaign, the elections themselves, and political tensions and violence in these processes and their aftermath in the highlands and PNG as a whole. These processes reduced staff, government, and IP presence and activities in the highlands, particularly June – September 2022.

2. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The HJP was developed in 2019/2020 and launched in July 2020 by the seven participating UN agencies as a means to sustain the incidental peace and development gains from the UN's post-earthquake humanitarian and recovery efforts from 2018-2020. The programme logic of the HJP was:

if there is a collective focus on addressing the root causes of violence and conflict in the Highlands, then duty bearers and rights-holders will be increasingly empowered, so that a critical enabler for peace and development is strengthened to sustainably support the achievement of the government's development plans.

This logic was used to generate a longer set of if, then statements for a Theory of Change for the HJP.

The HJP was used to build an overarching framework over UN Agency projects and joint UN projects working in Hela and SHP. This framework was sought to support resource mobilization for the highlands as well as to support the implementation of activities. PUNOs envisaged implementing up to forty-five different activities of different projects within the framework of the HJP.

The foundational document for the HJP is the Programme Document (ProDoc), endorsed in July 2020. The ProDoc provides the rationale for the HJP, explains its thematic and geographic focus, and elaborates on the

¹ International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (The World Bank), Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict, 2017 (available at <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/epdf/10.1596/978-1-4648-1162-3>).

cross-cutting principles behind the programme. The programme logic is developed through seven pathways into a ToC for the HJP, and a RRF was completed.

The HJP aimed to contribute to six of the eight key results areas and fourteen goals of the PNG's Medium-Term Development Plan (2018-2022) while contributing to the Peace Outcome in the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2018-2022 with a one year extension to 2023. The HJP developed four expected outcomes in its RRF. The expected outcomes were that by 2022-

1. Communities affected by conflict in the Highlands have increased capacity to promote and demand peace and social cohesion.
2. Highlands' communities and households have improved resilience to manage risks and mitigate shocks from conflict and man-made/natural disasters.
3. Traditional/non-traditional leaders and service providers have enhanced knowledge and skills to integrate peacebuilding strategies into service delivery in conflict affected areas in the highlands.
4. Public institutions in the Highlands have people-centred, proactive and transparent/accountable systems to support effective leadership that promotes peace and security.

The HJP envisioned a total planned activity and budget costs for projects and activities of USD 30 million. The actual budget raised has been USD 15.3 million. The specific joint projects and agency projects with funders are discussed in coherence and effectiveness below.

The HJP does not implement activities itself; the HJP is instead a coordinating and management mechanism that links joint projects, agency projects, and activities of PUNOs funded through core resources and other joint programmes like Spotlight.

3. METHODOLOGY

The objectives of the review were to learn from the design, implementation, and results of the HJP 2020-2022 towards developing a Phase II of the HJP. To do so, the review team (RT) developed methods to learn from documents, UN staff, partners, and stakeholders with knowledge and experience with the current design, implementation, and results of the HJP to date. Per the ToR for the Review Report, the review assessed various aspects of the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, monitoring, gender equality and human rights of the design, implementation, and results of the HJP since July 2020.

The review has been conducted through transparent and participatory processes with PUNOs, implementing partners (IPs), and stakeholders of the HJP through document and data review as well as remote and in-person Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The review has used a non-experimental design and mixed methods of document review and interviews to examine the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, HR, GE, and sustainability, and M&E of the HJP towards making forward-looking, actionable recommendations for PUNOs on Phase II of the programme, including potential extension to new issues relevant to conflict and fragility as well as to Enga Province. The review was conducted in accordance with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards, Ethical Guidelines, and the Code of Conduct for Evaluations in the UN System.

The design of the review was approved with Reference Group review of the draft Review and Design Plan (RDP) and revision by the RT as a final RDP which was approved. The RT then endeavored to implement the approved plan. The RDP planned for team members to focus on the most important aspects of the HJP, triangulate data, use purposive sampling, and employ comparison in analysis. Focus targeted the RT on the

most important parts of the HJP and its major achievements. Triangulation has been used through the triangulation of the mixed-methods used in the evaluation (document and data review as well as KIIs) as well as in analysis to compare information from different PUNOs, geographic areas, and types of staff, partners, and stakeholders. Triangulation adds confidence to the validity and reliability of the data, findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Purposive sampling has been used to select key informants for interviews; the RT's selection has focused on the most well-informed people that are available when the RT visited the highlands, as the best place to provide the most useful information on the activities, challenges and achievements of the HJP. Additional interviews prioritized most knowledgeable informants for remote interviews when these people were not available for in-person interviews during the fieldwork period.

The review team consulted with the HJP team and UN Agency staff on the Reference Group to solicit information on key partners and stakeholders to interview. The RT greatly appreciates the assistance of UN staff to reach these partners and stakeholders in the course of fieldwork in PNG. Data collection efforts have endeavored to be sensitive to human rights concerns and gender in its approaches. This has meant ensuring reaching out to women as well as men and being attentive to the difficult context of the highlands, including that some people may be quite traumatized by violence and/or people living with disabilities (PLWD). The review team has analyzed the data collected through document review and interviews and compared findings from different activities and projects, different UN agencies, different implementing partners, different target groups (e.g. women and youth), and different geographic areas (provinces, districts, LLGs, and communities).

Two processes were used to collect data: a review of existing documents and information collected by the RT through KIIs with PUNOs, IPs, and stakeholders of the HJP. Over a two week period at the end of January and first week of February 2023, the review team visited Port Moresby and the capitals of three provinces: Wabag (Enga), Mendi (SHP), and Tari (Hela) for interviews. Security concerns and UN rules did not allow the RT to visit intervention communities in person.

Document review has used HJP materials, UN agency documents, and information on the Highlands context solicited from the Reference Group and HJP team, added to in interviews, and identified during research. A list of documents utilized is included as Annex 1. Documents reviewed include the HJP Programme Document, the baseline report for Hela, programme steering committee (SC) records, semi-annual and annual reports, monitoring reports, and other project-produced and used materials plus materials from the projects that are encompassed within the HJP.

Interviews prior to and during in-country fieldwork gathered data from PUNOs and their key IPs and stakeholders that worked with the HJP and projects under it. A list of PUNO management and staff, partners, and stakeholders reached for interviews or discussions is included as Annex 2. Interviews in Hela and SHP focused on how PUNOs, IPs, and stakeholders viewed the projects and verifying and triangulating data on programme results. Data from programme staff, UN Agency staff, documentation from the projects and other sources, and donor, partner and stakeholder interviews and discussions have been used to evaluate the plausibility of the programme model (the ToC and how the HJP was designed) and implemented. Findings examine the contribution of activities to the results of the HJP, with an emphasis on outcome and output level results to date. Interviews in Enga and questions about working in Enga were used to explore the context and the feasibility and utility of potentially expanding the HJP to the province. Semi-structured interviews were held with the HJP team, the management and staff of PUNOs, and implementing partners, and stakeholders from government and civil society organizations. An interview protocol and semi-structured interview questions were used to gather information. The consultants followed up on structured questions from the interview guide with respondents to learn more from particularly interesting responses. Not all informants were asked all questions as knowledge and experience with the HJP and activities under it varied. Interviews

were conducted in person when possible and over the telephone, Zoom or Teams when in person interviews were not possible or feasible. Interviews were conducted in English by the International Consultant- and English or Tok Pisin by the national consultant. Informed consent was obtained from all interviewees, who were assured anonymity and non-attribution.

Data analysis followed. The data from data and document review as well as KIIs has been analyzed to identify findings, draw conclusions and lessons learned, and make recommendations on programming through the Draft and then Final Review Report and Draft Phase II Programme Document. The Review Report and draft Phase II ProDoc are based on the experience of designing and implementing the HJP and conditions and evident opportunities in SHP, Hela Province, and Enga Provinces at present from the analysis and accumulation of findings.

Evaluation reference group members reviewed and commented on a draft Final Report to validate review findings, conclusions, and lessons as well as the plausibility of recommendations. The RT revised the draft to address all comments, including clarifying what has been done through a results matrix. The Final Review Report is a synthesis of the RT's analyses drawn from documents and interviews.

Limitations faced included

- Challenges delineating the HJP from joint and other projects under the HJP.
- Busy PUNOs, partners and stakeholders at years end, with the holiday season, and the start of the new year.
- Funding and travel challenges, with issues with flights as well as payments.
- Disruptions due to violence and safety in travel and Highlands, addressed by deferring meetings when affected by tribal conflicts, following all UNSS rules and advice, and reaching remote partners like LEP Centre coordinators through remote methods.
- Large number of stakeholders for potential engagement, addressed by having the RT work with HJP and UN agency staff to select priority partners stakeholders for interviews.
- Reaching substantially fewer women than men.

4. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The review is organized through the categories set by the ToR and specific questions under them. Findings are from the analysis of accumulated facts - the evidence gathered from interviews and documents. Conclusions summarize the analysis of these accumulated facts.

RELEVANCE

How relevant has the HJP been for the Highlands?

The HJP was developed out of the UN's experience working in the Highlands after 2018 in earthquake response supporting immediate needs with humanitarian assistance (HA). This experience resituated the highlands as central in PNG for UN agencies, with its own particular issues and opportunities for UN agencies to work on given their specializations.

Violent conflict is endemic to the Highlands and widespread. Violent conflict is driven by multiple causes in a system of interconnected factors that have arisen from customary practices and their erosion, natural resource constraints, population growth, and climate change, political and socio-economic conditions of colonialism and state building after independence, and the proliferation of modern weapons. Violent conflict and threats of conflict had been key parts of the traditional, customary systems used by tribes themselves to

regulate relations within communities and between tribes which created an equilibrium that maintained relatively stable intra and inter-tribal relations and limited conflicts. Tribal fights were traditionally ordered, regulated, and carried out theatrically by men with bows and arrows, which minimized loss of life, and avoided casualties among women and youth. This system provided both for compensation for conflict losses and retaliation/threats of future violence that kept the peace between tribal groups before colonialization in the Highlands. Colonial law and order systems and then GoPNG law and justice infrastructure since independence have rested above these ways that communities traditionally regulated inter-tribal relations themselves. This longstanding ecosystem that has existed across the Highlands has been noted to be worsening since the 1980s due to a number of factors. Tribal and community authorities have been seen to have declined in status and activity, with other leaders taking roles over from traditional chiefs. Colonial and state authorities have eroded these traditional chiefs and their powers, but not had the reach to replace them to regulate, manage, and minimize tribal conflicts. Business and church leaders have large influence in communities with different goals and perspectives. Finally, modern weapons have replaced traditional ones, which increases the casualty level from conflict. Power and authority in communities can reportedly come from simply controlling arms, including through hiring gunmen who are not constrained by traditional rules of tribal conflicts around retaliation.

Interviews found unanimity on the relevance of the HJP for the Highlands. UN RCO and agency leaders and staff, national and provincial officials, and implementing partners recognized that the Highlands had deep development and conflict challenges and that the activities of the HJP were relevant to addressing them. Data gathered by some projects under the HJP found evidence for the breadth of conflict impacts in the highlands; for example, the baseline study for the Gender transformative psychosocial support for peace and community resilience in Hela Province found all people surveyed for the study had been affected by violent conflict in the province. Awareness raising was validated for many UN agency staff as an important method to use in the highlands, where people only recognized that they should and could live differently. One UN staff member noted that only after IOM under the HJP brought trainings to people in the community did community members “get their eyes opened and ask why we don’t go back to normal life with peace?”² Youth report to UN staff that because of the trainings they have received, they no longer engage in conflict and fighting as they now have learned to think differently.

All eight community representatives/leaders interviewed (two women and six men) felt that the HJP was relevant for the highlands as their communities faced these conflict and development issues and the programme was helpful with them.

In conclusion, the relevance of the HJP was not contested and clear to all engaged.

Has the scope of the HJP been appropriate for the context of the highlands?

Conflict risks and damage from violent conflicts are apparent across the two provinces. The lack of development is also striking, leaving communities and the inhabitants of the Highlands region have tremendous unmet needs. However UN Agencies have limited funding, limited capacity (including staff) and face a limited set of partners to work with in the Highlands.

The HJP was organised through three categories and seven pathways from the joint UN/World Bank Pathways for Peace report. These were:

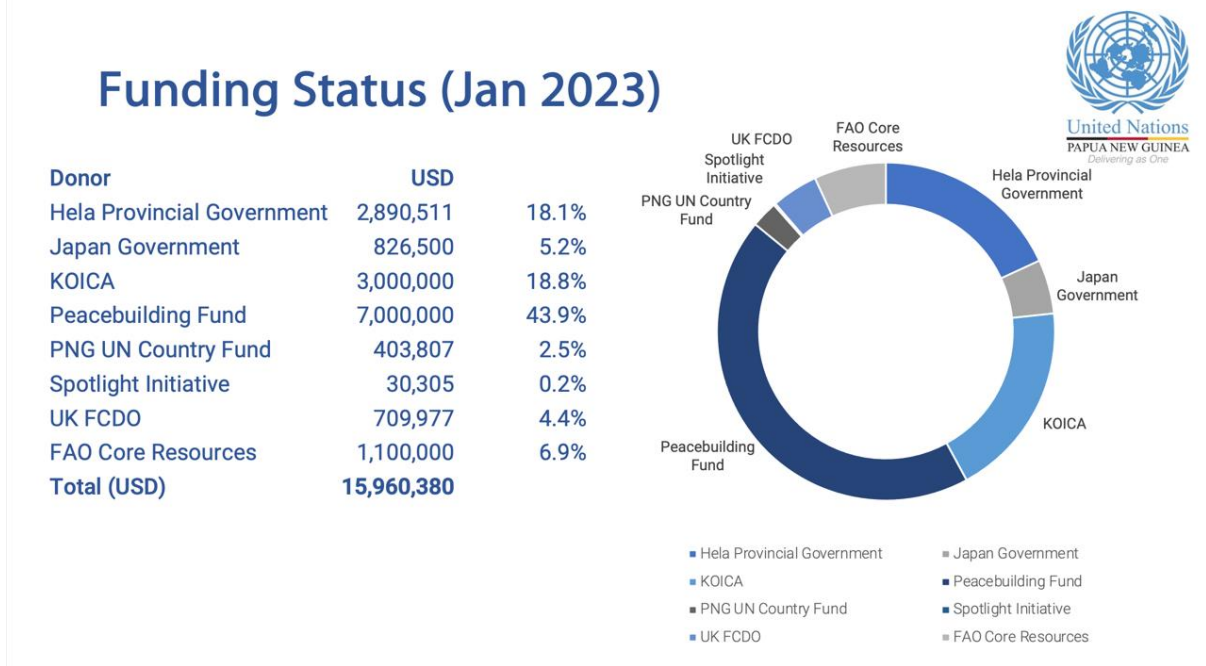
² IOM reported training to 94 people (59 men and 35 women) through activities under the CCfP Project in its October 2022 reporting.

Community Development	1. Women and Youth
	2. Resilient Communities
	3. Disaster Risk Management
Building Bridges for Peace	4. Rule of Law
	5. Social Cohesion
Accountable Government	6. Government Services
	7. Leadership

HJP activities were clear in the three categories and six of the seven pathways. Engagement in rule of law (ROL) however appears to be limited to coordination with justice and law enforcement organisations and actors at the national, provincial and community levels, with support for the sector largely provided by the large, longstanding Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Justice Services and Stability for Development Program (JSS4D).

UN agency leaders interviewed felt that the planned scope of the HJP 2020-2022 at around USD 30 million for 3 years was appropriate for the two provinces. Revenue mobilisation however did not reach this amount. The resources mobilised and included under the HJP reached slightly over half of this amount (almost USD 16 million). Figure 1 below details the funding and sources for projects within the HJP.

Figure 1: Funding for Projects under the HJP, July 2020-January 2023 by Source



The HJP has not broken down funding allocated through projects and other resources under the HJP using the pathways. The scope of activities of the HJP was thin with respect to some of the 7 pathways for peace used

as a conceptual framework for the programme. The limited work of projects and activities in ROL was noted in this regard; this however was seen by UN staff as sensible, as the UN did not have the resources to make a strong effort with state institutions that are tasked with delivering law and order and importantly because the Australian government has long invested substantial resources and targeted the sector. Some UN leaders noted how much demand there was in these provinces for UN activities and exploring additional work to meet this demand in a wide variety of areas suggested the scope could be larger.

Other UN interviews noted the limited geographic reach of the HJP even within the two provinces. UNDP has mapped 112 ongoing conflicts across the two provinces in Hela and SHP based on various sources. Project engagement reached few of these conflicts. The HJP and projects within it also had limited engagement on key natural resource issues and conflicts around mining and natural resource extraction in the highlands.

Provincial authorities and partners, while grateful for support, felt that the activities were promising starts but not large enough to be able to address the scale of the needs in the provinces. This was well understood *ex ante* and not a surprise. The hopes expressed were similar to those of UN staff – that testing and piloting ideas and approaches was promising not only to start building the potential for peace and stability but also to draw in additional donors and non-UN actors to extend peace and development beyond what had been achieved in the initial years of the HJP.

At the community level, activities under the HJP also provided for a breadth of engagement inclusive of almost all issues that might affect peace and development. This is notable in the creation of holistic peace and development plans within communities, informed by the respective local contexts and coordinated with provincial and national authorities and priorities. Some UN interviews noted that UN processes, planning, and programming included and brought some issues to the attention of communities of less immediate priority to them, such as climate change. In situations of conflict and scarcity that communities are in, the focus of these communities was sometimes short-term on their immediate conflict situation and needs rather than on what some community representatives view as longer-term issues.

All eight (two women and six men) community representatives/leaders interviewed felt that the scope of the HJP was appropriate for the Highlands; some elaborated on this noting with approval the coverage of the HJP of a variety of actors, channels, and causes of conflict as well as multiple ways to bring benefits of peace and after peace to communities.

In conclusion, the HJP's conceptual scope was seen as appropriately wide ranging by all informants as the peace and development challenges of the highlands are also wide ranging. However, the geographic area covered in implementation and time under implementation was viewed as insufficient to adequately help PNG government and civil society come to grips with the deep conflict and development issues in Hela and SHP; addressing these conflict and development issues in the highlands would need a substantially longer time, additional concentration of effort to reinforce complementary peace and development initiatives, and to extend beyond the provinces, districts, and local level governments prioritised under what were generally hoped to be only the first few years of the HJP.

COHERENCE

Has the governance of the HJP been appropriate?

The HJP is governed by a Steering Committee chaired jointly by the UN RC and the GoPNG, represented by the Secretary of the Department of National Planning and Monitoring. Each of the six UN agencies in the HJP is a member on the SC as are donors. In addition, the provincial administrators of SHP and Hela are members.

The ProDoc provides for a representative from the Provincial Local Level Services Monitoring Authority (PLLSMA) and a representative of the Social and Law and Order Sector Heads (SLOSH) are members. The secretariat for the SC is the staff of the HJP, who prepare the meetings and briefing content for SC members. Donors are also included on the SC. The SC meet to launch the HJP in June 2020, in March 2021, and twice in 2022 (in February and October). Meeting participants not on the SC from other humanitarian, peace and development actors working in the Highlands have also been included in meetings.

Provincial authorities consulted felt that the governance arrangement was appropriate. In both Hela and Southern Highlands, civil servants in the provincial government recognized that they were key counterparts and needed not only to know what the HJP was doing but needed to make sure that this fit with provincial plans and institutions. This gatekeeper role was seen as important for avoiding surprises that might reflect negatively on the provinces. Placing provincial authorities at the centre was also seen as encouraging sustainability and replication by making it more likely that HJP results could endure with a modicum of provincial government support and could be taken up and extended to additional disputes/LLGs.

Provincial authorities consulted however sought additional and more frequent consultation and briefing for their offices, and more benefits for government departments or committees from the project - such as work with Provincial Peace and Good Order Committees (PGOCs) and Village Courts (VCs).³

Processes that reviewed and learned from HJP activities and coordination were used by the HJP secretariat and are part of what has been done at HJP Steering Committee meetings. For example, SC meetings have worked to reinforce coordination with key government partners. These actions were through the management meeting with and learning from key counterparts and partners and bringing this learning into HJP processes and documents (including for the preparation of SC meetings). The HJP secretariat liaised and engaged with government and community stakeholders on HJP goals, activities, participation, engagement and learning towards supporting the HJP as well as projects under the HJP. There have not been formal reviews or evaluations of the HJP.

The conclusion that follows from these findings is that while the formal governance structure for the HJP was seen as appropriate and effective, additional efforts by the HJP were sought by IPs, provincial authorities, and community leaders to increase the spread of information about HJP programming, improve the coordination of programme activities (including with other initiatives, particularly GoPNG ones), and strengthen programme coherence by better linking activities to concentrate efforts in the area-based programme.

Have the planning arrangements for the HJP been appropriate?

SC meetings have been used to discuss and approve the ProDoc and work plans for the HJP. Each UN Agency uses its own planning processes towards developing their own activities in its projects, including in joint projects, in UN Agency headquarters in Port Moresby. The plans have been compiled by the HJP to capture and report on the full set of projects operating in the highlands. The HJP coordination team has not participated in this detailed planning. The HJP also tracks the geographic reach and concentration of projects in the highlands.

UN interviews often noted the importance of balancing the planned use of limited funding with retaining some funds to be used flexibly towards meeting project and HJP goals as opportunities arose in what were

³ -The HJP is not working directly with the PGOCs or VCs. These two law and justice institutions are supported by JSS4D.

often described as the “unpredictable” highlands. Agencies noted being able to be flexible enough under current planning arrangements to seize these opportunities as a strength.

Provincial authorities noted that their provincial governments found it challenging to fully participate in the SC; Provincial government staff noted that their administrators and administrations have limited capacity and in challenges with coordination across the difficult terrain of their provinces and in their connections with Port Moresby and other provinces. Their participation in SCs was seen by provincial government staff interviewed as not sufficiently active for them to make the most out of the HJP. This was seen as an area that provincial governments themselves should do better at. Support from the HJP secretariat towards organising the travel of PAs has not resolved these issues, as last-minute cancellations of plans to attend has still occurred. In person participation is considered important by provincial government leaders.

UN agency interviewees appreciated collaborating and learning from other projects and agencies, including through HJP meetings used as sharing mechanisms. Many UN agency staff implementing programming in the Highlands noted that there could still be more collaboration and that working together more closely across agencies would improve implementation. Having the HJP Coordinator chair planning meetings for joint projects like Creating Conditions for Peace was seen as useful as it enabled the UNDP manager of the joint project to focus in these meetings on their role as the manager of UNDP activities rather than their responsibilities for the joint project. UN agency interviewees appreciated the support of the HJP with communications, but noted more needs to be done to reach across the difficult communications terrain of the highlands (with government stakeholders, with IPs, and especially with communities).

Community leaders interviewed had varied interpretations of HJP planning. Five (including the two women) felt the HJP planning was fine since as a result of HJP planning, the programme worked with their communities and CBOs. Three male leaders noted that at their levels, they were not included in planning processes; two of these three leaders felt this was problematic as not being included in planning may have limited the extent to which the HJP engaged with and partnered with local CBOs for grass roots activities.⁴

In conclusion, findings suggest that HJP planning has worked effectively enough for UN agencies to help them support their own agencies’ plans and their implementation. However, agency staff in the Highlands and government and community stakeholders sought to know more about planned and implemented UN joint programming and have this programming more tightly targeted over concentrated periods of time on priority communities towards potentially having larger effects from activities under the HJP in peace and development. HJP roles could be strengthened towards greater coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

Have the implementation arrangements for the HJP been appropriate for the context?

The HJP was developed as UN Agencies continued to learn how to operate effectively and efficiently and implement in SH and Hela provinces, working directly (for IOM) and through implementing partners (for FAO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, and UN Women) in the two provinces.

Per UN Agency procedures, Agencies are responsible for managing the implementation their own projects and/or activities under joint projects. UN agency leaders and staff noted the importance of staffing projects

⁴ The review reached a small sample of community leaders, which provided limited, fragmentary and incomplete information on inclusive planning or its limits. The UN conducted extensive community consultation sessions in 2019 covering a cross section of communities in Hela and SHP which culminated in a high-level workshop with government and local stakeholders in Hela to validate the HJP’s focus.

within the HJP with their own staff - and the challenges identifying, hiring, on-boarding, and retaining staff to work in the highlands, both for international and national staff, given the corporate shift in contracting modalities adopted by some PUNOs. Having project managers in place, either national or international for different projects, was seen as critical for current joint PBF projects to progress, although HJP staff support and work was appreciated and used at the inception of projects to get these initiatives started during the long lead time for hiring joint project managers through UNDP.⁵ Each UN Agency operated in PNG under its own legal arrangements with the government, as well as through their own agreements (including in joint projects and programmes) with donor partners.

IOM stood out as the sole UN agency that did direct implementation in Hela and SHP. IOM staffed up in the earthquake HA effort and has been able to use and maintain the same national staff in Mendi to implement activities themselves in the highlands. Having staff in place was recognized to be extremely valuable for quickly starting IOM activities under joint projects, while other UN agencies needed to hire international or national staff as well as identify and reach agreement with IPs before beginning to implement activities in these projects. One result however was difficulties in linking activities of UN agencies in joint projects. With staff in place, IOM activities sometimes thus got out in front of other agencies and/or the activities of other UN agencies sometimes lagged behind IOM as they didn't have staff or partners in place prepared to act at this time. Some UN agency staff in interviews saw PUNOs (including sometimes their own agencies) as underinvesting in staff for the highlands. Some PUNOs have not had staff in the field or had staff in the highlands for only short periods. This lack of staffing was seen as inhibiting implementation and field-level coordination with other PUNOs - particularly when coupled with the minimal presence of CSOs to partner with and the corresponding low capacity of IPs; efforts to use Port Moresby based staff slowed implementation and challenged communications with IPs and other UN organisations in the highlands.

PUNO staff interviewed noted the limited number of qualified IPs to work with UN Agencies on projects in the highlands in general, and for the particular foci of specialized issues and areas sought in the HJP and projects under it. Agencies were able to share the limited number of IPs well qualified for some of these activities. However the limited capacity of partners made it difficult to address the scale of the needs and demands in the highlands. PUNO capacity building support has been provided towards building up the capacity of partners. But UN Agency staff interviewed as well as IP staff noted that building capacity from existing low levels is a long, on-going process in the highlands.

UN staff suggested that more structure would be useful to help Agency staff know, including staff in Port Moresby, and understand the activities of other agencies in the highlands. Sometimes Port Moresby staff reported they learned about activities and communities where UN agencies were present through fortuitous rather than systematic ways. More information sharing was seen as a way to boost and share relationships with partners and stakeholders as well, towards stronger joint impacts and outcomes. The HJP Coordinator has been able to hold meetings and coordinate field-based staff of PUNOs in the HJP to support coordination.

Community leaders interviewed (six men and two women) advocated for greater/additional support to be channelled through the HJP to local CBOs. They sought additional emphasis and resources through the HJP towards bottom up approaches in awareness raising, peace building, and development. Several community leaders (including the two women leaders) felt implementation arrangements of UN agency projects needed more extensive on-the-ground presence in the provinces, districts, LLGs and communities to be more

⁵ An example of 8 months to recruit and mobilise project staff was given, which clearly affects the implementation of short-duration projects like some of the PBF-funded ones that have 18-month terms in their designs.

effective. IPs noted that they were continuing implementation through these existing UN agency and joint projects under the HJP; this funding was critical to their ability to sustain their efforts.

Findings suggest the conclusion that the HJP has had appropriate implementation arrangements given the context of the highlands. The difficulties of staffing the HJP and UN agency projects, the challenges of working with government stakeholders, and the limited number and capacity of potential implementing partners in SHP and Hela have shaped the ways the HJP has been implemented. The need for PUNO field-based staff is critical to mentor and supervise the implementation of activities by IPs. Direct implementation has been successful for IOM but may deliver less capacity building and sustainability than working through IPs.

EFFECTIVENESS

What are the main results of Highlands Joint Programme to date?

UN Agencies, under the framework of the HJP, have since July 2020 implemented several joint projects and single-agency projects. The main results of the HJP are its work to support programme relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, M&E, reaching marginalized groups and addressing issues of gender and disability, and sustainability. These results of the HJP are discussed under these categories elsewhere in the report. This section briefly focuses on the main results to date of the projects under the HJP from July 2020 through the early months of 2023.

The first PBF-funded joint project, Strengthening the role of Women and Youth as Peace Builders to improve Development in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea that linked IOM, UNFPA and UN Women, was developed and substantially implemented before the start of the HJP. The project and its activities thus are part of the development and basis for the HJP rather than included in it, although some activities from the joint project were included in the RF for the HJP.

The joint and agency projects, UN Agencies, time frames, and funders with funding levels for the projects that fit under the HJP are:

Creating Conditions for Peace in PNG Highlands (UNDP, IOM, UNFPA, UN Women) December 2020-May 2023 (will request to be extended), PBF USD 4 million

Preventing Climate-Induced Conflicts Through Empowered Women Leadership (UNDP, IOM) December 2021-June 2023 (will request to be extended), PBF USD 1.5 million

Gender transformative psychosocial support for peace and community resilience in Hela Province, Papua New Guinea (UN Women, UNFPA) (will request to be extended), December 2021-June 2022, PBF USD 1.5 million

Addressing Conflict & Fragility in the Highlands in Papua New Guinea (UNDP) July 2021-June 2024, KOICA USD 3 million

Hela Provincial Government Agreement (FAO, IOM, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, UNDP, UNDCF) March 2020-2023 Hela Provincial Government USD 2.89 million

Additional funding for activities included under the HJP come from core resources of UN agencies involved, other joint programmes/projects like the Spotlight Initiative and Women Make the Change. The United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office contributed more than \$700,000 to the HJP and the UN's PNG Country Fund allocated more than \$300,000 in unearmarked resources to support HJP coordination.

The discussion of results of the HJP here thus highlights key results of projects within the HJP. However projects within the HJP have yet to be completed. Some projects in the HJP are still at very early stages of implementation. As of October 2022 reporting, the PBF-funded Preventing Climate-Induced Conflicts Through Empowered Women Leadership project noted had expended only 7% of its budget and Gender transformative psychosocial support for peace and community resilience in Hela Province reported expending almost 8%. Updated figures have not been made available for the report. These projects have correspondingly modest results to date. Some of the key results anticipated for Hela from the provincial government's contribution, such as the development of the Tari Market, have not been completed.

Key results come from reporting and interviews. Projects have reported to donors through their agencies or lead agencies for joint projects. Projects have also reported to the HJP secretariat, which has produced progress reports for the SC. These provide more detail on results. Interviews gathered information on the significance of results as well as on a key result – the ability and merit of UN agencies working together across Agencies through the HJP in the highlands. Results focus on HJP results in supporting coordination and towards the results in the HJP's own RF; the ToR did not provide for and the RT was not able to review the results of projects under the HJP or their RFs. Community leaders interviewed did not have information on overall HJP results; community leaders were only able to speak to results in their communities or the work of CBOs in their communities.

One of the main constraints on reporting results in conflict management of the HJP is the elastic sense of conflict and the ever changing number and extent of conflicts in the highlands. This sense that conflict is everywhere and unpredictable seems to be how local stakeholders view conflict in the region, as noted by Conciliation Resources report. UN staff and government officials seem to also share this sense that conflict could be anywhere and everywhere in and between highlands communities and is unpredictable - even as the many, multiple channels that can lead to conflict and actors that contribute to conflict are reasonably well understood. Tensions are noted, rise to the level of conflict, and often last for long periods of time – while other tensions may go unnoted by people outside of these sometimes remote communities, even if they are accompanied by violence that is seen as in some sense as significant. The potential for conflicts to be long dormant and generational – and for resolution to require extensive, long-term compensation arrangements that can easily break down - add to the definitional challenges of what a conflict is and when a conflict is “resolved.”

UN staff, government officials in SHP and Hela, and implementing partners all note that UN support through projects under the HJP has been important in building the capacity of trusted local actors to mediate existing conflicts and that there are positive results from UN support. , that some successes have been achieved in reaching and implementing accords to end conflicts in some communities, and that this capacity has been useful in helping head off potential conflicts or a return to conflict in other cases. CCfP reports project supported training by UNDP has built and strengthened five inter-denominational

mediation teams led by the Catholic Diocese of Mendi and the United Church, whose work has led to four ceasefires in conflicts that the teams continue to reinforce. The successive interventions and continued work led by UN Women and UNFPA, their partners, and other interventions under the HJP with LEP centres in 10 communities has led, IPs report, to big impacts in the empowerment of women and youth in these communities. These activities have led to women and youth speaking out – and seizing opportunities to participate – in community practices and traditions that marginalised or silenced women and youth in cultures in Hela and SHP.

Some UN agency staff, implementing partners and stakeholders expressed concerns about how some interventions are implemented or sought and emphasized ways that UN agencies and IPs could strengthen implementation to build momentum towards stronger results and a wider impact. The criticism was not about what Agencies planned or partners/IOM implemented but rather aspirational in that stakeholders, partners and staff felt they could do better to compound the positive effects of work in some communities and to spread programming more rapidly to additional communities. These ideas include towards stronger implementation included:

- More frequent engagements with communities to encourage the use of HJP-supported capacity, for example following up on training events rapidly with facilitation to support the use of this training (such as with the training for community-level women peace mediators);
- Enlisting other agencies and working towards bringing in government contributions to follow up with concrete support shortly after priorities in IOM-facilitated Community peace for development plans are determined (towards the implementation of items in CPDPs⁶);
- Rapidly bringing in more tangible peace dividends to support ceasefires and peace agreements, such as FAO support for agricultural production and marketing, to accompany peacebuilding;
- Coordinating UN agencies and IPs to support all parts of production needed, such as bringing the rice mill to support training and seeds for rice production in a community;
- Persistent, regular outreach to and collaboration of the HJP with government stakeholders to bring them along consistently to support and reinforce peacebuilding, including with their own government resources; and
- Elevated UN efforts to use their neutral reputation to engage with key political stakeholders (Governors and Members of Parliament) in order to elevate peacebuilding to this level, address political issues that impede peace and development (such as issues that continue to impede the work of the governor across SHP, including Mendi), and create avenues for constituents to press for MPs and local governments at all levels to use their resources to support peacebuilding.

More results are expected in the future as UN agencies accelerate the implementation of PBF-funded projects that have had a slow start, including through the use of no-cost extensions.

To conclude, the main results of the HJP by end 2022 are only seen as the start of addressing the need for building conditions conducive to peace and development in Hela and SHP. The main results noted by UN agencies, stakeholders, and IPs were that they had begun to work together on peace and development in

⁶ IOM was able to get the SHP Administrator to commit 50,000 to each CPDP in the province in 2022, and governments at other levels have contributed – for example the President of Hulia Local Level Government in Hela pledged PKG 5,000 towards one community in the LLG.

the highlands in productive ways and established the relationships and capacity to do more towards peace and development together and with their implementing partners in the future. The huge needs for peacebuilding and development in the highlands need both more focused, concentrated support and a greater volume of support, including additional capable IPs.

How and how much have HJP activities enhanced and strengthened opportunities to create conditions for enduring peace and sustainable development?

The interventions under the HJP are seen by HJP staff, UN agencies, partners, and stakeholders as having supported important progress in peacebuilding and preparing the ground for development in the two and a half-years of the existence of the joint programme. However this is seen as only the start of supporting addressing peace and development challenges and opportunities in SHP and Hela, which require more time and more programming to start to build an effective basis for these transformations. The HJP activities are the work of the Coordinator and staff to link and support the particular joint programmes and PUNO projects as well as activities of UN agencies supported by their core resources implemented in the two highlands provinces.

All eight community leaders interviewed (two women and six men) were grateful for the support that some had received towards their work in awareness raising, peacebuilding and development and training/capacity building for CBOs and community leaders/members in these areas. Three community leaders interviewed (one female) advocated for more consistent, ongoing support from the HJP towards these goals/activities. These three community leaders stressed the need for sustained efforts and joint implementation with UN staff, their IPs, and community leaders going to and working in communities together through the HJP. Two male community leaders were explicit that the activities had not done much yet and that this support to date is not yet enough to create opportunities for peace and development in the highlands. Their argument was that more activities needed to be done in the targeted communities to support peace, empower women and youth, and reinforce the benefits of both through tangible support that benefits communities as peace dividends (such as small-scale infrastructure for agro-processing to support livelihoods activities as peace dividends).

In conclusion, the findings suggest that UN agencies have and can productively work together on joint programming with CBO and community implementing partners towards creating conditions that can support peace and development. Progress to date noted was substantially in how IPs and communities were working together after HJP-supported training and capacity building as they worked together with UN agencies in the communities that the longer-active PBF-funded project (CCfP) has supported.

EFFICIENCY

Have risks in HJP been identified and managed appropriately?

The Highlands are a high-risk environment for many reasons. The ProDoc identified numerous risks with substantial likelihood to impede the HJP. The risk matrix categorized risks under a variety of insecurities: (economic, environmental, financial insecurity, food, and physical) plus operational risks and risks of unintended consequences. The ProDoc also developed risk mitigation strategies for each risk. Some programme approaches under the HJP and its projects addressed these risks, such as providing water tanks and supporting community water management, which is how to address the risk of reduced access to water due to the variability of rainfall (an environmental insecurity issue noted as a risk).

HJP staff monitored risks and shared information with UN Agencies and partners. These processes appear to be largely oral and through meetings. Reporting on risks and their management does not appear to be a substantial part of reporting to donors. The HJP staff also liaise with provincial authorities which kept the information flow with government partners going.

Security risks are a constant concern. UNDSS supports monitoring these risks but does not have staff in place in these provinces, which limits their connections to local security actors. UN staff also count on community actors in the communities where programs are implemented to informally share news about safety and security risks. Communities do readily share this information, including with IPs, and IPs share with the UN. Deputy provincial administrators are key links in project information sharing, including on risk management. Projects keep them informed and they report on security concerns to projects.

Projects implemented in Hela and SHP are often affected by conflict risks, which lead to postponing activities. UN staff report IP staff are responsive when asked to pause or slow activities due to UN concerns about risks. These issues are often specific to particular communities and conflicts. The more generalized risks around the 2022 national general elections led to broader postponement of activities across highlands provinces for months in summer and early fall 2022.

Limited partner capacity was seen as a risk by UN agencies. This is the case both for government partner capacity and for IPs in these provinces, particularly local NGOs and CBOs, including faith-based organizations. Project staff and HJP staff have endeavored to build partner capacity as well as to increase the number of partners that work in the highlands towards managing these risks and strengthening project implementation (such as UNDP bringing in CARE, World Vision, Conciliation Resources and Think Place and UNW bringing in Melanesian Institute within the CCfP project).

Some UN staff noted that the UN system, UN agencies and/or UNDSS should increase its monitoring and management of risk towards enabling more UN agency presence in communities. Activities that IP staff do in communities on their own, in situations where UN security protocols and concerns do not allow for UN staff to be present, were viewed as potentially benefiting from more UN presence. Just having UN staff present was viewed as boosting implementation and sustainability by showing the UN cares about these communities and issues.

Many community leaders interviewed felt the HJP had managed their risks effectively. However some noted that CBOs and community leaders had risks as well and that they needed support to manage these risks. Other CBO interviewees did not know how the HJP managed risk. Community leaders sought more UN presence in their communities.

In conclusion, the HJP's framework recognizes risk. The management of risk has been a feature of programme management, both by the HJP Coordinator and by UN agencies that participate in the HJP, as well as by UNDSS. To date, risks have been managed effectively. However security risks are widespread and difficult to predict across the highlands. A more robust staffing structure that placed a coordinator in each province and more frequent meetings to link agency staff and IPs in the highlands could be used to better engage provincial authorities and/or communities and involve them in joint planning, implementation, M&E, as well as risk management and mitigation.

How have risks to the sustainability of activities been identified and managed?

Sustainability has been challenging for development actors (including the UN) and donors across PNG, including for the UN in the Highlands. The HJP ProDoc had a section on sustainability that emphasized that multiple strategies would be used towards sustainability, including linking and integrating existing UN agency activities and using a deliberative process to determine activities and programmes in the Highlands.

Approaches that work towards sustainability in the HJP, projects under the HJP, and activities within them are to recognize that successor programmes will be needed, to work with IPs and the government that will continue in the region long-term, build capacity in individuals, organisations, and communities that will endure and be used going forward, and to reinforce processes and results by working with the same IPs, government officials, communities, and beneficiaries (including include women, youth, PWD and the elderly) through multiple activities. All of these approaches towards encouraging sustainability are challenging to implement them for the UN and their successes lie substantially out of UN control as well as a substantial time out in the future. The main avenues to support the sustainability of HJP interventions were to have Phase I serve as a platform to leverage further investments from the GoPNG and other donors, use a design that encouraged replication and transferring the experience to other provinces, and that community demand and ownership should encourage continuing and expanding peacebuilding and development programming. UN agencies and leaders have also continued to raise revenues towards successor projects. UN co-chairs at SC meetings have noted and emphasized that peacebuilding in the Highlands remains a long-term endeavor and have stressed the importance of strengthening local institutions to sustain peacebuilding efforts beyond the programme through capacity building Projects to carry this approach to and expectation about sustainability. The KOICA project notes that “the full impacts of the project are not expected to be conclusively seen or experience within the project period (2022-2024), as changes in attitudes and behavior in relation to peaceful resolution of conflicts, social cohesion, and accountable institutes takes time to be entrenched, consistently practices, and permeate all levels of local society. (p. 31).

UN, national government, and provincial government interviewees emphasized the importance of working with and through government processes towards greater sustainability. UN staff also stressed the need to have agency leaders target revenue raising based on the tremendous needs in the highlands and the UN’s demonstrated capacity to support addressing them through the HJP. Interviewees emphasized the potential for raising additional funding, including through non-traditional donors and government at the national and provincial levels in PNG.

Using HJP staff to start the implementation of joint projects in the highlands while UN agencies were in the long processes of staffing and onboarding project management was seen by some UN staff as a good practice to get more time in actual project implementation, which also supports sustainability. HJP staff noted concern about having the staff of one agency do the work of another agency, which might detract from the ability of staff to meet their main responsibilities and impede project implementation.

The fact that projects under the HJP focused on building the capacity of key people in communities was seen as supportive of sustainability. The key people within communities for conflict resolution were the ones selected for training to build their skills in leading conflict mediation processes in CCfP. These people

from the communities provide sustainability as they will be the ones that continue to provide leadership within these communities.

Other interviewees from IPs and communities noted that they were not aware of how the HJP addressed sustainability or managed risks to sustainability. Many community leaders interviewed felt sustainability could be further supported by more engagement with them for community-level work.

To conclude, the HJP and projects under it have been able to manage risks successfully to date, but interviews suggest the UN should consider some modifications to procedures and processes in risk management to further encourage sustainability for a potential Phase II. Specific ideas are put forth in recommendations below.

Recommendations to improve how the HJP, UN Agencies and their partners operate in the Highlands going forward?

The challenges and high costs of operating in PNG are compounded for operating in the Highlands for UN Agencies. HJP coordination staff in Mendi have been seen as important assets in supporting the design, implementation, M&E, and reporting on activities, projects, and the HJP itself. UN agency staff hired for and posted to Mendi and Tari have been important assets to other agencies in working in the two provinces. The UNDP presence in Wabag (Enga Province) through the Strengthening integrated sustainable land management project helps establish relationships that can be leveraged towards additional work by the UN in Enga on peacebuilding and development.

The experience to date suggests the importance of sustained contact and interventions to support reaching and maintaining peace agreements reached through facilitated mediations, which need continued attention to endure (as emphasized by the HJP 2021 Progress Report). Interviews emphasized the importance of sustained presence and engagement by IPs towards enduring agreements and their implementation, as well as sought more presence by UN staff in communities (which was seen by communities as showing that the UN cared and by staff as raising their knowledge and awareness that helped in project implementation as well as raising the profile of the UN in ways that could support programme extension).

Linking “soft” benefits like capacity building and training in peacebuilding with “hard” benefits such as water tanks that meet community needs were seen as best practices, but difficult to link and sync in practice as implementation alignment and UN agency alignment is challenging. Agency alignment was shaped by funding availability as well as implementation arrangements. Limited funding for example has left FAO without activities under the HJP to implement in the highlands after mid-2022, despite the tremendous agricultural needs and opportunities there. More predictable, longer-term funding can help UN agencies link programming to support peace and development as agency core and other funding quite limited (for FAO in this example).

All eight community leaders interviewed (two women and six men) sought greater engagement of the HJP in the highlands to support sustainability, as a larger programme with more activities was expected to have greater results. Some emphasized that this engagement should go through CBOs for impact. One male community leader concluded: “I would like all UN agencies to work closely with the established community groups, by then we will see changes.” Some partners noted risks of community level work and

illustrated these with evidence that in at least one case a LEP centre and its leaders had been a part of community processes that are human rights violations.⁷ These partners asked for stronger UN oversight and engagement to avoid these problems with community-level partners.

In conclusion, the experience of the HJP and projects under it to date and interviews for the review have suggested areas and ideas for improved implementation going forward. Specific ideas are put forth in recommendations below.

SUSTAINABILITY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

Has there been sufficient investment through the HJP to make a positive difference in empowering youth and women and girls as key local actors in peacebuilding processes?

The HJP to date has been a three-year initiative funded at the level of approximately USD 15 million to start addressing the humanitarian-conflict-development nexus in selected communities/LLGs and issues in two challenging provinces. But the issues and challenges in Hela and SHP are long-term and endemic across the provinces (and the rest of the highlands). The earthquake response was an emergency HA effort to support urgent needs in the wake of the disaster that raised UN awareness of the issues in these two provinces. The HJP and projects under it that followed were designed as pilots to test and develop the capacities of UN agencies and their partners to work together on peacebuilding and development in areas where they have competitive advantages. Pilots, almost by definition, are to test ideas. Testing seldom emphasizes sustainability but instead explores whether approaches can be done and can have results.

The HJP and the projects under it are based on a HR-based approach that seeks to reach the most vulnerable to address inequalities, promote the participation of rights holders and enhance accountability of duty bearers, which the HJP notes lie at the heart of under development and insecurity in both provinces. Both the HJP and projects also need to work with existing leaders and power structures at the community level that are predominantly male.

The HJP and projects within it have focused on benefitting women and girls through a gender-mainstreaming approach in general as well as targeting some specific activities on women and girls. The recognition that the situation for women and youth cannot be addressed without addressing the structural causes of conflict, exclusion, and poverty motivates interventions in the HJP. The approach towards gender equality recognizes the patriarchal nature of societies in the highlands and the need to work with both men and women and boys and girls to make gains in women's empowerment and advocacy.

DNH remains an important imperative and needs to continue to be thought through in work in the highlands. Risks of potentially doing harm remain in many areas of HA, peacebuilding, and development. The April 2020 context analysis done in the development of the CCfP project noted that income generation activities that increase women's economic empowerment may raise risks of increasing GBV, for example.

⁷ LEP centres are platforms developed by UN Women with support from UNFPA and IOM that are managed and implemented by the IP Melanesian Institute. UN Women and MI have not had ongoing monitoring of LEP centres; other partners were critical of the limited monitoring and the lack of action to investigate and address claims of the misuse of the centres.

The take away from this is the need to work to reduce and manage GBV risks in general and to complement specific activities like income generation support for women.

UN interviewees stressed both that HJP programming had begun to start to make a difference in empowering youth and women and girls in local peacebuilding and that this was not enough yet. The magnitude of marginalization and the strength of community norms that impede the full incorporation of youth and women in peacebuilding in the highlands were noted as too entrenched for the few years and set of activities of the HJP to change.

The eight community leaders (two female and six male) interviewed had differing interpretations in this area. Three male leaders felt that the fact that the HJP was working to empower youth and women and girls meant that it would make a positive difference. Five others (including the two women leaders) noted that the short time period of the HJP, limited resources, and the extent of marginalization of women, girls, and youth in the highlands meant that there had not yet been sufficient investment from the HJP to empower them given the context.

These findings lead to the conclusion that there has not been sufficient investment through the HJP to make enough of a positive difference in empowering youth and women and girls as key local actors in peacebuilding processes in the highlands to date. Progress in starting to do so however is evident. It should not be a surprise that the few years of programme activities and engagements in some communities in these two highlands provinces have not been enough to empower marginalized actors like women and youth in these provinces on difficult issues that they have traditionally been excluded from like peace and conflict.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The assessment of M&E comes in the conclusions to the answers of each of the review questions under M&E based on the RT's analysis of reports and interviews with UN staff, IPs, and government stakeholders. The eight community leaders (two women and six men) interviewed did not know or speak to HJP outcome/output results, how the HJP did M&E, or HJP efforts to support learning as they noted they have little to no information about these areas. Three of these community leaders (including one woman leader) emphasized that the HJP should work closely with communities towards data gathering and greater results and that they would like to know the broader outputs and outcomes from their collaboration with UN agencies and the HJP.

Has data from activities provided good evidence for output achievements of the HJP?

The HJP ProDoc outlined indicators and measurements for output achievements. Both projects under the HJP and the HJP ProDoc itself have output results outlined in results frameworks. These data that measure outputs are usually measurable and measured. But not all of these HJP outputs have aligned with activities of projects under the HJP; some joint projects were developed later than the HJP and have to some extent different output results. This suggests the evolving nature of the programme and how approaches have adapted over time to the challenges and opportunities of peacebuilding in these two provinces. Some of the more complex output indicators have not been measured (e.g. "the proportion of women & youth in decision-making roles participating in peacebuilding mechanisms within communities"). These indicators are challenging within the programme context; some UN staff suggested these were not measurable within the programme context.

Some UN Agency staff interviewed noted and appreciated the HJP's M&E templates and how they are used for reporting. UN Staff noted the value of the HJP team in supporting their reporting. HJP staff drew praise for their skills and outreach towards M&E and for using project-based data rather than making new demands for data collection. UN agency staff appreciated the HJP's work developing reporting and outreach products by further elaborating on brief bullet points submitted by field staff. UN agencies noted that the HJP's efforts on these products also supported agency communications and advocacy.

In conclusion, the HJP has substantially relied on output data from activities of projects under the HJP. These projects, like the HJP, have sometimes also had ambitious data needs that have not always been met. However in general, the activity level or output data from projects within the HJP provide evidence that project activities are implemented and reach beneficiaries with positive effects, including at the output level.

Does this output data provide good evidence for overall progress toward intermediate and longer-term outcomes?

Both projects under the HJP and the HJP ProDoc itself have outcome results outlined in results frameworks. The outcome measurements outlined in the ProDocs for projects under the HJP and the HJP itself are often difficult to measure and many have not been measured to date. Some HJP indicators are too broad to be indicative of project-level successes and output data focused on communities, which do not work at the level of the whole province or region (which is the level where many of the outcome indicators are, e.g. "number of new conflicts, annual" or "proportion of informal employment in non-agricultural employment".)

The general information base and data on PNG, particularly the Highlands, is extremely weak; there are few studies and very little data available, and this information is dated for almost any issues and attribute of the Highlands and the people that live across it. This includes the most basic information, such as the size of the population. The lack of data on the context particularly inhibit the ability to measure outcome-level results.

The expectations of UN agencies are that longer-term outcomes will take more time to come through than the HJP or projects under it. As the UNDP KOICA project notes on impact, "The full impacts of the project are not expected to be conclusively seen or experienced within the project period, as changes in attitudes and behaviour in relation to peaceful resolution of conflicts, social cohesion and accountable institutions take time to be entrenched, consistently practiced and permeate all levels of local society."

UN agency management and staff and HJP team interviewed were not satisfied with the outcome indicators used in the HJP ProDoc or the systems used or not used to date to generate data on these indicators. Projects under the HJP monitor their project outcome indicators, not HJP ones.

In conclusion, the challenges of outcome measurement in the highlands to date have remained problematic for the HJP. Phase II should consider ways to simplify outcome reporting and prioritize this measurement to assess progress for intermediate and longer-term outcomes.

Do current M&E mechanisms facilitate learning and continuous improvement of project activities?

Per UN Agency procedures, UN Agencies are responsible for monitoring their own programs as part of their responsibilities for managing them. UN projects, and notably the PBF-funded joint projects, have detailed indicators with extensive data needs; the ProDocs of these projects outline extensive plans for baseline, sometimes midline, and endline data collection. These plans have sometimes not been carried through or delayed as project start ups have been challenging, time concerns pressing, and the emphasis has been on moving forward with implementation on peacebuilding activities in projects.

HJP staff has solicited performance data from UN agencies on activities under the HJP. Joint monitoring missions have been sent by UN agencies in Port Moresby under PBF-funded joint projects., including high-level missions that have included key donors that might support future activities independently or through the UN. UN Agency country office staff interviewed report that joint missions of mid-management staff are useful and valuable as well as more efficient than monitoring alone. Other UN staff focused on their own and their own agency M&E and did not know of HJP M&E.

HJP staff use agency data for reporting. PUNOs use agency staff for reporting and engaged with their IPs towards reports. HJP monitoring has focused on needs for SC meetings.

Some UN agency leaders suggested a HJP body to link management of UN agencies in Port Moresby to support the programme. This body could be used to task M&E missions and review data from regular programme monitoring, HJP staff, and join missions towards strengthening implementation, learning, and future programmes (both planning and resource mobilization). PUNOs would need to co-fund joint monitoring as lead agencies cannot subsidise this cost. The current HJP coordination team does not have resources for organising M&E missions.

In conclusion, M&E mechanisms of the HJP have not collected some data as difficult to obtain; this suggests modifying data needs and increasing M&E capacity to make the M&E burden doable and reasonable for the conditions.

TOWARDS PHASE II

Right things for UN Agencies and the HJP to do in SHP and Hela Province over the next few years?

The needs and opportunities identified at the outset of the HJP, the experience of UN agencies with the projects and interventions under the HJP and HJP coordination, monitoring and reporting since July 2020, and the fieldwork for this review suggest that UN agencies have taken on important issues in the highlands and have responded with activities in SHP and Hela that can be managed and have largely been managed adequately despite the extremely challenging implementing conditions in Hela and Southern Highlands provinces. These challenges have been compounded by COVID-19 and processes of the 2022 general elections. UN Agencies have and have kept to their comparative advantages and managed within their own capacity constraints the challenges of operating in the highlands. UN agency difficulties staffing and implementing in the highlands as well as the limited capacity of government partners and implementing partners have been major constraints on the speed and extent of programme mobilization and implementation.

The approach of working to build community capacity and organization and linking communities that gain from these less-tangible benefits from training with more tangible benefits (such as water tanks to meet

priority needs for safe potable water) is appreciated. The HJP's roles engaging government stakeholders and networking them into programme activities are also seen as needed and key to the approaches taken under the HJP, as is ensuring that HJP activities explicitly target and focus on reaching women and youth in communities.

In conclusion, findings from the review suggest that the priorities of the HJP remain key peace and development priorities of Hela and Southern Highlands provinces going forward. The division of labour of UN agencies that supports UN agencies to address issues that are their comparative advantages should continue to guide UN activities over the next few years in the highlands. UN agencies would benefit from the involvement of the Peace and Development Advisor in RCO who is in place as of May 2023.

Is it feasible to expand activities or develop new activities to include Enga Province?

Enga is commonly grouped together with Hela and Southern Highlands as the third province in the upper Highlands at the end of the road network of PNG. Documents and fieldwork for the review provided limited detail and concrete data on the challenges and opportunities of working on the humanitarian-peace-development nexus in Enga Province. The general perspectives of all informants were that the known similarities in the conditions, problems, and opportunities suggested HJP coordination and activities were appropriate for Enga – but that more detailed context specific information would be needed to identify priorities, implementing partners, and funding to enable HJP programming in the province.

The light analysis and evidence available for the review suggests Enga shares many characteristics with SHP and Hela in the frequent outbreaks and costs of violent conflict. Some data on Enga is included in the draft Phase II ProDoc. The province is economically important for its large population and has a large extractive industry project, the stalled Barrick Gold mine in the outlying district of Porgera. Violent conflicts within and between communities are common, with a large number of active conflicts and displaced communities due to conflict. Human development indicators for the province, like for SHP and Hela, are low and the trajectory that shows little improvement or regression over recent years is troubling. However a detailed analysis of conditions, priorities, and prospective implementing partners would be needed towards building a base for this work - coupled with deliberate political engagement to create the operational space for the UN to venture into sensitive themes. Additional funding for staff and programming would be needed for programme exploration, including identifying prospective IPs and resource mobilization.

UN Agencies would need a level of knowledge, connections, funds, staff, and partners in the province to potentially work effectively and manage the risks of developing and implementing HJP programming in the province. The start provided by the UNDP Strengthening integrated sustainable land management in Enga project could be asked to help facilitate this exploration in the province. The project however is not in a position to support the development of programming in Enga beyond facilitating initial stakeholder engagement towards HJP expansion to the province. More engagement would be needed than the single interview conducted with a provincial government representative for the review to build interest and get formal approval by provincial authorities as well as enlist their participation. Provincial government engagement and support should be a prerequisite to subsequent processes of programme development in Enga.

If the UN chooses to explore extending the HJP Phase II to Enga, the RC and UNCT would need to engage in an extensive consultation process towards extending the HJP. Any expansion needs to manage the risk to spreading the HJP too thinly given the already limited resources invested in SHP and HP and losing focus on these two provinces. If the UNCT remains interested and gains explicit provincial government support for extending the programme to Enga, then, the UNCT should then do a full participatory assessment of the province. UN agencies should consider using assessment tools and techniques similar to those used to develop the context analysis done in 2018 and refreshed in 2020 that underpinned the drafting of the Phase I HJP. For phase I, this entailed having UNDP staff conduct in-depth research and analysis for several months, extensive stakeholder engagement within the Province to validate the analysis, substantial work with UN Agency managers in Port Moresby considering and developing potential interventions, and resource mobilization from UN Agencies. This process could be led by the Peace and Development Advisor with the support of the HJP team as well as through extensive collaboration with all interested UN Agencies, and should explicitly target and focus on reaching women and youth in communities.

The seven community leaders (two female and five male) interviewed in Hela and the Southern Highlands felt that Enga should be included in the HJP viewing the problems in Enga as similar to those in their provinces. The one male Enga community leader interviewed also sought inclusion - particularly towards greater UN presence in the province, which was expected to boost efforts at peace and development. Four of the community/CBO leaders (one female and three male) interviewed in Hela and SHP sought HJP support and mentoring for them to extend their activities from Hela or SHP to Enga. The small sample of community leaders reached, since they viewed the problems as similar and the training and capacity building support they had received towards addressing conflicts in their communities as useful, felt that they could be part of the mechanisms of extending the HJP to Enga.

In conclusion, UN Agencies, existing IPs, and community leaders in Hela Province and SHP felt that extending the HJP to Enga province would be helpful in helping to start to address the conflict and development issues in the province. However additional funding, Agency staff, and partner capacity would be needed and Enga provincial government approval, a detailed assessment, the development of local IP capacity, and funding would be needed to extend Phase II to the province.

How should the HJP be designed for Phase II?

Interviewees emphasized expanding the initiative to reach a wider area (including Enga), reach more people and communities, as well as concentrate efforts and build on initiatives in particular communities to have greater effects in creating conditions for peacebuilding and development.⁸ The main suggestions from interviews for design were to continue the HJP and work to link UN Agencies, IPs, government stakeholders, and communities towards the extended, durable engagement with communities that were seen as the main ways for the HJP to build foundations for peace and development in vulnerable, volatile communities in the highlands.

⁸ The emphasis of interviewees was on reaching more communities and people (with an implicit assumption of many interviewees that this means all of the people in communities - including women, youth, PWD and the elderly).

Community leaders interviewed consistently emphasized the need for greater presence of UN staff and IP staff at all levels in the highlands and that the HJP should endeavor to follow up on training quickly with concrete support for trainees to use these skills towards peacebuilding and development.

The findings converge on two main general recommendations for design for Phase II: to more closely connect peacebuilding training with concrete support for communities in other pathways that reinforce peace and for additional UN (and government work) to develop and use coordinating and learning structures at a variety of levels to strengthen HJP implementation, extension, and sustainability. Additional efforts to reach and partner with government stakeholders with the mandates and resources that support peace were seen as important avenues to work more on.

Areas to consider for additional activities and coordination in Phase II should consider the areas for focus across the Pathways for Peace that provides the conceptual framework for the HJP:

1. *Pathway 1 - Women and Youth:* UN agencies should build on the efforts to capacitate women and youth as leaders in peacebuilding, including against gender-based violence. UN agencies should consider additional approaches towards increasing the participation and leadership of women and youth in areas that complement peacebuilding and reinforce peace agreements, including through practical engagement expanding the roles and rewards to women and youth from agriculture and small-scale trade. These efforts that can further empower women and youth can then reinforce the efforts of women and youth in the development and implementation of ground-up community-based peacebuilding solutions at local levels. Practical ways are needed to strengthen women's roles and engagement in peace and security and to address youth disaffection/disenfranchisement and what many see as an identity crisis.
2. *Pathway 2 - Resilient Communities:* UN agencies should consider increasing the magnitude of peace benefits within and across communities that implement peace agreements, as well as make these peace dividends more visible to other communities in conflict as ways to encourage them to make peace. Towards resilient communities, UN agencies should focus on ways to help communities grow their economic base and support provincial governments to develop robust economic pathways for communities as well a support education to develop young people and women's skills and potential, including linkages downstream to employment.
3. *Pathway 3 - Disaster Risk Management:* UN agencies should work closely with Provincial, District and LLG authorities towards drawing in government resources towards disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction (DRR), particularly through gender sensitive approaches that are self-conscious of adjusting to climate change. These DRR efforts can be connected to developing and supporting sustainable economic development activities towards resilient communities and be another way to bring in government stakeholders around DRR in these vulnerable communities, including for women, youth, PWD and the elderly. DRR should be linked with climate security, including since the theme is included in the 202e PBF call for proposals for the Gender Promotion Initiative.
4. *Pathway 4 - Rule of Law:* To support and supplement the HJP's emphasis on community-based work to address conflicts, reduce human rights violations (including SARV and gender-based violence), UN agencies and the HJP should consider coordinating more closely with the JSS4D

program as part of the effort to ramp up the effects of the HJP through government partners and stakeholders. Phase II could consider expanding into addressing the evident problems of the proliferation and use of small arms and light weapons.

5. *Pathway 5 - Social Cohesion:* UN agencies should look for additional ways to reinforce peace dividends, including towards increasing social cohesion in highlands communities. This might have multiple strands. One area might be expanding activities that directly target and expand conflict mediation by bringing in more members of the community, including particularly women and youth. A second area might be in areas that accompany peace agreements and complement reaching them by bringing together members of communities around social and cultural events (such as sports tournaments). A third area might be collaborating with other humanitarian-development actors such as the ICRC so that communities being supported with humanitarian assistance by the ICRC could then be supported with conflict mediation by the UN as well. The goal of these activities would be to reinforce peace and knit together HJP activities, partners, and beneficiaries at the community level. Phase II could expand on small community peacebuilding grants to saturate the landscape with more community-driven projects to foster co-dependence between communities and reinforce interventions.
6. *Pathway 6 - Government Services:* PNG's local governance system has multiple issues that are far broader than the scope of the HJP. The HJP can not lead the reform and change of this system, but can raise awareness of community and LLG needs, particularly within the context of peacebuilding in communities where projects under the HJP focus. Project support can continue to support gender-responsive conflict-sensitive integrated development planning at provincial, district and LLG levels and should consider working closely with government officials towards pulling their contributions into priorities from these plans. This can include supporting community outreach to Members of Parliament on community plans and priorities, towards enlisting contributions from them through DISP funds and other matching resources they influence or control. HJP leadership and staff can work closely with elected leaders and civil servants towards bringing more service delivery from government as peace dividends and great engagement with (and accountability to) communities.
7. *Pathway 7 - Leadership:* UN Agencies should consider ways to support leadership development at levels above the community level. LLG, district and provincial civil servants, elected officials, and informal leaders would benefit from increased capacity building on gender-responsive conflict-sensitive leadership. Higher-level officials may be critical in supporting community peacebuilding and agreements, as well as holding and reinforcing peace agreements and their implementation between communities. Strengthening leadership at these levels is an essential element to undergird the weak or non-existent social contract between communities and the state, which is fundamental to preventing a social fracture in PNG. The HJP should also look for opportunities to support large-scale peacebuilding strategies, such as the Hela Peace and Development Workshop in Phase I, and support the development of provincial/regional/national peacebuilding strategies and their subsequent implementation of these strategies.

The conclusion that follows from the review’s findings suggest the merits of a continuation of the broad Phase I HJP design and a focus on strengthening planning and implementation to on the one hand concentrate more benefits from the programme and other stakeholders on targeted communities and on the other hand to expand programme impact to additional communities and a wider geographic area through existing and new partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries. The emphasis of UN agency staff and leaders, IPs, and community leaders in thinking about a future HJP was in how to expand the reach of activities under the programme, strengthen integration and connections to reinforce results in programme areas, and implement towards greater effectiveness and efficiency not on ways to design the programme differently.

Knowledge, relevance, and modifications to the HJP Theory of Change?

1. HJP staff and interviews with the few UN agency leader and managers that knew the ToC suggested that the ToC for the HJP remained relevant; the objective of having an encompassing ToC that explicitly included the comparative advantages of UN agencies in the HJP was seen as valuable for facilitating the incorporation of all UN agencies and enabling the whole set of HJP PUNOs to work on the wide range of peace and development issues that exist in the highlands. Some UN staff noted that the PBF values ToCs, and thus the ToC was useful towards furthering PNG’s engagement with the PBF and fundraising through PBF instruments. UN Agency staff did not note that they used the HJP ToC for their programs or activities in design or implementation. Managers of the joint projects funded by the PBF and of the UN agencies within these projects knew the different ToCs for their joint projects, but not the ToC of the joint programme. No interviewees suggested major changes or modifications for the existing HJP ToC. One potential consideration suggested was for all future projects nested within the HJP to have their ToCs, outcomes and outputs be aligned with those of the HJP towards strengthening coherence.

Provincial officials, IPs and community leaders interviewed were not knowledgeable about the ToC.

In conclusion, the ToC of Phase I – because it has a wide range and comprehensively covers the main areas of comparative advantage of UN Agencies and encompasses issues that are clearly relevant to peace and development in the highlands – is seen as relevant and useful for retention in a possible Phase II. The UNCT should consider how it plans to use a future ToC for any Phase II project as key information to guide the formation or any future ToC towards making the ToC more useful and used.

Knowledge sharing can be strengthened to improve the HJP. This is at the field level in delivery and in coordination of UN agencies, implementing partners, government stakeholders, and communities. Knowledge sharing needs to happen both vertically and laterally within the UN. For example, if UN agencies choose to engage with the HJP at the country office level rather than at the field level, then the responsibility of disseminating knowledge to their own agency field staff rests with the CO staff and not the HJP team. If the field staff are empowered to interface with the HJP team in the field, then field coordination can be more effective (without having to regularly refer to country office level for permission to engage. Beyond knowledge sharing for the deliverer of interventions at the field level and to strengthen coordination, expanding peacebuilding technical expertise and senior thought leadership on conflict and fragility within the UN system in PNG is also needed in order to advance the UN’s prevention agenda within the context of the Highlands and PNG more broadly. Leadership within the RCO could be a key role for a Peace and Development Advisor. Leadership in Port Moresby is particularly important towards gaining more traction with the national government and in engagement with development partners and potential development partners.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

Lessons learned come from the analysis of documents as well as interviews by the RT.

What are the main lessons learned for UN agencies and for joint operations from the experience of the HJP to date?

UN Agencies in PNG can productively operate through a joint programme in the Highlands.

UN Agency management and staff note that developing and implementing joint programming in the Highlands has been beneficial for UN operations, joint and agency projects, and been able to demonstrate results from UN agency interventions and linking them together to stakeholders and beneficiaries in Hela and Southern Highlands Provinces.

Activities implemented under the framework of the HJP can demonstrate results.

Interventions by programs under the HJP have shown positive results in helping partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries create conditions that start to move selected communities away from conflict and reduce fragility as well as support LLGs, district, and provincial level progress start to build conditions to support peace and development, including with the empowerment of women and youth. However the implementation of several projects and many activities remain in nascent stage, which has left the results limited to date. The entrenched nature of the peace and development challenges and their widespread nature in these two provinces has only begun to be affected.

Active UN Agency management and strong collaboration across Agencies is needed at the field and country office/UNCT level to animate the HJP.

The HJP links six UN agencies on the ground in the country to work in two provinces remote from the UNCT in Port Moresby. UN agency processes, including contracts and grants for staff and IPs, work through and are managed within specific agencies; joint programming and management is thus based on collaboration and persuasion rather than direct management, whether at the level of the RCO, the HJP Programme Coordinator and HJP staff, or of joint project management. This poses risks for agency and joint implementation.

Partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries appreciate and value HJP coordination and the interventions under the HJP.

The UN is recognized and lauded as a key actor active in helping government, partners, and people in communities in the highlands start to address the humanitarian, peace, and development needs of SHP and Hela. This support is seen as modest and in need of extension and reinforcement by PNG actors, particularly national and provincial governments as well as other donors. National authorities in the Department of National Planning and Monitoring, representatives of provincial governments in Hela, Southern Highlands, and Enga Provinces, and bi-lateral donors interviewed were all supportive of the HJP.

SHP and Hela Province remain at early stages in building the conditions for peace and development.

Highlands provinces had been neglected by government, private sector, bilateral agencies, and multilateral development agencies for years. Ignoring these provinces has meant that longstanding issues of violent conflict and underdevelopment went unaddressed and worsened for decades. The small scale

and few years of the HJP and projects within it are seen as not enough to address these challenges but only a start to doing so, particularly with women and youth.

Substantial work remains in peacebuilding and development to help reduce fragility in SHP and Hela Province.

Endemic violent conflict and chronic underdevelopment remain striking characteristics of the Highlands context. The efforts that fall under the HJP from July 2020 to the present are modest in size and of short duration relative to the magnitude of these longstanding conflict and underdevelopment problems.

Substantially fewer specifics are known on conflict, peacebuilding and development in Enga province as UN Agencies have less engagement in the province.

With only one active project in the province and few prior experiences working in Enga , the UN has a limited footprint in the province that is only a first step towards potential greater engagement there. More is known on Hela and SHP based on the earthquake response and programming in the two provinces under the HJP and projects under it. The experience of developing the HJP in Hela and SHP demonstrates that analysis and/or experience in the province is needed for programming in Enga province.

UN agencies and implementing partners have gained significant experience developing, implementing, monitoring, and reporting on programming in the Highlands.

UN Agencies have built a base of staff, government and civil society implementing partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries beginning with the emergency response that have been strengthened by their work with the HJP and activities under its programs since 2020 in SHP and Hela Province. This base can be built upon in Phase II. This base is however thin everywhere. The UN needs to engage and capacitate substantially larger numbers of organizations and people to have greater effects; growing the size of the stakeholder and implementing partner pool is particularly important in Enga, where this work and its potential is less known. Redundant capacity is critical to support resilience, particularly within UN agencies, as people move and organizations fluctuate in capacity over time.

The UNCT and donors have opportunities to carefully build on and replicate/extend the Phase I experience in Phase II.

UN Agencies have the experience working together on conflict and fragility over the past three years in communities and LLGs in Hela and the Southern Highlands. This experience is often transferrable and replicable to other fragile, conflict-affected areas in SHP and Hela that are widely seen as having similar issues as well as to Enga. UN agencies and their partners can and would need to develop the capacity to reach additional communities as well as adapt as needed should conflict issues and resolution opportunities in other communities prove to be significantly different from those already worked on in the two provinces.

The HJP and UN Agencies need additional staff, funding, coordination, implementing partners, and government partners to strengthen HJP development, extension, implementation, and sustainability.

Human capacity in the HJP and in UN agencies working on the highlands is thin, limited to a few key people in these provinces and Agency country offices in Port Moresby. Development partners and funds are also quite limited for the highlands. And coordinating the range of activities and UN agencies is difficult at the field level and needed at the Agency level in Port Moresby; two levels of coordination are needed - both at programme level (in UN agency country offices) and implementation (in the field). The limited number

and capacity of partners that are suitable for UN agencies to partner with in the highlands is notable. UNDP has worked to bring some additional IPs to Hela and SHP such as World Vision. But more partners, including local CSOs, are needed – both ones that work in communities as well as ones that have the capacity and financial/accountability systems that allow UN agencies to transfer funding to them. The limited capacity and number of potential partners may be especially challenging in Enga, as fewer UN activities have been engaged there to date.

Approaches of national government ministries and provincial governments in Hela, Enga, and the Southern Highlands that focus on law enforcement and take a strictly securitized approach have not been sufficient to support peace in the highlands nor facilitate development.

A core strength of UN organizations is their institutional partnerships with national governments. However government organizations at the national, provincial, district and LLG levels in PNG and the highlands have limited capacity and resources to bring to bear on the chronic conflict issues and tremendous development needs in the highlands. Government organizations at all levels have largely failed to recognize conflicts as symptoms of deeper socio-economic issues, including that the communities perceive a lack of security provided by the State. Peace and good order committees seem to have had limited successes as solutions to violent conflicts, for prevention, and have limited effects on development. These capacity limits and the lack of broader coordination mechanisms for subnational governments appear to limit how well UN organizations can partner with governments across the highlands as well as inhibit sustainability and the government's own interventions.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions from the analysis of findings and lessons learned above support recommendations for UN RCO and UNCT consideration. The first set of recommendations towards Phase II of the HJP are strategic for the UN RCO and UN Agency Management. The second set focus on the HJP and implementation in the highlands. Recommendations follow from the conclusions and analysis of findings, the lessons learned, and specific recommendations from the review's interviews.

Strategic recommendations

Strategic recommendations are towards shaping the scale, scope, funding, and top management of joint programming in the highlands.

1. The RCO and UNCT should consider developing a Phase II for the HJP.

The peace and development issues in highlands provinces remain serious and endure. The experience of the UN 2020-2022 with the development, funding, implementation, and results of the HJP to date suggest that the UN can manage joint programming and that the HJP provides valuable assistance with this management and implementation. The highlands remain a difficult environment for implementation with limited implementing partners and for the UN to staff and operate, particularly with COVID-19 and political tensions for 2022 with the elections. This has meant that three years of the HJP are considered to have only started to build a basis for peace and development in Hela and Southern Highlands Provinces. This base is promising for further developing activities and projects, including for extending UN peace and development programming to help address these issues in the underserved province of Enga. A potential Phase II could be aligned to the five year duration of the UNSDCF.

2. The RCO and UNCT (with UNDP as convening agency) should gather more information and decide on Phase II parameters based on anticipated funds available and UN priorities.

Phase I of the HJP and projects within it can operate through early 2024 with current funding (pending PBF extensions that are routinely accepted when justified). Questions about continuing work in Hela and Southern Highlands Provinces should be decided by the RCO and UN Agencies based on their priorities for work in PNG. The RCO and UN Agencies, to work on these issues in a next Phase II in these two provinces and to possibly extend programming to Enga Province, will need to fundraise. Funds available after RCO, joint and single-agency resources can be used to determine the scale of UN interventions, their distribution by Agency, and reach across communities and provinces (including the question of extending to Enga). A deliberate design process is needed to develop Phase II, which would benefit from a facilitated design workshop.

3. The RCO should consider developing an Agency-head level coordinating body to enlist and maintain regular Agency support for and management of UN programming in the highlands.

To develop and maintain high-level Agency attention to the highlands, as part of the HJP, the RCO should consider holding perhaps quarterly meetings on the strategic direction of peacebuilding and programming in the highlands. UNDP could serve as a convening agency for the group The Peace and Development Advisor might be able to facilitate this body.

4. Since the problems in Enga appear similar and linked, the UNCT should form a team of interested UN agency staff to conduct a thorough assessment of the potential to work in Enga province in the HJP.

High-level liaison with the Enga Provincial authorities, a detailed investigation of community-level interest in working with the UN on peacebuilding, and the identification of potential implementing partners in the province would be needed to potentially extend the HJP to Enga.

5. The RCO should consider working with the national government and provincial governments to develop a regular high-level coordination structure for the HJP to strengthen partnerships with government at these levels in the HJP. UNDP could be the convening agency for the structure.

The programme would more strongly support sustainability if able to more strongly support the government and formal institutions build their own capacity – as well as trust and confidence in this capacity by local communities. An HJP structure that linked national and provincial stakeholders, perhaps quarterly, to share information and encourage greater activism by government at these levels could support learning, skills and ideas transfer, and networking towards a transition to strengthening more formal conflict resolution and more systematic and sustainable approaches to peacebuilding through government linkages. The coordination structure could be used towards encouraging the national government to develop its own approaches and agenda towards peacebuilding in the highlands as a key policy challenge of the country.

Recommendations for implementation of potential HJP Phase II

Recommendations under this subheading focus on suggestions for Participating UN agencies and the HJP Coordination team staff for implementing activities of projects under a Phase II HJP.

6. PUNOs should consider building on to Phase I achievements to expand the pool of partners and engaged stakeholders towards growing the HJP in two ways: by reaching more communities as well as engaging with government and using UN agencies and partners to provide additional concrete peace dividends in order to strengthen peace implementation. and the replication of agreements.

The size of the highlands, tremendous number of on-going and potential conflicts, and huge development needs are daunting. The HJP, based on the lessons and achievements of Phase I, can work to expand the reach of the programme (including to Enga but also to other communities and LLGs within Hela and SHP)

by capacitating and expanding the range of IPs in the highlands, including CBOs focused on women and youth. The HJP can also reinforce peace through additional work on delivering peace dividends to communities in the wake of peace agreements and in support of implementation. This could particularly focus on working with government partners to bring their resources to bear to support peace and development. And the HJP could consider systematically engaging UN agencies to bring their comparative advantages and work of their partners into peace implementation to bring concrete benefits in better agriculture, health, child welfare, and youth and women's development to partner communities.

7. The HJP should consider developing a platform within the HJP coordination team to use to network and monitor LEP Centres and other CBO partners.

Community-based implementing partners are remote. These partners seek greater engagement with UN agencies. Other partners noted that some LEP Centres were potentially problematic or had issues that needed attention for them to be suitable partners. The HJP could be used to convene a coordinating and information sharing body to network CBO level partners, including CBOs that focus on women and youth, which would both benefit partners and provide the HJP and UN agency staff that work with these partners additional visibility into and potential influence over them that can be used to support their development and proper use.

8. PUNOs should consider holding more training and capacity building events within highlands provinces.

UN agencies should consider implementing more training in provinces and districts in the highlands for the potential to reach larger numbers of women, men and youth in the highlands at lower cost than bringing people out of the highlands to other locations for training. More people in the highlands may also become aware of the training with positive externalities for them and those trained. This recommendation does not change the fact that at times for programmatic reasons it is preferable or necessary to bring beneficiaries and stakeholders out of the highlands to neutral locations outside of the conflict area to be more effective.

9. HJP PUNOs should consider developing trainings towards building existing and new implementing partner capacity to work with the UN.

The HJP PUNOs can work to develop current and potential IPs so that they are better able to partner with UN agencies, better in implementing peacebuilding and development activities, and have greater potential to carry their organisations and programming forward in the highlands. Workshops and training can build CBO, FBO and NGO staff skills and network them in ways that support HJP activities, other potential UN activities, and further other development and peacebuilding goals (including their own). Capacity building towards partnerships should explicitly include CBOs that focus on or are led by women and youth.

10. The HJP Coordination team should consider developing a local IP partner ecosystem to link these strengthened IPs with each other and help support their communication and networking with government stakeholders.

The HJP coordination team can also focus on networking the local IP organizations that PUNOs have developed and managed trainings to strengthen in order to make a more cohesive ecosystem of organizations that can work together on these issues and extend to other areas and highlands provinces to scale up impact. This kind of support can go beyond what is implemented by the KOICA project through peace and development dialogue networks and peacebuilding forums and may be particularly helpful towards extending HJP activities to Enga Province.

11. The HJP should consider a standard practice of developing a working group of UN agency staff, IPs, and provincial, district, and LLG government staff to share information and strengthen implementation through better coordination.

The HJP could benefit from stronger coordination with government partners that need to be more involved in peace and development in their domains. The HJP could increase how these partners are brought into implementation through the development of a regular coordination structure for the HJP to strengthen partnerships with governments at these levels. The HJP would likely have to provide the venue and allowances to support participation, particularly travel allowances. Rotating sites might enlist more varied participation as well as continue to spread awareness of HJP goals, activities, partners, and results in the region. Additional resource mobilization would be needed for the HJP coordination team towards the costs of these activities.

12. The HJP should consider developing a liaison and working group to more closely coordinate with peace and good order committees, law enforcement organisations, and development partners that work in Rule of Law to better integrate HJP work within communities on peacebuilding with the roles of state institutions.

Law enforcement issues remain serious across the highlands. The HJP has done less in this area as a focus of the large Australian JSS4D. The HJP should consider forming a working-level body to increase information sharing and coordination between ROL bodies/assistance and the HJP's efforts with communities towards reinforcing both. At the provincial level, this is meant to be done through the Provincial Coordination and Monitoring Committee. JSS4D has been supporting the capacity building for this but has yet to take off. RCO-level engagement, likely through the PDA, should also be considered in Port Moresby towards sharing information from the highlands and influencing the national effort to strengthen ROL. This could be through a forum like the present development partners roundtable but one dedicated to the Highlands.

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ANNEX 2: INTERVIEWS AND DISCUSSIONS

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