COMMUNITY-LED MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL ACCELERATION PROJECT (CLMAP), PAPUA NEW GUINEA

LESSONS LEARNED REPORT

Empowering and Supporting Communities to Grow and Prosper
“I have lived a long life. It’s been hard. I have seen too many women die while giving birth, or while on their way to seek medical help, children die because we could not get to a hospital on time. The nearest hospital is too far away. And to go, we needed a car, and to go in a car, we needed our roads and bridges to be passable.”

But our community “turned pain and hardship into something positive, looking at what they could use and do to help themselves. Thanks to the EU and UNDP we can now use our locally available resources and skills.

Our health center serves a population of over 8,000 in Trolga and surrounding villages.”

Namba Mel, in her mid-eighties, expressing her delight at the new health centre in Trolga, Western Highlands.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With many thanks to the organizations below, whose thoughts and comments helped inform the review:

Communities
Men and women, young and old, from the four communities
1. Musendai, East Sepik Province
2. Sibalai, Milne Bay Province
3. Trolga, Western Highlands Province
4. Domil, Jiwaka Province

Community Based Organisations
1. South Sea Evangelical Church (SSEC)
2. Baptist Union of Papua New Guinea (BUPNG)
3. Integral Community Health Development (ICHD)
4. Milne Bay Church Development Funds Association (MBCDFA)

Jiwaka Provincial Government
1. Provincial Administrator
2. Foreign Division Coordinator
3. Secretary, Governor North Whagi
4. Program Manager, Health
5. Governor of Jiwaka
6. Director, Social Service

Western Highlands sub-national Government
1. Provincial Administrator
2. Director Rural Health Services
3. Mul–Baiyer District Health Officer
4. Advisor to the District Development Authority - Mul Baiyer/Lumusa

Milne Bay Local Government
1. Local-level Government President
2. Area Manager
3. Principal Advisor
4. Suau Local-level Government Women’s Representative
5. Vice President

National implementing partners
1. European Union.
2. United Nations Development Programme
3. Department of National Planning and Monitoring

National stakeholders
1. All the organisations that took part in the national workshop.

A special acknowledgment goes to Mr. Koen Toonen, of MDF Training and Consulting, whose knowledge, experience and professionalism led to very informative discussions with communities and officials of which this report is based on. His contributions were instrumental in the formation of this report.
The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM) have implemented a European Union (EU) funded rural development project. This project is called the “Community-led Millennium Development Goal Acceleration Pilot Project (CLMAP), and was designed to demonstrate self-driven, area-specific, community development through community based organizations (CBOs), based on community articulated needs and priorities.

The project focused on the development of health, essential infrastructure and income generation sectors, with women empowerment as a cross-cutting theme. The projects were designed based on the specific community priorities and development plans, and were implemented in four remote villages in Papua New Guinea:

1. Sibalai, Milne Bay Province
2. Domil, Jiwaka Province
3. Trolga, Western Highlands Province
4. Musendai, East Sepik Province

The project commenced in July 2012 and completed its interventions in March 2016. As part of the handover process to the Government of Papua New Guinea, the project planned to conduct a review of lessons learned and to identify specifically:

- What worked well?
- What could work better?
- How can the programme be improved going forward?
- Overall performance and suitability of the project modality?

In this context, UNDP organized field visits to all four communities to conduct a lessons learned review and organized a National Workshop to share the findings and to look at aspects of bottom-up participatory development planning.

In this background, this paper documents several lessons learned, which can be used to inform any rural development intervention under formulation in Papua New Guinea.

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1 The resource center in Sibalai, constructed as part of the CLMAP. The resource center is a multi-service complex providing conference facilities, a library, an office for the ward councillor, a women in business office and a wholesale shop.
BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Progress Reports for Papua New Guinea (PNG) in 2010 revealed that PNG was unlikely to meet any of the global MDG targets, although some progress has been made towards tailored (localized) targets for some of the MDGs.

With over 80% of the population living in rural areas, the rural population remains a priority focus and a localization of the implementation of MDGs is essential for acceleration of progress.

The pilot project was designed to demonstrate the leading capacity of the communities to deliver on the identified activities, and to assess whether or not the approach is sustainable and replicable. The project was also keen to learn if the program design was suitable to PNG conditions or if further adaptation would be required.

The total funding allocated to the pilot project was € 1.0 million from the EU and € 0.04 million cash contributions from the four communities to engender ownership. The selected communities, along with their respective CBOs, took the lead in formulating the detailed community investment programmes, which led to a broad investment level of approximately €150,000 per village.

The four community projects focused on:

+ Sibalai: increase village income through establishment of a poultry and piggery breeding unit and copra (coconut) dryer, establish fruit and plant multiplication plots through a partnership with the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) to improve food security, set up a cooperative society to manage the community projects and a women in business office to support gender equality, build a community resource centre for learning and business development.

+ Trolga: development of a health centre building to improve the health status of the people.

+ Domil: complete the construction of a mini cassava mill and commence processing of cassava and chicken to improve food security and income generation for self-sufficient, rural, sustainable development of the Domil community.

+ Musendai: improve transport for access to markets for cash crops, rice milling for increasing income generation, address girl/child school attendance by installing an ablution block for girls, improve maternal health care by completing a maternity wing in the health centre, wokabaut sawmill to improve village housing.

Selection of the four communities was based on: if they are well organised, have previously demonstrated community development through a single sector entry point, have long standing effective CBO support and represent a range of environments, including remoteness.
METHODOLOGY

UNDP organized field visits to all four communities from 3-19 February 2016. The team consisted of the UNDP programme officer, Mr. Stephen Liston, the UNDP programme associate, Ms Ovin Wafewa and the MDF international consultant, Mr. Koen W. Toonen. Meetings were organised with the implementing village communities, where the team met with men and women separately, and conducted the following exercises:

1. Focus group discussion
2. SWOT analysis
3. Stories of change
4. Interviews with local authorities

The combination of these exercises enabled the team to grasp, in a very short period of time, the complexity of changes perceived by the communities, and their knowledge and opinions on the projects.

The exercises were designed to understand the perceptions of the community members who were affected by the project, with the purpose to identify lessons learned. The exercises were not designed to evaluate the project on its achievements, successes or failures as determined by the project intervention logic. Compared to regular monitoring based on a predefined outcome and output indicators, the applied methodology does not specifically target the project indicators, but collects broad information on the perceptions and impressions of stakeholders on the project, and can therefore also capture non-planned, undesired, or unintended outcomes of the projects.

The information collected from the site visits was compiled and presented at a National Workshop in Port Moresby. This workshop was held on 19 February 2016 and gathered community members, representatives from local-level government, district, provincial and national-level government entities, civil society organisations, as well as members from the private sector, and donor partners, including the European Union (EU) and United Nations agencies.

During this workshop the key findings from the review exercise were shared with the audience, and discussion generated on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to bottom-up, community-led, development planning for the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A presentation was moderated by the Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM) on national efforts to prepare for delivery on the SDGs. This was followed by two exercises: the “World Café on rural development planning” and the “Market Place for partnership development on rural development”.

These exercises helped put forth in further detail the potential and constraints to community-led bottom-up planning and what existing measures are in place that can be further utilised to support this.

LOCAL-LEVEL WORKSHOPS

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Focus group discussions of approximately four hours in length, one for women and one for men, were held with each of the village communities. A series of open-ended questions were raised to gather insights on the history, relevance and achievements of the projects. Specific efforts were made to have all participants engage, and to not only let the village leaders speak. Through engaging questions, and specific questions to older people, younger people, community leaders and mothers, a free-flowing discussion was created, which stimulated thinking and sharing of experiences.

Focus group discussions specifically target the engagement of all participants to the discussion to obtain a full picture of the issues affecting the project.

SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis on the projects was conducted in each of the villages. A SWOT analysis identifies the strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O) and threats (T) of a project, as perceived by its clients. The UNDP team met with men and women separately, and during these meetings the participants were requested to share with us what they thought were the strengths and weaknesses of the projects, and which opportunities and threats were having an impact on the success of the project.

Participants were invited to share their individual opinions through writing up their responses on coloured cards. These were collected and displayed on the wall, and discussed in the group. This exercise enabled the community members to learn and see their collective opinions on the project.
As part of the lessons learned exercise, focus group discussions were conducted in each community to find out the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of the project. The sessions were split into male and female groups.

An example of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats exercise from one of the communities.
STORIES OF CHANGE

The team also applied part of a data gathering methodology called “Most Significant Change”, which is a technique for impact evaluation designed by Rick Davies and Jessica Dart. It aims to collect data on impacts that have occurred as a result of the project through the collection of stories of the villagers affected by the project. The UNDP team designed a short questionnaire in which the participating village members were invited to share their story of change.

A total of 182 villagers (89 male, 81 female, 12 no-gender indication) responded to the questionnaire. The participants shared their stories on how the project had impacted and changed their lives, how the change occurred and why.

INTERVIEWS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Finally, during open discussions with local authorities and stakeholders of the project, information was gathered on the management of the projects, the constraints, and the involvement of the stakeholders.

NATIONAL WORKSHOP

WORLD CAFÉ ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The “World Café” is a structured conversational process intended to facilitate open and intimate discussion, and link ideas within a larger group to access the “collective intelligence” or “collective wisdom” in the room. Participants move between a series of tables, where they continue the discussion in response to a set of questions, which are predetermined and focused on the specific goals. The goal for this World Café was to find out advantages, difficulties, supporting and hindering factors to rural development planning. The questions raised to the participants were:

1. What are the advantages of the bottom-up development approach?

Meeting with members of the provincial administration in Jiwaka Province as part of the local lessons learned information gathering. The Jiwaka provincial administration and the North Waghi District administration were the largest co-financing partners in the project, contributing K600,000. This exceeded the project contribution from the EU of K570,000.
2. What are the difficulties with the bottom-up development approach?

3. What factors are supporting the bottom-up development approach?

4. What factors are hindering the bottom-up development approach?

The “Market Place” methodology is designed to assess, within a group, the demand and supply for services, in this case the services delivered towards promoting rural development. In round one, the participants are requested to identify and write up on a flip chart the services they deliver, and what it is they need to deliver these services. In round two, the participants review all flip charts to indicate how they can contribute to meeting other participants’ needs. In round three, a “match making” exercise happens during which the participants can meet and discuss the identified “supply” and “demand”. The Market Place provided an opportunity for actors already working in the field of community development to come together and identify opportunities, on how they could further support this initiative.

MARKET PLACE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Representatives from communities, government and development partners discussing bottom-up planning at the national workshop.
SOME OF THE FINDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY SWOT ANALYSIS

**Strengths**

+ Built on the strengths of existing community skills
+ Addressed the needs identified by the community
+ Improved access to medical services, medication, ambulances and health cares
+ Better public health and less mortality in the community, plus reduced travel time
+ Less time walking to collect water
+ Increased income through sales of better livestock and crops
+ Product diversification is increasing food security and improving diet
+ Conference and office/admin facilities to support development room
+ Work creates labour, future opportunities and hopes for youth and adolescents
+ Sets an inspiring example for other communities
+ Improved income to support development of better houses
+ Delivered many unexpected changes to the village
+ Installation of power supply has meant children can now study in the evenings
+ Education provided by NARI has helped awareness on new agriculture / food-related practices and has helped the village to find new ways for the use of existing crops, and introduce new crops
+ Community labour gives community members a sense of pride and ownership
+ Opportunities to discuss family planning
+ Provided an opportunity to discuss reform of cultural norms, e.g. role of women and youth

**Opportunities**

+ Local-level Government, district or provincial level government can support and invest in community development by raising co-funding requirements
+ Strengthened collaboration with LLG, district government and neighboring wards
+ Successful implementation generates hopes and expectations for additional investments and follow through
+ Inter-community collaboration facilitates inter community unity
+ Donor funding (EU and UNDP) generates additional government investments
+ Collaboration between council wards has led to positive cooperation and mobilization of community co-funding
+ Engaging youth in development of projects is a good way to get them involved, creates ownership and generate hopes for the future
+ Projects caused curiosity from other communities wanting to replicate in their community
+ Communities given the confidence to want and go in search for more
Weaknesses

+ Avoiding delays and timely implementation is essential to avoid loss of interest, community gossip and to keep the momentum for development
+ Management of certain undesirable outputs was not fully planned for
+ Women feel excluded because they did not have a significant and undervalued role in the project
+ Weak community leadership can lead to delays, miscommunication and lower motivation
+ Free community labour made it difficult to keep the workers, and particularly the youth, engaged
+ Voluntary community contributions (free labour) can create challenges towards other family duties and costs
+ Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) need to negotiated and signed with key authorities at the start of project e.g. with the provincial health department

Threats

+ Insufficient consultations between clans, churches and government authorities during project formulation will lead to problems during implementation
+ Land disputes must be settled before project approval
+ Maintenance is a problem if there is no technical monitoring or capacity building
+ Technical supervision is required over community labour to avoid technical mistakes in procurement and design of the project
+ Training of ward councillors is needed
+ Public services need to receive material and financial government support to sustain services, e.g. medical centre
+ Poor road conditions pose problems for ambulances, patients and livelihoods through access to market
+ Conflicts between communities pose threats to the implementation of the project
+ No access to a bank or financial services to support income generation activities
+ Traditional practices and beliefs may restrict adoption of new ideas and practices
+ Climatic changes are leading to unpredictable harvests and loss of income
+ Lack of clarity on how to access government funding and entry points
+ Proper consultsations between communities are required before project approval, otherwise there is a chance for jealousies and tribal fights
+ Women are expected to share their earnings with men, if not there may be disputes
+ Anti-social behaviour, mostly by youth and men, cause threats to community and project property if not properly involved
+ Other communities helping on the project need to be paid otherwise they may block the road
+ 10% co-funding requirement is difficult to mobilize, particularly when overall amount is high
Example of Fundraising: Members of the Sibalai community went to Alotau to work on a water drainage system. After the work was completed they stayed behind for two weeks to work on a roof structure which would be used as a church. Through the church mass, the Sibalai community raised contributions towards the 10% co-funding, to support the EU grant.
LESSONS LEARNED

The lessons learned from the exercises have been organized into lessons learned for:
1. Communities
2. Government
3. Private Sector
4. International Aid Agencies

COMMUNITIES

Community infrastructure projects have tremendous social and economic spin off.

The Community-led MDG Acceleration Project, funded by the European Union (EU), and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM), focuses strongly on the development of small infrastructure projects, identified by the communities themselves. These small community projects have a significant social and economic spin off, which creates a profound impact on the living standards and wellbeing in these communities.

Once community members understood there would be an opportunity for grant funding under the CLMAP project, they have been very pro-active in meeting the requirements, attracting necessary co-funding and delivering voluntary labour towards making their projects a success. The mere fact that funding is available already leads community leaders to activate the community members, in an attempt to make use of this opportunity.

What does it take for communities to get engaged and develop a true effort to change? What drives communities to be willing to offer free community labour and to become active and implement the development work by themselves?

What does it take for a community to consider that engaging women in the works is a positive development? These are some of the questions that were raised by this exercise and discussed in the succeeding sections.

Ownership through desire for a better future

Communities are motivated by desire to earn income, and towards prospects for improved access to basic services.

From community visits, some answers to the above questions can be found in the desire to earn income, the desire for accessing better wellbeing and health through improved basic services (such as health care, education, water, electricity, transport), and the desire to enjoy better community infrastructure and better lives.

Interestingly, at the beginning of programme when communities were discussing their activities and development plans, three of the communities elected to support the development of income generation activities. In one community, it was a very close decision between using the project to develop improved housing for all or provide income generation opportunities. The community decided to support income generation as the outcomes from this could sustain improved house improvements and other desired services.

Community members become active once they can grasp and understand that a better future is on the horizon. However, despite a profound desire for accessing basic services, income and better future opportunities, it was noted from the SWOT analysis that the community members also showed some resistance to the changes development brings in terms of work time, role patterns, and “doing things differently”. Adjusting to change comes with time, and a collective trust that the efforts will pay off.
Planning, planning and planning

The secret to a successful project lies in the quality of its planning phase.

The success of the project is determined at the beginning of the project. The quality of the planning process is directly linked to the quality of its implementation and the number and scope of problems the project would face during the implementation.

Issues like agreement of activities, community labour, co-funding, potential conflicting issues between villages, clans, churches and government, land owners and compensation are a few but essential topics to address during the planning phase. In addition, discussion on the role of women, youth, and inclusion of people with disabilities, minorities and other vulnerable groups should be organized during the planning phases.

I am an old man, but see things are changing. There was no road access, and it was difficult to find some health care. Even now with a health center and a road, it is still difficult. The road is key, I am worried and concerned, because it is the lifeline for our community. It is a long walking distance to the other health facility for more serious cases. We were carrying sick people and pregnant women long distances. We will provide all the assistance we must give.

Older man, Trolga community

Where planning is inclusive and well represented from the onset by all members of the community, it can lead to harmonious support and increased cooperation. All four communities commenced with strong open dialogue and the outcomes were evident. One community, Sibalai, explained how interfaith relations had significantly improved within the community as a result of the common goals set by the project. Another community, Trolga, discussed how the project helped mitigate a tribal conflict, due to the common ground of the project bringing the parties together to discuss. These two examples can only be achieved by ownership taking root across the community and not just at the individual level.

It is also crucial to discuss the management arrangements (human resources, finance and governance) to be put in place after the project is complete. It is essential to discuss external support issues, such as continued support from government, as well as sustainability arrangements, to ensure the continued operations of the project. This includes the preparation and signing of any MoUs or MoAs, if required.
Voluntary community labour and 10% co-funding

From the field visits it was clear of the extra-ordinary commitments by the communities to implement their projects. All communities have provided free community labour, as well as mobilized resources to support the 10% co-funding requirement imposed by the donor on community grants.

Communities go the extra mile to implement their projects, but free community labour can lead to unpredictable and irregular availability of the work force.

Providing free community labour has a profound impact on the communities and the task and role divisions between community and family members. Time spent on constructing community infrastructure cannot be spent on growing crops or on important family time and tasks. Community members, however, have shown keen interest to work on the community projects, since these are considered important assets which will overall enhance their quality of life and wellbeing.

Free community labour, however, can also lead to irregular availability of the workforce, since the work does not result in direct income. This can be especially the case if the duration of project implementation is over a long time period.

Supporting government and donor agencies, should consider if incentives (such as cash, food, or other less common practices such as seeds) for community work is a reasonable or feasible way to ensure timely and reliable work progress. However, such incentives can also create expectations and potential dependencies by communities.

Community labour has, notably, high levels of youth engagement in the works. Leading to skills development and good work experience.

Volunteer community labour has been a real strength of the programme. However, one of the lessons learnt is that it is important to quantify the value of community labour, or “sweat equity”, at the beginning of the project. It is imperative to confirm not only how much voluntary labour is expected as community contribution, but also the amount of time that will be voluntary labour, provided by those implementing and those involved in the project activities (the project leader, the key implementing “staff”). A perception of un-fairness (not being paid for work), uncertainty about the amount of time expected to be contributed in labour, plus unexpected impacts of the work on family/traditional chores can negatively impact on group motivation and project progress.

Community contributions need to be clarified during planning.

At the onset of the project, a clear organigram of roles, responsibilities and individual inputs should be clearly articulated, discussed and agreed upon. This should include a common value comparison of in-kind inputs (materials, food, labour, and other support mechanisms) and a clear understanding of how much labour/in-kind assistance will be required to complete the programme.

During the focus group discussions the community members indicated that if they had a choice between providing free community labour or having the work completed by an external contractor, their preference was to deliver the work themselves. This preference was based on the level of ownership and pride the work generated, as well as the opportunity to learn new skills, and get the youth engaged.
Communities prefer to do the work themselves, over the works to be implemented by an external contractor.

As part of the procedures put in place by the donor a requirement for obtaining a community grant is to provide 10% co-funding. It must be made very clear by the funding partners whether or not it is possible to count community in-kind assistance towards the 10% co-funding requirement.

In attracting the co-funding portion, the communities have shown strong willpower and resilience. The 10% co-funding contribution requirement has forced communities to come up with solutions. All four communities chose to develop partnerships with government in search for co-funding. Sibalai, worked hard to supplement the co-funding through labour activities, the construction of a church building and engaging in fundraising through church services.

Ownership through inclusive pre-project consultations

Real community ownership and engagement starts with participatory planning, consultation and joint discussions among the stakeholders in a community. Pre-project planning involves dialogue between all stakeholders that benefit from any potential future project. Planning for community projects needs to be fully inclusive with dialogue between clans, churches, women representatives, youth representatives, people living with disabilities, minority groups, and government authorities through the ward council meetings and development committees. Inclusive project planning is an essential tool for risk management and risk mitigation.

Inclusion of a wide variety of stakeholders in pre-project consultations leads to strong ownership, ability to solve problems and increase sustainability.

In Sibalai, for example, dialogue was organized among the various stakeholders, which included the land owners, two churches, the provincial and district government, women and youth. This process generated sufficient ownership for the project to be feasible.

However, during the field visits it was also noted, that pre-project consultations are not always “inclusive” of all stakeholders. Pre-project consultations should not only include the individuals responsible for project initiation (leadership, contractors, etc.), but also the beneficiaries in the communities who will access the services or infrastructure delivered by the project.

The consultations need to include members from a variety of clans, members from a variety of churches, members from government authorities, women, youth/adolescents, potential minority groups, people living with disabilities, and people from other communities impacted by the project.

By increasing inclusivity during pre-project consultations and activity identification and implementation, it increases community bonds and sense of unity.

The ward council would be the institutional platform for inclusive dialogue.

![Image of a community grant](image_url)

An example of one of the 182 Most Significant Change answers received.
The National and Sub-National Planning Process From Ward Development Committees up

Wards are the governance mechanism for participation of the village level into the planning process. The Ward Development Committee (WDC) is the principal community advisory unit to the LLG (Ward Councillors represent the WDC at the LLG), determining needs for services, programs and infrastructure.

The Organic Law on Provincial Governments and Local-level Governments (1995) provides the participative structure of ward development committees. A ward committee comprises the elected member for the ward (who is the chairperson; the ward councillor) and a maximum of five community representatives (of whom two must be women) as associate members.

The linking between WDCs and National Planning occurs through the Five Stages of Development Planning:

+ The Ward Activity Plan is designed by the WDC through discussion with the community.
+ The Local Level Government Plan is formed through compilation of its respective Ward Activity Plans.
+ The district puts together all the LLG Development Plans and sector plans into a single District Development Plan (five year rolling plan) and submits it to the Province – the district can use its plan to access other funding opportunities such as the District Services Improvement Program (DSIP).
+ The province compiles all District Development Plans into a single Provincial Development Plan (five year rolling plan) and submits to the National level – the Province can use its plan to access other funding opportunities such as the Province Services Improvement Program (PSIP).
+ The 22 provinces submit their Provincial Development Plans to the Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM) and the Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs (DPLGA) to be entered into the National Plan.

(Source: Department of Provincial and Local Level Government)
The quality of pre-project planning is determined by its ability to address potential conflicts which may manifest during implementation and between stakeholders. As witnessed during our project visits, this could include issues related to land ownership or inter-community issues. Solutions to these issues must be formalized - for example through signing MoA/MoU on land tenure.

Pre-project planning should also identify the partnerships that are required for project implementation to be sustainable. It is important to formalize these partnerships early on, enabling the project to engage partners from the beginning of the project and onwards. An example of this is the health centre in Trolga, which was in need for an MoU/MoA with the provincial department of health. The health centre should be included in the provincial and national health facilities plans, and adequate funding, training, doctors, nurses, salaries, medical equipment and supplies provided under government support. There was an implicit agreement that the Department of Health would provide the soft furnishings, but this did not materialize. UNDP had to step in. As mentioned, it is important to develop this partnership early through a contract, and explicit agreement, so that planning and budgeting can be made, and sustain the existence of the facility.

_Sustainability planning is a crucial part of the project planning process, in order to ensure that services will continue to be funded, managed and institutionalized and continue to function after donor funds are exhausted._

Pre-project planning should clearly identify the leadership responsibilities and management arrangements. From the communities visited, three project sites had clear leadership arrangements, which led to strong ownership and implementation by the community members. In one project site, the leadership arrangements were found to not be as strong, which also led to delays in project implementation.

Strong leadership is needed to facilitate timely delivery of the project. Untimely delivery leads rapidly to community members being discouraged, devoting time to other priorities, leading to further delays in project implementation.

 Putting in place strong leadership and checks and balances for accountability and transparency are preconditions for successful project implementation.

Strong leadership is also required to ensure an accountable and transparent use of the project resources. Community members are quick to judge and act if any suspicion arises leading to inefficient use of the project resources. Problems with delivery or accountability may lead to gossip and friction in and between communities. In one community, extreme delays in project procurement led to severe complications in the relations between the community and the Ward Councillor.

During the pre-project planning phase, it is of course important to not only engage the community members, but also the relevant technical supervisory partners. For a project to be successful it is also important that community members or the specific project leaders have the technical skills and experience to implement and operationalize their ideas. For example, in Sibalai, the project leader is also a NARI employee, in Domil there has been a strong history of processing cassava and chickens. In Trolga two community members leading the project are also working for the health department.

_Technical supervision of community initiatives is essential to prevent technical errors from happening._

Community members with specific skills will be the first ones to express their needs in a community. However, engaging external technical partners can be very useful to assess these needs based on technical feasibility and formal needs assessment. They will also be able to assess the cost-efficiencies and cost-benefits of the proposed projects jointly with the community members. During the field visit, the UNDP team noted a few problematic issues related to the technical specifications for power supply, water tank capacities and maintenance of equipment.
Youth empowerment

Engaging youth in community works leads to reducing community tensions and reduced substance abuse.

From the SWOT analysis, most community members indicated that engaging youth in community works leads to reducing tensions in the community. Youth, engaged in the works of the project, receive important on-the-job training, which can be used for finding employment elsewhere. Youth engaged in the project expressed a sense of pride, accomplishment and ownership of the project results. According to community members, their engagement in the works provides hopes for the future, and a reduction of alcohol and drug use. This development in turn leads to less vandalism and improves community security.

Women empowerment

One of the key performance indicators of the project is the empowerment of women. In general, women were included in the pre-project consultations, and have played important roles during the implementation of the project. However, in one community, during the focus group discussion, women
expressed clearly that they were not adequately engaged in the project. They felt that traditional values and beliefs had led men to implement the works, with women providing moral and supporting roles (food, drinks). The women expressed a clear desire to be engaged in the construction works as well.

Women should not only be engaged during planning, but also during implementation of the projects. Any cultural barriers need to be discussed during the planning.

In other communities, the project clearly provided evidence that the engagement of women during both the formulation processes as well as during the implementation leads to ownership by the entire community, and also to women empowerment and skills development.

In Sibalai, half of the students who attended the agricultural skills training at NARI were women, and they have been key in fostering change in the agricultural practices in the community. In addition, as part of the Sibalai resource centre, the community has now established a Women in Business development centre to support women in the community to improve their livelihoods.

**Conflict resolution**

Community development projects attract significant interest from neighbouring communities. People are very keen to learn if neighbouring community projects are successful, in a desire to also implement a similar project. In a few cases, the UNDP team has been alerted to situations where joint collaboration between communities actually led to a resolution of conflict. However, exclusion of neighbouring communities quickly leads to jealousies, particularly if the projects are successful. Jealousies can serve to be another source of conflicts between communities. Collaboration among communities therefore needs to become a stronger aspect of focus during the design of the programme.

**Failure to include or cooperate with other communities quickly leads to jealousies.**

In the Sibalai community, ward councillors of other wards felt keen to replicate something similar in their three zones. They were inspired to try to introduce new concepts for agricultural production to supplement their income, and to improve and diversify their agricultural products.

Ward councillors regularly wanted to meet with the UNDP team to discuss how they can get their community involved in these types of projects. Smaller ad-hoc types of projects and/or pilot projects have a great spin-off and easily create expectations towards other communities. It is the role of the government, perhaps supported by the international aid community, to strengthen the development planning systems in such manner that all communities ultimately are able to put
Embedding the project through creating partnerships

All the communities developed important partnerships with local government counterparts and identified entry points to obtain further financial support. This is key to ensure the sustainability of the project. Since these projects are the first of their kind for at least three communities, the community members are learning by doing.

Partnerships with key stakeholders and government are important for sustainability of the project.

They have learned how to prepare development priorities, and how to seek the entry points into government funding mechanisms. Communities have made claims to their ward councils to be more facilitating in obtaining government support. The communities also learnt new skills – hard skills like construction, as well as soft skills like management.

Communities are learning by doing and look for help and partners along the way.

Key to the management arrangements for project implementation is an excellent partnership between an associated CBO, who is the grant recipient, and the community. The experience from the four communities shows that where the CBO is based in the community, or the project manager representing the CBO is from that same community, we can expect a stronger and productive relationship. This personalized the work and further incentivises the CBO/Manager.

CBOs need to be operating in or closely linked to the community.

The SWOT analysis revealed the importance of maintaining community motivation and momentum by efficient and effective project management by the CBO and the project leadership. There is a need to have efficient procurement processes in place for the project to be delivered rapidly. Project leaders should endeavour to minimise delays in material/service delivery so as not to lose project momentum.

Funding and project implementation modality from the EU to the community, through UNDP and the CBO. Regular progress update reports and financial acquittals flowed from the CBO to UNDP in order to monitor implementation and release further tranches.
GOVERNMENT

Although Papua New Guinea started somewhat late with the delivery on the Millennium Development Goals, the Department of National Planning and Monitoring has commenced discussion on the planning, localizing and operationalization of the new Sustainable Development Goals. This endeavour will lead into the formulation of an indicator framework relevant for Papua New Guinea, and which will serve as the foundation for further government investments into rural development.

The MDG acceleration project has attracted additional ad-hoc government investments. These investments have been received as a result of personal networking and advocating for the successful completion, finalization and continuation of the projects by the community members.

Collaboration between communities and government has improved. The EU/UNDP investments have attracted additional government investments which reinforce the success of the projects. However, for rural development to be effective it is important that the relevant LLG, district and provincial-level government authorities institutionalize a well-functioning bottom-up planning process.

Bottom-up rural development planning system requires capacity strengthening notably at ward, LLG and DDA levels.

From the focus group discussions, it appears that community members are generally unaware where to go and how to request support from the government for their community projects. Therefore, the relevant government authorities should also implement an awareness-raising campaign among community members which explains the application processes and procedures for government funding.

Community members do not seem aware of the various timeframes for submission of development plans, strategies and proposals. Similarly, LLG and provincial authorities indicated that funding allocations from higher levels is unpredictable, and does not follow suit with development plans submitted.

A bottom-up planning process should be inclusive and gender balanced.

Women representation at LLG, district and provincial level is very much desired by the women interviewed. Women feel very insecure about such responsibilities, but if given the right incentives and capacities, they want to express their needs in the planning processes.

**Question to women group: How can you strengthen your relationship with government?**

**Answer: We need good women speakers who can voice for us at the LLG and district-level, women representatives who speak on our behalf.**

The associated government agencies will also need to engage themselves in discussions on planning for a sustainable continuation of the services/infrastructure/facilities delivered by a project. This sustainability planning is an essential element for successful project continuation. Community projects, once implemented, need continued support and investments in order to sustain the services delivered. However, sustainability planning has been weak, if not absent, for all community projects.

Sustainability planning for continuation is essential and needs improvement.
For example, in Sibalai, the successful product diversification will generate extra income. However, the communities were now requesting support on managing their newly earned finances. Sibalai community does not have access to financial services. The community does not practice savings schemes, nor has access to a microfinance agency or a bank.

Provision of vocational training and extension of business services will further support economic development.

In Domil, Sibalai and Musendai, the communities would benefit from having access to vocational training, in combination with regular micro-finance / savings products, as well as small/medium enterprise development services including facilities for business skills development. Such services would foster self-reliance by the communities through development of economic activity and small/medium-scale private sector development.

In Trolga, the newly constructed health centre is well designed for first aid and primary health care. However, for secondary and tertiary health care, the centre is dependent on good road and bridge conditions for transport of patients to the nearest hospitals. At the time of our visit, the roads and two out of three bridges were inaccessible, and, therefore, the ambulance provided by the project, could not reach any of the other health centres.

In addition, the Trolga health centre is included in the government plans for health care financing, and in principle the costs for health care personnel, equipment and health services are part of the government budget. However, during discussions with the Provincial Health Department it was important to note, that the department funding needs are insufficiently met by national level, and provided on an ad-hoc basis, which leads to unpredictable results, and actions by the provincial health authorities.

PRIVATE SECTOR

Once some basic infrastructure has been constructed, communities very quickly move on to use these services, and this immediately creates potential for further investment by private sector entrepreneurs. Particularly in those communities which reach increased income as a result of product diversification or private sector investment, and business and management skills development will accelerate the results that have been achieved.

In order to address the future perspectives of the large number of youth and adolescents, private sector investment could focus on these groups by facilitating vocational training...
opportunities, reinforced by providing support to access financial services (microfinance, banks). Additional support could focus on strengthening entrepreneurship through provision of leadership and management skills.

Private sector investment could focus on strengthening the financial sector, vocational training, employment opportunities, networks and access.

From the field visits, it was noticed that there is growth in the number of associations in PNG. Associations facilitate the development of value chains, and product diversification. The staff of associations may need training in management and marketing skills. For associations it is important to find partnerships and markets to sell their products. Private sector entrepreneurs could facilitate in finding and accessing such markets for the products from the communities. The growth in number of associations is an excellent opportunity for private sector entrepreneurs to engage in partnerships and contracts, both at national and international scale.

Microfinance and banks and financial infrastructure development will accelerate the earnings and economic productivity in the communities.

Electricity has been installed to run the freezers in Domil. With the electricity we now also have light. The children are able to study. Not the entire village has access, but those closer to the road have light. Children come to where there is light and study together.

Member of the Domil community discussing the indirect impact of introducing electricity to the community

Private sector entrepreneurs could invest in relevant vocational training endeavours, as well as invest in provision of maintenance of equipment and services.

Investments by private sector entrepreneurs leads on the one hand to employment opportunities for community members, but also to service delivery and labour for private sector entrepreneurs.

When getting engaged in community development, it is important for private sector entrepreneurs to provide training in the assets they are selling to support adequate maintenance and continued use of the supplies.

Private sector suppliers should offer training in the assets they sell as well ensure the goods or services sold are relevant and applicable to the purchasing community.

It is also important the private sector provides a fair service by selling the most appropriate applications to the community. In one instance, a community procured a generator to support a rice mill and it transpired the generator was not fit for that purpose. This can be the result of the community not properly researching and conveying their demand, or the supplier not fully considering or appreciating the end use.

The Digicel Foundation ambulance donated to the health post in Trolga assisting a young girl to receive lifesaving medical treatment. Because of immediate medical attention and the ambulance facilities the young girl survived and made a full recovery.
Private sector partnerships are an excellent means to support community development. An illustration of this is the provision, by the Digicel Foundation, of an ambulance in Trolga. During the UNDP mission to Trolga, a medical emergency occurred and the ambulance assisted in the saving of a life.

The private sector can provide a lot of support to community development through corporate social responsibility (CSR). A CSR is a corporation’s initiatives to take responsibility for the company’s effects on a social good, beyond the interests of the firm, e.g. in areas of environmental and/or social wellbeing.

CSR can be a win-win for the community as well as the firm

CSRs can provide large benefits not just for the community but for the firm as well. CSRs can develop good reputations for the firm, leading to increased brand awareness, recruitment opportunities of employees proud to be associated with the work. It can also support the formation of good relationships with local authorities and local communities, making doing business easier.

INTERNATIONAL AID AGENCIES

Evidence suggests that the Community-led MDG Acceleration Project has produced positive results at the community level in the four communities. It is somewhat early to already see impacts in the communities, but the project has finalised the construction of the infrastructure works, implemented through community work. This community engagement in the project has already shown positive social and economic changes.

Co-funding requirements by the funding partners has led to many discussions and debates among community members. Co-funding requirements, if not too high, can be met by the communities through fundraising. However, there are limits to the levels of co-funding the communities will be able to meet. Therefore, it is recommended to the international aid agencies to conduct a feasibility study on the potential for co-funding by the affected communities during the project planning phase.

Co-funding can be mobilized by communities, however there are limits to the amount of co-funding that can be mobilized.

In addition, it must be considered that the co-funding requirement may introduce a system where “richer” communities, or those communities that are able to finance the co-funding, will be able to benefit from the grant support, whereas “poorer” communities may be left behind. Co-funding has been mobilized by the communities themselves, but also by attracting LLG or district level funding.

We have been given training to handle the machines which make chicken and pig feed from cassava. The training was given to the men, but some women also participated. We have seen different ways how cassava can be used. Now our livestock is feeding on it and we notice a change in growth. Men and women will be employed by the project. Feed will be processed by men, the women will de-feather and cut the chicken. We will receive paid jobs.

Member of Domil Community
LESSONS LEARNED FROM WORLD CAFE ON BOTTOM-UP RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

During a national-level workshop, held on 19 February 2016 in Port Moresby, a wide range of participants discussed bottom-up rural development planning. The World Cafe methodology was used, and the discussions focused on 4 key questions:

1. What are the advantages of the bottom-up development approach?
2. What are the difficulties with the bottom-up development approach?
3. What factors are supporting the bottom-up development approach?
4. What factors are hindering the bottom-up development approach?

The discussions and group work led to the following insights:

Advantages and supporting factors

Inclusive, community-driven development lies at the heart of the bottom-up rural development planning approach, which in essence is the vehicle for communities to identify and prioritize their needs, and generate ownership in realizing these needs. Rural bottom-up development planning is really an entry point for development efforts, and leads to empowerment of community members, strengthened relations between its members, and to pathways for longer term results, resilience and sustainable development.

Planning is essential and for planning to be contributing to successful and sustainable continuation of the project results, communities will need to involve all stakeholders. Planning mechanisms should be gender inclusive and gender balanced. Such inclusion will lead to local solutions to local problems, which often leads to more realistic plans and targets, and hence cost-efficiencies. It will lead to value for money. The strong ownership by all community members may also lead to strengthened relations between communities, who are interested to piggy-back on the developments, and could potentially lead to cost-sharing with other interested communities. More importantly it could lead to the identification of problematic inter-community issues, and an opportunity for the communities to address and resolve these issues.

Bottom-up planning can lead to local solutions to local problems.

The local context in the villages in Papua New Guinea makes it important that among the stakeholders, and in addition to relevant government authorities, adequate consultations will be held with members of a variety of local churches, and clans, differences among which are often a source of community conflict. It helps by strengthening linkages and improved coordination between different groups for decision making. In addition, by also including women, children and youth, minority and other vulnerable groups, a real platform is created for equal participation, adequate voice, democratic decision making and inclusive development planning.

Community-led implementation leads to skills building for community members, and, as such, potential future employment opportunities. It also leads to strengthening community leadership and enhanced engagement with development partners and other stakeholders. The development projects in their own right create economic opportunities and generate income generation.

Difficulties and hindering factors

Before bottom-up rural development planning can be institutionalised, it is important to consider the difficulties experienced with the current planning approach. Bottom-up planning has long been a topic of discussion and attention for the Government of Papua New Guinea, however, with limited results since direct investment at the community level is extremely limited.

First of all, community members show a lack of knowhow and technical skills on aspects of planning, and budgeting to adequately prioritize and plan community developments. Also, a lack of support, the expenses of coming with, and shortage of, technical staff or government officers to provide support to communities to assist them with developing their plans makes it difficult to pursue development planning. Low
levels of literacy are also not conducive in improving the opportunities for development planning.

Many villagers and the national workshop participants are asserting that there are funding constraints, however the UNDP team believes it is the adequate channelling of the available funds that is the problematic issue. Allocated resources of approved plans do not seem to be forthcoming at the community level. With Papua New Guinea being a resource rich country, a solution should be found in strengthening the budget allocation and planning systems.

At this point, communities have no proper understanding of the development planning processes and linkages at different levels. This lack of understanding, and the lack of investments by the various levels of government in the communities, cause a “no care attitude” by community members, a sense of hopelessness that feeds tribal conflicts, and substance abuse.

From a development planning system perspective, there is a lack of understanding on how the Millennium Development Goals, and now the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are aligned to national strategies. The Department of National Planning and Monitoring is currently engaged in efforts to clarify the SDGs in relation to the development goals and indicators of Papua New Guinea.

Political changes in leadership invariably also lead to changes in the development plans, and create instability in the planning mechanisms. Plans should, in principle, be reflecting the needs of the communities who identified these needs, and not the individual priorities and needs of politicians.

Community members are finding difficulties in getting the higher levels of authority to accept the development plans. In addition, during the planning of development projects, land ownership issues can paralyze the efforts, as demands for compensation of land or resources, or land ownership issues can take a long time to be addressed and resolved.

From a gender perspective, strong customary beliefs restrict many women from speaking in public places, and may contribute to conflict. Finally, the geographic conditions, and the remote characteristics of the most vulnerable, pose a challenge to adequate outreach and participation in development planning.
As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, the purpose of the project review was to determine:

- Overall performance and suitability of project modality
- What worked well?
- What could work better?
- How can the program be improved going forward?

1. Overall performance and suitability of the project modality

The design of the project is relevant and adequately adjusted to the realities of the communities in Papua New Guinea. The design of the project, providing grants through community based organisations (CBO), and seeking technical expertise where needed closely aligns with the desire of the communities to undertake the work themselves, over the works to be implemented by an external contractor. The CBOs have been closely linked to the communities leading to an effective mode of delivery. Overall, the project has performed well in producing the intended results and within a reasonable timeframe, and has shown to be leading to raise the interest of other communities.

2. What worked well?

The community infrastructure projects have impressive social and economic spin off. Communities are motivated by desire to earn income, and towards prospects for improved access to basic services. Communities are going the extra mile to implement their projects, as shown by their impressive efforts to raise 10% co-funding required for project approval. However, although co-funding can be mobilized by communities, there are limits to the amount of co-funding that can be mobilized.

Free community labour has been key to the success of this project. As a result of community labour and participation, the projects have been important for skills development, which are a vehicle for further social and economic development processes in the communities. However, voluntary labour arrangements also lead to unpredictable and irregular availability of the work force, and potential delays. This can be mitigated through clear resource planning and a valuation of the time volunteered.

Several communities have seen increased cooperation with other communities. However, in the event of failure to include (or cooperate with) other communities, this quickly leads to jealousies and conflicts. Collaboration and greater inclusivity between communities therefore needs to receive stronger focus during the design of the programme.

Engaging youth in community works has led in several cases to reduced community tensions and reduced substance abuse.

Successful projects attract curiosity and interest from other communities, who are keen to replicate or find ways to get engaged in the existing projects. Success breeds success!

3. What could work better?

The secret to a successful project lies in the quality of its planning phase. Generally, the project should focus on strengthening the planning efforts, particularly in light of a sustainable continuation of the project results after project completion. Sustainability planning, also in terms of follow through by respective government authorities through public investments, is a crucial part of the project planning process, in order to ensure that services will be institutionalized and continue to function after donor funds are exhausted.

Putting in place strong leadership and checks and balances for accountability and transparency are preconditions for successful project implementation. Community contributions need to be clarified during the planning. The project planners need to include a wide variety of stakeholders in pre-project
consultations, which leads to even stronger ownership solving potential problems and sustainability.

Support for women’s empowerment and early engagement from project conception can lead to greater participation and involvement of pro-women, gender balanced activity identification. A pro-women stance early on will also facilitate key conversations and discussions on the role of women in project delivery, as well as providing time to challenge any social norms and cultural traditions that may oppose their wants. Lending by the supporting agency can be conditional on these early conversations having taken place.

Institutionalizing regular technical supervision of community initiatives is essential to prevent the project against technical errors, and ensure that maintenance is occurring continuously.

4. How can the program be improved going forward?

All stakeholders engaged in community led development projects should consider that projects, when being brought to life, need to be able to continue independently after external support has been exhausted. This implies that efforts are needed from all stakeholders to ensure a sustainable continuation of the project.

Communities need to ensure that projects get delivered on time and within the available resources. Communities will also need to manage potential conflicts by ensuring inclusion of all stakeholders in the project environment. Finally, communities need to ensure that the projects are going to be well maintained, staffed and funded. If MoUs/MoAs are required for this continuity these must be prepared and signed as early as possible.

Government authorities will have to follow through by providing all important support to ensure the project gets embedded in the local context and has means and resources to continue.

The private sector can play a stronger development role, as has been shown by Digicel. The private sector has an important role to play to provide operational support, e.g. financial training, savings and loans schemes and banking/financial services. Private sector investment could focus on strengthening the financial sector, invest in vocational training, and creating employment opportunities, provide access to networks and access to markets.

International Aid Agencies should continue to support efforts of the Government of Papua New Guinea to deliver direct support to communities through a community development fund/scheme, which supports community-initiated, inclusive, bottom-up rural development.

International aid agencies can also continue to provide sub-national governance support in the areas of accountability, transparency, good practices and monitoring and evaluation.

The current government development planning system needs to be complemented by a bottom-up planning and development process. Communities at present have indicated that too little public investment is being received at the community level, despite Papua New Guinea being a resources rich country.

With the government in the lead, UNDP and the European Union should jointly build on the success of the CLMAP project and continue to discuss, promote and develop a system of effective and efficient bottom-up planning.

Such a system needs to target direct investment at the community level through a grants based approach, led by the DNPM, and should include the following components:

1. An inclusive, gender balanced and participatory planning process to be initiated by the Ward Councils, leading to the formulation of community development initiatives, and which is in line with existing district, provincial and national-level development plans and planning cycles.

2. Capacity building for participatory, rural appraisal and planning, community (social) accountability.
3. A multi-agency Community Development Fund, to be managed and coordinated by the DNPM, and which includes a multitude of community grant schemes in existence by a variety of international agencies.

Such a bottom-up planning system needs to, among other things, specifically facilitate joint planning, in order to address the cooperation, collaboration, and coordination among villages, clans, churches and government, in order to resolve a variety of conflicts arising from community disputes, land issues and traditional practices.

The joint planning system needs to be organized based on principles of inclusion, which can be enforced through the approval procedures for the community grants:

+ inclusion of youth (to advance enhanced community security, reduction of substance abuse and crime, and foster employment and future opportunities),
+ inclusion of women (to advance women empowerment and gender equality),
+ inclusion of those impacted by environment and climate change (to build community resilience and adaptation against the impacts of climatic changes).
+ inclusion of minority groups (in order to ensure that benefits from the projects reach all community members in an equal fashion).

The planning system will also need to facilitate accountability and transparency and community contributions:

+ Audits of community projects will facilitate a clearance for accessing a potential next grant application.
+ Community contributions, through community labour, are an effective manner to generate community buy in and ownership. However, cash contribution requirements may lead to exclusion of the poorer communities.
School children in Musendai (East Sepik Province) showing their appreciation for the new ablution block in their school. The ablution block was identified by the community and the school as a key way to improve access to education for girls in the community.

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