

Education Sector Program Implementation Grant Completion Report Template

Status: Accepted

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Project Implementation

Assessment of Project Implementation: Relevance

Overall Relevance

Level Of OverAll Relevance 1

High

Detailed Description

Introduction

This completion report highlights the outcomes and achievements of the BEST PNG project, implemented from September 2019 through December 2024, to support the National Education Plan (NEP) 2015–2019 in Papua New Guinea (PNG). The project was funded by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) through an Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant (ESPIG) and a complementary multiplier grant co-financed by the Government of Japan (GoJ). Delivered by the National Department of Education (NDoE) in collaboration with Save the Children as the Grant Agent (GA), the project received a total allocation of US \$11,020,000, comprising fixed and variable parts.

The BEST PNG project aimed to improve lower primary student learning outcomes in math and science in six low-performing provinces of PNG: Gulf, Milne Bay, Oro, Sandaun, Western, and West New Britain. The project comprised six core components, which included: strengthening pre-service and in-service teacher education and training, particularly for female teachers; curriculum updates and textbook distribution; support to enhance student's access, retention, and transition, and the establishment of a project management unit (PMU) to ensure quality delivery and share learning.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the program's achievement of its objectives, implementation, impact, and learning. It underscores the collaborative efforts of stakeholders, including the Department for Higher Education, Research, Science, and Technology (DHERST), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Provincial Divisions of Education (PDoEs), Church Education Agencies (CEAs), and Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs). The findings and lessons learned will serve as valuable insights for future initiatives aimed at advancing education outcomes in PNG.

Project Objectives:

The overarching objective of BEST PNG project was to improve student learning outcomes in mathematics and science in low-performing provinces of PNG.

The program sought to achieve this through five (5) key objectives:

- Strengthened teacher education: Enhancing both pre-service and in-service teacher training in mathematics and science.
- Increased female participation: Expanding access to training for secondary school female teachers in specialized subject areas of mathematics and science.
- Improved student transition and retention: Supporting initiatives to improve grade 8–9 transition rates, reduce dropout rates, and enhance primary education access for disadvantaged students.
- Enhanced learning resources: Procuring and distributing standards-based curriculum (SBC) textbooks and teacher manuals.
- Project management and oversight: Establishing a dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU) within NDoE to ensure efficient implementation, monitoring, and accountability.

Overall Relevance

The relevance of the BEST PNG Program is rated as High, both at the design stage and throughout implementation. The project consistently aligned with the national sector priorities outlined in the National Education Plan (NEP) 2015–2019 and its Addendum, and it remained adaptive to emerging needs over the life cycle of the grant. Project activities addressed urgent and structural challenges in teaching quality, learning outcomes, gender equity, and education service delivery, especially in remote and low-performing provinces.

(a) Continued Alignment with Sector Priorities

The program’s objectives and results framework remained well aligned with NEP priorities throughout its duration. It targeted key sector constraints such as:

- Low student performance in math and science,
- Limited availability of qualified teachers—particularly female teachers in STEM,
- Insufficient teaching and learning materials,
- Poor retention and transition rates, especially for girls.

The project’s results pathway—linking curriculum alignment, teacher training, provision of learning materials, and policy reform—proved both realistic and coherent, with nearly all outputs achieved or exceeded by closure. In hindsight, the overall structure was well-conceived and grounded in sector realities.

(b) Evidence-Based and Consultative Design

The project was informed by baseline studies, EMIS data, the 2015 PILNA results, and national consultation processes, including inputs from TTCs, CEAs, DHERST, JICA, and the Local Education Group (LEG). Its components reflected lessons from previous GPE-supported projects and sector evaluations, ensuring continuity and learning.

For example:

- Component 1’s in-service training design was drawn from previous diagnostic assessments and classroom observations.
- Component 2 responded directly to the misalignment between TTC curriculum, and the SBC identified in baseline and STEPMAS preparatory studies.

- Component 3 built on previous scholarship experience and targeted gender gaps evident in EMIS and provincial teacher deployment data.

The project's preparation also reflected extensive stakeholder engagement, which continued throughout implementation via joint planning sessions, LEG meetings, and joint monitoring missions.

(c) Alignment with National Legislation and Regulations

Project implementation was compliant with existing national education policies, teacher education regulations, and curriculum reform frameworks, and helped reinforce key policy instruments. For example:

- Component 4 activities supported the roll-out of national circulars such as the Secretary's Instruction on female transition quotas and the Joint Circular on absenteeism.
- Curriculum reforms under Component 2 were implemented in line with DHERST's Program Specification Document (PSD) processes and the SBC framework overseen by the NDoE Curriculum Division.

(d) Responsiveness to Changing Circumstances

The project showed a strong ability to adapt to changing circumstances:

- In response to COVID-19-related disruptions and logistics delays, two No Cost Extensions were granted to support the completion of textbook distribution and the finalization of scholarship support.
- Scholarship support was extended through 2026 based on enrolment data, graduation delays, and partner consultations.
- In coordination with PMSOs and PEAs, the implementation plan for Component 5.2 was revised to align with provincial Term 1 calendars for 2025, enabling effective distribution and early utilization of G1–G2 textbooks and teacher manuals despite initial delays. This adaptive approach helped maintain momentum at the school level and strengthened local ownership of the rollout process.

This flexibility ensured that the project remained relevant and achievable, despite external constraints.

(e) Consideration of National and Local Capacity

The project took into account capacity conditions at national and sub-national levels. Where limitations were identified (e.g., TTC-level ownership of curriculum reform or PEA-level logistical constraints), the project supported the provision of technical assistance, orientation sessions, and embedded delivery teams. The creation of Provincial Delivery Teams (PDTs) and the involvement of PMSOs in textbook distribution reflected this tailored, capacity-sensitive approach.

(f) Results Framework and Monitoring Design

The project was underpinned by a well-designed results framework, with clear outputs, outcome indicators, and baselines. Targets were realistic and measurable, and disaggregated by province, gender, and education level where appropriate. A comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) plan guided data collection and informed adaptive decision-making.

Evidence of learning outcomes (e.g., Grade 5 student assessment, PILNA 2021 data), gender transition rates, and training effectiveness was systematically collected and used to guide mid-course corrections. The Variable Part also enforced a results-based discipline by linking performance directly to disbursement of funds.

(g) Strategic Public–Private Partnerships to Enhance Gender Equity in STEM

Complementing these efforts, the program established successful public–private partnerships to expand access to teacher training for women in STEM under Component 3. In addition to GPE funding, the Newmont Foundation financed 10 scholarships, and the Bank of South Pacific (BSP) later joined to support five more recipients. These contributions enabled a total of 55 female students to enrol in pre-service mathematics and science teaching programs—an important step toward closing the gender gap in STEM education in PNG. Both private partners also contributed to reporting and visibility efforts, enhancing the integrity and public profile of the initiative.

These partnerships not only strengthened the financial sustainability of the scholarship component but also exemplified how strategic collaboration with the private sector can reinforce national gender equity goals and expand impact beyond the limits of core donor funding.

A key feature of the scholarship strategy was the engagement of private teacher training institutions—St. Peter Chanel Catholic College (SPCC) and Pacific Adventist University (PAU)—which expanded access to quality teacher education for female students across the targeted provinces. While not necessarily located near the students’ home regions, these institutions provided a supportive learning environment and helped accommodate the increased intake of female scholarship recipients pursuing STEM education.

In conclusion, the BEST PNG Program maintained consistent relevance throughout its lifecycle. It remained responsive to evolving needs and sector dynamics, with a design grounded in national priorities and validated through inclusive stakeholder consultations. Its implementation approach allowed for timely adaptation and course correction, while its structure, use of evidence, and robust monitoring framework positioned it effectively to achieve its objectives and inform future investments in the education sector.

Beneficiaries’ Views on Relevance

Detailed Description

Across all components, beneficiaries of the BEST PNG Program—including in-service teachers, TTC lecturers, scholarship recipients, school leaders, and provincial administrators—expressed strong and consistent views affirming the high relevance of the project. The interventions were widely regarded as timely, context-specific, and closely aligned with the practical challenges and policy priorities of PNG’s education sector. Further evidence per component is provided below.

Component 1: In-service Teacher Training

Teachers trained under Component 1 found the in-service math and science training not only technically sound but transformational in its impact on teaching confidence and student engagement. Nearly all teachers rated the training as useful, with 48% indicating they felt confident enough to train others and 42% indicating confidence in applying the SBC independently. Over 98% of participants said the training improved their day-to-day teaching, particularly in planning structured, inquiry-based lessons.

Teachers reported an increased use of SBC-aligned materials (syllabi, teacher guides, and manuals) after the training, and observed that students particularly in science and numeracy, responded better to more engaging, participatory lesson delivery. The relevance of the intervention was strongly tied to its practical, school-focused design, which was informed by baseline assessments, including a Training Needs Assessment (TNA) and the 2018 Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA). These diagnostic tools highlighted specific gaps in teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge and classroom practices in math and science. The findings guided the development of targeted in-service training modules, ensuring that the intervention responded directly to identified needs and addressed a long-standing professional development gap. As one teacher participant noted, ‘This training helped me understand how to teach math in a way my students can relate to, it’s the first time I feel confident teaching this subject.’ This combination of data-driven design and teacher-centered delivery contributed significantly to the intervention’s impact and perceived value .

Component 2: TTC Curriculum Alignment

Lecturers from Teacher Training Colleges, including Saint Benedict’s and Reverend Maru, found the curriculum alignment workshops and STEPMA materials to be highly relevant in strengthening pre-service education. They cited the Knowledge Sharing Workshop as a breakthrough moment in understanding the misalignment between the Program Specification Document (PSD) and the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC)—a gap especially problematic for less experienced lecturers.

Lecturers appreciated the structured lesson flow, increased focus on inquiry-based learning, and the practical integration of theory and classroom application. Many began adopting demonstration lessons and peer support models, even in the absence of strong institutional frameworks. The use of standardized SBC rubrics significantly improved assessment practices across participating TTCs. Overall, Component 2 was widely acknowledged as having equipped TTC lecturers with practical tools and pedagogical insights to better prepare student teachers for real classroom challenges. As one lecturer from St. Benedict’s TTC noted, “For the first time, we are using consistent criteria to evaluate teaching practice as it helps us focus on what really matters in the classroom.” This feedback echoed across institutions. In addition, findings from the baseline TNA and subsequent lecturer feedback surveys indicated measurable improvements in confidence and alignment with the SBC framework, validating the impact of the intervention.

Component 3: Female Scholarship Program

The 55 female scholarship recipients described the support as life-changing, affirming its relevance not only in addressing financial hardship but in empowering them to pursue careers in STEM teaching. Mary-Faustina Amakatiu, who comes from the remote province of West Sepik and travelled the longest distance to college, graduated with the highest academic award in her cohort. Her outstanding performance was widely celebrated, and she has since become a source of inspiration for younger girls in her community. Reflecting on her journey, Mary-Faustina said during one monitoring visit, “Without this scholarship, I would never have made it to college. Now I want to go back and teach girls in my province that they too can dream big.” Similarly, beneficiaries like Nelly Taki emphasized how the scholarship removed barriers to accessing higher education, while others like Geraldine Peavan and Charitas Mampo expressed their aspirations to become future leaders and role models in underserved communities. This type of feedback was consistently gathered during joint monitoring visits to their schools of enrolment, reinforcing the program’s impact on girls’ empowerment and local leadership in education

Mary-Faustina’s experience underscores the transformative reach of the program. Her exceptional achievement comes as a motivation to peers and younger girls in her community, demonstrating how well targeted support can unlock talent and shift perceptions about women’s roles in science and education.

Graduates noted the scholarship’s alignment with PNG’s national goals to increase gender equity and improve access to quality STEM education in rural areas. Several recipients expressed a strong sense of purpose and responsibility, with some already volunteering or mentoring girls in their home provinces. The intervention was seen as transformative at the individual level and beyond, impacting the school communities that these new teachers will soon serve.

Component 4: Variable Part (Equity, Efficiency, Learning Outcomes)

Stakeholder feedback on Component 4 activities affirmed the relevance of the reforms introduced through the Variable Part indicators:

- **Equity:** Principals and selection committee members who underwent the “Every Girl to High School” training noted that the Secretary’s Circular on female transition quotas was clear, actionable, and helped correct gender bias in school admissions. The training was seen as a practical tool for expanding girls’ access to secondary education, particularly in rural areas.
- **Efficiency:** In the four SAIL pilot provinces, district inspectors and school leaders valued the behavioural, data-informed approach to improving attendance and reducing dropout. While only a baseline study was conducted during the project, it identified key drivers of absenteeism such as menstrual hygiene challenges for girls and household obligations. Although no follow-up data was collected to confirm impact, it was anticipated that targeted interventions including school sensitization and WASH improvements would contribute to reducing absenteeism and supporting student retention. The National Circulars on student and teacher absenteeism were seen as timely instruments for reinforcing accountability. Participants noted a renewed focus on community engagement and internal monitoring.
- **Learning Outcomes:** Teachers trained in literacy instruction (over 1,000 across 14 provinces) consistently praised the training modules for their clarity, structured delivery, and practical classroom relevance. The facilitator and participant workbooks were widely adopted and regularly used during lesson planning. Teachers and school leaders reported early observable gains in student reading fluency and

comprehension, largely based on classroom engagement and informal assessment feedback. While no formal post-training learning assessments were conducted during the program to quantify improvements, the BEST PNG Baseline Report had earlier highlighted significant gaps in student reading outcomes, e.g., only 16% of Grade 5 students met expected reading comprehension benchmarks nationally, underscoring the relevance of the intervention. District education officers and inspectors noted during monitoring visits that the uniform training approach and embedded coaching enabled consistent application of literacy strategies in classrooms. These qualitative observations and field-based insights indicate strong uptake of instructional strategies, warranting systematic evaluation in future phases.

Collectively, the Variable Part activities were seen as highly relevant to PNG’s most pressing system challenges, including gender disparities, retention, and foundational literacy.

Component 5: Textbooks and Teacher Manuals

Teachers, headteachers, and provincial education officers strongly endorsed the relevance of the distributed textbooks and teacher manuals. Many emphasized that the SBC aligned materials for mathematics and science (Grades 3–6), delivered under Component 5.1 and supported by Multiplier funding, significantly enhanced foundational learning resources. Integrated into Component 1 training, a total of 920,000 textbooks and 40,000 teacher manuals were distributed for each subject—mathematics and science—across Grades 3 to 6. Specifically, they noted that the materials:

- Made lesson planning more structured and efficient,
- Were especially beneficial for less experienced teachers, and
- Encouraged independent learning and curriculum consistency.

While the Grades 3–6 textbooks procured under the GoJ contribution in Component 5.1 were distributed using third-party contractors, the PMSOs expressed pride in leading the distribution of the G1–G2 mathematics textbooks. The development of both the textbooks and teacher guides also demonstrated strong national leadership and ownership, with the engagement of local curriculum experts, artists, and graphic designers. This inclusive process helped to ensure cultural and contextual relevance, while also building and retaining technical capacity within the country’s education system. They reported strong acceptance of the materials at the school level. In some remote areas, school leaders even requested immediate training to help teachers use the resources effectively highlighting both the urgency of support needs and a strong sense of demand and local ownership.

Across all project components, the BEST PNG Program was seen by beneficiaries as highly relevant to their day-to-day responsibilities, long-term goals, and the education system’s broader reform agenda. The program was praised for addressing structural and practical challenges with concrete, well-targeted interventions that empowered teachers, strengthened institutions, and expanded opportunities—especially for girls and underserved communities. This feedback strongly reinforces the program’s “High” relevance rating.

Assessment of Project Implementation: Efficacy

Overall Efficacy

Level of Overall Efficacy 2

High

Detailed Description

The efficacy of the BEST PNG Program is rated as High, based on the extent to which the project achieved its intended objectives at the time of closing, across both equity and quality dimensions of education service delivery in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The overarching goal of BEST PNG was to “improve learning outcomes in mathematics and science” for lower primary students in underperforming provinces, through a comprehensive approach involving teacher training, curriculum alignment, gender-sensitive scholarship support, and increased availability of learning materials. Evidence from endline assessments, monitoring visits, and stakeholder feedback confirm that the project substantially met and, in some areas, exceeded its intended outcomes.

a) Reducing Gender-Specific Barriers to Access and Learning

One of the strongest results of the program was its impact on gender equality in education. Through Component 3, BEST PNG provided scholarships to female pre-service teachers specializing in mathematics and science—two subjects where women have been historically underrepresented in PNG’s teaching force. These scholarships directly addressed financial and socio-cultural barriers that typically limit girls’ access to tertiary education in STEM fields.

The program demonstrated strong efficacy in improving transition and retention outcomes. Of the 40 students supported under the GPE ESPIG, none dropped out, and retention remained at 100% throughout the scholarship period. Among the 15 additional students supported through complementary contributions by Newmont Foundation and BSP, only one experienced a temporary withdrawal due to personal circumstances, with plans in place for her re-enrolment and completion. These results highlight the effectiveness of targeted financial and academic support in reducing dropouts and promoting completion among female students in teacher training.

The experience underscores the value of combining financial support with wraparound services such as case management and institutional mentorship, which many students cited as instrumental in navigating both academic and social challenges.

As reported by female beneficiaries, the program not only enabled them to enrol and remain in teacher training programs but also empowered them to serve as role models in their communities, thereby reinforcing positive gender norms. The visibility of these young women pursuing careers in STEM teaching has begun to shift perceptions, especially in remote areas where such representation was previously limited. Additionally, the presence of more female mathematics and science teachers in classrooms is expected to increase girls’ engagement and persistence in these subjects a crucial long-term equity gain.

To further showcase these outcomes, excerpts from interviews conducted with scholarship recipients on the day of their graduation, along with selected photos , have been included in Annex 9. These personal reflections provide compelling insights into how the BEST PNG program is transforming lives, strengthening local leadership, and advancing gender equity through education.

The in-service training under Component 1 included modules on gender-transformative pedagogy, equipping teachers with the skills to create more inclusive and equitable classroom environments. Of the teachers trained, 67% were women, an important milestone in strengthening gender-sensitive pedagogical capacity within schools. These educators went on to implement participatory teaching approaches, supported by SBC-aligned materials designed to promote fairness and equal participation among all learners.

b) Addressing Barriers Faced by Vulnerable and Marginalized Children

The BEST PNG Program was implemented in six of the lowest-performing and most remote provinces Gulf, Milne Bay, Oro, Sandaun, Western, and West New Britain where children face systemic barriers such as lack of qualified teachers, poor infrastructure, and inadequate learning materials. These challenges have historically contributed to low learning outcomes and high dropout rates. While dropout-specific data was not collected during the project period, evidence from implementation tracking and stakeholder feedback indicates strong retention, particularly among scholarship recipients and trained teachers.

Through targeted interventions, BEST PNG helped address these barriers by:

- Training over 70% of teachers in the six provinces on SBC-aligned teaching strategies for math and science, leading to marked shifts in classroom practice. Lesson observations at endline (n=238) showed

significant improvements in student-centered instruction compared to baseline, with increases in the use of visual aids, group work, open-ended questioning, and classroom experiments. For example, 62% of science lessons included experiments or observations, and 64–70% of lessons involved students working in pairs or groups.

- Improving access to textbooks and materials: The share of students without textbooks dropped from 40% at baseline to 21% at endline, with more frequent use of materials reported—74% of teachers used science textbooks in every lesson compared to 65% at baseline.
- Strengthening teacher pedagogical content knowledge: Teachers who received BEST PNG training demonstrated significantly higher confidence and competence in SBC methods, particularly in physical science, which was emphasized in training. For instance, 79% of teachers felt confident in the physical science strand, and 90% rated the training as useful or very useful.
- Equitably distributing resources: Rural schools in remote districts received the same level of training and materials support as those in more accessible areas, ensuring that the benefits of the program were felt across all locations, regardless of infrastructure limitations.
- Improving engagement and participation in classrooms: Compared to baseline, students were more active during lessons, using concrete materials and participating in group activities especially beneficial for learners previously disengaged due to rote methods.

Although formal attendance or transition data was not collected across all schools, retention within key cohorts provides strong indicative evidence. Among the 40 GPE-funded scholarship recipients, none dropped out, suggesting a strong impact on female transition and persistence in teacher education. Further, one of the additional 15 students supported by partners like BSP and Newmont temporarily paused studies due to social challenges but was scheduled to resume. These patterns support claims of improved access and retention among disadvantaged groups.

This combination of qualitative and quantitative findings confirms that the program's design, implementation fidelity, and adaptive strategy effectively contributed to greater access, participation, and equity especially in math and science learning in underserved provinces.

Efficacy by Component/Objective

Component / Objective	Level of Achievement (Outcome Level) at End of Grant 3
Component 1: Primary in-service teacher training in SBC maths and science	High

Brief narrative on key achievements and challenges, by component/objective

All planned activities under Component 1 were successfully completed, resulting in the training of 4,080 teachers across six disadvantaged provinces. This significantly strengthened teacher capacity in delivering Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC)-aligned instruction in mathematics and science. To promote long-term impact, the Component Steering Committee convened to map out sustainability strategies, including continued provincial engagement and integration into national teacher development plans.

Comprehensive school support and monitoring visits were conducted in all six provinces to assess intervention effectiveness, provide coaching, and gather implementation insights. As part of the component's wrap-up, an endline survey was administered to measure shifts in teacher practices and student outcomes. Additionally, the program produced six instructional videos targeting Grades 3–5 learners. These videos served as supplementary learning tools and were well-received by teachers, many of whom noted their clarity, contextual relevance, and potential to reinforce key concepts outside traditional classroom settings. Feedback indicated strong potential for scaling their use in remote and resource-constrained environments

The cumulative results under this component include:

- Module 1 (M1) SBC Maths and M1 SBC Science developed, printed, and distributed.
- Module 2 (M2) SBC Maths and M2 SBC Science developed, printed, distributed.
- Baseline report produced; findings disseminated.

- Endline survey carried out.

Training of teachers in SBC Maths and Science modules was delivered in six target provinces as per the summary below:

- M1 Maths: 1,193 teachers from 798 schools.
- M1 Science: 978 teachers from 785 schools.
- M2 Maths: 1,116 teachers from 702 schools.
- M2 Science: 793 teachers from 785 schools.

While a 7.5% increase was observed in science test scores (from 40% to 43%), no significant difference was recorded in mathematics scores between baseline and endline. Several factors may help explain this outcome. First, the implementation timeline may have been too short to capture measurable changes in mathematics learning, particularly as in-service training requires time to translate into classroom-level gains. Notably, the endline assessment was conducted in the year following the intervention, specifically after only two school terms whereas a full academic year would have provided a more accurate picture of learning gains. Second, mathematics pedagogy demands more specialized skills in structuring concepts and using formative assessment, and additional coaching may have been required to embed these practices. Third, external disruptions such as COVID-19-related school closures and logistical delays in textbook distribution likely impacted instructional continuity. Finally, some schools reported uneven utilization of Grade 3–6 mathematics textbooks distributed under Component 5.1, co-financed by the Government of Japan, which may have limited reinforcement of classroom learning.

Component / Objective

Level of Achievement (Outcome Level) at End of Grant 3

Component 2: Primary pre-service maths and science curriculum aligned to SBC

High

Brief narrative on key achievements and challenges, by component/objective

All implementation activities under this component were completed during the implementation period. The focus was on alignment of the maths and science courses/programs taught at Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) with the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC). The courses had been published in the Program Specification Document (PSD) of DHERST's in February 2020.

Component / Objective

Level of Achievement (Outcome Level) at End of Grant 3

Component 3 : More female science and maths teachers

Substantial

Brief narrative on key achievements and challenges, by component/objective

While only 40 scholarships were initially planned under the ESPIG, a total of 55 scholarships were awarded for a four-year program of study at the 3 Teacher Training Institutions: St. Peter Channel Catholic College (SPCC), Pacific Adventist University (PAU), and the University of Goroka (UoG). Fifteen of the scholarship recipients are supported through a separate funding mechanism by Newmont Mining and BSP. Thirty-three scholarships, including 10 supported by Newmont, were issued in 2021, followed by 17 scholarships issued in 2022, and an additional five scholarships under the BSP contribution issued in 2023. The first cohort of eight (8) students graduated in 2023 and the second batch of 12 students graduated in Dec 2024. The 20 remaining students will complete their studies in 2025 and 2026 respectively.

Component / Objective

Level of Achievement (Outcome Level) at End of Grant 3

Component 4: Variable Part

High

Brief narrative on key achievements and challenges, by component/objective

All targets under the variable part were achieved with 100% disbursement.

The component was successfully implemented, expanding training initiatives for Headteachers and Provincial School Selection Committees to all provinces, and enhancing transition rates for female students into secondary education. A total of 500 headteachers and Grade 9 selection committee members were trained on the Secretary’s Circular for the female Grade 9 quota. As a result, the Grade 8-9 transition rate for female students increased to 68% (above the target of 67%) from the 2018 baseline of 63%.

School census data collection and the issuance of Secretary Circular Instructions (SCIs) streamlined educational administrative processes.

The National Enrolment and Attendance Policy target was adjusted to issuing Secretary’s Circular Instructions instead, with dissemination ensuring compliance at all levels. The Student Attendance Improvement Lab (SAIL) was effectively deployed in over 200 schools across four provinces, reinforcing efforts to improve student retention and survival rate.

Additionally, data-driven decision-making was further enhanced through the dissemination of the PILNA 2021 report, which guided targeted interventions such as the delivery of specialized literacy training to 1,017 Grade 3–5 teachers—exceeding the original target of 1,000 teachers. Supporting this initiative, the Literacy Training Module was reviewed and finalized, and 1,300 copies of Participants’ Workbooks and 200 copies of Facilitators’ Guides were printed and distributed. Master trainer sessions were conducted in key regions, ensuring broad impact across the education sector.

Component / Objective **Level of Achievement (Outcome Level) at End of Grant 3**

Component 5: Primary maths and science textbooks **Substantial**

Brief narrative on key achievements and challenges, by component/objective

Planned activities were concluded, resulting in the finalization and approval of Grade 1 and Grade 2 mathematics textbooks and Teachers’ Manuals. Concurrently, the Teachers’ Manuals underwent drafting, trialling, review, validation to ensure the provision of high-quality instructional support materials. Printing contracts were executed, with textbooks printed in Japan and delivered to Papua New Guinea, while the Teachers’ Manuals were printed in-country. Delivery of textbooks to schools in the six target provinces was completed, and the Teachers’ Manuals were dispatched to provincial capitals for onward distribution to schools.

Component / Objective **Level of Achievement (Outcome Level) at End of Grant 3**

Component 6: Program management and monitoring **High**

Brief narrative on key achievements and challenges, by component/objective

The completion of this component marks the successful conclusion of all project management and monitoring activities. Implementation progress reports were submitted annually, and the final ESPIG Completion Report has been prepared for submission to the GPE Secretariat to ensure full transparency in reporting. Component Steering Committee meetings were held regularly to maintain alignment with project objectives. As part of the transition process, Joint Education Sector Review (JESR) plans were adjusted to align with the new System Capacity Grant, facilitating a seamless handover to subsequent sector interventions. Upon conclusion of program components, project resources and assets were transferred to the NDoE for continued use in provinces. Finally, all project staff were offboarded, completing the project close-out process.

Contribution to system progress (including the variable part)

Detailed Description

The BEST PNG Program made a significant and measurable contribution to system-level progress in Papua New Guinea’s education sector. The project was designed to align closely with national education priorities as outlined in the National Education Plan (NEP) 2015–2019 (and its Addendum), and it functioned as a catalytic investment to support critical reforms in teaching quality, curriculum implementation, gender equity, and foundational learning outcomes.

(i) Contribution to Sector-Level Progress

The BEST PNG Program demonstrated system-wide relevance and coherence by supporting foundational elements of education delivery—curriculum, teachers, materials, assessment, and policy in an integrated manner. These interventions were strongly aligned with the national reform priorities articulated in the Country Compact and informed by the Enabling Factors Analysis, including efforts to address teacher quality, learning materials, and inclusive education delivery.

Importantly, BEST PNG interventions supported the Government’s 1-6-6 structural reform by strengthening instruction and curriculum alignment in the early and middle years of learning. This included:

- Strengthening teacher capacity at both pre-service and in-service levels through SBC training, supported by baseline and endline data showing improved pedagogical knowledge and practice among trained teachers. The in-service training reached over 1,000 teachers across 14 provinces, with 67% female participation, while pre-service capacity was enhanced through TTC engagement and curriculum alignment.
- Supporting curriculum coherence and delivery for math and science through the use of STEPMAS materials, realignment of training content, and deepened collaboration with TTCs, consistent with the needs emerging from PILNA findings and baseline TNA data.
- Improving availability and utilization of learning materials, including the development and distribution of student textbooks and teacher guides. These materials were contextually appropriate and developed in collaboration with local curriculum experts, illustrators, and graphic designers—strengthening national ownership and technical capacity.
- Enhancing system capacity through the establishment of a Program Management Unit (PMU) within the NDoE, which improved internal planning, monitoring, and financial management practices.
- Issuing Secretary Circular Instructions (SCIs) under Component 4 of the Variable Part, which provided policy guidance on inclusive education, student attendance, and gender responsive pedagogy, contributing to improved governance and accountability mechanisms.
- Demonstrating adaptive capacity by maintaining delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic through decentralized training, school-based coaching, and logistics mobilization at provincial and district levels.

These contributions directly supported the priority reform areas and addressed systemic bottlenecks, particularly in relation to teacher preparedness, material gaps, and local-level accountability, laying the groundwork for more equitable and effective service delivery under the 1-6-6 framework.

(ii) Effectiveness of the Variable Part Strategy

The Variable Part (VP) strategy under Component 4 was particularly effective in driving results-based system reform and progress across three key dimensions: equity, efficiency, and learning. All six VP indicator targets were achieved or exceeded, leading to the full disbursement of the US\$3.17 million allocated under this component. The VP strategy:

- Incentivized national and sub-national action to support girls’ transition from Grade 8 to 9, with over 500 selection committee members trained and a national gender quota circular issued and implemented. This contributed directly to an increase in the female transition rate from 63% to 68%, exceeding the target of 67%
- Supported the development and dissemination of national policy instruments to address student and teacher absenteeism, as well as the piloting of a retention program in over 200 schools. These interventions addressed systemic inefficiencies that previously contributed to low survival rates.
- Facilitated improvements in foundational learning outcomes, with the successful delivery of a nationally representative PILNA 2021 and the training of over 1,000 literacy teachers across 14 provinces. The PILNA 2021 results showed a modest but positive shift in student performance compared to PILNA 2018, particularly in reading. While overall numeracy results remained relatively stable, the proportion of students performing at or above the minimum expected proficiency in reading increased, suggesting that the literacy-focused interventions—especially training and material provision contributed to improved learning outcomes. These findings underline the relevance of the BEST PNG strategy in addressing foundational learning gaps. The VP design thus provided targeted, measurable incentives for systemic improvements in education access, quality, and equity. In doing so, it promoted accountability, accelerated reform implementation, and ensured alignment with PNG’s broader education strategy.

Overall, the BEST PNG Program contributed to strengthening the foundations of sector progress in a scalable and coherent manner. Its integration of system capacity development interventions with targeted variable part incentives has positioned PNG to sustain gains and expand impacts under future sector investments. The achievements under the Variable Part detailed further in Annex 3 offer a strong

demonstration of how performance-based financing can enhance system responsiveness and reform traction in fragile and decentralized education environments.

Other Effects

Detailed Description

In addition to the planned outcomes, the BEST PNG Program generated several unintended but largely positive effects, which were causally linked to the interventions under various components. These ancillary effects have implications for future programming and policy considerations.

a) Enhanced Institutional Collaboration Across Education Agencies

One of the most notable unintended effects of the BEST PNG Program was the strengthened collaboration between key education sector institutions namely, the National Department of Education (NDoE), the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DHERST), and Church Education Agencies (CEAs). The program fostered meaningful joint planning and delivery of activities that created new channels of coordination. These included:

- Joint Technical Working Group meetings on curriculum reform,
- Knowledge-sharing workshops on aligning the Program Specifications Document (PSD) of courses taught at TTCs to the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC),
- Joint monitoring visits to Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs),
- Component-level and overall Program Steering Committee meetings,
- Annual program reflection meetings, and
- Component 3 activities such as the coordinated selection and monitoring of female scholarship recipients by NDoE and DHERST.

Importantly, these collaborations helped overcome a period of institutional strain following the transfer of the teacher education mandate from NDoE to DHERST under the Higher and Technical Education Reform Act (HATERA) of 2020. By bringing the two entities together around shared goals, BEST PNG helped re-establish a functional working relationship between NDoE and DHERST. These collaborative structures are expected to endure beyond the program's lifespan and provide a foundation for more cohesive policy implementation and sector-wide reform going forward.

b) Emergence of Peer-Led Professional Development Models

The implementation of school-based SBC training by teachers who had received district-level training led to the emergence of informal peer-led continuous professional development (CPD) models in some schools. Although not originally designed as a structured CPD program, these practices—such as lesson demonstrations and collaborative planning sessions became a low-cost and scalable model for cascading learning between peers. Teachers in several provinces began requesting additional refresher modules, highlighting latent demand for sustained professional learning.

c) Increased Motivation Among Female Students and Community Role Modelling

The scholarship component supporting female students in TTCs (Component 3) yielded powerful social signalling effects. Community feedback and TTC-level monitoring suggest that the visibility of female scholarship recipients pursuing STEM-related teaching degrees motivated younger girls to remain in school, particularly in conservative rural communities where such pathways were previously seen as unattainable. Some scholarship recipients were already engaging in peer mentoring or volunteering during school holidays, creating a ripple effect in their home communities.

d) Textbook Utilization as a Gateway to Broader Instructional Reform

The large-scale distribution and use of SBC-aligned math and science textbooks prompted a shift in classroom teaching culture in ways not originally anticipated. Observations revealed that some teachers, particularly in lower-performing districts, began restructuring their lesson plans and instructional strategies around the textbook content even outside the scope of math and science. This points to the potential of quality learning materials as anchors for broader pedagogical transformation, especially in contexts where traditional CPD systems are under-resourced.

e) Operational Lessons for Results-Based Financing (RBF)

While the Variable Part was designed to incentivize key reforms, the process also served as a learning opportunity for government and implementing partners on managing results-based financing. Through the Independent Verification process and the linking of disbursements to clearly defined indicators, implementing agencies gained greater appreciation for monitoring systems, documentation rigor, and evidence-based reporting. This operational insight is likely to influence the design and implementation of future donor-funded programs.

f) Delays in G1 and G2 Material Distribution as a Learning Moment

While not an intended effect, the delays in the printing and distribution of Grade 1 and 2 textbooks and teacher manuals due to procurement bottlenecks and supply chain disruptions prompted important programmatic reflections on risk management and contingency planning. These experiences led to a request for a No-Cost Extension to December 2024, which was approved, and subsequently triggered enhancements in internal systems to mitigate similar disruptions in future textbook supply chains.

In parallel, BEST PNG supported the successful delivery of the nationally representative PILNA 2021. While initially designed to align with regional assessment protocols, the program facilitated local reflection on how the sampling methodology and tool design could also be adapted to meet national data requirements. This included consultations on how PILNA insights could feed into domestic policy dialogue and be used to strengthen foundational learning strategies beyond donor or regional priorities. These discussions helped reinforce national ownership of learning assessments and laid the groundwork for future adaptation of large-scale assessments to inform PNG's specific needs.

While the BEST PNG Program met or exceeded its intended objectives, it also produced valuable secondary outcomes that extended its impact. These effects—particularly in institutional behavior, community engagement, assessment design learning, and system adaptability underscore the depth and resilience of the intervention and provide useful insights for future education investments in Papua New Guinea and similar contexts.

Conditions Affecting the Project

Detailed Description

The implementation and performance of the BEST PNG Program were shaped by a combination of internal and external factors, some of which facilitated progress while others posed challenges. The experience provides valuable insights into the country's operational context and the efficacy of risk mitigation strategies.

(i) Internal and External Conditions Influencing Project Success

Facilitating Conditions:

- **Strong Stakeholder Collaboration and Coordination:**The effective partnership among the National Department of Education (NDoE), Save the Children as Grant Agent, DHERST, JICA, and provincial education stakeholders created a solid foundation for program delivery. Regular coordination through the Component and Program Steering Committees, LEG meetings, and joint field visits enabled timely

course correction and decision-making.

- **Dedicated Program Management Unit (PMU):** The PMU embedded within NDoE played a crucial role in coordinating multi-level implementation, managing procurement, monitoring activities, and liaising with sub-national actors. This institutional arrangement ensured that activities were locally driven and nationally aligned.
- **Flexible and Adaptive Project Management:** The Grant Agent, leveraging its strong technical expertise in GPE grant management and program delivery, demonstrated notable adaptability particularly in adjusting schedules, revising timelines, and securing two No-Cost Extensions (NCEs). This flexibility proved vital in navigating a range of external challenges, including COVID-19 disruptions, procurement delays affecting textbook production, and the extended rollout of the Variable Part. Throughout the project lifetime, operations were also impacted by recurring flight disruptions caused by economic constraints (e.g., fuel shortages), adverse weather conditions, and tribal unrest in some provinces such as West New Britain. In response, the program adopted decentralized implementation approaches and adapted delivery schedules to maintain momentum. Periodic learning and "pause-and-reflect" sessions were facilitated with key stakeholders—including the NDoE, DHERST, Church Education Agencies, and implementing partners—to evaluate progress, identify bottlenecks, and recalibrate activities. These sessions, such as Annual Reflection Meetings and Program Steering Committee engagements, strengthened adaptive management and ensured continued alignment with sector needs and realities on the ground.
- **Government Commitment to Counterpart Financing:** The GoPNG demonstrated exceptional national ownership and financial commitment throughout the program lifecycle. All activities under the Variable Part (VP) were prefinanced by GoPNG, showcasing strong confidence in achieving the agreed performance targets. Upon successful verification and disbursement of VP funds, the government reinvested these earnings to finance both No Cost Extensions (NCEs). These funds supported the completion of critical activities, including final textbook distribution and extended scholarship support. This cycle of prefinancing, performance-based earnings, and strategic reinvestment not only enabled the project to meet its full objectives but also exemplified responsible use of results-based financing and reinforced national leadership in driving sector reforms.

Constraining Conditions:

- **Geographic and Logistical Barriers:** Papua New Guinea's rugged terrain, remote school locations, and lack of reliable transport infrastructure significantly delayed training and monitoring activities especially in maritime and isolated provinces. Flight disruptions and fuel shortages further exacerbated these issues.
- **Capacity Constraints at Sub-national Level:** Limited human and institutional capacity within Provincial Divisions of Education (PDoEs) sometimes delayed activity rollout, particularly during the handover of responsibilities for in-service training and logistics.
- **Variability in Institutional Support for TTCs:** The pre-service reform under Component 2 encountered challenges due to inconsistent support from TTC leadership and lack of standardized academic processes across TTCs, which hindered consistent implementation of curriculum alignment efforts.
- **High Staff Turnover:** Frequent changes in TTC lecturers and field-based implementers resulted in loss of institutional memory, requiring repeated orientations and slowing momentum.
- **Manual Financial Procedures:** Manual disbursement processes such as cheque-based payments added inefficiencies to fund flow, particularly for activities requiring quick mobilization, like school-based monitoring.
- **Political and Bureaucratic Delays:** Broader bureaucratic bottlenecks such as , during government transition periods or approval of textbook drafts, caused delays, particularly in Component 5.2 (G1 and G2 textbook rollout), which required extended timelines.
- **Overly Ambitious Design for Timeline:** While the program was officially designed as a three-year intervention, it included activities particularly under Component 3 (female scholarships) that inherently required a longer implementation horizon. For instance, the scholarship component supported pre-service teacher training programs with a standard four-year duration, and the first year of the grant was largely devoted to mobilizing, recruiting, and enrolling students from the target provinces. This meant that full implementation and realization of intended outcomes, especially in terms of graduations and deployment of trained female teachers, extended well beyond the three-year timeframe. The ambitious timeline, when contrasted with the multi-year nature of some interventions and the complex logistics of operating in PNG's decentralized context, placed significant pressure on implementation teams and affected the depth and consolidation of reforms. A five-year timeframe would have provided a more realistic window to deliver, evaluate, and embed the program's innovations across all components.
- **Competing Priorities for Curriculum Division Staff:** The Curriculum Development Division (CDD) staff were heavily engaged in other ongoing national curriculum reform activities, limiting their availability to fully support Component 5 activities as initially planned. This necessitated multiple timeline readjustments and increased reliance on external coordination for textbook content development and validation.

(ii) Risk Identification and Mitigation

Accuracy of Risk Identification:

The original project design accurately anticipated most of the key risks that materialized during implementation particularly those related to geographical access barriers, limited financial management capacity at sub-national levels, and coordination challenges across institutions. However, the intensity and persistence of certain risks, such as frequent domestic flight disruptions and high staff turnover within implementing partners/agencies, were somewhat underestimated.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic, an unprecedented and unforeseen global crisis, introduced a significant layer of disruption that could not have been predicted at the time of project design.

Effectiveness of Mitigation Measures:

- The deployment of Provincial Delivery Teams (PDTs) and decentralized training models proved to be effective in overcoming logistical barriers in Component 1.
- Project teams proactively coordinated with CEAs and PDoEs, adjusting implementation plans to fit school calendars and local events.
- Digital tools (e.g., tablets for monitoring) helped reduce reliance on field visits and enabled real-time data collection.
- The scholarship component was adapted midstream to accommodate student withdrawals and continuity planning, including discussions for post-project sustainability.

Unforeseen Risks:

- Prolonged textbook validation and adaptation timelines under Component 5.2 were not anticipated at the scale experienced. The complexity of contextualizing materials for PNG's diverse linguistic and cultural settings proved greater than expected.
- The low number of female applicants for STEM teacher training scholarships, linked to systemic underrepresentation of girls in secondary-level science and math, emerged as a structural barrier that had not been fully accounted for at design stage.
- External partner-led activities, such as the PILNA report compilation, were subject to timelines beyond the control of the implementing partners, delaying verification processes for some VP indicators.

While the project encountered several implementation constraints, effective coordination, flexible project management, and strong stakeholder commitment helped mitigate many of the risks. In hindsight, certain systemic and contextual challenges could have benefited from deeper initial risk analysis. However, the program's adaptive learning and operational responsiveness enabled it to meet or exceed its target demonstrating resilience in a challenging implementation environment.

Lessons and Recommendations, Successful Practices and Innovative Interventions

Detailed Description

Major Lessons Learned

a) Importance of Ground-Level Capacity and Decentralized Delivery:

The use of Provincial Delivery Teams (PDTs) to conduct in-service training under Component 1 was a successful decentralization approach. However, varying levels of capacity and coordination among PDoEs highlighted the need to invest early in sub-national systems strengthening and clarity of roles in decentralized education delivery.

b) TTC Leadership, Autonomy, and Governance Influence Reform Uptake:

Under Component 2, the pace and depth of curriculum alignment in pre-service Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) varied significantly across institutions. This variation was largely influenced by the level of leadership commitment, internal governance structures, and the degree of autonomy exercised by each TTC.

While the Knowledge Sharing Workshops and STEPMAAS materials provided a strong technical foundation, the actual uptake of reforms required strategic engagement with TTC management and academic boards. In several cases, lecturers expressed willingness to implement changes but lacked the institutional authority to amend curriculum content or teaching approaches without formal approval from college leadership or governing bodies.

Compounding this challenge was the transfer of the regulatory mandate over TTCs from the National Department of Education (NDoE) to the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (DHERST) through an Act of Parliament, which occurred midway through program implementation. This transition introduced institutional uncertainty and delayed key decisions, as TTCs and partner agencies adjusted to the new oversight arrangements. Approvals related to curriculum alignment, standards enforcement, and lecturer responsibilities were often deferred during this period of administrative realignment.

This experience reinforces the lesson that education reforms particularly in pre-service teacher education, require not only technical inputs but also a strong enabling environment, including:

- Early and sustained engagement with TTC leadership and academic boards;
- Clear regulatory frameworks and decision-making authority;
- Strategic leadership and commitment from top management in DoE and DHERST; and
- Stability in institutional mandates during the reform cycle.

Future programs should factor in governance transitions and allow for flexibility in timelines when major sectoral restructuring occurs.

c) Role of Visible Role Models in Gender Equity Interventions:

The female scholarship component (Component 3) demonstrated that while financial support is essential, it is not sufficient on its own to challenge deep-seated structural gender norms. The visibility of scholarship recipients and related community awareness efforts generated positive unintended outcomes—such as the emergence of local mentorship opportunities and heightened aspirations among schoolgirls. These outcomes underscore the importance of incorporating soft-power strategies like role modelling and community sensitization into gender-focused interventions.

Although TTIs such as SPCC and PAU conducted regular pastoral sessions to support students' overall well-being, and the University of Goroka (UoG) designated scholarship officers to oversee academic progress, the program experience revealed the additional value of a more structured case management approach. The PMU's Component 3 Coordinator provided remote oversight and conducted in-person support visits at least once every semester, fostering close collaboration with institutional staff. However, the experience demonstrated that a dedicated Case Manager for the scholarship recipients—embedded within or across the partner TTIs could have further strengthened gender-responsive safeguarding measures.

Such a role would have ensured more timely and individualized responses to the complex social and emotional challenges young women faced, including academic stress, financial vulnerability, and gender-specific risks. Strengthening these support structures aligns with broader commitments to gender equity in higher education and reinforces the importance of holistic care models in improving female retention, transition, and success rates in traditionally male-dominated STEM fields. This insight offers a valuable lesson for future scholarship schemes aiming to address systemic barriers to female participation in education.

d) Effective Use of Performance-Based Financing to Drive Reform:

The successful implementation and full disbursement of the Variable Part (Component 4) confirmed that well-designed results-based financing mechanisms can incentivize reform. However, it also revealed that early engagement with verification agents and timelines for third-party validation need to be realistically built into project schedules.

e) Implementation Timelines for Textbook Development Need Realistic Buffering:

The delayed rollout of G1 and G2 textbooks and teacher manuals under Component 5.2 highlighted the importance of building realistic timelines into material development and dissemination processes. In multilingual and decentralized education systems like Papua New Guinea, the process of developing, adapting, validating, printing, and distributing teaching and learning materials can take considerably longer than initially projected. This is particularly true when standardized national validation protocols and iterative content reviews are involved.

Moreover, longer lead times inevitably translate into additional costs including extended technical support, warehousing, and transport expenses. This underscores the need for the Government to ensure sufficient and dedicated budget allocations not only for the initial development but also for the distribution and sustained monitoring of textbook and teacher manual usage across provinces. Accurate forecasting of procurement and supply chain cycles, supported by inter-agency coordination and timely budget releases, will be essential to mitigate such delays in future textbook reform initiatives.

Key Recommendations for Future Programs

- 1. Strengthen Sub-National Capacity from the Start:** Future projects should begin with an early assessment of provincial and district readiness, followed by targeted orientation and institutional support to local education managers before major rollout phases. To operationalize this effectively, it is essential to develop costed provincial implementation plans that clearly outline roles, timelines, and resource requirements. This will enhance ownership, coordination, and accountability at the sub-national level, while also ensuring that implementation is both context-sensitive and financially feasible.
- 2. Formalize CPD Models and Peer-Learning Approaches:** Building on the emerging school-based professional learning groups (observed in Component 1), government and partners should formalize and scale up peer-led CPD models as low-cost, contextually relevant capacity development pathways.
- 3. Bundle Financial Aid with Community-Based Gender Advocacy:** Gender-targeted scholarships should be accompanied by mentoring schemes, parental engagement, and leadership training for recipients to amplify the multiplier effect and ensure sustainable impact.
- 4. Establish Cross-Sector Steering Mechanisms for TTC Reform:** For structural reforms like TTC curriculum alignment, cross-institutional coordination platforms involving DHERST, TTCs, and the NDoE should be institutionalized with clear mandates and reporting lines.
- 5. Build Flexible Contingency Periods into Material Production Plans:** Future education programs should budget additional time and resources for development, printing, approval, distribution and post distribution monitoring of teaching and learning materials, especially in fragile and challenging logistics environments. Monitoring is essential to assess whether the textbooks and materials are contextually appropriate, effectively utilized, and contributing to improved learning outcomes. Under BEST PNG, limited time at the project's close meant that comprehensive monitoring of textbook usage and follow-up training, particularly on the G1 and G2 teacher manuals could not be completed. Future programs, including those supported under the next STG grant, would greatly benefit from including dedicated plans and resources for monitoring and refresher training to ensure the intended instructional improvements are fully realized and sustained in classrooms.

Successful Practices and Innovations

- **Scholarship Diversification Through Partnerships:** The program successfully leveraged partnerships with BSP and Newmont to co-finance the female teacher scholarships—demonstrating an innovative model for blended funding of education equity programs, which could be further expanded in future projects.
- **Field-Based Independent Verification:** The use of in-country agents to conduct independent verification of results under Component 4 was intended to enhance credibility and promote transparency in the disbursement of Variable Part funds. While the verification mechanism provided a degree of accountability, implementation challenges such as variability in the quality and timeliness of Independent Verification Reports (IVRs) highlighted areas requiring improvement. Nevertheless, the approach introduced an important conversation around localized verification models and the need to strengthen national M&E capacity. Future programs could benefit from refining the terms of reference, building the capacity of local agents, and embedding quality assurance measures to ensure consistency and reliability in result validation processes.
- **STEPMAS Integration in TTCs:** The partnership with the JICA funded project STEPMAS and use of lesson flow models in mock teaching by TTC lecturers proved to be an effective tool to bridge the theory–practice gap in pre-service training. This innovation encouraged more practical and spiral approaches to lesson planning, which was positively received by both lecturers and students.

Innovative Delivery Practices: Textbook Distribution via PMSOs and Local Shipping Partners

One of the key operational lessons from the BEST PNG Program was the effectiveness of leveraging existing government systems and local market actors for the distribution of teaching and learning materials under Components 5.1 and 5.2.

The program adopted a decentralized textbook distribution model coordinated through Provincial Materials and Supply Officers (PMSOs). These officers, embedded within provincial administrations, took direct responsibility for receiving, storing, and overseeing the last-mile distribution of textbooks and teacher manuals. This approach proved to be:

- Cost-effective, using existing logistics infrastructure and human resources;
- Locally owned, increasing accountability and responsiveness;
- Scalable and sustainable, as it empowered PMSOs with hands-on leadership and reinforced their role in the education service delivery chain.

To reach remote and maritime provinces, the program partnered with local shipping companies and, when necessary, relied on local flight charters—often coordinating with other development partners to share space on their chartered aircraft due to the limited availability of dedicated flights. In extremely hard-to-reach areas where road, air, or water transport was not feasible, the program employed community-based foot labor to carry materials to schools situated in rugged terrain accessible only by foot. This flexible and context-specific delivery model ensured that even the most geographically isolated schools received their textbook consignments, reaffirming the program’s commitment to equitable, last-mile delivery. The multi-modal delivery strategy maximized efficiency, reduced costs, and leveraged existing community and development partner networks.

As a valuable lesson learned, this approach demonstrated the importance of local adaptation and collaborative logistics in achieving delivery targets under complex conditions.

In addition, funds for distribution in each province were channelled through cluster schools within the provinces, bringing about shared responsibility, transparency, and accountability among education stakeholders at the local level. This approach empowered school leaders to play an active role in managing and tracking deliveries, while also fostering collaboration among neighbouring schools and education authorities.

This dual approach of government-led coordination and private sector partnership, complemented by community-level financial oversight, proved highly effective. It is recommended that similar models be institutionalized and explored further—for example, integrating education material deliveries with health or emergency logistics or bundling government delivery contracts for greater inter-sectoral efficiency.

The BEST PNG Program demonstrated how a multi-component, system-aligned intervention can deliver scalable and sustainable results in a fragile, decentralized context. The lessons and innovations from

this program provide a rich knowledge base for future education sector investments in Papua New Guinea and similar settings.

Impact Stories

Detailed Description

Links to impact stories published over time provided here below:

Online news websites

- <https://www.looppng.com/community/best-png-supports-female-students-120696>
- <https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/jica-and-gpe-deepening-partnership-address-learning-crisis>
- <https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/scholarships-support-tertiary-education-young-women-papua-new-guinea>

Social Media links:

1. LinkedIn Posts

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7050988834154577920>

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7061485019231375360>

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7072363728926617600>

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7072687111551815680>

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7079608001858318336>

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7136311353459314689>

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7157596104186851328>

2. Save the Children Australia Website

<https://www.savethechildren.org.au/our-stories/inspirational-journey-from-village-to-university>

Multiplier Cofinancing

Cofinancing (in US\$/€) expected to be mobilized at design	Cofinancing (in US\$/€) actually mobilized
4,300,000	3,520,000

If the cofinancing wasn't mobilized fully, provide reasons why

The GPE Multiplier contribution to the BEST PNG Program was: US\$3.52 million out of the US\$4.3 million approved envelope.

This amount was leveraged through co-financing with the Government of Japan, and was integrated into the overall program budget alongside the ESPIG and Additional Maximum Country Allocation (MCA) funds.

Assessment of Project Implementation: Efficiency

Overall Efficiency

Level of Efficiency 4

Substantial

Timeliness

Detailed Description

The BEST PNG Program experienced a moderate delay between grant approval and the actual start of implementation, largely due to procedural and global factors beyond the control of the Grant Agent and implementing partners.

- GPE Grant Approval Date: September 2019
- Actual Start of Implementation: July 2020
- Time Lag: Approximately 10 months

Reasons for Delay:

1. Approval of Effectiveness Documentation:

The initial delay was due to the time required to fulfill GPE grant effectiveness conditions, including finalization and endorsement of grant agreements, disbursement protocols, and implementation arrangements with key partners such as the National Department of Education (NDoE), Save the Children (Grant Agent), and DHERST.

2. Onset of COVID-19 Pandemic:

Just as the program was preparing to commence in early 2020, the global COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted operations. Border closures, national lockdowns, and restrictions on movement and gatherings delayed planned field activities, procurement processes, training rollouts, and coordination meetings. The pandemic also limited early travel by technical teams and consultants essential for capacity-building and curriculum alignment activities.

Remedial Measures Taken:

- A revised implementation calendar was developed, and activities were re-sequenced to adapt to evolving conditions.
- The program secured a No Cost Extension, allowing for full implementation of delayed components, including the printing and distribution of textbooks (Component 5.2) and the continued support of scholarship recipients through 2026.
- Virtual coordination mechanisms, flexible procurement approaches, and decentralized delivery through Provincial Delivery Teams helped the program regain momentum by late 2020.

Despite the initial delay, the project recovered well, and implementation accelerated across all components from 2021 onwards. Key milestones—including in-service teacher training, TTC curriculum workshops, and the start of female scholarship cohorts—were achieved within a revised and manageable timeframe.

Detailed Description

Some key milestones were achieved in the first year, such as:

- The successful rollout of Module 1 Math and Module 1 Science teacher training in the six target provinces,
- The enrolment of the first cohort of female scholarship recipients under Component 3, and
- The completion of the baseline assessment for aligning math and science curricula at Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) with the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC).

However, the broader implementation timeline experienced multiple disruptions that necessitated adjustments to the original schedule. As a result, three Program Revision Notes (PRNs) were submitted and approved to facilitate No Cost Extensions and ensure the full delivery of activities across all components.

Main Causes of Implementation Delays:

1. COVID-19 Pandemic:

The pandemic caused school closures, delayed procurement and shipping timelines, restricted in-person training and supervision, and limited the mobility of field staff and consultants. These disruptions were particularly severe in 2020 and early 2021, requiring reprogramming of activities and suspension of large gatherings.

2. Political and Electoral Cycle (2022):

The national elections in 2022 led to reduced government availability, slower decision-making, and limited field activity in some provinces due to security concerns or political sensitivities. These factors contributed to further delays in provincial coordination and program oversight.

3. Natural Disasters and Geographic Barriers:

Flooding and seasonal weather disruptions, particularly in low-lying and maritime provinces, affected textbook delivery and training rollouts. Some areas were rendered temporarily inaccessible, further complicating logistics.

4. Transport and Mobility Constraints:

The program also faced unreliable domestic flight schedules and cargo cancellations, often delaying the movement of training teams, textbooks, and essential program supplies. In extreme cases, materials could only be delivered on foot by local labourers or through coordinated space-sharing on chartered flights by other development partners.

Impact on Beneficiaries and Remedial Measures:

While these delays had a temporary impact on the pace at which direct beneficiaries received services, most activities were ultimately delivered. The program responded proactively by:

- Re-sequencing activities to prioritize what could be delivered virtually or through local actors,
- Deploying Provincial Delivery Teams (PDTs) to maintain local momentum in training and coordination,
- Utilizing No Cost Extensions to extend the project life and ensure that core activities—such as the distribution of G1–G6 textbooks, finalization of TTC curriculum alignment, and continued scholarship support—could be completed within a realistic timeframe.

As a result, although implementation timelines were extended, the project successfully mitigated most delays and ensured that beneficiaries received services as planned, albeit over a longer period.

Grant Costs

Detailed Description

At the time of report submission, a detailed output costs analysis was not able to be completed. A number of external factors beyond the control of the project team had direct and indirect impacts on unit costs, and also made it challenging to quantify to a meaningful and exacting degree. These include: Mobilisation of implementation of the first 2-3 years of the grant during the onset of COVID and the the associated challenges this presented regarding restrictions on international and domestic travel, movement of goods, school closures, and re-prioritisation of govt capacity and funding away from standard education service delivery. The grant also received significant levels of in-kind support from the Grant Agent to achieve continuity of activities during these times, while also seeking a NCE to the end of 2024, thereby adding pressure to the administrative/management aspects of the grant's budget, which may not be fully reflected in the final unit costs. Ultimately however, and what is evident from the rest of the report, is that all outputs were delivered and targets achieved in line with the project's initial design, with no additional request for budget support from other external partners, including the GPE.

Alignment and Harmonization

Detailed Description

The BEST PNG Program was designed with a strong emphasis on alignment with national systems and structures, as well as on fostering coordination across key actors in the education sector. The program's implementation experience demonstrated tangible progress in both dimensions and contributed to strengthened institutional capacity for greater alignment and harmonization in future education programming.

(i) Use of Aligned Modalities

The program was delivered primarily in project modality, but key components were closely aligned with national systems, which helped reinforce the government's role in sector delivery and oversight. Aligned elements included:

Execution through national institutions: The National Department of Education (NDoE) had leadership over the project's direction and implementation, supported by a dedicated Program Management Unit (PMU) within the Department. This structure enabled the use of existing government oversight mechanisms, including financial reporting, procurement, and monitoring through district education officers.

Capacity embedded within existing national structures: The project's technical implementation, particularly under Components 1 (in-service teacher training), 2 (TTC curriculum alignment), and 5 (learning materials), relied on provincial education offices, teacher training institutions, and school-level actors. This reinforced the use of existing national human resources and administrative mechanisms.

Scholarship delivery through national systems: Under Component 3, the implementation of the female teacher scholarships involved direct coordination with public universities (UoG, PAU, SPCC) and used established admission and financial aid processes. The future handover of scholarship administration to DoE will further enhance system alignment.

(ii) Use of Coordinated/Harmonized Mechanisms

The BEST PNG Program effectively leveraged and strengthened several key coordination and harmonization mechanisms to support inclusive, aligned, and adaptive implementation across all components.

Local Education Group (LEG): The LEG remained a cornerstone mechanism for sector coordination. It was actively used for joint planning, progress review, and endorsement of major project decisions—including No Cost Extensions, budget reallocations, and disbursement approvals linked to the Variable Part (VP) indicators. This multi-stakeholder forum brought together government agencies, development partners, coordinating education agencies (CEAs), civil society organizations, and other education actors to ensure open dialogue and accountability.

Senior Education Officers Conference (SEOC): BEST PNG capitalized on the annual SEOC, a high-level national conference presided over by the Minister of Education and attended by all Provincial Education Advisors (PEAs), representatives of other key Central Agencies (Ministries/National Departments), and development partners. The SEOC served as a powerful policy and coordination platform where implementation progress, intermediate achievements, and operational challenges of the BEST PNG Program were shared and discussed. It played a key role in disseminating program lessons and reinforcing provincial ownership and alignment with national priorities.

Component and Program Steering Committees: Dedicated Component Steering Committees were established to guide the technical and operational aspects of each program component. These were complemented by an overall Program Steering Committee, which was responsible for strategic oversight and coordination across the full program. These committees enabled regular review of progress, resolution of implementation bottlenecks, and timely decision-making, enhancing vertical and horizontal coherence among implementing actors.

Joint Field Missions and Technical Working Groups: The program also promoted harmonized implementation through joint technical working groups, curriculum reform workshops (under Component 2), and collaborative knowledge-sharing events co-organized with DHERST, JICA, and CEAs. These engagements strengthened alignment between pre-service and in-service teacher development efforts, and synchronized capacity-building efforts across institutions.

Variable Part Coordination: The design and implementation of the Variable Part (VP) demonstrated an exemplary model of harmonized, results-based aid. The performance indicators were co-developed and owned by the Grant Agent, NDoE, and sector partners. Independent verification mechanisms were used collaboratively to confirm results and unlock disbursements. This approach fostered mutual accountability and results-oriented dialogue.

Together, these harmonized mechanisms contributed significantly to program coherence, implementation efficiency, and cross-institutional learning laying a strong foundation for more integrated education sector programming in future cycles.

Contribution to Future Capacity for Aligned and Harmonized Aid

The experience of BEST PNG has positioned the education sector in Papua New Guinea to better engage in aligned and harmonized aid modalities in future. Specifically:

Increased capacity for fiduciary management: The program built stronger internal capacities within NDoE for budgeting, monitoring, and results tracking—laying the groundwork for future on-budget aid delivery.

Operationalizing cross-agency collaboration: The partnership model between NDoE, DHERST, TTCs, and CEAs has shown that harmonized implementation across institutions is possible and sustainable with the right coordination architecture.

Data and evidence systems strengthened: Through school-based monitoring, TTC engagement, and Variable Part verification, the program created data systems and learning loops that can support future sector-wide programs with unified reporting.

Institutional readiness for sustainability: The detailed sustainability and exit strategy, particularly for Components 3 (scholarships) and 5.2 (textbooks/manuals), emphasizes handover to national systems. These plans include realistic timelines, effective partner engagement, and designated focal points demonstrating readiness for long-term ownership.

The BEST PNG Program contributed to strengthening alignment with national systems and encouraged improved coordination among education actors in PNG. Its implementation experience offers a practical model for scaling coordinated, government-led education programs supported by development partners in a harmonized and accountable manner.

Partnerships

Detailed Description

The implementation of the BEST PNG Program was significantly strengthened by a range of partnerships across sectors and governance levels. These partnerships were vital in ensuring that the program’s objectives were delivered effectively, sustainably, and with relevance to local contexts. They spanned government institutions, private sector actors, teacher training institutions, international technical agencies, and sub-national education authorities.

One of the most successful partnerships was with Provincial Administrations, which played a central role in the delivery of Component 1: in-service training for lower primary teachers in mathematics and science. Through the establishment of Provincial Delivery Teams (PDTs) based in provinces and supervised by Provincial Education Advisers (PEAs), the project ensured that the training was not only decentralized but also embedded within local education structures. PDTs worked closely with school inspectors and standards officers, enabling contextualized mentoring and follow-up support at the school level. This localized approach improved teacher attendance at training, enhanced contextual relevance, and fostered stronger provincial ownership of quality improvement efforts.

In addition, Provincial Materials and Supply Officers (PMSOs) took a leading role in the distribution of project-procured textbooks and teacher manuals. Their engagement was critical in ensuring that the massive logistical exercise of delivering over 1.8 million math and science textbooks (for grades 3–6), along with 140,600 G1–G2 textbooks and 9,500 teacher manuals, reached the intended schools. PMSOs helped coordinate delivery routes, verified receipts, and liaised with schools and district officials to track textbook utilization. This hands-on leadership at the provincial level enhanced accountability and transparency in resource deployment and demonstrated the capacity of sub-national systems to manage major education investments.

The scholarship program was delivered through three key Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs): St. Peter Chanel Catholic College (SPCC), University of Goroka (UoG), and Pacific Adventist University (PAU). These institutions supported students academically and administratively, ensured reporting compliance, and worked with the program team on disbursement coordination. Their consistent engagement and ownership helped ensure high retention and graduation rates among the scholarship recipients.

Meanwhile, under Component 2, the program partnered with 16 Primary Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) across PNG to align their curriculum with the national Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC). These colleges participated in a national knowledge-sharing workshop, piloted STEPMAS teaching materials, and engaged in follow-up monitoring. While progress varied across TTCs due to institutional autonomy and internal decision-making dynamics, the process established a shared foundation for curriculum reform in teacher education.

Technical partnerships with DHERST and JICA added depth to program implementation. DHERST provided policy guidance and institutional coordination, particularly in relation to teacher education reform, while JICA co-developed and disseminated the STEPMAS materials and supported capacity-building activities at TTC level. These partnerships ensured technical soundness and policy alignment across project components.

The program also benefited from the oversight and convening power of the Local Education Group (LEG), which provided a coordination platform for the government, development partners, and civil society. The LEG reviewed implementation progress endorsed adjustments (including No Cost Extensions), and supported results validation for the Variable Part, thereby fostering a culture of joint accountability and

transparency.

In summary, the BEST PNG Program was built upon a wide network of partnerships that went beyond financing to include technical support, sub-national delivery capacity, institutional engagement, and public–private collaboration. Notably, the program partnered with private sector actors such as BSP and Newmont to extend scholarship support to additional female teacher trainees, further strengthening the program’s gender equity goals. These partnerships were central to the program’s achievements and offer a replicable model for future sector investments demonstrating that strong, inclusive partnerships are essential to delivering equitable and sustainable education outcomes in Papua New Guinea.

Use of Data and Evidence for Improvement

Detailed Description

Throughout its life cycle, the BEST PNG Program placed strong emphasis on the use of data and evidence to inform decision-making, course-correct implementation, and ensure achievement of intended results. Monitoring tools, endline assessments, field visits, and stakeholder feedback loops were strategically employed to identify bottlenecks and adapt interventions in real-time. This results-focused culture significantly contributed to the program’s high efficacy rating.

Use of Project Monitoring and Evaluation Data

The Program Management Unit (PMU), in collaboration with Save the Children as Grant Agent, developed a comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework. Monitoring data was routinely collected and analysed from:

- Training attendance records and post-training evaluations
- School-based monitoring visits by PDTs and Provincial Inspectors
- Joint verification missions for the Variable Part
- Baseline and endline assessments on student learning and teacher practice
- Quarterly and annual implementation progress reports

This data enabled the project to identify areas of underperformance, such as challenges in textbook utilization, disparities in TTC lecturer capacity, and gender-based barriers in scholarship uptake. For example, data from the baseline assessment highlighted gaps in lecturer familiarity with the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC), prompting targeted refresher trainings and closer alignment of TTC course materials. Additionally, insights from midline monitoring revealed uneven usage of the Grade 3–6 mathematics and science textbooks that had been supplied under Component 5.1 with Multiplier funding from the Government of Japan (GoJ). In response, the project intensified provincial engagement efforts and provided logistical support to promote effective utilization of the materials. Adjustments also included rescheduling trainings, conducting additional refresher sessions, and extending project timelines to accommodate textbook distribution under Component 5.2.

Evidence Use in Strategic Decision-Making

Several strategic decisions were guided directly by evidence generated during implementation:

- The extension of the project timeline (No Cost Extension) to December 2024 was based on delays identified through procurement tracking and provincial distribution reports for G1 and G2 materials.
- The scholarship continuation plan for 20 female students into 2025 and 2026 was based on academic progress data and partner consultation with TTIs.
- Insights from the Component 2 monitoring visits to TTCs informed future curriculum alignment planning, highlighting the need for deeper institutional engagement and standardization in academic procedures.

Additionally, the 2018 PILNA played a critical role in informing program design. Specifically, data from PILNA 2018 were used to identify the six beneficiary provinces for Components 1, 3, and 5.2. The assessment findings helped highlight foundational learning gaps, especially in numeracy, which were further explored through a TNA during the baseline phase. In fact, the numeracy test instrument used in the TNA was adapted from the 2018 PILNA framework and administered in the six targeted provinces. This triangulation of regional assessment data and national diagnostic tools ensured a strong evidence base for targeting and tailoring interventions to local needs.

Joint Problem-Solving and Adaptive Learning

The project facilitated several joint problem-solving platforms, including:

- Joint supervision missions involving NDoE, Save the Children, DHERST, JICA, and TTC representatives to track curriculum alignment and scholarship progress.
- Regular LEG meetings, where implementation updates, performance indicators (including Variable Part progress), and policy bottlenecks were discussed with the GPE Secretariat and development partners.
- Endline assessments and validation exercises, which informed dialogue on learning outcomes, textbook usage, and teacher pedagogical changes.

These engagements were essential in fostering a collaborative, evidence-informed culture, where all partners had visibility on progress and shared accountability for results. They also improved communication between national and sub-national actors and created feedback loops between field experience and policy adjustments.

Level of Usefulness and Recommendations for Improvement

The use of data and evidence was highly effective in ensuring timely course correction and improving overall project performance. However, a few limitations were noted:

- Delays in receiving data from provinces occasionally hindered rapid decision-making.
- Some monitoring tools, such as those tracking textbook usage, would have benefitted from digitization for real-time access.

Recommendations moving forward:

To improve the use of data and evidence in future education programs, several key actions are recommended:

1. Standardize Data Collection Tools and Practices: It is critical to develop and apply standardized data collection tools across all components and implementing partners. This should be complemented by comprehensive training and awareness raising for all stakeholders ensuring that everyone involved understands the purpose, methodology, and application of the tools being used.
2. Ensure Clear and Specific Indicators: Indicators and data collection instruments, including survey questions and monitoring templates, must be well-defined, context-relevant, and unambiguous. This reduces the risk of multiple interpretations and enhances the consistency and reliability of the data collected across provinces and implementing agencies.
3. Promote Data-Driven Feedback Loops: Data collected and analyzed must be disseminated back to relevant stakeholders—including provincial education authorities, teacher training institutions, and central policymakers. Establishing regular feedback loops enables evidence to be actively used in planning, decision-making, and programmatic adjustments. Such participatory use of data reinforces accountability and strengthens adaptive learning. However, persistent gaps in the national EMIS continue to constrain evidence-based planning. Challenges include inconsistent reporting from remote schools, delayed data entry, limited interoperability with other data systems, and insufficient disaggregation by gender, geography, and disability. Strengthening EMIS will require targeted investments in digital infrastructure at the sub-national level, capacity-building for school and district-level officers, and enhanced indicator coverage—particularly on learning outcomes, textbook use, and equity dimensions. Notably, as the BEST PNG

Program came to a close, the World Bank was supporting an initiative with the National Department of Education (NDoE) aimed at enhancing the national EMIS platform. This presents a timely opportunity to consolidate gains made under BEST PNG and ensure that future programs are grounded in more robust, timely, and inclusive data systems.

By institutionalizing these practices, future programs will be better positioned to generate high-quality evidence, ensure its strategic use, and ultimately improve education outcomes through informed decision-making. The experience of the BEST PNG Program underscores the value of embedding a culture of data use and adaptive learning throughout the project cycle. This approach enabled the program to remain responsive to implementation realities while maintaining a clear focus on strategic objectives. It further highlights the importance of sustained investment in robust MEAL systems and the promotion of collaborative data use among stakeholders as key elements for improving accountability, effectiveness, and long-term impact in education sector programming.

Use of GPE Processes

Detailed Description

USE of GPE Processes

The implementation of the BEST PNG Program actively leveraged GPE’s established processes, tools, and engagement mechanisms to ensure alignment with national priorities and to promote inclusive dialogue, effective implementation, and fiduciary accountability throughout the grant cycle.

1. Country-Level Dialogue and LEG Engagement

The program was anchored within the Local Education Group (LEG) framework, ensuring consistent consultation, information sharing, and joint decision-making among key stakeholders—including the National Department of Education (NDoE), DHERST, development partners, teacher training institutions, and civil society. LEG meetings served as a vital platform for endorsing key design elements, reviewing progress, and jointly responding to implementation challenges, including approval of the No-Cost Extensions and scholarship adjustments.

2. Use of the GPE Results-Based Funding Model

Component 4 successfully applied GPE’s Variable Part (VP) modality, linking disbursements to performance against indicators targeting equity, efficiency, and learning outcomes. This approach catalyzed policy reforms—such as increasing female transition rates and enforcing national attendance policies—and reinforced a culture of accountability and results-based planning within the education sector. The disbursement-linked indicators were fully achieved and independently verified, ensuring credibility and transparency.

3. Alignment with GPE’s Quality Assurance and Reporting Mechanisms

The program fully adhered to GPE’s guidance for grant application, monitoring, and reporting. Annual Progress Reports (APRs), the results framework, and variable part verification processes were systematically used to monitor implementation. The use of GPE-endorsed templates and protocols ensured consistency and comparability across reporting cycles, while enabling evidence-informed decision-making and mid-course corrections based on learning and feedback loops.

4. Collaboration with GPE Secretariat and Coordinating Agency

The GPE Secretariat and Coordinating Agencies (UNICEF and JICA) provided critical technical and coordination support throughout the program’s life cycle. This collaboration ensured timely alignment with GPE policies, supported adaptive planning during disruptions (e.g., COVID-19), and facilitated the resolution of implementation bottlenecks. Guidance from these partners enhanced compliance, coherence,

and sector-wide coordination.

5. Promoting Sustainability through GPE's Capacity-Building Focus

GPE's emphasis on capacity development and country ownership was evident in how the BEST PNG Program supported government-led delivery mechanisms. For instance, the use of Provincial Delivery Teams (PDTs), embedded technical assistance, and involvement of Provincial Education Advisors and PMSOs helped to institutionalize program approaches. These practices contributed to building long-term institutional capacity, particularly at subnational levels.

6. Financial and Fiduciary Management in Line with GPE Standards

The program employed a hybrid financial and fiduciary management approach, combining the systems and guidelines of both the Grant Agent, Save the Children Australia, and the Government of Papua New Guinea (GoPNG). This dual modality ensured that financial flows and procurement processes were both efficient and compliant with GPE fiduciary standards.

The approach was clearly articulated in the approved Program Document and applied as appropriate:

- Save the Children's financial and procurement procedures were primarily used for project components requiring accelerated procurement and international contracting.
- GoPNG's Public Financial Management systems were utilized for activities implemented through government structures, including fund disbursements to provinces and schools.

This blended model enhanced operational flexibility while ensuring alignment with national systems and strengthening local accountability. The Grant Agent maintained rigorous oversight, regularly reporting on expenditure and procurement progress to the LEG and GPE Secretariat. The model promoted transparency, minimized fiduciary risk, and built GoPNG capacity in results based financial management within the education sector.

Sustainability and Grant Management

Sustainability

Detailed Description

The BEST PNG Program was intentionally designed to lay the groundwork for lasting improvements in teaching quality, education equity, and system performance—particularly in math and science education. As the program reaches its closure, several results, services, and reforms demonstrate strong potential for continuity and scale-up, provided the enabling conditions are maintained and further strengthened.

(i) Potential for Continuity

The program has generated several tangible results and systemic improvements that are likely to continue beyond the GPE grant period:

- **Teacher Professional Development Structures:** Through the Provincial Delivery Teams (PDTs), a decentralized model for in-service training has been institutionalized in six provinces. This structure—anchored in the Provincial Education Offices and working closely with standards officers and inspectors—has created a locally embedded mechanism for teacher support.
- **Curriculum Reform at TTCs:** The knowledge-sharing workshops and STEPMAS tools introduced under Component 2 have initiated curriculum alignment processes in 16 Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs). While not all reforms are complete, the foundational work and partnerships established with DHERST and TTC leadership provide a clear trajectory for continued alignment of pre-service education with the

national SBC.

- Female Teacher Pipeline in STEM: The scholarship model piloted under Component 3, including co-financing arrangements with BSP and Newmont, has established a scalable approach to increasing the number of female math and science teachers. With 20 students continuing into 2025 and 2026, the momentum remains strong.
- Policy Instruments and Learning Resources: The Secretary's Circulars aimed at improving girls' transition to secondary school and reducing absenteeism, alongside the nationwide rollout of over 1.94 million SBC-aligned mathematics and science textbooks for Grades 1–6, including 140,600 Grade 1–2 mathematics textbooks will continue to benefit both teachers and learners. These policy and material investments hold long-term value, especially if accompanied by sustained teacher support and capacity-building.

(ii) Enabling Conditions and Risks to Sustainability

Several enabling conditions are in place to support sustainability:

- Commitment from the National Department of Education (NDoE), which has led implementation and participated actively in planning the transition.
- Active partnerships with TTIs and TTCs, which have shown strong institutional interest in continuing reforms.
- Established program infrastructure, including monitoring tools, training materials, and institutional memory within provincial education teams.

However, some risks may jeopardize sustainability if not addressed:

- Delays in GoPNG budget releases or donor support could disrupt the continuation of scholarships and textbook logistics and delivery processes.
- Lack of binding policy directives or frameworks may hinder full adoption of the updated curriculum and in-service training models.
- Turnover of trained personnel, especially among lecturers and provincial officers, could result in loss of institutional knowledge.

(iii) Sustainability Plans and Exit Strategies

A detailed sustainability and exit strategy was developed in 2024 and operationalized across several relevant components during the extension and closeout period:

- For Component 3, the Department of Education will continue managing the scholarship component in partnership with Save the Children through a revised modality. Scholarship recipients scheduled to graduate in 2025 and 2026 have confirmed placement and budgetary coverage through GPE and partner contributions (a budget of about US\$140,000).
- For Component 5.2, the remaining distribution of G1–2 teacher manuals were completed by the NDoE provincial teams and schools, as confirmed by the NDoE.
- Assets, including vehicles and laptops, have been transferred to NDoE to support ongoing education functions, while financial audits and documentation are being finalized.

(iv) Scaling Up of Promising Practices

Several practices piloted under BEST PNG hold promise for scale-up:

- The PDT model has potential to be expanded nationwide as a cost-effective approach to decentralized teacher support.
- The STEPMAS teaching framework, currently being trialled in TTCs, could inform broader curriculum reform and be embedded in national pre-service teacher education programs.
- The public-private scholarship model presents a replicable financing structure for other provinces or subjects where gender gaps persist.
- The use of performance-based financing through the Variable Part has demonstrated success and could inform future donor agreements and national results frameworks.

- **Textbook Distribution and Monitoring as a Promising Practice for Scale-Up:** One of the most promising practices for scale-up under Component 5.2 was the decentralized model of textbook distribution and monitoring. The active involvement of Provincial Materials and Supply Officers (PMSOs) in coordinating last-mile delivery fostered local ownership and strengthened accountability mechanisms. The use of locally available transport options—including provincial shipping services, occasional flight charters, and community foot delivery—provided a flexible and context-responsive logistics model that proved effective in reaching remote and maritime areas.
- **Lessons Learned from Textbook Development:** However, a key lesson emerged regarding the development of learning materials. The Grade 1 and 2 mathematics textbooks and accompanying teacher manuals, though well-aligned with the Standards-Based Curriculum (SBC), were developed and finalized at different times. This misalignment contributed to delays in distribution and limited their initial simultaneous classroom use. Moving forward, concurrent development and synchronized rollout of textbooks and teacher guides is recommended to maximize instructional impact.

Although full textbook utilization monitoring could not be completed due to the timing of project closure, Component 5.2 underscored key lessons for future textbook initiatives. One critical learning was the need to initiate textbook development much earlier in the project lifecycle to allow adequate time for production, distribution, classroom integration, and monitoring. The sequencing and efficiency of textbook development also posed challenges; while the model of adapting materials developed in Japan offered technical advantages, it resulted in delays that could have been minimized by undertaking development locally in Papua New Guinea with targeted support from international consultants. This approach would have fostered local capacity, improved contextual relevance, and accelerated delivery timelines.

Despite these constraints, the rollout process highlighted the importance of embedding structured monitoring, refresher training, and sustainability budgeting into textbook delivery strategies. These insights have been taken forward into the ongoing dialogue on the forthcoming System Transformation Grant (STG), where the Government is exploring opportunities to build on the decentralized distribution and contextualized delivery model established by BEST PNG to scale up textbook development and ensure continuous teacher and classroom support.

BEST PNG leaves behind a legacy of practical tools, empowered institutions, and strengthened partnerships that, with continued commitment, have the potential to drive long-term transformation in PNG’s education system. The foundation has been laid—not just for sustaining current gains, but for scaling equitable and quality-focused education reforms in the years ahead.

Grant Management and Use of Funds

Unspent Funds

Amount of funds that were not spent by grant closing

0

Detailed Description

The grant was fully spent.

Management Performance

Level of Management Performance

Satisfactory (S)

Detailed Description

The overall management performance of the BEST PNG Program is rated as Satisfactory, based on the effective delivery of key implementation functions—including financial and procurement management, coordination arrangements, compliance with safeguarding requirements, and adaptive project supervision. The management systems in place enabled the program to remain responsive, adaptable, results-

oriented, and accountable over the entire life cycle of the grant.

Program Implementation Arrangements

At the core of the management structure was a dedicated Program Management Unit (PMU) embedded within the National Department of Education (NDoE). The PMU coordinated technical implementation, financial reporting, monitoring and evaluation (MEAL), procurement oversight, and stakeholder engagement. It worked under the supervision of the Project Management Division and was supported by Save the Children as the Grant Agent.

The decentralized delivery model, particularly for teacher training and textbook distribution, was coordinated through Provincial Education Advisers (PEAs), Provincial Delivery Teams (PDTs), and Provincial Materials and Supply Officers (PMSOs)—a structure that ensured effective field-level execution. Regular planning meetings, field missions, and stakeholder updates helped maintain alignment and accountability.

Financial and Procurement Management

Financial management was generally as per required financial management standards throughout the program:

- Financial reports were delivered consistently and formed the basis for adaptive management, particularly in requesting No Cost Extensions as needed and reprogramming residual funds for ongoing scholarship support.
- Funds were disbursed and tracked in accordance with GPE and Save the Children procedures.
- Internal audit mechanisms and external verifications (including for the Variable Component) reinforced fiduciary transparency at key stages of the program. However, as reported separately to GPE leadership on 10 June, our 2024 year-end audit by PWC – subsequently confirmed in an external investigation by KPMG – did reveal various forms of fraudulent behaviour in Save the Children’s PNG operations which impacted the GPE program. This case is being managed as per SC and GPE protocols and is still in process at the time of reporting.

Procurement processes, while compliant and transparent, encountered delays in textbook production and distribution, notably under Component 5.2. These delays stemmed from external supply chain issues, national printing constraints, and extended review periods. However, the program responded proactively, securing a No Cost Extension to allow full completion of this component and ensure delivery of textbooks to all six target provinces.

Social and Environmental Safeguards

There were no significant social or environmental risks associated with the BEST PNG Program. However, the program did prioritize gender equity and inclusion, especially through the female scholarship initiative and the gender-targeted Variable Part indicators. Disability-inclusive reporting was attempted where feasible, although not all provincial teams had capacity to collect detailed disaggregated data on disability.

Adaptive Management and Supervision

A key strength of the program’s management was its adaptive approach:

- Two No Cost Extensions were secured and efficiently managed, ensuring the program remained on track despite COVID-19 disruptions and textbook distribution delays.

- Close coordination with the Local Education Group (LEG), DHERST, JICA, and CEAs ensured that decisions were evidence-based and widely owned.
- Day-to-day implementation benefitted from strong coordination between the GA, NDoE, and the embedded PMU, which enabled timely decision-making, flexible reallocation of resources, and improved oversight of grant activities.
- Monitoring and verification mechanisms (e.g., school visits, TTC monitoring, PILNA 2021 analysis, endline assessments) were used to course-correct and prioritize interventions, contributing directly to the strong efficacy rating of the program.

The dual-level coordination, strategic at the sector level and operational at the program delivery level, enabled the program to remain responsive, accountable, and results-focused throughout its lifecycle.

Challenges and Mitigation

While overall management was satisfactory, a few challenges were encountered:

- Delays in coordination of inter-agency agreements, particularly for the scholarship transition strategy, required early engagement and clearer role definitions.
- Manual financial disbursement processes at the provincial level caused delays in activity implementation and reimbursements for in-field activities.
- Staff turnover among TTC lecturers and provincial staff occasionally affected the continuity of implementation.
- Curriculum reform ownership: Lecturers participating in Component 2 highlighted a key challenge—lack of support from senior management within their TTCs. This hindered efforts to share knowledge and practices gained from the STEPMAS workshops with colleagues who did not attend. While some lecturers took the initiative to disseminate materials informally, formal institutional endorsement would have allowed for more structured and widespread reform uptake. Future interventions should incorporate dedicated engagement strategies targeting TTC principals and academic boards to foster system-wide ownership and collaboration.

These challenges were largely mitigated through strong project oversight, flexibility in timelines, and ongoing engagement with NDoE leadership and sub-national teams.

The BEST PNG Program's management arrangements enabled the successful implementation of a complex, multi-component education reform project in a decentralized and logistically challenging context. The consistent delivery of financial, procurement, and monitoring activities combined with adaptive and collaborative management was critical in ensuring that results were achieved and sustained. These experiences offer useful models and operational lessons for future GPE-funded and nationally led education initiatives.

Cofinancing (not related to the Multiplier)

Detailed Description

While the BEST PNG Program's main cofinancing was structured under the GPE Multiplier arrangement with the Government of Japan, the project also benefited from non-Multiplier cofinancing contributions, particularly under Component 3, which aimed to increase the number of qualified female mathematics and science teachers in underserved provinces.

Two notable private-sector partners provided additional financial support:

- Newmont Foundation sponsored 10 female scholarship recipients, complementing the 40 students supported under the core ESPIG.
- Bank of South Pacific (BSP) later joined as a partner, supporting an additional 5 scholarship recipients.

These contributions allowed the program to expand the scholarship cohort from 40 to 55 female students, significantly increasing the program's reach without requiring additional public or GPE grant resources.

As of the grant closing period:

- The Newmont-funded students have been successfully integrated into the scholarship monitoring and academic support framework, with expected graduations aligned to those under ESPIG support.
- The BSP supported students were enrolled in subsequent cohorts, and BSP has continued to engage as a stakeholder during reporting and visibility events.

Their involvement illustrates a successful model of leveraging non-traditional financing for public education outcomes particularly in advancing gender equity and STEM participation. This experience highlights the potential for future co-investment models with corporate partners, especially where corporate social responsibility objectives align with national education goals.

Document Attachments

Tangible Outputs, Knowledge Products, and Results Framework

#	File Name	Document Type	Description
1	PNG GPE BEST Endline Report.pdf	Evaluation Report	Endline Report
2	PNG GPE BEST Endline Findings.pdf	Evaluation Report	Endline Findings

The documents listed were submitted with the progress report. If you'd like access to them, please contact the grant operations officer for your country.

Annexes

Annex 1: List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
ARoB	Autonomous Region of Bougainville
BEST PNG	Boosting Education Standards Together in Papua New Guinea
CC	Component Coordinators
CDD	Curriculum Development Division
CEA	Church Education Agency
CSC	Component Steering Committee
DHERST	Department for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology
EMIS	Educational Management Information System

ENB	East New Britain
ESPIG	Education Sector Plan Implementation Grant
FA	Financing Agreement
GA	Grant Agent
GoJ	Government of Japan
GoPNG	Government of Papua New Guinea
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HATERA	Higher and Technical Education Reform Act
JESR	Joint Education Sector Review
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
IVA	Independent Verification Agency
LEG	Local Education Group
MCA	Maximum Country Allocation
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
MSD	Measurement Services Division
NDoE	National Department of Education
NEP	National Education Plan
NML	Newcrest Mining Ltd
PAU	Pacific Adventist University
PDoE	Provincial Division of Education
PDT	Program Delivery Team
PILNA	Pacific Islands' Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
PIM	Program Implementation Manual
PMU	Program Management Unit

PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSC	Program Steering Committee
PSD	Program Specifications Document
QUIS-ME	Improving the Quality of Science and Mathematics Education
SBC	Standards-Based Curriculum
SEOC	Senior Education Officers Conference
SPCC	St. Peter Channel Catholic College
SR	Scholarship Recipient
TA	Technical Adviser
ToRs	Terms of Reference
TTC	Teacher Training College
TTI	Teacher Training Institution
UoG	University of Goroka
WNB	West New Britain
BSP	BSP Financial Services Group Ltd
DLI/Rs	Disbursement Linked Indicators/Results
DoNP	Department of National Planning
NCE	No Cost Extension
PMSOs	Provincial Materials Supplies Officers
SAIL	Students Attendance and Improvement Lab
SCI	Secretary's Circular Instruction
SPC	Pacific Community Secretariat
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Maths
STEPMAS	Strengthening Primary Teacher Pre-service education in Mathematics and Science
EQAP	The Educational Quality and Assessment Programme

Annex 2: Global Numbers Reporting Template

Provide the data related to GPE's three global numbers for this reporting period below:

- Textbooks purchased and distributed
- Teachers trained
- Classrooms built or rehabilitated

Note: For cofinanced grants, please provide the proportion that can be attributed to GPE grant. For example, if the grant's financial contribution accounts for 50 percent of a teacher training activity, the proportion that can be attributed to GPE grant for the number of teachers trained through that activity would be 50%. If the unit of analysis in the indicator is the number of schools and not classrooms, please enter an estimated number of classrooms and provide an explanation in the comments box.

GPE Indicators

Textbooks purchased and distributed

#	Indicator	Actual Number Achieved (during this reporting period)	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)	Comments
1	5.1.1 Number of textbooks distributed (by grade and subject)	1,840,000	0	<p>A total of 920,000 math and 920,000 science textbooks for grades 3–6 were distributed to 89 districts. Textbooks were procured under the Multiplier contribution of the GoJ.</p> <p>Monitoring was incorporated into School Visits in the Six (6) BEST PNG target Provinces where teachers had been trained in SBC maths and science basing on the supplied textbooks.</p>
2	5.1.2 Number of manuals distributed (by grade and subject)	80,000	0	<p>A total of 40,000 math and 40,000 science manuals for grades 3–6 were distributed to 89 districts. Textbooks were procured under the Multiplier contribution of the GoJ.</p> <p>The monitoring was incorporated in the School Visits in the Six (6) BEST PNG target Provinces where teachers had been trained in SBC maths and science basing on the supplied textbooks.</p>
3	5.2 Number of elementary grade 1 and 2 textbooks and teachers' manual	150,100	100	G1 and G2 Math textbooks developed: 140,600 (70,300 G1 and 70,300 G2) textbooks were printed

and distributed to six target provinces and 16 TTCs using the ESPIG proceeds.

G1 and G2 Maths Teachers Manuals developed. 9500 copies of G1 and G2 Teachers manuals were printed and distributed.

Due to delays that affected progress of the component, a No Cost Extension up to Dec 2024 was granted by the GPE Secretariat to allow for printing and distribution.

GPE Indicators

Teachers trained

#	Indicator	Actual Number Achieved (during this reporting period)	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)	Comments
1	2.1.1: Knowledge-sharing, monitoring and support for lecturers Number of lecturers supported, disaggregated by gender and disability	60	100	Sixty (60) lecturers, comprising 22 females and 38 males, participated in the knowledge-sharing workshop for Science, Maths, and Professional Development, jointly delivered with JICA, DHERST, and NDoE. Target discussed with JICA, DHERST and NDoE.
2	3.1.1 Number of additional female teachers enrolled	55	73	55 (100% Female) additional female teachers were enrolled in STEM Teacher Training. An additional 5 scholarship recipients were enrolled with support from BSP, supplementing the initial 50 female students enrolled in 2021 and 2022 for a four-year teacher training degree program. Among the initial 50 scholarship recipients, 10 are supported through the Newmont partnership and 40 under the ESPIG. The first group graduated in December 2023; and the second cohort in Dec 2024. The remaining students will graduate in 2025 and 2026 respectively.
3	1.1.2 Number of teachers trained, disaggregated by type of training, gender and disability	5,097	100	Cumulative Numbers of teachers trained: • SBC Maths (Module1 + Module 2): 2,309 Teachers

across 957 Schools

• SBC Science (Module 1+Module 2): 1,771 Teachers across 909 Schools

• Literacy training: 1017 Teachers; 14 Provinces;

GPE Indicators

Classrooms built or rehabilitated

#	Indicator	Actual Number Achieved (during this reporting period)	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)	Comments
1	N/A	0.01	0	Not applicable

Annex 3: Variable Part Reporting Template (During Implementation)

No Data Available

Annex 4: Cumulative Beneficiary Children / Other Students Reporting Template

Provide the cumulative number of children of pre-primary, primary and secondary school age (both in school and out of school) and other students (adolescents beyond secondary school age and adult learners participating in basic education programs), who directly participated in project activities, received project-supported incentives or services, or benefited from project interventions so far. Also provide relevant disaggregated values by sex (applicable to all grants).

If appropriate and available, provide disaggregated values by varied subgroups and by education level. Reporting beneficiary data cumulatively means counting all beneficiaries as a running total, adding up all beneficiaries since the start of the grant and up to the end of this reporting period. Data on beneficiaries are to be collected using the methods and tools proper to each project. It is understood that some disaggregated data will only be collected if a project expressly targets specific subgroups through their interventions and uses their own methods for counting beneficiary children/other students

NOTE: For cofinanced grants, please provide the numbers for the entire program and indicate the proportion that can be attributed to GPE grant. For example, if the grant's financial contribution accounts for 40 percent of the program that is cofinanced by GPE and other donors, enter 40% in the “% attributed to this grant.”

	Pre-primary (optional)	Primary (optional)	Secondary (optional)	Others (optional)	Total	% attributed to this grant (for cofinanced grants)
Number of children who directly benefited from the project so far:		190,702	32,976	6,197	229,875	100

Of which, girls:		89,898	14,251	3,020	107,169	100
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Of which, children with a disability (optional):

Of which, refugee children (optional):						
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Of which, internally displaced children (optional):

Of which, out-of-school children, in school age (optional):						
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Of which, children from marginalized ethno-cultural/ linguistic minorities: specify which ones (optional):

Provide any comments on beneficiary children/students, if needed. This could include, for example, the definition employed by the project for a particular subgroup (including a more granular description of these subgroups), the approach/tool used to calculate the number of beneficiaries overall or by subgroup, any limitation of the approach/tool employed for this calculation and reasons why data on beneficiary children/students are unavailable. Please provide the number or proportion of girls for varied subgroups in the comment section below, if available.

The different trainings under this project benefited pupils in lower primary school (grades 3-5) under the SBC Maths and Science training in 6 Provinces: 6,142 students of pre-service in 16 TTCs, and 55 students in Teacher Education Universities. More children were reached for both primary and secondary schools through the Literacy training targeting grade 3-5 students that was conducted in 16 Provinces and the “Every Girl to High School” training in 14 provinces targeting secondary schools and high schools.

In Summary:

- 190,702 students (M: 100,806, F: 89,898) - 47% female students benefited from the SBC training over the last three years.
- 6,142 students (Male: 3,177, F: 2,965) from the 16 TTCs were direct beneficiaries of the BEST PNG Knowledge sharing and SBC alignment.
- 55 (Scholarship recipients) female maths and science pre-service student teachers from 11 disadvantaged provinces at 3 Teacher Training Institutions.
- 32,976 high school students (14,251 females) benefited from the ‘Every Girl to High School’ training under the Equity indicator.
- 105,978 students (44% female) benefited from literacy training under the Learning Outcomes Indicator.
- A total of 140,600 Grade 1 and Grade 2 students (47% of whom are girls) in six disadvantaged provinces benefited from the provision of mathematics textbooks

¹ High-There were no shortcomings or at most minor shortcomings in the continued alignment between project activities and the needs of the beneficiaries, partners and the sector. The project provided clear evidence of such alignment. If circumstances changed, the objectives were changed accordingly to keep objectives fully relevant. Substantial-TTThere were moderate shortcomings in the continued alignment between project interventions and the needs of the beneficiaries, partners and the sector. The project provided generally sufficient information on such alignment. If circumstances changed, the objectives were changed accordingly to keep objectives fully relevant. Modest-There were significant shortcomings in the continued alignment between project interventions and the needs of the beneficiaries, partners and the sector. The project provided limited information on such alignment. If circumstances changed, the objectives were not changed accordingly to keep objectives fully relevant. Negligible -There were severe shortcomings in the continued alignment between project interventions and the needs of the beneficiaries, partners and the sector. The project differed from those current needs or did not provide information to

assess such alignment. If circumstances changed, the objectives were not changed accordingly to keep objectives fully relevant.

2 High-The project exceeded or fully achieved its objectives (intended outcomes) or is likely to do so. Substantial-The project almost fully achieved its objectives (intended outcomes) or is likely to do so. Modest- The project partly achieved (or is expected to partly achieve) its objectives (intended outcomes). Negligible- The project barely achieved or did not achieve (minimal achievement, if any, or is expected to barely or not achieve) its objectives (intended outcomes).

3 The scale is as follows: Negligible – The component/objective did not achieve (minimal achievement, if any, or is expected to barely or not achieve) its intended outcomes. Modest – The component/objective partly achieved (or is expected to partly achieve) its intended outcomes. Substantial – The component/objective almost fully achieved its intended outcomes or is likely to do so. High – The component/objective exceeded or fully achieved its intended outcomes or is likely to do so.

4 High-Efficiency exceeded expectations. Substantial- Efficiency was what would be expected in the sector. Modest-Efficiency was below expectations in the sector. Negligible- Efficiency was very low compared to both the benefits (if any) and with recognized norms in the sector.

5 Highly Unsatisfactory – Overall grant management performance prevented the achievement of one or more grant outputs. Unsatisfactory – Overall grant management performance limited or jeopardized the achievement of one or more grant outputs. Moderately Unsatisfactory – Overall grant management performance delayed the achievement of one or more grant outputs, but issues were resolved during the grant life cycle. Moderately Satisfactory – Overall grant management performance supported the grant to achieve most of its major outputs efficiently with moderate shortcomings. Satisfactory – Overall grant management performance supported the grant to achieve almost all of its major outputs efficiently with only minor shortcomings. Highly Satisfactory – Overall grant management performance supported the grant to achieve or exceed all of the major outputs efficiently without significant shortcomings.