



**EVALUATION OF THE UNICEF CONVERGENCE PROGRAMME:  
NAWAEB AND BOGIA DISTRICTS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

**FINAL REPORT  
(VOLUME 1: MAIN REPORT)**

**UNICEF PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
NOVEMBER 2025**

# **Evaluation of the UNICEF Convergence Programme: Nawaeb and Bogia districts in Papua New Guinea**

## **Volume 1: Main Report**

© United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Papua New Guinea Country Office, 2025

Permission to copy, disseminate or otherwise use information from this publication is granted so long as appropriate acknowledgement is given.

UNICEF Papua New Guinea publishes all evaluation reports to fulfil a corporate commitment to transparency. The reports are designed to stimulate a free exchange of ideas among those interested in the topic and to assure those supporting the work of UNICEF that it rigorously examines its strategies, results and overall effectiveness.

The contents of the report do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of UNICEF. The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators, hence UNICEF accepts no responsibility for error. Also, designations in this publication do not imply an opinion on the legal status of any country or territory, or of its authorities, or the delimitation of frontiers.

The copyright for this report is held by the United Nations Children’s Fund. Permission is required to reprint/reproduce/photocopy or in any other way cite or quote from this report in written form. UNICEF has a formal permission policy that requires a written request to be submitted. For non-commercial uses, permission will normally be granted free of charge. Please write to the Papua New Guinea Country Office at the address below to initiate a permission request.

UNICEF Papua New Guinea Country Office  
[www.unicef.org/png/](http://www.unicef.org/png/)

Front cover photo credit: © UNICEF/

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES .....	IV
PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	V
LIST OF ACRONYMS .....	VII
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	X
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Context.....	1
1.3 Convergence programming .....	2
1.4 Overview of the PNG Convergence Programme.....	5
1.5 Description of the Programme Districts .....	6
1.6 Rationale and Description of the Evaluation .....	7
CHAPTER 2. APPROACH AND METHODS .....	9
2.1 Introduction .....	9
2.2. Approach.....	9
2.3 Programme Stakeholders .....	10
2.4 Methods and Process.....	12
2.5 Data Assembly and Analysis.....	13
2.6 Ethical Considerations.....	14
2.7 Limitations and Mitigation .....	15
CHAPTER 3. RELEVANCE .....	16
3.1 Introduction .....	16
3.2 Theory of Change: Relevance .....	16
3.3 Findings: Relevance to the Needs of Rights Holders.....	17
3.4 Summary: Relevance.....	20
CHAPTER 4. COHERENCE .....	21
4.1 Introduction .....	21
4.2 Theory of Change: Coherence.....	21
4.3 Findings: Programme Coherence.....	23
4.4 Summary: Coherence.....	24
CHAPTER 5. EFFECTIVENESS .....	25
5.1 Introduction .....	25
5.2 Theory of Change: Effectiveness.....	25
5.3 Findings on Effectiveness: objectives of convergence programming .....	27
5.4 Summary: Effectiveness.....	32
CHAPTER 6. EFFICIENCY.....	34
6.1 Introduction .....	34
6.2 Theory of Change: Efficiency.....	34
6.3 Findings on Efficiency.....	35
6.4 Summary: Efficiency.....	38
CHAPTER 7. SUSTAINABILITY .....	39
7.1 Introduction .....	39
7.2 Theory of Change: Sustainability .....	39
7.3 Findings on Sustainability .....	40
7.4 Summary: Sustainability .....	43
CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS.....	44
8.1 Introduction .....	44
8.2 Conclusions .....	44
8.3 Lessons Learned.....	47
8.4 Recommendations .....	48
REFERENCES.....	53

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

---

Figure 1: PNG progress against SDGs .....	1
Figure 2: Pathways to Organisational Convergence.....	4
Figure 3: Map of Bogia and Nawaeb districts.....	6
Figure 4: Level of cooperation in the household survey .....	14
Table 1: Assessment of findings against theory of change and evaluation criteria .....	xi
Table 2: Conclusions.....	xii
Table 3: Lessons Learned.....	xiii
Table 4: Evaluation theory of change statements.....	10
Table 5: Stakeholder groups involved in the convergence programme, by category.....	11
Table 6: Sampling .....	13
Table 7: Limitations and mitigation strategies/factors .....	15
Table 8: Assessment against theory of change: relevance.....	16
Table 9: Assessment against theory of change: coherence .....	21
Table 10: Assessment against theory of change: effectiveness .....	25
Table 11: Summary programme performance against outcome targets.....	28
Table 12: Direct cash transfers (DCTs) and implications for future convergence programming .....	32
Table 13: Assessment against theory of change: efficiency .....	34
Table 14: Programme Resources and Expenditures.....	36
Table 15: Assessment against theory of change: sustainability .....	39
Table 16: Strategies to foster sustainability and progress of the convergence programme .....	40
Table 17: Key differences between convergence programming and cross-sectoral work .....	47
Table 18: Lessons Learned.....	47
Table 19: Recommendations, targeted parties/entities, and indicative timeframes .....	48

## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

This report presents the findings of the evaluation of the UNICEF Convergence Programme implemented in Nawaeb District of Morobe Province and Bogia District of Madang Province, Papua New Guinea, between January 2022 and July 2025. The evaluation was commissioned to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the programme and to generate evidence that will inform future convergence programming within the UNICEF Papua New Guinea Country Programme (2024–2028) and beyond.

The Convergence Programme was conceived as an innovative approach to address multidimensional child deprivation by synchronizing interventions across five core sectors, Education, Child Protection, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Health and Nutrition, and Social Policy, in two of PNG's most disadvantaged districts. This evaluation interrogates the programme's design, implementation, and results, and offers actionable recommendations to strengthen convergence programming in fragile and complex contexts such as Papua New Guinea.

The evaluation found, inter alia, that convergence programme was relevant to the needs of children in the selected communities, delivered against many of its targets, that delivery was cost-efficient, and spending was aligned with targets. Implementation adapted to realities in the communities. Despite these achievements, there was little evidence of integrated delivery. Targets were not clearly linked to outcomes, programme processes did not enable convergence, and district strengthening efforts were disconnected from programme processes and outcomes. Over time, commitment to convergence diminished as the focus shifted primarily to delivery. Going forward, the evaluation to reaffirm commitment to convergence programming and to clarify its purpose and value, articulating a clear conceptual framework, and adopting a more strategic, context-sensitive approach.

This evaluation was executed by SIAPAC International LLC and APR (PNG), on behalf of UNICEF PNG. I would like to thank Dr David Cownie for his leadership and guidance, and to acknowledge the contribution of the evaluation team consisting of Robin Weeks, Dr Almah Tararia, Eimi Pulitala, Samuel Sogi, Albertine Awai, Jeremiah Zazeng, Norman Angai, Solomon Daniel, Stacey Dickson, and Elizabeth Murawa, whose commitment ensured the quality and reliability of data gathered under challenging conditions.

The evaluation would not have been possible without the leadership, commitment, and collaboration of many individuals and various institutions. First, we are grateful for our partners in the Government of Papua New Guinea, particularly the National Department of Health through the Medical Research Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of Professor William Pomat and all its members for ethical clearance, and the National Department of Education, Research and Evaluation Unit led by Priscilla Rasehei and the Research Advisory Committee, for their guidance and collaboration and ethical clearance. We also acknowledge the District Development Authorities of Bogia and Nawaeb, the District Management Teams, and all sector leads for their collaboration, teamwork, engagement and support.

Our gratitude further extends to the Archdiocese of Madang and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea (ELCPNG) Morobe, for a firm partnership and all team members who contributed to programme implementation. We also recognize the contributions of provincial and district authorities, civil society partners, and all community members in Bogia and Nawaeb districts, whose insights, views and participation enriched this evaluation. Their voices and experiences remain central to the findings and recommendations presented in this report.

In UNICEF PNG, special appreciation is extended to Mr. Vikas Singh, Deputy Representative for Programmes; and Ms. Kateryna Lytvynenko, Deputy Representative for Operations, for their strategic guidance and strong support. The Chiefs of Sections, Dr Satish Gutta (Health), Chiharu Kondo (Education), Nirakar Joshi (WASH), Paula Vargas (Child Protection), Andrew Sammy (Nutrition) and all programme teams whose technical

expertise and operational contributions were instrumental throughout the evaluation process. Convergence Programme focal points - Caty Patuvii (Education), Alex Rogave (WASH), Rachael Torambe (Child Protection), Paula Kongua (Health), and Stepphanie Hera (Nutrition) – provided invaluable support and coordination efforts in the programme districts.

Kathleen Letshabo (Evaluation Specialist) managed the evaluation while Jane Mwangi, (Regional Evaluation Adviser) provided strategic and technical guidance. We also acknowledge Peter Gande Ghandhii, Planning and Monitoring Specialist as the Focal Point for Convergence Programme Evaluation, Natalie Massueng and Toya Nath Subedi for providing in-country effective coordination and support at different point in the evaluation process. We are also appreciative of UNICEF staff in the PME, Supplies, Admin, and Finance teams for all their technical and operational assistance.

On behalf of UNICEF Papua New Guinea, we commend the efforts of all who contributed to this evaluation and trust that the findings, lessons, and recommendations will inform future strategies to advance child rights and improve outcomes for children and adolescents in Papua New Guinea.

**Dr. Veera Mendonca**  
Country Representative  
UNICEF Papua New Guinea

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AoM	Catholic Archdiocese of Madang
APR	Asples Pacific Research
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
Covid-19	Coronavirus Disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus
CP	Convergence Programme
CPD	Country Programme Document
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DDoE	District Department of Education
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DFAT ANCP	DFAT Australian NGO Cooperation Programme
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DLKII	District Level Key Informant Interview
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ELC	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
EQ	Evaluation Question
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
ERIC	Ethical Research Involving Children Principles
EU	European Union
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEROS	Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System
GESI	Gender and Social Inclusion
GovPNG	Government of Papua New Guinea
HACT	UN Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
HDI	Human Development Index
HH	Household
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
KII	Key Informant Interview

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>LLKII</b>	Local Level Key Informant Interview
<b>LLG</b>	Local Level Government
<b>LLG</b>	Local Level Government - Government Support Improvement Programme
<b>LPA</b>	Lukautim Pikinini (Child Protection) Act 2015
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MDGs</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MEL</b>	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
<b>MERL</b>	Monitoring, Evaluation, Results and Learning
<b>MFAT</b>	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>MICS</b>	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
<b>MLQQ</b>	Medium-Length Quantitative Questionnaire
<b>MTDP</b>	Medium-Term Development Plan
<b>NDoE</b>	National Department of Education
<b>NDoH</b>	National Department of Health
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NoCFS</b>	National Office of Child and Family Services
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>OECD DAC</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
<b>P4CD</b>	Parenting for Child Development
<b>PDoE</b>	Provincial Department of Education
<b>PSEA</b>	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
<b>PHA</b>	Provincial Health Authority
<b>PNG</b>	Papua New Guinea
<b>RRBM</b>	Rights and Results-Based Management
<b>SDA</b>	Seventh Day Adventist Church
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SIAPAC</b>	SIAPAC International LLC
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>STA</b>	Strategic Priority Areas
<b>SWAG</b>	Story With A Gap
<b>ToC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UN Women</b>	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV&AIDS
<b>UNCRPD</b>	United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>UNEG</b>	United Nations Evaluation Group
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>UNICEF EAPRO</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office
<b>UNICEF PNG</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund Office in Papua New Guinea
<b>UNSDCF</b>	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
<b>VAC</b>	Violence Against Children
<b>VHA</b>	Village Health Assistant
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WASH</b>	Water and Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WVI</b>	World Vision International

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

### PURPOSE AND METHODS

---

The Convergence Programme was designed in 2021 and implemented from January 2022 to July 2025. It was implemented in two districts (Bogia and Nawaeb) in two provinces (Madang and Morobe, respectively) where development challenges were most severe. Aimed at ‘reviewing the added value of operating through convergent outcomes,<sup>1</sup> a summative evaluation was incorporated into the design of the Convergence Programme.

The **purpose** of the evaluation was “to assess the contribution of the convergence programme in addressing disadvantages in the early years [in the selected districts] so that infants and young children got the best start in life and adolescent girls, boys and those of other gender identities are protected and empowered to reach their full potential.” and to provide rigorous evidence “to inform any redesign and replication of a Convergence Programme within the new Country Programme of Cooperation (2024-2028).” The evaluation addressed three **objectives**:

- To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and sustainability of the Convergence Programme from its inception to the present, with particular focus on equity, gender equality and disability inclusion, convergence of programme components and achieving results, as well as the strategic positioning UNICEF in relation to its child rights mandate.
- To identify and document key lessons learned, good practices and innovations in implementing the Convergence Programme that can inform and support advocacy for replication.
- To provide a set of forward-looking and actionable recommendations to strengthen programmatic strategies in the design and replication of the Convergence Programme, taking into consideration national development priorities and plans and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the country.

The evaluation employed **mixed-methods, participatory, and theory-based approaches**. The evaluation interrogated the Programme Theory of Change (ToC) which was rather complex, and developed a ToC for the evaluation, which attempted to articulate causal pathways that reflected what the Programme was actually focusing on from the beginning. This allowed the evaluators to consider *both* the performance of the Programme against its intended objectives and actions taken to adapt to emergent circumstances.

Interviews were conducted with a wide range of duty-bearers at district and local levels, and rights-holders<sup>2</sup> in communities reached by the programme. Methods included a quantitative household survey with results compared to a baseline survey and a number of qualitative methods inclusive of participatory approaches. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS, while qualitative findings were analysed using ATLAS.ti. A draft of the final report was discussed in a participatory workshop which was also used to develop concrete ideas for final recommendations. Evaluation users comprise UNICEF PNG (primary), as well as the Government of PNG, donors supporting the Convergence Programme (including UNICEF Australia, which manages funding from the Australian Government, the Government of New Zealand, and other private and institutional donors), and other UNICEF country offices and UNICEF EAPRO.

### FINDINGS

---

Findings are summarized in Table 1, presented against the theory of change and by evaluation criteria.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/17001/file/2023-PL18-Papua-New-Guinea-CEP-EN-2023-06-13.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> The use of the terms duty-bearers and rights-holders to “individuals or social groups that have particular entitlements in relation to specific duty-bearers. In general terms, all human beings are rights-holders under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”. See <https://www.unescwa.org/sd-glossary/rights-holders#:~:text=Individuals%20or%20social%20groups%20that,through%20organizations%20representing%20their%20interests.>

**Table 1: Assessment of findings against theory of change and evaluation criteria**

Evaluation Criteria and Main Evaluation Question	Overall Status
Overall	The programme demonstrated several positive aspects including adaptation, innovation, strong target reach, dedication, and a continuous effort to deliver results. However, it also faced challenges such as design problems, limited convergence, inadequate community engagement and strengthening, weak sustainability prospects, implementation under difficult circumstances, and a narrowing group of stakeholders over time.
Relevance – CP doing the right thing in the right way	The services were built on solid sector programming, and valued by beneficiaries. It was relevant to the needs of host communities and successfully reached both women and men, However, design flaws undermined the relevance of the Convergence Programme, and several assumptions in the Theory of Change were overly optimistic. The programme did not effectively strengthen linkages between districts and communities, and disability targeting was not successful for reasons that extended beyond what the programme could influence or deliver.
Coherence – compatibility within UNICEF PNG, with Government, with programming in the Programme Area	Programme aligned and fit well within the faith-based organisation framework, with teams showing dedicated efforts to make the Convergence Programme work. Nonetheless, delivery within UNICEF continued to be sector-based, as was the delivery of relevant Government services in the programme area. These sectoral approaches, along with a lack of shared understanding of the programme, undermined coherence.
Effectiveness – achievement of objectives including capacity-development, systems strengthening and delivery	The programme delivered against many of its targets, and the direct cash transfer process was effective. Community members were often aware of the services provided, and many benefitted, with some evidence of improvements in knowledge and practices. There was early commitment to making convergence work. Despite these achievements, there was little evidence of integrated delivery. Targets were not clearly linked to outcomes, programme processes did not enable convergence, and district strengthening efforts were disconnected from programme processes and outcomes. Over time, commitment to convergence diminished as the focus shifted primarily to delivery.
Efficiency - how well are resources being used	Delivery was cost-efficient, and spending was aligned with targets. Implementation adapted to on-the-ground realities, and delivery took place across multiple sectors. However, the programme provided little added value in terms of convergence, and there was limited investment in integrated delivery.
Sustainability – will the benefits last	The programme generated lessons that will inform future programming, including insights into what works well and what does not. Attention to equity and gender may have influenced district and faith-based organisation processes moving forward. However, there was little evidence of sustainability, as district strengthening was not well linked with sub-district and community-level engagement or strengthening. Disability inclusion was minimal, and a significant narrowing of stakeholders over time further undermined sustainability.

**Relevance:** The Convergence Programme was conceptually well-aligned with national development priorities and strategic objectives of UNICEF. It targeted two of the most disadvantaged districts, addressing critical needs in early childhood development and adolescent empowerment. Communities valued the services provided, with high levels of awareness and appreciation for interventions such as early childhood education and positive parenting. However, the programme theory of change (ToC) was overly ambitious, relying on assumptions about district-level capacity and community engagement that did not hold in practice. Disability inclusion was notably weak, with only 0.3 percent of early childhood education enrollees identified as having disabilities, far below the national prevalence estimate of 15 percent. Moreover, sustained and meaningful engagement with rights-holders was limited, undermining the contextual responsiveness of the programme.

**Coherence:** Internally, UNICEF PNG demonstrated strong commitment to convergence, with efforts to align sectoral teams and coordinate with faith-based partners. The Convergence Programme was consistent with the 2018–2022 Country Programme Document and had a shared vision with development partners such as DFAT and MFAT. However, coherence was compromised by persistent sectoral silos within both UNICEF and government structures. Programme outcomes remained largely sectoral, and the lack of a unified understanding of convergence among stakeholders hindered integrated implementation. Tensions arose due to the dominant role of faith-based organizations. While effective in-service delivery initiatives, had complicated relationships with government actors. The departure of the Programme Coordinator in late 2024 further disrupted coordination and coherence.

**Effectiveness:** The Convergence Programme achieved many of its output targets across sectors: In particular, there were significant gains in early childhood education, with enrolment exceeding targets and six new centres established (**Education**). The positive parenting programmes reached a significant number of caregivers, though birth registration fell short of targets (**Child Protection**). Handwashing and menstrual hygiene targets were met or exceeded, but infrastructure functionality and community-level engagement were inconsistent (**WASH**). High reach was achieved in areas like safe delivery kits and nutrition counselling, but antenatal care and skilled birth attendance remained below targets (**Health & Nutrition**). District-level social accountability mechanisms were established, though data generation and use remained limited (**Social Policy**). Despite these achievements, the programme struggled to deliver integrated services. Most interventions were implemented as discrete sectoral activities, with limited cross-sectoral synergy. The absence of convergent outcomes in the results framework and fragmented reporting further diluted the integrative intent of the programme. Community-level actors often perceived the Convergence Programme as a collection of unrelated initiatives rather than a unified programme because that was how it was presented to the community during implementation.

**Efficiency:** The Convergence Programme demonstrated strong cost-efficiency, with 98% of its budget utilized and high delivery rates across sectors. Leveraging existing, proven interventions—such as positive parenting and health outreach—enhanced value for money. However, cost-effectiveness was undermined by underinvestment in joint supervision, community engagement, and convergence-specific activities. While over 1,400 individuals were trained (more than double the target), the lack of sustained community involvement and the sectoral nature of delivery limited the potential for synergistic outcomes. Monitoring and reporting systems weakened after the departure of the Programme Coordinator, reducing the ability to adapt and learn in its final phase.

**Sustainability:** Sustainability emerged as the weakest area. There is little evidence that Convergence Programme benefits will endure without continued external support. The short timeline, coupled with limited institutionalization of convergence strategies within government and civil society systems, hindered long-term impact. While some district-level capacity development occurred, systemic issues—such as political interference, resource constraints, and high staff turnover—persisted. The narrowing of stakeholder engagement over time and the absence of robust community empowerment mechanisms further eroded prospects for sustainability. These problems occurred within the context of high levels of violence in both provinces, while some areas were affected by resettlement that left unresolved problems around land and service access, and chronic constraints in Government service delivery. Nonetheless, the convergence programme generated valuable lessons that could inform more focused, realistic, and context-sensitive convergence programming in the future.

## CONCLUSIONS

Five conclusions were derived from the findings as presented in Table 2, while a more detailed discussion for each of the conclusions is presented in Section 8.

**Table 2: Conclusions**

Conclusion	Discussion
1. The idea of convergence is sound	The <i>idea</i> of convergence is sound, even in a difficult implementation environment such as PNG, and especially in a country where needs are significant across a range of sectors. The <i>efforts</i> of UNICEF PNG to make the CP work were considerable and were based on recognition of the value of such programming for children and families in PNG. The <i>work done</i> early on to engage with decentralised authorities and faith-based organisations was solid. But the factors working <i>against</i> the CP were powerful and, despite notable adaptation, weaknesses in implementation meant that these factors undermined desired outcomes and objectives. Rethinking convergence would allow UNICEF PNG to advance child development objectives.

Conclusion	Discussion
2. Convergence should be realistic	Realistic objectives need to be set rather than promising too much, especially in such a challenging environment. The focus needs to be on the art of the possible, not the ideal.
3. Converging outcomes should be the focus	The concept behind convergence programming is that ‘thinking together across sector’ is critical to its efficacy and is central to what it can accomplish that adds value beyond sector programming. From planning to implementation to monitoring and reporting, the focus needs to be on convergence. This should be reflected in objectives and outcomes and, where feasible, outputs. For the CP, the identification of sectoral outcomes and outputs took attention away from the necessity to focus on convergence, and what convergence could deliver for children and families beyond what was offered by each sector. And with the Theory of Change not being a critical part of implementation and reflection, its role in ‘keeping an eye on the ball’ was undermined.
4. Commitment to community engagement was the weak link in programme implementation	A particular weak link in the chain for implementation was commitment to community engagement throughout the CP. While sectors involved in the CP did engage with community leaders and community members to varied extents, engagement was not standardised across the CP and not planned at CP level. Discussions with community members highlighted a lack of involvement in decision processes and lack of even basic information provided on actions to be taken, lack of community engagement was the CP was delivered, and lack of follow-up with community members to dissemination information or discuss the efficacy of the CP.
5. Innovation and adaptive practice were not systematically harnessed or institutionalized	One important feature of CP implementation was attention to innovation in response to challenges that arose, and to take advantage of opportunities as they arose. Programme implementation in PNG is necessarily adaptive, given the range of challenges, and for the CP, this was especially true because these challenges were magnified by programmatic complexity. Unfortunately this learning and innovation was not translated into a range of knowledge products that would have both strengthened implementation and contributed to the broader learning about convergence programming.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The experience of convergence programming in PNG brought a key lesson about the conceptual differences and key considerations between convergence programming and cross-sectoral work. In addition, six core lessons are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Lessons Learned**

Lesson Learned	Discussion
1. Set realistic objectives	Delivering in PNG is complex and difficult, resources are often constrained, and new implementation challenges constantly emerge. These problems are magnified in convergence programming. In such an environment, it is important to set realistic objectives.
2. Political economy analysis	A solid political economy analysis that covers the national context but also the specific programme area situation can substantially inform the content and intent of any convergence programming. It informs development of the Theory of Change, with particular reference to enabling and disabling factors, informs the development of the Results Framework, and strengthens the coherence of the project proposal. It also highlights where assumptions may not be valid (e.g., building district capacity in the social sector will help overcome broader district administration constraints, and also allow better delivery to communities).
3. Adapt and innovate	One of the key successes of the CP was its ability to adapt and innovate, critical in a fragile state environment.
4. Formative evaluation	Despite what has been learned from the design and implementation of the CP, and from monitoring and evaluation, the focus, objectives, and overall aims of any further convergence programming needs a final check before a project document is issued to secure financing. A formative evaluation, conducted after the initial political economy analysis, would help ensure that the convergence programme would have the best opportunity to succeed.
5. Focused baseline and endline	A full impact evaluation of a future convergence programme may not be warranted, but a tight, focused baseline-endline design would help support early implementation and assess the efficacy of core programme actions. This requires careful quality control.
6. Decide how to proceed regarding sustainability	Within a development context like PNG, expectations around sustainability should be framed within the context of what is possible. Government is likely not going to be able to deliver at programme levels for a range of reasons, nor is civil society. But strong engagement of various actors at community and local government levels can support both more sustainable results and a greater ability of local actors to press for services and secure additional support.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Six recommendations are offered, each with a justification and additional ideas to be considered in the management response actions. The original recommendations were reviewed and discussed with UNICEF PNG, the Evaluation Reference Group and Evaluation Management at a workshop held involving UNICEF PNG and Evaluation Management from UNICEF APRO in Bangkok and UNICEF PMCO Port Moresby in mid-September 2025. Recommendations are prioritised as ‘high priority’ or ‘medium priority.’ The rationale for each recommendation is included in the elaborated table in Section 8 of the main report.

<b>Recommendations</b>
<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> UNICEF should reaffirm its commitment to <b>the convergence programming approach</b> by clarifying its purpose and value, articulating a clear conceptual framework, and adopting a more strategic, context-sensitive, and realistic approach tailored to Papua New Guinea’s unique implementation environment, and engages government departments at the national, district, and local levels.</p>
<p><b>High Priority:</b> Initiate within the next 6 months and align with the 2026 mid-term review of the 2024–2028 Country Programme.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> UNICEF should update the situation analysis for PNG by incorporating a political economy analysis to ensure that the convergence programming is informed by reasonable assumptions.</p>
<p><b>Medium Priority:</b> Initiate in the next 12-18 months as an input to the drafting of the 2029-2033 Country Programme</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> UNICEF PNG should prioritize the development of knowledge products that consolidate lessons from the convergence programme and develop programme guidance tools to support contextualized convergence programming approaches.</p>
<p><b>High Priority:</b> Initiate within the next 6 months and align with the 2026 mid-term review of the 2024–2028 Country Programme.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> UNICEF PNG should design a Social and Behavior Change Communication framework and/or approach and invest in the capacity building of UNICEF staff and partners to strengthen the demand side programming and community engagement in convergence programming and in other newly <b>initiated programmes</b> to ensure that future programming is grounded in participatory approaches and responsive to local realities.</p>
<p><b>High Priority:</b> Initiate within the next 6 months and align with the 2026 mid-term review of the 2024–2028 Country Programme</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> UNICEF PNG should articulate a clear approach to integrate convergence programming into humanitarian response, and in climate change actions.</p>
<p><b>Medium Priority:</b> Initiate in the next 12-18 months as an input to the drafting of CPD 2029-2032</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> UNICEF PNG should increase advocacy for Government to strengthen broader integration models, including convergence programming where opportunities exist.</p>
<p><b>Medium Priority:</b> Initiate in the next 12-18 months as an input to the drafting of CPD 2029-2032</p>

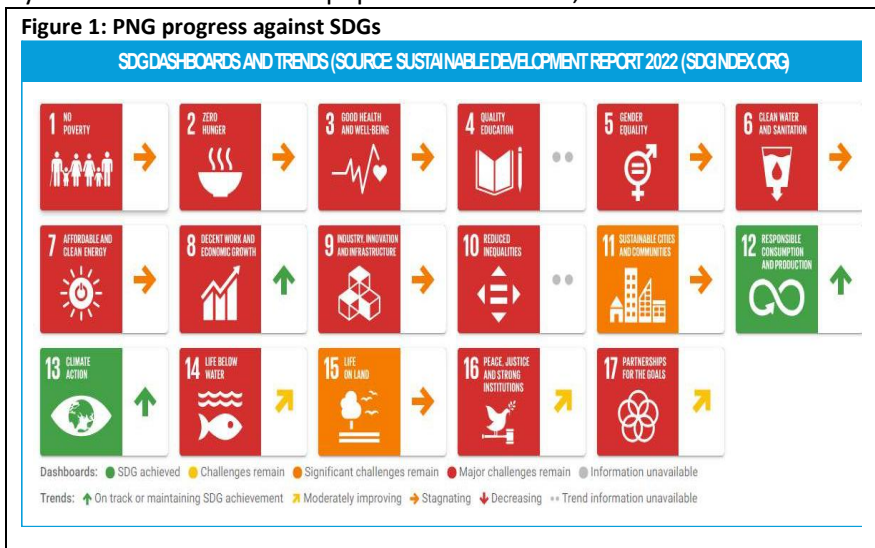
# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents findings from a summative evaluation of the Convergence Programme (CP) in Papua New Guinea (PNG), in Bogia district of Madang Province, and Nawaeb district of Morobe Province. Section 1 provides contextual information on PNG, overviews convergence programming in general and in PNG, describes the purpose, focus and objectives of the evaluation, and describes the evaluation matrix and evaluation questions. Approach and methods are discussed in Section 2. Sections 3-8 present findings against evaluation questions for Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability. Section 9 presents conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations. Presented in Volume 2, annexes include the evaluation matrix, a list of documents consulted, the terms of reference for the evaluation, ethical protocols and approval processes, more detail on methods employed, the stakeholder analysis and the final agreed stakeholder listing, a discussion of the Programme theories of change (there were two developed) and the evaluation Theory of Change (ToC), and the qualitative and quantitative tools used for the evaluation. The evaluation was conducted from March through September 2025.

## 1.2 CONTEXT

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is the largest island state in the Pacific Region, at 462,840km.<sup>2</sup> The country is comprised of over 600 islands and atolls and a population of approximately nine million, 87 percent of which live in rural areas, A significant percentage live in remote locations, many of which are only accessible by air or river transport. Between 800 and 1100 languages are spoken, with the English-based creole language Tok Pisin spoken and understood by over two thirds of the population<sup>3</sup>. In 2024, PNG ranked 169<sup>th</sup> of 191 countries on the Gender Equality Index. Also, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for PNG indicated that 56.6 percent of the population was experiencing multi-dimensional poverty, while an additional 25.3 percent were classified as vulnerable to multi-dimensional poverty<sup>4</sup>. The diverse nature of development challenges in PNG are reflected in poor performance across a wide range of sustainable development goals, as reflected in Figure 1<sup>5</sup>.



For instance, while outdated, data from the 2009 Household Income and Expenditure Survey<sup>6</sup> found that half of all children under the age of five were stunted, reflecting chronic malnutrition. Using measures of dietary

<sup>3</sup> National Statistical Office (2015). Papua New Guinea 2011 National Report, National Population and Housing Census 2011, National Statistical Office, Port Moresby, PNG.

<sup>4</sup> <https://papuanewguinea.un.org/en/264947-united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-2024-2028#:~:text=The%20UNSDCF%20is%20a%20partnership,to%20benefit%20Papua%20New%20Guinea>

<sup>5</sup> <https://papuanewguinea.un.org/en/264947-united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-2024-2028#:~:text=The%20UNSDCF%20is%20a%20partnership,to%20benefit%20Papua%20New%20Guinea>

<sup>6</sup> 2009-2010 Papua New Guinea Household Income and Expenditure Survey, National Statistical Office, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. <https://www.nso.gov.pg/census-surveys/household-and-income-expenditure-survey/>

diversity and meal frequency as a proxy for a good diet, the 2018 Demographic and Health Survey<sup>7</sup> of children 6-23 months found that 68 percent were not receiving sufficiently diverse diets, 56 percent were not receiving a sufficient number of meals per day, while 82 percent did not meet basic requirements for ‘minimum acceptable diet.’

In education, net enrolment rates of approximately 85 percent for the early primary grades were reasonably high. However, enrolment dropped to approximately 58 percent in upper primary while only 20 percent reached secondary school. Girls experienced lower transition rates between grades, and a higher likelihood of not transitioning to upper secondary school and beyond<sup>8</sup>. Estimated at 46 percent gross enrolment in 2018,<sup>9</sup> enrolment in pre-schools was increasing steadily, and while it was concentrated in urban areas, integrated early childhood development centres have expanded in rural provinces. Only one-third of all rural residents had access to water that was clean at the source, while access to basic sanitation was even lower - 15 percent in rural areas and 20 percent in urban areas<sup>10</sup>.

While PNG has a history of democratic government since independence in 1975, there are profound challenges to governance and accountability. Classified as a ‘fragile state’ on the Fragile State Index<sup>11</sup> PNG is fragile along five key dimensions comprising economic foundations, resilience, violence, justice and institutions,<sup>12</sup> each of which undermine the ability of the state and its partners to deliver for its people. As a result, development initiatives face multiple roadblocks when trying to progress towards desired outcomes. Key challenges include lack of accountability reflected in poor service provision and high levels of corruption, social inequality, environmental challenges, a range of humanitarian crises, pockets of instability and high levels of violence, all of which are worsened by climate change and growing challenges to livelihoods especially in rural areas<sup>13</sup>. Also, there is widespread, pervasive violence throughout the country, with long historical roots to “managed conflict” - a conflict resolution mechanism aimed at strengthening social cohesion within ethnic groups and social capital across ethnic groups.<sup>14</sup>

The UNICEF Country Programme Document (CPD) for 2024-2028 highlights vulnerability to the impacts of climate change in an environment where natural disasters are already common, including earthquakes, volcanos, tsunamis, flooding and landslides. Approximately 5 percent of coastal communities have already had to relocate due to intrusion of salt water and rising seas, and this problem is accelerating. In response to the challenge, climate action policy and programming is one of PNG’s areas of major progress against the SDGs, but much remains to be done.

### 1.3 CONVERGENCE PROGRAMMING

---

Broadly defined, convergence is the process of coming together. Applied to development programming, convergence is the integration of two or more distinct entities (e.g., sectors, programmes, departments, agencies, or levels of implementation) to work towards common outcomes in a multiplicative way. Convergence intentionally aligns resources aimed at accelerating achievement of outcomes under a unified logic model that is driven by one or more sectoral theories of change or, ideally, a single integrated theory of

---

<sup>7</sup> National Statistical Office and the DHS Program (2019). Papua New Guinea Demographic and Health Survey 2016-18, National Statistical Office Government of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, in association with the DHS Program Rockville Maryland United States. <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR364/FR364.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> UNICEF (2023). Country Programme Document: Papua New Guinea 2024-2028, United Nations Economic and Social Council, New York, New York, United States. <https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/documents/country-programme-document-papua-new-guinea-srs-2023>

<sup>9</sup> World Bank (2022). Human Capital Country Brief, Papua New Guinea, prepared by the World Bank, Washington DC, United States. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/7c9b64c34a8833378194a026ebe4e247-0140022022/related/HCI-AM22-PNG.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> UNICEF (2023). Country Programme Document: Papua New Guinea 2024-2028, United Nations Economic and Social Council, New York, New York, United States. <https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/documents/country-programme-document-papua-new-guinea-srs-2023>. Also see UNICEF PNG (2022) Sanitation in PNG: Estimating Impacts and Investments Required to Meet Targets, UNICEF PNG, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/2886/file/Sanitation%20in%20PNG.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> PNG is ranked at 78.1 on a scale ranging from Somalia at 111.9, to Norway at 14.5. [https://fragilestatesindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/FSI-2023-Report\\_final.pdf](https://fragilestatesindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/FSI-2023-Report_final.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/developmenttalk/what-fragile-state>

<sup>13</sup> <https://papuaneuineea.un.org/en/284948-common-country-analysis-2024-update>

<sup>14</sup> <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/919221468284385751/pdf/750580REPLACEM0no020Drivers06004014.pdf>

change. Key elements of convergence programming comprise joint planning, financing and implementation of programmes, jointly striving to meet shared goals and results, and in some cases programming in the same geographical locations, all with the aim of delivering cost-effective outcomes.

Defined within the development context as ‘establishing and executing meaningful programmatic linkages that work to achieve greater results’, convergence arose as a strategy in UNICEF out of the necessity to solve the problem of operating in programme silos with resultant inefficiencies, and to achieve better synergies between programmes. It is intended to reduce duplication, overlap and ambiguity between programme interventions, minimise transaction costs for implementing agencies, and maximise human resource efficiency and delivery. Operationally, within UNICEF, convergence is normally sought when highly collaborative programmes pursue multi-sectoral and/or integrated approaches, and also in ‘crosscutting’ programmes such as early childhood development, disability inclusion, climate action and peacebuilding.<sup>15</sup> Overall, convergence tends to follow a life-cycle approach to programming with the emphasis on programming consistent with the life-cycle needs of children and families.

At a global level convergence emerged as an important principle in the formative evaluation of *UNICEF work to link humanitarian and development programming*<sup>16</sup>. This document noted varied types of convergence. This included *organisational convergence*, defined as a process of bringing together the various pillars of the organisation (internal convergence -- vertically, horizontally, functionally) and with its partners (external convergence). It also made reference to *thematic convergence* which occurs when there is coordination and integration across two or more sectors which brings together programming under a common conceptual framework, and with this joint or aligned planning, budgeting and implementation.

*Geographic convergence* refers to multiple sectors working jointly on a common issue in selected geographical areas, usually providing support across the prevention and protection continuum. *Programmatic convergence* refers to focusing on UNICEF-supported programmes within varied sectors and delivering in a manner that brings together the most powerful elements of each. *Multi-level convergence* focuses on bringing different levels of government (national, provincial, district, community) and/or government and civil society to enhance two-way flow of information, knowledge and accountability. Convergence programming can include elements from across these types.

The humanitarian and development programming assessment conducted in 2021<sup>17</sup> found that UNICEF staff primarily understood and practiced convergence in their programming, where feasible, and confirmed that the best drivers of convergence in UNICEF were practices around the implementation of the humanitarian/emergency response where the situation often demands that different sectors plan their activities to address the needs of children in an all-inclusive manner. The formative evaluation recommended that UNICEF should ‘*accelerate programmatic and organisational convergence towards outcomes for children, which included among others codifying convergence into programming guidance using evidence-based approaches, building on the experience of countries that have piloted this successfully, aligning policies, procedures and capacities, and addressing cultural aspects of convergence to incentivise system thinking, enhanced multi-sectoral and comprehensive approaches.*’

Convergence in humanitarian programming has been specified as a commitment within the framework of the UNICEF Core Commitment for Children in Humanitarian Action.<sup>18</sup> Specifically, Commitment 2.2.2 requires all

---

<sup>15</sup> Noij, F. (2012). *Evaluation of the Convergence Approach in UNICEF Supported Programmes in the Pacific, 2008 till 2012: Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu*, evaluation report prepared for UNICEF, Suva, Fiji. <https://evaluationreports.unicef.org/GetDocument?documentID=643&fileID=25188>

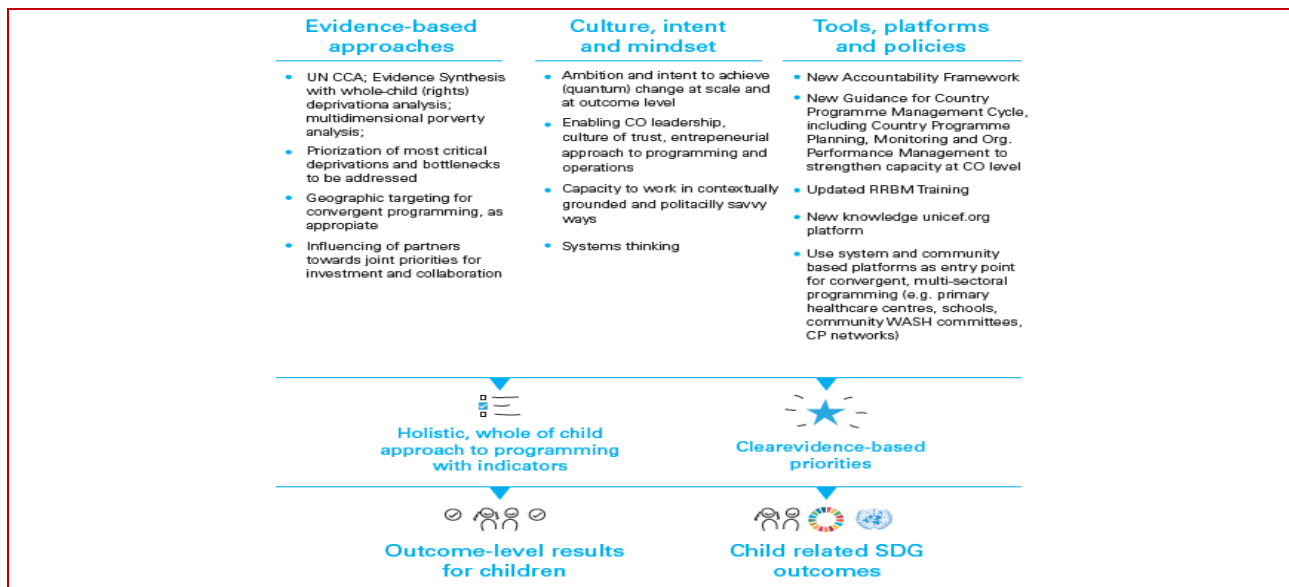
<sup>16</sup> [https://humanitarianoutcomes.org/sites/default/files/publications/formative\\_evaluation\\_of\\_unicef\\_work\\_to\\_link\\_humanitarian\\_and\\_development\\_programming.pdf](https://humanitarianoutcomes.org/sites/default/files/publications/formative_evaluation_of_unicef_work_to_link_humanitarian_and_development_programming.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> [https://humanitarianoutcomes.org/sites/default/files/publications/formative\\_evaluation\\_of\\_unicef\\_work\\_to\\_link\\_humanitarian\\_and\\_development\\_programming.pdf](https://humanitarianoutcomes.org/sites/default/files/publications/formative_evaluation_of_unicef_work_to_link_humanitarian_and_development_programming.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> UNICEF (2020) Core Commitment for Children in Humanitarian Action. UNICEF, New York, New York, United States. <https://www.unicef.org/media/83881/file/Core%20Commitments%20for%20Children.pdf>

UNICEF country offices to ‘foster multisectoral/integrated programming and geographic convergence in all phases of the programmes cycle.’<sup>19</sup> The humanitarian and development programming assessment also offered three core pathways to organisational convergence they contended were relevant to UNICEF when considering how to strengthen the coherence of programming:

**Figure 2: Pathways to Organisational Convergence**



Beyond its utility in strengthening delivery of humanitarian responses, other examples of convergence programming in UNICEF include the Global Programme to End Child Marriage which is implemented in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).<sup>20</sup> In UNICEF programming, the convergence model was employed in early childhood development (ECD) in UNICEF India,<sup>21</sup> the UNICEF Tanzania Country Programme (2016–2022) to enhance early childhood development and adolescent-focused programming, and in UNICEF Pacific (in Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) to support under-served areas at the sub-national level with various programme components focusing on the same geographical locations as well as addressing the developmental needs of children in a holistic manner.

Evaluations of the afore-mentioned programmes paint a picture of a complex approach, some elements of which have matured, while others were in a nascent stage. For instance, thematic convergence across sectors, within agencies, between agencies, and across government sectors was achieved, while geographical convergence was found to be a particular challenge.<sup>22</sup> The evaluation of the programme in UNICEF Tanzania concluded that joint programming, joint resource mobilisation and common funding, clear and understandable theories of change, clear partnership arrangements, and joint monitoring and follow-up were critical in the success of convergence programming.<sup>23</sup> Overall, the evidence suggested that convergence was not always implemented efficiently, constrained by a political, institutional and resourcing context that does not incentivise multi-sectoral programming and collaboration both in UNICEF and with governments. Also, there was a recurring theme - that implementing agencies and partners lacked a common understanding of what convergence programming was, or how it was supposed to be implemented.

<sup>19</sup>Commitment 2.2.2: UNICEF fosters multisectoral/integrated approach and geographic convergence in the design and implementation of its programmes and partnerships. Sector leads are encouraged to operate in the same geographic locations; coordinate the planning, financing and implementation of programmes jointly; contribute to each other’s goals and results, in order to deliver more sustainable, cost-effective and at-scale outcomes.

<sup>20</sup> GPECM is a 15-year programme (2016–2030) that is being implemented in in twelve countries with some of the highest child marriage prevalence in the world (Burkina Faso, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger Sierra Leone, Uganda Yemen and Zambia).

<sup>21</sup> <https://knowledge.unicef.org/resource/convergent-approach-early-childhood-development-learnings-maharashtra-aarambh-programme>

<sup>22</sup> UNICEF (2023). Joint Evaluation of UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage, 2020-2023

<sup>23</sup> Mokoro (2021). *Evaluation of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and UNICEF Country Programme 2016-2022*, Mokoro for the UNICEF ESARO Evaluation Office

## 1.4 OVERVIEW OF THE PNG CONVERGENCE PROGRAMME

Convergence was articulated as a programme strategy in PNG in the UNICEF Country Programme Document for PNG (CPD, 2018-22)<sup>24</sup> to “*maximise efficiency and delivery of results for children*. The approach was aimed at synchronizing services across health, nutrition, education, child protection, and WASH, and to address systemic bottlenecks such as gender inequality and multidimensional child poverty. The 2018–2022 CPD emphasized targeting the most deprived provinces, strengthening systems, and mainstreaming resilience and disaster risk reduction.

The first attempt to implement convergence in UNICEF PNG programming was in 2018, in Hagen Central District. This effort was delayed by a succession of disasters – a destructive earthquake, a measles outbreak, as well as the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges were further exacerbated by “weak capacities of implementing partners, confronting security challenges, and limited commitment from traditional authorities”<sup>25</sup>. When the opportunity and funding for a new convergence programme materialized, geographic convergence was prioritized, and Nawaeb and Bogia districts – two of the most disadvantaged provinces - were selected. The *Convergence Programme* in Nawaeb and Bogia districts is the subject of this evaluation.

Designed in 2021 and implemented from January 2022, the *Convergence Programme* for the in Nawaeb Bogia districts specified an overall aim to have “*children and adolescents in PNG grow up and thrive in stimulating, safe and protective environments*.” The programme design coincided with the development of the new UNICEF PNG Country Programme Document, (CPD, 2024-2028). Consequently, the programme targeted five work streams (education, child protection, water sanitation and hygiene, health and nutrition, and social policy<sup>26</sup>), with the aim of contributing towards two results areas of CPD, 2024-2028, namely:

- 1) To address disadvantages in the early years so that infants and young children get the best start in life (*survive and thrive*) in targeted districts
- 2) To protect and empower adolescent girls, boys, and those of other gender identities to reach their full potential (*transform*) in targeted communities.

A comprehensive stakeholder analysis was conducted in the two districts, featuring consultations with government departments, local authorities, faith-based partners and rights-holders (see Annex C). Also, an evaluability assessment was completed in 2022.<sup>27</sup> The final proposal for the convergence programme was signed in September 2022 by UNICEF PNG Office, UNICEF Australia and UNICEF Aotearoa New Zealand<sup>28</sup> with support from the governments of Australia and New Zealand. The programme budget was approximately USD4 million, with a completion date of 31 July, 2025 - a total time of 3.5 years.

In Bogia, the main Implementing Partners were faith-based organisations linked to the Archdiocese of Madang, while Evangelical Lutheran Church of PNG was the main Implementing Partner for Nawaeb District.

The Programme Document highlighted linkages to the SDGs and other key commitments as follows:

SDGs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 16  
CRC Articles: 6, 7, 12, 19, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29  
PNG Dev Plan: key result areas 2, 3, 5, 6, 7  
UNDAF: outcome 1, sub-outcomes 1.1, 1.2, 1.3  
Country Programmes: Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6  
UNICEF Strategic Plan: Goal Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

<sup>24</sup> UNICEF (2017). *Country Programme Document Papua New Guinea*, UNICEF, New York, New York, United States.

[https://sites.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2017-PL12-Papua\\_New\\_Guinea-CPD-ODS-EN.pdf?\\_gl=1\\*4zc7zq\\*\\_gcl\\_au\\*NjAyNjk4ODU5LjE3NDQ2NTU0MDU.\\*\\_ga\\*MTg4NzY5MDE5OS4xNzQ0NjU1NDA1\\*\\_ga\\_P0DMSZ8KY6\\*MTc0NTM4Mjc4NS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNi4wLjA.\\*\\_ga\\_BCSVVE74RB\\*MTc0NTM4NTEyOS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNy4wLjA.\\*\\_ga\\_ZEPV2PX419\\*MTc0NTM4Mjc4NS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTEzOC41MC4wLjA](https://sites.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2017-PL12-Papua_New_Guinea-CPD-ODS-EN.pdf?_gl=1*4zc7zq*_gcl_au*NjAyNjk4ODU5LjE3NDQ2NTU0MDU.*_ga*MTg4NzY5MDE5OS4xNzQ0NjU1NDA1*_ga_P0DMSZ8KY6*MTc0NTM4Mjc4NS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNi4wLjA.*_ga_BCSVVE74RB*MTc0NTM4NTEyOS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNy4wLjA.*_ga_ZEPV2PX419*MTc0NTM4Mjc4NS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTEzOC41MC4wLjA)

<sup>25</sup> UNICEF PNG (2022). *Negotiated Partnership Activity Design Document Reimagined Convergence: Achieving Results for Every Child and Adolescent across sector in Select Geographic Areas in Papua New Guinea*, UNICEF PNG, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Page 17.

<sup>26</sup> In some Programme documentation, the reference is to six programme areas, with nutrition separated from health. For this evaluation report, five programme areas are referenced consistent with the programme reporting protocols.

<sup>27</sup> Bala (2022). *Evaluability Assessment of UNICEF Papua New Guinea Convergence Programme*, Port Moresby.

<sup>28</sup> UNICEF PNG (2022). *Negotiated Partnership Activity Design Document Reimagined Convergence: Achieving Results for Every Child and Adolescent across sector in Select Geographic Areas in Papua New Guinea*, UNICEF PNG, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

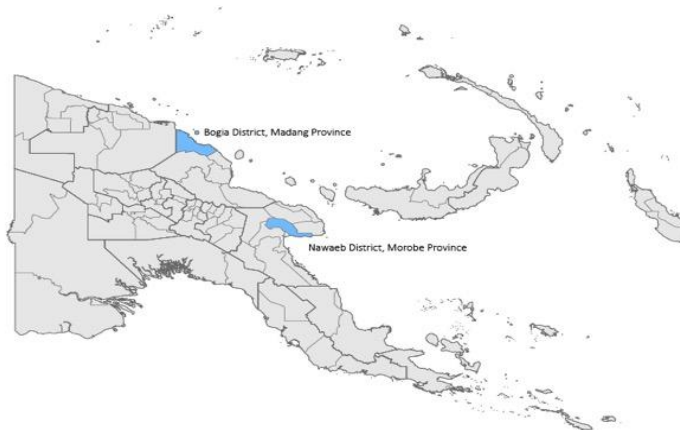
The programme was intended to partner with Government authorities at the district and provincial levels as co-implementers, as well as Government counterparts at the national level (i.e., National Department of Education, National Department of Health, the PNG Civil Identity Registry, and the National Office of Children Services and Family).

## 1.5 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME DISTRICTS

The Convergence Programme was implemented in selected locations in Bogia District in Madang Province and Nawaeb District in Morobe Province. The two districts were selected because of ‘persistent low achievement on multiple child rights indicators.’ The Programme was indicated as being implemented in close collaboration with provincial authorities in Morobe and Madang provinces and district authorities in Nawaeb and Bogia districts, respectively. The population that was anticipated to benefit from the programme was estimated at 62,000 in Nawaeb District, and 116,000 in Bogia District.

The two districts were selected because they fell into two provinces that had high levels of child deprivation (two of eight provinces identified with the highest levels of child deprivation), and where there was substantial implementation of UNICEF-supported programmes.

Figure 3: Map of Bogia and Nawaeb districts<sup>29</sup>



According to a household survey conducted as part of the evaluation, the key attributes of the Programme Area’s population are as follows:

- Gender of household head: 83.8 percent male; 84.0 percent Nawaeb, 83.1 percent Bogia
- Household membership by gender: 54.5 percent female, 45.5 percent male
- Population aged 0-4: 8 percent; 0-17 years 36.7 percent; 18+ 55.3 percent
- Marital status (aged 14+): 55.2 percent married, 36.6 percent never married
- Main occupation of household members (aged 10+): smallholder agriculture/home-focused 44.1 percent, attending school 31.7 percent, formal employment 10.4 percent, small business 4.2 percent, piece work/seasonal 5.1 percent
- Education status: 2.3 percent none, some/completed primary 49.5 percent, some/completed secondary 26.6 percent, higher than secondary 13.9 percent
- Persons with disabilities: 5 percent, most common were visual and hearing issues not corrected by devices
- Orphan status: 86.4 percent non-orphans, 13.6 percent orphans (most paternal orphans)
- Child-headed households: 0.5 percent
- Children under 18 married: 0.5 percent
- Household ever relocated: 51 percent
- Household members speak local language: 77.6 percent; 81.3 percent Nawaeb, 66.3 percent Bogia
- Speak and comprehend Tok Pisin: 98.4 percent
- Household members similar ethnicity as most of community: 83.5 percent; 87.1 percent Nawaeb, 72.5 percent Bogia

<sup>29</sup> Map from UNICEF PNG (2022). *Reimagined Convergence: Achieving Results for Every Child and Adolescent across sectors in Select Geographic Areas in Papua New Guinea*, UNICEF PNG, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

- Households caring for other household's children because parents could not do so: 16.6 percent; 17.7 percent Nawaeb, 12.4 percent Bogia
- Household has on-property water supply: 47.3 percent, higher in Nawaeb District than Bogia District
- One-quarter of households had waterborne sanitation on the property, and half had pit latrines. Half of all households had handwashing facilities on the property
- Half of all households had a sanitary means of solid waste disposal
- Less than 10 percent of properties were rating as 'unclean'
- One-third faced some sort of on-property risk associated with landslides of flood potential, and one-third were concerned about safety concerns around busy roads, but few other risks were mentioned

There are some measures that suggest specific vulnerabilities, including half of all households having been relocated, lack of local language skills and belonging to a minority ethnic group (all more problematic for Bogia than Nawaeb), high dependency ratios, few households with a member in formal employment, and some environmental risks. In addition, almost one-in-seven children were single or double orphans, and a similar percentage were looking after children from other households because the immediate family could not do so. Other measures point away from particular vulnerabilities, including low levels of identified disabilities, few child marriages, few child-headed households, high levels of Tok Pisin comprehension, while some 40 percent had at least some secondary schooling.

## 1.6 RATIONALE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATION

---

A summative evaluation was planned in the design of the programme, to 'review... the added value of operating through convergent outcomes.'<sup>30</sup> The **purpose** of the evaluation was *"to assess the contribution of the convergence programme in addressing disadvantages in the early years [in the selected districts] so that infants and young children got the best start in life and adolescent girls, boys and those of other gender identities are protected and empowered to reach their full potential."* Also, there was a stated intent that the evaluation would serve to provide rigorous evidence *"to inform any redesign and replication of a Convergence Programme within the new Country Programme of Cooperation (2024-2028)."*

The evaluation specified three **objectives** as follows:

1. To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and sustainability of the Convergence Programme from its inception to the present, with particular focus on equity, gender equality and disability inclusion, convergence of programme components and achieving results, as well as the strategic positioning of UNICEF in relation to its child rights mandate.
2. To identify and document key lessons learned, good practices and innovations in implementing the Convergence Programme that can inform and support advocacy for replication.
3. To provide a set of forward-looking and actionable recommendations to strengthen programmatic strategies in the design and replication of the Convergence Programme, taking into consideration national development priorities and plans and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the country.

The tools employed for data collection and analysis paid due attention to equity, gender and disability inclusion.

The **temporal scope** of the evaluation was originally specified as 2021-2024. However, it was adjusted to accommodate the end date of June 2025, extending the temporal scope of the evaluation from the design phase in 2021 through mid-2025. The **geographical scope** of the evaluation was national in terms of UNICEF operations, at the provincial level in terms of the involvement the Government of PNG, and at district level in the two Programme districts of Nawaeb and Bogia and in reached communities. The **thematic scope** of the evaluation focused on assessing progress towards intended Programme outcomes, with attention to the efficacy of convergence programming as well as the value added through engaging across the core

---

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/17001/file/2023-PL18-Papua-New-Guinea-CEP-EN-2023-06-13.pdf>

programming sectors of health and nutrition, education, WASH, social policy, and child protection. The scope did not include specific attention to humanitarian programming, as this was not a stated objective of the CP. However, the scope did include adaptive programming with findings relevant to humanitarian programming.

Evaluation users comprise UNICEF PNG (primary), as well as the Government of PNG, donors supporting the Convergence Programme (including UNICEF Australia, which manages funding from the Australian Government, the Government of New Zealand, and other private and institutional donors), and other UNICEF country offices and UNICEF EAPRO.

Overall, the evaluation used robust criteria. However, the convergence programme was implemented in a fragile state, and took on many attributes of an adaptive programme, factors which the evaluation took into considerations.

## CHAPTER 2. APPROACH AND METHODS

---

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

---

This section elaborates the overall approach to the evaluation, discusses the programme Theory of Change and the simplified version that was used in this evaluation, elaborates the specific methods employed, presents the stakeholder analysis, indicates ethical procedures employed for the evaluation, and explains analysis and reporting procedures followed.

More detail is presented following annexes in Volume 2 of this report as follows:

- Annex B provides further information on ethical protocols
- Annex C provides the full stakeholder analysis
- Annex D provides more detail on methods
- Annex E includes the original theory of change as Figure 1 and the revised theory of change which formed the basis for the evaluation theory of change presented as Table 4 below.

### 2.2. APPROACH

---

The evaluation employed a **mixed-methods approach** inclusive of **participatory approaches** within the framework of qualitative tools utilised at community level. After due consideration of the Theory of Change and discussion with the UNICEF evaluation oversight team and considering that the ToR included reference to a theory-based evaluation, the evaluation also included an adapted **theory-based approach**.

The **mixed-methods approach** included quantitative, qualitative and participatory methods. The varied tools covered many of the same evaluation questions to support triangulation of findings, including across qualitative tools. The **participatory approach** included rights-holders and duty-bearers at community level. This included the use of *venn diagrams* focused on how influence and authority manifest around programming at community level, and the employment of a *story with a gap* approach to envision improved futures and consider enabling and disabling factors.

- Mixed-methods
- Participatory
- Theory-based

Because of the **adaptive nature** of how the Programme has been implemented, the evaluation also included a brief and focused ‘crowd-sourcing recommendations’ exercise with UNICEF PNG personnel to understand how the Programme evolved over time, where it coped well and where it did not, and what that might mean for future convergence programming. This included the identification of outcomes that emerged versus outcomes that were anticipated, and how this varied due to adaptation.

Relatedly, PNG has characteristics of a *fragile state*<sup>31</sup> despite its middle-income status, hence the evaluation approach acknowledges the many challenges facing development programming in the country. For these reasons, the field instruments explored progress towards outcomes and how these had been redefined as implementation proceeded due to fragile state factors, and what this meant for Programme outcomes.

On the **theory-based approach**<sup>32</sup>, a review of programme materials and discussions held with UNICEF PNG programme staff led to the development of a much simplified evaluation-focused theory of change based on the revised theory of change (ToC) contained in the programme proposal.<sup>33</sup> The ToC was simplified to reflect key aspects of implementation and to assess the veracity (or lack thereof) of stated assumptions. Specifically,

---

<sup>31</sup> See the OECD publication [States of Fragility 2022](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/states-of-fragility-2022_c7fedf5e-en.html), OECD Publishing, Paris [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/states-of-fragility-2022\\_c7fedf5e-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/states-of-fragility-2022_c7fedf5e-en.html)

<sup>32</sup> See the full discussion of the theory of change in Annex E.

<sup>33</sup> See UNICEF PNG (2022). [Negotiated Partnership Activity Design Document Reimagined Convergence: Achieving Results for Every Child and Adolescent across sector in Select Geographic Areas in Papua New Guinea](#), UNICEF PNG, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

a review of the ‘because’ statements and a number of the assumptions highlight the ambition of the convergence programme. For these reasons, the ‘translation’ of these points into the results framework itself were rather considered in terms of ‘progress towards’ these elements of the ToC as expressed through output and outcome statements. This revised ToC allows a better understanding of the complexity of the implementation environment, the challenges facing convergence programming, and the importance of strengthened processes of implementation that would be expected to ‘deliver’ positive programme outcomes.<sup>34</sup> The **Evaluation Theory of Change** was therefore described as reflected in Table 4.

**Table 4: Evaluation theory of change statements**

IF	THEN	BECAUSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District, ward and community level duty-bearers are capacitated and supported to better deliver in an integrated manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duty-bearers will engage in programming in a manner reflecting a better understanding of the benefits of convergence</li> <li>Duty-bearers recognise the value added in collaborating across sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP has strengthened capacity and systems at district level in Bogia and Nawaeb districts in a manner relevant to their delivery of services to rights-holders</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights holders in target districts have been reached with behaviour change communications</li> <li>Rights holders in target districts are reached with improved services in an integrated fashion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights-holders are aware of Programme components and intentions and view these as desirable</li> <li>Rights-holders perceive improvements across a range of relevant social services</li> <li>Rights-holders recognise the value added in securing a range of relevant social services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner that has engaged local authorities in a meaningful manner, strengthening commitment to this service delivery</li> <li>The Convergence Programme and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner and at such a level that rights-holders recognise the value of this programming</li> </ul>

The simplified theory of change statements cover the two core components of the convergence programme: 1) strengthening and enabling decentralised duty-bearers and local actors to deliver; and 2) providing services in a manner that shows results for rights-holders. The extent and nature of this as it occurred under the convergence programme– as noted above within the framework of adaptive programming in a fragile-state environment – was a key focus of the evaluation. The original ToC had a wide range of assumptions that proved to be less important for the implementation of the programme (e.g., that Covid-19 will continue to affect programme implementation) or not assumptions to be tested but part of the results chain (e.g., that social service sector actors achieve minimum capacity to deliver).

The evaluation, therefore, is broader than just the application of the evaluation ToC theory-based approach. While the evaluation ToC allowed the theory-based approach to the evaluation to focus on what emerged as the Programme proceeded, the broader CP was assessed against what the Programme said it was going to do. These latter aspects of the evaluation are aligned with the evaluation matrix, hence the evaluation has proceeded along the lines of assessing programme performance against its own objectives and also along the lines of how the CP adapted to circumstances within the context of a fragile state environment.

### 2.3 PROGRAMME STAKEHOLDERS

UNICEF PNG engaged a variety of stakeholders in the convergence and collaborated with partners national, subnational and community level. On the side of the government, the main partners were the provincial and district officials, duty-bearers who are primarily responsible for the protection, promotion and fulfilment of children’s rights. Other partners include United Nations agencies, multilateral development banks, bilateral donors, civil society and non-governmental organizations, academia, the media and the private sector. The intended beneficiaries were children, while community members, parents/caregivers benefitted from capacity enhancement activities.





<sup>34</sup> The Evaluation Matrix reflects the Programme Theory of Change, as this was developed first. The Evaluation theory of change is consistent with the Evaluation Matrix overall, with the findings presented as overall evaluation criteria level.

The initial stakeholder list used during the development of the programme was updated to include individuals who were involved at all levels of implementation, and to exclude individuals not involved in the programme. This process created a focused stakeholder list, while also highlighting gaps where participation was expected but absent. These gaps formed part of the evaluation findings and are reflected under relevant criteria. Table 5 provides a list stakeholder map for the convergence programme and their roles and an assessment of their influence. A high level of influence (green box) denotes a major role in the convergence programme. A medium level of influence (blue box) means that the stakeholder group has a secondary or supportive role, while a low level of influence (yellow box) means that this stakeholder group has a limited or indirect role in the convergence programme.

**Table 5: Stakeholder groups involved in the convergence programme, by category**

Stakeholder Group	Description of Stakeholders	Stakeholder role(s) and influence					
		Planning & Design	Implementation & Coordination	Monitoring & Evaluation	Resource Mobilization	Advocacy & Innovations	Accountability
<b>UNICEF Staff and Consultants</b>							
<b>UNICEF Country Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representative, Deputy Representative (Programmes), and Deputy Representative (Operations) and Programme Chiefs</li> </ul>						
<b>UNICEF Programme Teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health, Education, WASH, Child Protection, Social Policy teams and Programme Chiefs</li> </ul>						
<b>UNICEF Regional Office (EAPRO)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Programme Advisors</li> </ul>						
<b>UNICEF Partners (Government of PNG)</b>							
<b>Government Partners (National)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Department of Education (NDOE), Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS), National Department of Health (NDOH), Department of Justice and the Attorney General, Minister for Public Enterprises, Department of Finance and Treasury, Teachers Service Commission, Pacific Institute of Leadership and Governance, PNG Education Institute, National Research Institute, National Maritime Safety Authority</li> </ul>						
<b>Sub national (District)</b>	<b>Nawaeb (Morobe Province)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nawaeb District Administration, Nawaeb District Division of Education, Nawaeb District Division of Health, Department for Community Development, Department of Agriculture and Livestock, Division of Law and Justice, Morobe Special Education Resource Center.</li> </ul>						
	<b>Bogia (Madang Province)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Madang Provincial Health Authority, Madang Provincial Administration, District Development Authority, Department of Community Development, Catholic District Administration, District Administration,</li> </ul>						
<b>UNICEF Partners (other key stakeholders)</b>							
<b>UN agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UN Women</li> </ul>						
<b>Development Partners / Donors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNICEF New Zealand/Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), New Zealand</li> <li>UNICEF Australia/Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia</li> </ul>						
<b>Civil society and/or</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Save the Children PNG, Plan International, ADRA PNG, Susu Mama Inc, Rotarians Against Malaria, National</li> </ul>						

Stakeholder Group	Description of Stakeholders	Stakeholder role(s) and influence					
		Planning & Design	Implementation & Coordination	Monitoring & Evaluation	Resource Mobilization	Advocacy & Innovations	Accountability
	Early Childhood Development Alliance, Volunteer Service Overseas, Lutheran Health Services, LLG Ward members and Ward Recorders, World Vision.	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue
<b>Faith-Based Organization (FBO) Implementing Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Council of Churches, Evangelical Lutheran Church, Catholic Church Health Services, Archdiocese of Madang, SDA Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church</li> </ul>	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
<b>Private Sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telecommunications companies, Dekenai Construction, RN Sons Construction.</li> </ul>		Green				
<b>Beneficiaries of UNICEF-supported programmes/services</b>							
<b>Community &amp; Recipients</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families, communities, children, Youth Advisory Group and adolescents</li> </ul>	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue

<b>Legend</b>	 <b>High influence:</b> direct and major role	 <b>Medium influence:</b> secondary, supportive role	 <b>Low influence:</b> limited or indirect involvement	 <b>No influence: no role or involvement</b>
---------------	--	---	---	---







A list of stakeholders who participated in the evaluation is provided in Annex C, by position/designation, to preserve their anonymity,

## 2.4 METHODS AND PROCESS

**Desk-based document review:** A wide range of materials were assembled and reviewed during the Inception Phase. These documents were systematically reviewed and marked up to be used in developing field instruments and report preparation. A list of these documents is included in the final section of this report. In addition, two scoping missions were conducted by senior team members during the Inception Phase.

**Data collection:** Field-based data collection was conducted in both Programme provinces and districts of Bogia District in Madang Province and Nawaeb District in Morobe Province. In addition, interviews were held with UNICEF PNG personnel during two rounds of visits during the Inception Phase. The total number of duty-bearers and rights-holders that were interviewed is reflected in Table 6, as well as the data collection method employed.

**Table 6: Sampling**

Approach	Strategy	Number
UNICEF PNG Interviewees 	Interviews with UNICEF PNG officers at management level and involved in the Programme implementation	3 in management (multiple engagements) 5 in Programme implementation (most multiple engagements) Group meetings/discussions
Provincial and District Level Key Informant Interviews 	Stakeholder listing of provincial and district officials and non-state actors involved with the Programme No Provincial Level stakeholders were identified in Madang	0 provincial Madang 3 provincial Morobe 3 DLKII Nawaeb 3 DLKII Bogia 3 LLKII Bogia
Local Key Informant Interviewees 	Stakeholder listing of local actors involved in Programme implementation or backstopping No Local Level stakeholders were identified in Nawaeb	0 in Nawaeb 3 in Bogia
Focus Group Discussions 	Focus group discussions with community members (rights-holders) men’s groups, woman’s groups and youth groups	6 FGDs and 37 FGD participants in Nawaeb (17 female and 20 male) 6 FGDs and 36 FGD participants in Bogia (24 female and 12 male)
WASH Case Studies 	Observation checklist of 7 WASH infrastructure facilities at 5 ECD centres and 2 health centres Identification of local officials responsible for overseeing the infrastructure as part of their local duties	4 in Nawaeb 3 in Bogia
Quantitative Questionnaire 	Randomly selected household in areas of Programme reach Comparison of endline findings against baseline findings	776 (as with baseline) 404 interviews in Nawaeb (232 females, 172 males) 368 interviews in Bogia (193 females, 175 males)

## 2.5 DATA ASSEMBLY AND ANALYSIS

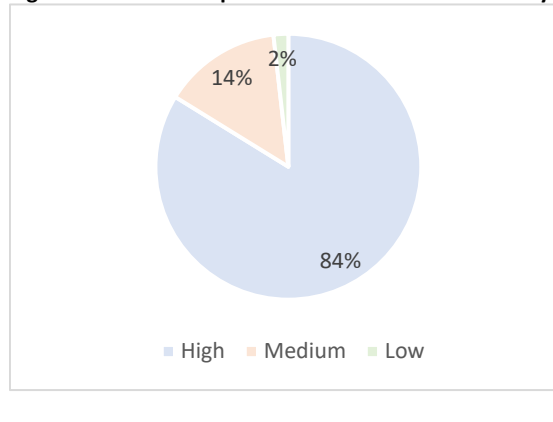
**Analysis of qualitative data:** Qualitative interviews were recorded and transcribed by a team that was responsible for qualitative data collection, under the supervision of a quality-control supervisor. Transcripts were analyzed using ATLAS.ti.

**Analysis of quantitative data:** Quantitative data were collected using CAPI, which generated a dataset that was analyzed using SPSS software. Baseline data file could not be obtained, hence no statistical tests of change over time. Statistical tests were conducted only for comparisons between the two districts, while baseline-to-endline comparisons relied on descriptive analysis. Instead, the evaluation generated summaries of findings from the baseline report for comparison with endline results.

Levels of cooperation for the endline survey were very high, with less than 2 percent of all respondents reported as uncooperative; even in these cases the questionnaires were fully administered.

The use of a range of qualitative tools inclusive of participatory elements and the endline survey, coupled with the extensive interviews conducted with UNICEF PNG personnel during inception, supported effective triangulation of findings. This triangulation was further supported by the number of interviews conducted using each tool, ensuring that conclusions drawn from the findings were based on robust evidence. And it was supported by the wide range of stakeholders being interviewed, including both rights-holders and duty-bearers, the latter at community level, local government level, district level, provincial level, and national level. These field findings were integrated with reporting from secondary materials to respond to each evaluation criteria.

Figure 4: Level of cooperation in the household survey



Contribution statements were validated in several ways, namely: 1) the extensive interviews with UNICEF PNG personnel up front informed how to measure against key variables, critical given the adaptive nature of Programme implementation; 2) the follow-on workshop with the UNICEF PNG personnel to consider findings, lessons learned and recommendations, as well as to consider actual outcomes, and how they came about; 3) direct interview questions on contribution; and 4) the development of the evaluation ToC, and its review during the Participatory Workshop.

## 2.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical protocols were followed to ensure that the Convergence Programme evaluation and endline survey strictly adhered to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation<sup>35</sup>, the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System<sup>36</sup>, the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation, the United Nations Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse<sup>37</sup>, the UNICEF Evaluation Policy, the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis<sup>38</sup>, the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women<sup>39</sup>, the United Nations Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Disability Statistics<sup>40</sup>, and the Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS) quality standards. The evaluation also followed UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation. The evaluation report is consistent with UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Reports standards and Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS) review criteria and prepared according to the UNICEF Style Guide, UNICEF Publication Toolkit and UNICEF Brand Toolkit.

Three ethical approval processes were followed, based on UNICEF requirements and requirements specific to PNG. For UNICEF, their ethical approval process was followed and approval secured after fulfilling all requirements. In addition, for PNG, ethical approval applications were submitted to the Medical Research Advisory Committee and the National Department of Education’s Research & Evaluation Steering Committee because of the content of the evaluation. A more detailed description of the protocols and procedures is provided in Annex D.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866>

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

<sup>37</sup> [https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/sites/www.un.org.preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/files/un\\_protocol\\_on\\_sea\\_allegations\\_involving\\_implementing\\_partners\\_en.pdf](https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/sites/www.un.org.preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/files/un_protocol_on_sea_allegations_involving_implementing_partners_en.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/documents/unicef-procedure-ethical-standards-research-evaluation-data-collection-and-analysis>

<sup>39</sup> [https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/65893/WHO\\_FCH\\_GWH\\_01.1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/65893/WHO_FCH_GWH_01.1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)

<sup>40</sup> [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/seriesy/seriesy\\_10e.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/seriesy/seriesy_10e.pdf)

## 2.7 LIMITATIONS AND MITIGATION

As with most development programmes where it is not feasible or practicable to create a comparison group to isolate the effects of the programme, or where it may be unethical, the evaluation could not attribute the observed results solely to the activities of the convergence programme, hence a contribution analysis was employed. However, three limitations were identified as key, namely; (i) non-availability of the dataset from the household survey that was conducted at the beginning of the implementation period; (ii) non-use of the programme theory of change; and, (iii) limited monitoring and/or reporting data on outcome indicators. Table 7 presents the limitations, and strategies to mitigate the effects of the limitations.

**Table 7: Limitations and mitigation strategies/factors**

Limitations	Mitigation strategies
<p>1. Empirical/methodological: The baseline dataset for the household survey conducted at the start of the programme was not available for comparative analysis</p>	<p>Three actions were employed to mitigate the negative impacts of not having the baseline database:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To the extent possible, questions from the baseline survey were included in the end-line survey to allow comparison of measures over time.</li> <li>• The same locations were used in both the baseline and endline surveys.</li> <li>• Comparisons were made with the published results of the baseline survey and reported in the evaluation. These quantitative comparisons were supported by findings from the qualitative methods employed for the evaluation, as well as monitoring data, to further contextualize comparisons.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Analytical: The theory of change (ToC) that was developed and approved during the design of the programme was difficult to operationalize in the implementation of the programme. As a result, significant divergence emerged between what was specified in the ToC and what was implemented.</p>	<p>A simplified ToC was developed and used in the evaluation, which was an adaptation of the original ToC that was consistent with actual CP intent and implementation. Some of the outcomes that were elaborated in the results framework and did guide implementation were included in the evaluation ToC which, partially mitigated the lack of utilization of the original ToC.</p>
<p>3. Progress reporting against the CP was poor, comprising only spotty sectoral reporting. Outcome reporting only covered presentation of some indicator evaluations and no presentation of outcomes overall. Results monitoring was limited and took place on an ad hoc basis within some of the sectoral tracking. There was virtually no reporting on measures that would inform an understanding of coherence in programming</p>	<p>The production of the end-of-programme report by UNICEF PNG that included reporting against all output and outcome indicators provided a valuable data point for the evaluation. This information was incorporated into the revised evaluation report focused on the measure of effectiveness. Field instruments were elaborated to seek insights into results as possible.</p>

## CHAPTER 3. RELEVANCE

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

**Relevance: Is the intervention doing the right thing?** Relevance entails examining the extent to which the intervention’s objectives and design respond to the target group’s needs and priorities, as well as alignment with national, global and partner/institution policies and priorities

The relevance chapter provided an assessment of the extent to which the convergence programme was “doing the right thing” for children, adolescents, families, and local duty-bearers in keeping with the evaluation criterion. The analysis explores whether the programme was designed and implemented in ways that responded appropriately to the needs and priorities of rights-holders in Bogia and Nawaeb districts, and whether these efforts aligned with national and institutional policies and priorities.

The enquiry begins by assessing the theory of change as it relates to relevance, which includes testing assumptions about strengthened district- and community-level capacity, improved service delivery, and the value that rights-holders place on integrated, cross-sectoral interventions. The chapter also considers the broader contextual fit of the programme vis-à-vis UNICEF strategic objectives and the operational capacities of implementing partners. It concludes by highlighting where relevance was strong, where it was undermined, and what this means for future convergence programming in PNG.

### 3.2 THEORY OF CHANGE: RELEVANCE

First, the evaluation examined theory of change (ToC) claims that have a bearing on whether the objectives and design of the intervention responded to the needs and priorities of the target groups (rights holders) and whether the programme was aligned with policies and priorities of the government (duty bearers). Table 8 indicates, by and large, that the converge programme was relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries with some significant flaws that undermined relevance.

**Table 8: Assessment against theory of change: relevance**

IF	THEN	BECAUSE	STATUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District, ward and community level duty-bearers are capacitated and supported to better deliver in an integrated manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duty-bearers will engage in programming in a manner reflecting a better understanding of the benefits of convergence</li> <li>Duty-bearers recognise the value added in collaborating across sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP has strengthened capacity and systems at district level in Bogia and Nawaeb districts in a manner relevant to their delivery of services to rights-holders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery was successful, but it did not yield strengthened cross-sectoral engagement nor convergent delivery across sectors at local level. Undermined by assumptions and design challenges</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights holders in target districts have been reached with behaviour change communications</li> <li>Rights holders in target districts are reached with improved services in an integrated fashion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights-holders are aware of Programme components and intentions and view these as desirable</li> <li>Rights-holders perceive improvements across a range of relevant social services</li> <li>Rights-holders recognise the value added in securing a range of relevant social services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner that has engaged local authorities in a meaningful manner, strengthening commitment to this service delivery</li> <li>The Convergence Programme and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner and at such a level that rights-holders recognise the value of this programming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery successful, rights-holders positive around what was delivered mostly because they appreciated any support. However, engagement of local actors remained sectoral and did not build ‘convergence’ across sectors nor with local authorities</li> </ul>

Overall, the programme was relevant to the needs of rights-holders, supported by the strength of UNICEF in delivering results in individual sectors and the presence of a coordinator, though limited by broader human resource constraints. Awareness of the convergence programme was high, with many households familiar

with multiple components. Community members who participated in local government and faith-based organisations also understood the concept of convergence and the overall goals of the programme. However, the relevance was weakened by assumptions that districts would engage productively with communities. In reality, the disconnect between districts and communities was significant, with no measures in place to address it.

The concept of convergence was compelling, and efforts to engage duty-bearers demonstrated a strong intent to ensure the CP's contextual relevance. This was reinforced by lessons from sectoral programming and alignment with broader UNICEF PNG priorities. However, the programme's theory of change was overly ambitious, relying on flawed assumptions about the logic of convergence, its design, and implementation. Only the geographical targeting of two of PNG's poorest provinces provided a higher degree of relevance.

Relevance was weakened by the lack of sustained engagement with rights-holders during design and implementation. Instead, efforts focused on faith-based partners (e.g., Archdiocese of Madang for Bogia District and Evangelical Lutheran Church of PNG for Nawaeb District) and local officials, assuming they represented community needs. In a context with limited services, translating beneficiaries' needs into viable programming was challenging, as communities welcomed any intervention. The most critical gap was the absence of consistent, on-the-ground engagement with diverse groups. The approach relied on assumptions that intermediaries would manage engagement effectively, that selected partners had sufficient local presence, or that service delivery alone would meet needs.

- The concept of convergence was highly relevant to the PNG context.
- Integrating strong elements of sectoral programming into the CP aligned well with population needs across multiple sectors. However, weak cross-sectoral coordination during implementation reduced this relevance.
- Limited and inconsistent community engagement further undermined the relevance as implementation progressed.
- Focusing on district capacity development proved less relevant given severe operational challenges at that level

### 3.3 FINDINGS: RELEVANCE TO THE NEEDS OF RIGHTS HOLDERS

---

**EQ1:** How relevant is the convergence approach to programming vis-à-vis sectoral programming, and to what extent is it consistent with the needs of rights-holders?

**EQ1.1:** To what extent has a convergence approach to programming been able to target the most vulnerable rights-holders?

**EQ1.2:** How relevant is convergence programming compared to traditional sectoral programme delivery modes?

#### 3.3.1 CONVERGENCE PROGRAMMING VIS-À-VIS SECTORAL PROGRAMMING

---

This section addresses relevance in terms of its 'value added' to sectoral programming. During the lifespan of the programme, UNICEF devoted increased attention to convergence as it yielded better value for money in a time of growing resource constraints and offered a better return on investment in terms of desired outcomes. In particular, the evaluability assessment of the UNICEF Strategic Plan (2022–2025)<sup>41</sup> highlighted the organization's intent to catalyse the functional, vertical, and horizontal convergence of all parts of the organization via the strategic elements and affiliations across Goal Areas and levels and provided a robust discussion of factors that constrained UNICEF readiness to realize its convergence potential.

The programme proposal outlined how each sector aligned with national and international frameworks and provided brief but informative analyses of sector conditions and UNICEF contribution. Each sector identified how convergence supported its objectives, highlighted deprived provinces such as Morobe and Madang, and explained the CP's contributions to capacity development and systems strengthening. Overall, the design evidence indicated that sectors clearly understood where the CP fit within their priorities and how

---

<sup>41</sup> [Evaluability assessment and formative evaluation of the UNICEF positioning to achieve the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025; Executive Board Decision E/ICEF/2023/3.](#)

convergence strengthened their outcomes, making a convincing case for the relevance and complementarity of convergence and sector programming.

Convergence programming also featured prominently in the discussion about the need to ensure coherence across the “humanitarian-development-peace” nexus. The formative evaluation of UNICEF work linking humanitarian and development programming addressed this, but it was specific only to the convergence of humanitarian and development programming and focused on convergence to tackle the multitude of challenges associated with development programming in high-risk locations that faced humanitarian challenges. Even with this particular understanding of what convergence should cover, the evaluation found that where convergence might have occurred, it was poorly documented and poorly evidenced—if it was evidenced at all. Also, UNICEF PNG CPD (2024–2028) place significant emphasis on ‘synergising’ implementation through “convergent programming in areas with persistent low achievement on child rights indicators”<sup>42</sup> aiming to “maximise efficiency and results for children.” This is consistent with UNICEF global commitment to “*accelerate programmatic and organizational convergence towards outcomes for children...*”<sup>43</sup>

### 3.3.2 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF RIGHTS-HOLDERS

---

Evidence of consistency with the needs of rights-holders **was** limited because the evaluation did not rely heavily on direct, on-the-ground consultations with a broad range of rights-holders in the programme area. Instead, it relied mainly from three factors: consultations held during programme design; alignment with the 2018–2022 Country Programme; and extensive efforts to align sectoral outcomes with the convergence outcomes.

On consultations, with right-holders, a review of the materials meant to track stakeholder engagement does not reflect sustained public engagement in a manner that would have secured their priorities. Rather stakeholders were presented with programmatic intentions focusing on how the CP might work. Key informant interviews with district and local level stakeholders also reflected limited engagement which was, in any case, engagement with duty bearers.

Second, alignment with the CP appears to rest on the assumption that consultative processes for both the country programme and sectoral programming were robust and reflected rights-holders’ needs. A review of operational programme documents and interviews with key actors involved in the design phase indicate significant effort was invested in establishing the CP, integrating sectors, embedding the programme within government structures, and engaging faith-based partners to explore community-level implementation in the two districts. This suggests a reasonable alignment between community needs and CP activities at the design stage—though direct engagement with community members was more limited.

Third, the demand for convergence programming appears to have been shaped primarily by the sectoral engagement of duty-bearers and by lessons derived from prior interactions with duty-bearers and rights-holders in the original programme location. Although other evaluation findings confirm that services such as improved access to water and sanitation and strengthened health and education systems are indeed valued, alignment in this case reflected an ex post facto interpretation rather than a deliberate strategic consideration during programme design. This suggests that alignment with UNICEF objectives was inferred retrospectively, rather than explicitly integrated into the initial planning process.

*‘Does the Programme fit? Well, the implementers did not involve or engage with the community and community leaders nor church groups. So how do they know what we need?’ Key informant, Bogia*

Two major issues undermined continued relevance during implementation. First, the convergence programme evolved into a collection of sectoral initiatives with weak or missing connections to support intended results. Second, severe dysfunctions in government and

<sup>42</sup> UNICEF (2023). [Country Programme Document Papua New Guinea](https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/documents/country-programme-document-papua-new-guinea-srs-2023), UNICEF, New York, New York, United States. <https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/documents/country-programme-document-papua-new-guinea-srs-2023>

<sup>43</sup> [Evaluability assessment and formative evaluation of the UNICEF positioning to achieve the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025; Executive Board Decision E/ICEF/2023/3.](#)

limitations faced by faith-based organisations reduced engagement to occasional major events or visits by senior personnel. Without the ‘glue’ of consistent coordination, the core idea of convergence was weakened.

Overall, community engagement suffered from the absence of a clear, documented plan for sustained interaction with diverse groups—leaders, activists, households near infrastructure, vulnerable populations, women, men, and children. As a result, programme offerings often failed to reflect community priorities, and opinions were rarely solicited or acted upon. Frustrations grew over poor communication, opaque protocols, perceived misuse of funds, and decisions made externally without explanation. These gaps eroded trust and raised doubts about the programme’s relevance to community needs. While sectoral engagement did occur—evidenced by positive findings such as three-quarters of caregivers attending school meetings—it lacked consistency and failed to leverage convergence to strengthen overall programme impact.

*‘Community members certainly have not had their say, most don’t know anything about the Programme, just some things going on without their inputs’*  
**Key informant, Bogia**

In the communities that were reached, survey results indicated that programme interventions were highly valued with access to services relatively high. Nearly 80 percent of respondents reported improvements to local education facilities, and the beneficiaries were girls in 80 percent of the cases. About one-third of respondents noted improvements in education quality, with 90.8 percent confirming household-level benefits. While baseline data showed boys were more likely to be enrolled than girls, endline findings suggest a positive trend toward greater inclusion of girls. This pattern also extended to pre-school, where one in four children aged 2–4 attended, with girls more likely than boys to participate

Positive parenting emerged as another strong area of relevance. In focus group discussion respondents indicated high satisfaction among participants, who reported personal benefits and shared learnings with friends and relatives. Quantitative data showed that one-quarter of surveyed households had at least one member reached by positive parenting initiatives, with coverage higher in Nawaeb District than Bogia District.

*‘They came and did things here, we’re not clear why the decisions were made, or who made them, or what happens when the funding stops.’ FGD, Nawaeb*

In another example, gaining access to ECD services resulted in mothers having to stay at the ECD centre until their child finished, due to long travel distances. Combining these services with more community-based ECD approaches could have expanded reach and better suited local contexts—an option that might have emerged through sustained community engagement. While communities appreciated any services provided, more effort in discussing alternative models with them may have increased the relevance and utility of the convergence programme

**Geographical Convergence and Participation:** The aim of convergence programming is not to replace sectoral programming but to add value by achieving greater return-on-investment when multiple interventions work together in the same geographical area. For the convergence programme in Bogia and Nawaeb, the key question was whether geographical convergence created connections that improved outcomes for rights-holders and enabled duty-bearers to deliver more without additional resources.

*‘A lot of the money that comes to the district goes for training. But that doesn’t translate into officials engaging with community members.’*  
**Key informant, Nawaeb**

Evidence from the household survey suggests these connections were limited. Benefits did not extend beyond what sectoral programming alone could achieve, as linkages—such as ECD with immunization or birth registration—were weak. The absence of community-level water and sanitation services further constrained impact, meaning improvements

for children in ECE or patients at health facilities did not reach the wider community. While this gap partly reflects broader land access issues rather than CP design, the result was a lack of clear ‘convergence benefits.’ It was expected that duty-bearers trained and supported through systems strengthening would deliver better multi-sectoral services, but this did not materialize.

*Relevance of Approaches Within the CP:* There are some larger questions around Relevance that can be raised both in terms of CP approach and in the execution of the CP itself. For example, there is no question that ECD services are valued, but distances and issues around child safety have meant that many caregivers have to walk with and often carry children to the facilities and, because of the time taken, stay at the centre to thereafter take the children home. While this often helped support the safety of the children, the safety of the caregivers with the children was noted by some as a concern as they were away from home.

These examples underscore gaps in design relevance, suggesting limited community engagement during planning and implementation. Decisions did not appear to reflect nuanced input from local leaders, activists, or traditional authorities. However, there are areas of promise: outreach for immunization, birth registration, and preventive health services showed stronger alignment with convergence goals. Focus group discussions revealed that some participants involved in these services understood both sectoral linkages and the broader intent of convergence, indicating potential to strengthen relevance through integrated outreach.

### **3.3.3 TARGETING THE MOST VULNERABLE BENEFICIARY GROUPS**

---

Geographical convergence was chosen to target Bogia and Nawaeb, two of PNG's most deprived provinces, to address vulnerability in line with UNICEF mandate to reach those most likely to be left behind and advance equity and inclusion. Programme design materials emphasize this focus, reinforced by sectoral convergence and application of good practice programming.

While not prominent in the Strategic Plan (2022–2025) and source materials for the convergence programme, interviews and document reviews confirm that sectoral programming within the CP prioritized reaching underserved groups—women previously excluded from services, men's involvement in health delivery, and households with children with disabilities. Potential exclusion risks related to language and cultural differences were minimal. Nearly half of surveyed households had relocated, often due to disasters, and one-third in Bogia District did not speak the local language (versus less than 20 percent in Nawaeb). However, 98.4 percent could communicate in Tok Pisin, and ethnicity or language did not correlate with service access. This suggests that outreach strategies did not systematically exclude vulnerable households, supporting the relevance of the delivery approach.

Other factors that affected alignment with the needs of rights-holder were challenges of weak government accountability mechanisms, resource scarcity for development, and tensions between government and civil society that complicated alignment with priority needs. Strengthening accountability systems required significant time and effort during design and early implementation. These challenges were compounded by limited meaningful engagement with communities, as efforts focused more on introducing the Programme than gathering insights. Even with stronger engagement, in communities with such limited services, any intervention is generally welcomed—provided there is follow-through, a point repeatedly emphasized in focus group discussions.

## **3.4 SUMMARY: RELEVANCE**

---

Overall, the evaluation concluded that the convergence programme was well-aligned with national development priorities and UNICEF strategic objectives. It targeted two highly disadvantaged districts and addressed urgent needs in early childhood development and adolescent empowerment. Communities valued the services provided and showed high awareness of interventions such as early childhood education and positive parenting. However, the programme theory of change proved overly ambitious, as its assumptions about district-level capacity and community engagement did not hold in practice. Disability inclusion remained weak, and engagement with rights-holders was limited, which undermined the ability to remain contextually responsive.

## CHAPTER 4. COHERENCE

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

**Coherence: Coherence refers to the level of compatibility (complementarity, harmonisation, and coordination) of the Convergence Programme with other government and civil society interventions and similar**

The coherence chapter examines the extent to which the convergence programme functioned as a compatible and well-aligned initiative within the broader ecosystem of government, civil society, and UNICEF-supported interventions. In keeping with the evaluation criterion, this chapter explores whether the programme complemented existing policies, systems, and delivery structures, and whether its multi-sectoral ambitions were supported—or constrained—by the institutional arrangements and partnerships in place. It considers the degree to which UNICEF sector teams, government actors, and implementing partners shared a common understanding of convergence, and how this influenced coordination, harmonization, and overall programme functioning.

The enquiry begins by situating coherence within the theory of change, focusing on assumptions regarding strengthened district- and community-level systems, integrated service delivery, and the anticipated value of collaborative, cross-sectoral work. This chapter also considers how the design and implementation of the programme aligned with national frameworks, strategic positioning of UNICEF, and the operational capacities of faith-based organizations and government partners. It introduces the core questions that guide the coherence analysis, setting the stage for a deeper examination of how well the programme “fit” within PNG’s governance landscape and institutional environment, and what this implies for future convergence programming in the country.

### 4.2 THEORY OF CHANGE: COHERENCE

The question on coherence addressed the shared understanding of programmatic convergence among UNICEF PNG sector teams, and between UNICEF, government, and implementing partners, and whether the necessary adjustments were made to ensure that the Programme was implemented coherently. Table 9 presents an assessment of the coherence of the programme against the theory of change.

**Table 9: Assessment against theory of change: coherence**

IF	THEN	BECAUSE	STATUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District, ward and community level duty-bearers are capacitated and supported to better deliver in an integrated manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duty-bearers will engage in programming in a manner reflecting a better understanding of the benefits of convergence</li> <li>Duty-bearers recognise the value added in collaborating across sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP has strengthened capacity and systems at district level in Bogia and Nawaeb districts in a manner relevant to their delivery of services to rights-holders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of ‘fit’ positive in terms of capacity development and systems strengthening needs</li> <li>Coherence undermined by larger systemic problems facing government delivery, with the CP assumption that district capacity and broader systems strengthening would yield resilient delivery challenging save at local level</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights holders in target districts have been reached with behaviour change communications</li> <li>Rights holders in target districts are reached with improved services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights-holders are aware of Programme components and intentions and view these as desirable</li> <li>Rights-holders perceive improvements across a range of relevant social services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner that has engaged local authorities in a meaningful manner, strengthening commitment to this service delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of ‘fit’ positive in terms of delivery from the CP, but ‘integrated fashion’ limited to internal convergence in education and health with child protection and, to a more limited extent, WASH</li> </ul>

IF	THEN	BECAUSE	STATUS
in an integrated fashion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights-holders recognise the value added in securing a range of relevant social services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Convergence Programme and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner and at such a level that rights-holders recognise the value of this programming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights-holder perceive improvements, a number of them aware of multiple sectoral delivery, services valued where they were functioning</li> <li>Engagement of local authorities, where it occurred, was sectoral in orientation, but still valued</li> <li>No awareness among rights-holders of 'convergence' as an idea</li> </ul>

On the positive side, the programme focus on district and sub-district capacity development aligned well with PNG governance structures, and communities generally welcomed the programme. Coherence was strengthened by leveraging sectoral programmes already active in the Programme Area. Also, UNICEF PNG invested considerable effort during design to build a shared vision internally and with faith-based partners, and to align with UNICEF PNG and development partners such as DFAT and MFAT, as well as UNICEF Australia and UNICEF Aotearoa New Zealand. Programme documentation reflected this shared vision, consistent with the UNICEF PNG CPD (2018 2022) emphasis on convergence.

However, coherence was weakened by persistent sectoral tendencies. Government actors did not develop a strong appreciation of convergence benefits or cross-sectoral collaboration, and linkages between district-level capacity development and community-level delivery remained weak. Engagement with Local Level Government (LLG) officials and community leaders was insufficient, limiting the ability to adapt implementation to local realities.

- The ambition of the convergence programme exceeded existing capacities at district and national levels, requiring significant effort to align with key actors; a fully shared vision was only partially achieved.
- Implementation did not reflect this vision, as delivery remained largely sectoral, weakening coherence.
- Human resource gaps constrained the ability to address challenges, reducing convergence and progress toward shared objectives.
- Field-level staff lacked a clear understanding of convergence goals, despite awareness of individual sectoral activities.

Challenges emerged in operationalizing coherence with government. While the convergence programme aligned with national priorities and decentralization commitments on paper, officials often viewed the programme through sectoral or political lenses. During implementation, this translated into a focus on tangible outputs rather than convergent outcomes. The absence of sustained community engagement further limited opportunities to influence decision-making and overcome entrenched sectoral practices.

Faith-based organizations played a critical role in service delivery where government capacity was weak, but their prominence created tensions with government actors. These dynamics, combined with fragile state conditions and resource constraints, made implementation more complex. Overall, the CP achieved moderate coherence—strong in design and partnerships but weaker in operational follow-through, particularly in adapting capacity-development models and strengthening community-level engagement.

## 4.3 FINDINGS: PROGRAMME COHERENCE

*EQ2: To what extent is there a shared understanding of programmatic convergence among UNICEF PNG sector teams, and between UNICEF, government, and implementing partners, and were the necessary adjustments made to ensure that the Programme was implemented in a coherent fashion?*

**EQ2.1:** How well did the Convergence Programme function within UNICEF PNG?

**EQ2.2:** How well did the Convergence Programme function within the implementation team and with Government?

### 4.3.1 SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONVERGENCE AMONG STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

At a strategic level, the programme aligned well with Government and development partner commitments to expand and strengthen social and child development services, despite persistent low delivery and poor outcomes. Beyond relevance, this alignment focused on two core components: (1) strengthening governance infrastructure to enable service delivery and sustainability, and (2) expanding access to quality services to improve child development outcomes. The programme design document referenced key national frameworks such as the National Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development, the Development Strategic Plan (2010–2030), and the Medium-Term Development Plan IV (2023–2027), as well as sector-specific policies and strategies. It also addressed Government’s decentralization agenda, which is critical for CP objectives.

While the development challenges in PNG were enormous and progress against the SDGs was poor, Government and its partners gave due attention to improving framework conditions that aimed to express not just development priorities but also those factors that would underpin achievement of these priorities. During programme development, reference was made to a wide range of overarching national policies such as the National Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development, the Development Strategic Plan (2010–2030), and the Medium-Term Development Plan IV (2023–2027), although only a single reference was made to Vision 2050<sup>44</sup>, when discussing WASH. Within this context, the design documentation for the convergence programme devoted due attention to how well the CP fitted within the context of sector policies, strategies, and plans, and how well it aligned with other actors engaged in these arenas. These were addressed in terms of how they informed programme design and implementation and how they supported Government’s broader development efforts. For this last point, specific reference was made to Government’s commitment to decentralisation, a key objective of the convergence programme.

The design process demonstrated strong integration with sector initiatives. For example, the PNG ECD Alliance convened diverse actors to advance early childhood development through policy, regulatory frameworks, and service delivery improvements. This growing commitment to ECD and ECE was reflected in the CP’s objectives and approach. Similar linkages were evident across other sectors, reinforcing the CP’s coherence with national priorities and collaborative efforts to strengthen child-focused programming.

### 4.3.2 COHERENCE OF CONVERGENCE PROGRAMMING WITHIN UNICEF PNG

UNICEF PNG referenced convergence in its 2018–2022 Country Programme Document,<sup>45</sup> but interviews with current personnel provided limited insights into these early commitments due to staff attrition and loss of institutional memory. However, a review of core design documents and interviews with long-serving staff showed that both management and sectoral teams were actively engaged in CP design, working closely with government officers. A coherent strategy for implementing convergence was developed and reflected in the final programme document.

<sup>44</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1496png.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> UNICEF (2017). *Country Programme Document Papua New Guinea*, UNICEF, New York, New York, United States.

[https://sites.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2017-PL12-Papua\\_New\\_Guinea-CPD-ODS-EN.pdf?\\_gl=1\\*4zc7zq\\*\\_gcl\\_au\\*NjAyNjk4ODU5LjE3NDQ2NTU0MDU.\\*\\_ga\\*MTg4NzY5MDE5OS4xNzQ0NjU1NDA1\\*\\_ga\\_PODMSZ8KY6\\*MTc0NTM4MjcZNS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNi4wLjA.\\*\\_ga\\_BCSVVE74RB\\*MTc0NTM4NTEyOS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNy4wLjA.\\*\\_ga\\_ZEPV2PX419\\*MTc0NTM4MjcZNS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNi4wLjA](https://sites.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2017-PL12-Papua_New_Guinea-CPD-ODS-EN.pdf?_gl=1*4zc7zq*_gcl_au*NjAyNjk4ODU5LjE3NDQ2NTU0MDU.*_ga*MTg4NzY5MDE5OS4xNzQ0NjU1NDA1*_ga_PODMSZ8KY6*MTc0NTM4MjcZNS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNi4wLjA.*_ga_BCSVVE74RB*MTc0NTM4NTEyOS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNy4wLjA.*_ga_ZEPV2PX419*MTc0NTM4MjcZNS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNi4wLjA)

[https://sites.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2017-PL12-Papua\\_New\\_Guinea-CPD-ODS-EN.pdf?\\_gl=1\\*4zc7zq\\*\\_gcl\\_au\\*NjAyNjk4ODU5LjE3NDQ2NTU0MDU.\\*\\_ga\\*MTg4NzY5MDE5OS4xNzQ0NjU1NDA1\\*\\_ga\\_PODMSZ8KY6\\*MTc0NTM4MjcZNS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNi4wLjA.\\*\\_ga\\_BCSVVE74RB\\*MTc0NTM4NTEyOS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNy4wLjA.\\*\\_ga\\_ZEPV2PX419\\*MTc0NTM4MjcZNS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNi4wLjA](https://sites.unicef.org/about/execboard/files/2017-PL12-Papua_New_Guinea-CPD-ODS-EN.pdf?_gl=1*4zc7zq*_gcl_au*NjAyNjk4ODU5LjE3NDQ2NTU0MDU.*_ga*MTg4NzY5MDE5OS4xNzQ0NjU1NDA1*_ga_PODMSZ8KY6*MTc0NTM4MjcZNS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNi4wLjA.*_ga_BCSVVE74RB*MTc0NTM4NTEyOS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNy4wLjA.*_ga_ZEPV2PX419*MTc0NTM4MjcZNS40LjEuMTc0NTM4NTE1Mi4zNi4wLjA)

Implementation required continuous engagement with UNICEF programme teams, supported by strong management involvement at strategic and operational levels. Despite this, engagement varied across sectors, which affected the quality of insights on outcomes and the availability of supporting evidence. The CP went beyond sectoral development to include programme-level support such as district capacity building, systems strengthening, partnership management, financial oversight, and reporting. Programme materials highlighted the complexity of these responsibilities and the challenging operational environment. Interviews with rights-holders revealed frustrations with stop-and-go implementation and difficulties in coordinating efforts through faith-based partners and district officials, despite strong management backstopping and generally good relationships with sectoral officers.

The convergence programme was overseen by a dedicated coordinator for most of its implementation period, but when she left in November 2024, no replacement was appointed due to the short remaining timeline (seven months). Responsibility for final coordination shifted to the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team, while sectoral officers focused on closing their CP-related activities. This placed significant pressure on the MEL and management teams, who had to resolve outstanding contracts with faith-based partners, construction firms, and suppliers. Sectoral officers, many unfamiliar with operational tasks, managed complex actions in the final months, including reporting and financial close-out activities.

### **4.3.3 COHERENCE BETWEEN UNICEF TEAMS AND GOVERNMENT COUNTERPARTS**

---

Although CP reporting was largely sectoral, evidence from operational plans, reports, and interviews showed that UNICEF PNG made deliberate efforts to function as a convergent team. Sections collaborated on district planning and integrated delivery, and joint monitoring visits facilitated shared learning and common considerations. However, most implementation remained sector-focused, with engagement concentrated within individual sectors or areas of natural overlap, such as education and child protection.

Despite these internal efforts, achieving a shared understanding with state and non-state actors was limited. Typically, evaluators would consult national-level government officials, other UN agencies, and development partners to assess coherence and alignment with broader priorities. For the CP, such stakeholders were absent; engagement occurred primarily at sectoral levels, and no national-level actors had direct involvement or knowledge of the programme. This gap restricted opportunities to validate coherence beyond UNICEF PNG's internal perspective.

## **4.4 SUMMARY: COHERENCE**

---

UNICEF PNG showed strong internal commitment to convergence, working to align sector teams and coordinate with faith-based partners. The convergence programme followed commitments made in the Country Programme Document (2018–2022) and shared a common vision with development partners such as DFAT and MFAT. However, programme outcomes remained mostly sector-specific, and the lack of a shared understanding of convergence among stakeholders hindered integrated implementation. Tensions arose due to the dominant role of faith-based organizations, whose effective service delivery coexisted with complicated relationships with government actors. Also, while the departure of the coordinator of the programme in late 2024 further disrupted coordination and coherence, the Programme Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) provided leadership to steer the programme through the remaining activities.

## CHAPTER 5. EFFECTIVENESS

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

**Effectiveness: Is the intervention achieving its objectives? Effectiveness refers to the extent to which Convergence Programme outputs have been achieved, and the extent to which these outputs have contributed to the achievement of Convergence Programme outcomes**

The effectiveness chapter examines the extent to which the convergence programme achieved its intended objectives, focusing on whether programme outputs contributed meaningfully toward the desired outcomes for children, adolescents, caregivers, and local systems. In line with the evaluation criterion, this section explores the degree to which the programme delivered against its commitments across the five workstreams—education, child protection, WASH, health and nutrition, and social policy—and how convergence processes were expected to enhance these results. The analysis also considers the ambitions of the programme around capacity development, systems strengthening, and the delivery of quality services in Bogia and Nawaeb districts, evaluating how these components were intended to work together to advance child rights and improve well-being at scale.

The enquiry begins by assessing the theory of change as it relates to effectiveness, including assumptions about integrated delivery, strengthened district-level leadership, and improved access to essential services for rights-holders. It also introduces the core evaluation questions that guided the effectiveness analysis, including the progress toward the outcomes of the programme, the value added by convergence approaches, and the role of direct cash transfers to districts. Together, these elements set the foundation for a detailed examination of how the Programme operated in practice, the extent to which intended pathways of change materialized, and what this means for the pursuit of integrated, multi-sectoral results in future programming in Papua New Guinea.

### 5.2 THEORY OF CHANGE: EFFECTIVENESS

Table 10 presents an assessment of effectiveness for each workstream in the theory of change, as well as an assessment of the combined efficacy of the programme.

**Table 10: Assessment against theory of change: effectiveness**

IF	THEN	BECAUSE	STATUS
Overall	<p><i>Status:</i> Little evidence of delivery in an integrated manner under CP. Evidence inadequate from Programme reporting to suggest this has been effective. This was also found from qualitative discussions held in communities in the Programme Area. However, there is some limited evidence from the quantitative survey that there are some increases in knowledge and practices</p> <p><i>Contribution:</i> Little evidence of sustained impacts because of the range of constraints facing sub-national actors, evident in a lack of outreach associated with Programme delivery. Specific engagement at junctures, especially in terms of community labour and tracking progress with UNICEF personnel. Volunteer engagement continues within sectors. Community groups and activists not involved beyond a few points during implementation. Overall contribution limited.</p> <p><i>Result 1:</i> operational engagement at district level but no evidence that it went beyond basic actions; no evidence of sustained focus on convergence at district level; facility and community level linkages within ‘smaller’ convergence circles</p> <p><i>Result 2:</i> value of collaboration recognised but not translating into clear collaboration, save within ‘smaller’ convergence circles at community level (e.g., health and child protection)</p> <p><i>Result 3:</i> Limited awareness, mostly sectoral, and often linked to awareness of infrastructure even if not benefitting from that infrastructure</p> <p><i>Result 4:</i> Limited perceptions of benefits, inconsistent findings</p> <p><i>Result 5:</i> Very evident that any services are valued, even without consultation on the selection of those services. Concerns about unfinished infrastructure and poor reach</p> <p><i>Summary Observations:</i> CP programme materials suggest recognition of the value of convergence, but little to no means to effect this, given the many problems constraining the work of sub-national authorities. Absence of</p>		

IF	THEN	BECAUSE	STATUS
	<p>documentation that measured this contribution as implementation proceeded. KIIs indicate capacity building activities valued but often not able to apply what was trained</p> <p>Community awareness of CP activities, even without community outreach to effect this. Community members value development efforts, including valuing volunteer services and similar. Programme reporting did not collect insights on community reach for what was provided, nor attitudes, which is a critical element in results reporting, and is what the CP said it was going to do under learning</p>		
IF	THEN	BECAUSE	STATUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District, ward and community level duty-bearers are capacitated and supported to better deliver in an integrated manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duty-bearers will engage in programming in a manner reflecting a better understanding of the benefits of convergence</li> <li>Duty-bearers recognise the value added in collaborating across sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP has strengthened capacity and systems at district level in Bogia and Nawaeb districts in a manner relevant to their delivery of services to rights-holders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At outcome and output level, the CP delivered against targets, but there was a lack of connectivity in terms of systems strengthening between districts and sector actors at LLG and community levels, nor local leaders</li> <li>Recognition of the value of convergence, but not realistic to expect district actors to make it happen</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights holders in target districts have been reached with behaviour change communications</li> <li>Rights holders in target districts are reached with improved services in an integrated fashion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights-holders are aware of Programme components and intentions and view these as desirable</li> <li>Rights-holders perceive improvements across a range of relevant social services</li> <li>Rights-holders recognise the value added in securing a range of relevant social services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner that has engaged local authorities in a meaningful manner, strengthening commitment to this service delivery</li> <li>The Convergence Programme and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner and at such a level that rights-holders recognise the value of this programming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At outcome and output level, the CP delivered against targets</li> <li>Communities pleased with delivery, save in cases where it was not completed or not completed correctly, and many were aware of the multi-sectoral nature of support (but did not know what convergence was intended to accomplish)</li> <li>Local authority engagement remained weak, and connections between these local authorities and rights-holders also remained weak</li> </ul>

The evaluation theory of change indicated two workstreams - capacity development and systems strengthening at decentralized levels, and achieved a substantial share of its objectives, with efforts increasingly focused on sectoral outputs and capacity-building rather than broader convergence goals. The evaluation also found strong evidence of delivery against outputs, (see Annex F), and identified some progress toward outcomes. This progress was achieved by leveraging existing UNICEF-supported initiatives. However, the programme did not perform well in the strengthening of capacities of lower-level district authorities and community leaders, nor did it foster a strong commitment to convergent delivery among district authorities.

On the other hand, rights-holders welcomed services from any provider and were aware of sector-specific interventions but did not observe convergence in practice. Persistent distrust in Government's ability to deliver without external support further highlighted gaps in the original design, which emphasized capacity-building but paid less attention to connecting these efforts to local actors and communities. Overall, the CP showed reasonable effectiveness within a challenging implementation environment, but this effectiveness was limited by the assumption that district-level capacity-building alone would strengthen Government engagement at community.

## 5.3 FINDINGS ON EFFECTIVENESS: OBJECTIVES OF CONVERGENCE PROGRAMMING

**EQ3:** *To what extent has the Project progressed towards achieving its objectives, and how did convergence programming processes and products help advance these objectives?*

**EQ3.1:** Why and to what extent has the Convergence Programme achieved its outcomes, or is likely to achieve them, overall and across varied groups including those most likely to be left behind inclusive of gender, disability, income level and others?

**EQ3.2:** How were the sector implementation strategies and policies, sector programmes, planning documents, and activities effective in contributing to the overall outcome of the convergence approach?

**EQ3.3:** To what extent was the Direct Cash Transfer to districts and engagement with district authorities effective in advancing improved child outcomes?

### 5.3.1 ACHIEVING THE INTENDED OUTCOMES OF THE CONVERGENCE PROGRAMME

While setting out to target geographical areas with low child outcomes, the design of the convergence programme was opportunistic – building on existing sector programmes which had a strong track record of delivering results for children. Because multiple sectors were involved, a range of services reached communities, though unevenly and often with timing challenges typical of development work in PNG. The evaluation found consistent evidence that this approach was sound from a planning perspective and effective for service delivery. However, the extent to which these services converged to benefit children and families was mixed. The quantitative survey showed some positive results related to service access but provided less clarity on what outcomes resulted from this access.

The evaluation found that the Convergence Programme (CP) was least effective in reflecting on where cross-sectoral connections were occurring and in engaging households, local activists, and community leaders across sectors. Instead, the CP was delivered mainly as a series of separate sectoral initiatives, often not well aligned in timing due to external factors. Focus group discussions confirmed that local activists engaged only with individual sectors and were largely unaware of activities being implemented by other sectors in the same communities.

This challenge stemmed largely from the structure of the Results Framework, which defined outcomes and outputs in predominantly sectoral terms. Although some reporting attempted to show how different sectoral outputs might combine to produce broader results, this was not convincing and relied mainly on output-level information. The 2022 Evaluability Assessment had already identified these weaknesses, noting that while vertical logic within sectors was clear, horizontal integration across sectors was not. The assessment also highlighted that targets were set from each sector's own perspective, reinforcing siloed delivery.

These structural issues were intensified by divided reporting responsibilities between UNICEF Australia and UNICEF Aotearoa New Zealand, which further fragmented oversight and planning. As a result, the absence of convergent outcomes, and the lack of outputs aligned to such outcomes, weakened the ability to function as

- The effectiveness of convergence was undermined by a Results Framework that did not include convergent outcomes, but rather sectoral ones, which is thereafter reflected in reporting. Sectoral progress is important, but it does not automatically yield progress against convergence objectives
- In areas where there was delivery overlap, here referring to district strengthening and engagement, the profound challenges faced by these institutions meant that the CP could not overcome these problems in a manner that supported convergent outcomes in the Programme Area
- The Theory of Change was not operationalised in any meaningful manner, further undermining the convergent nature of programming
- Progress was made across all sectors across many of the output and outcome indicators, and where progress was lacking, it was sometimes linked to broader challenges in the implementation environment
- Household level data reflect delivery in this regard, some showing significant progress, but in an environment where services are still constrained
- Gender data suggest solid delivery for both girls and boys, but despite efforts disability inclusion remains very constrained
- Despite this progress in terms of delivery of services, the contribution to higher outcomes described in the Theory of Change showed little to moderate progress at best

an integrated model. Overall, these design and reporting arrangements undermined compromised the effectiveness of the programme and contributed to the programme operating more as a set of disconnected sectoral efforts rather than a cohesive initiative.

Summary progress against outcomes and outputs is included in Table 11, which is further detailed in Annex F. These data come from the final CP progress report.<sup>46</sup> The findings in the detailed tables in Annex F reflect progress against some **outcome level** and a number of **output level** targets for a number of the measures, with some targets met or exceeded. At *outcome level*, targets were achieved or not met as follows:

**Table 11: Summary programme performance against outcome targets**

Outcome Targets Achieved	Outcome Targets Not Met
<i>Education</i>	
Enrolment in ECE	
# of early learning centres	
Proportion of schools with access to basic water and sanitation services	
<i>Child Protection</i>	
	Number of underfive births registered
	Number of functioning coordination mechanisms in target districts
<i>Health and Nutrition</i>	
Proportion of women and adolescents who menstruated in last 12 months using appropriate menstrual hygiene materials during their last period (Bogia only)	Percent of live births attended by skilled health personnel
% surviving infants 3 doses DPT	Number and percent of pregnant women attending 1+ ANC
	Number of 6-59 month old children with SAM starting treatment
<i>WASH</i>	
Proportion of health facilities that have access to basic water and sanitation services	
Proportion of health facilities that have access to basic water and sanitation services	
% of LLGs covered by costed WASH plan developed and implemented	
Service delivery arrangements for WASH in targeted districts	
<i>Social Policy</i>	
# of districts with functioning social accountability mechanisms accessible to children and adolescents	Number of district coordination meetings per year addressing child focused services and programming
# of evidence-based, costed plans and budgets that reflect local child priorities inc. those of children with disabilities	
District coordination mechanism exists which includes child-focused services and programming	

At outcome level, the following indicators were not tracked which made assessment of progress against results not possible:

- Education: Gross enrolment ratio in ECE
- Child Protection: # children/women experiencing violence who received services
- Child Protection: # of children, adolescents and caregivers benefitting from case management

At outcome level, ECE and WASH outcomes were largely met, while a range of health indicators were not. Child protection measures were mostly system functioning level, and for the one measure of direct delivery data were not available. There are some low reach vs. targets reflecting particular challenges in delivery,

<sup>46</sup> UNICEF PNG (2025). *Reimagined Convergence: Achieving Results for Every Child and Adolescent Across Sectors in Select Geographic Areas in Papua New Guinea. Jan 2024 to June 2025 Reporting Period*, prepared by UNICEF PNG for Australian and New Zealand National Committees for UNICEF, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

sometimes explained in the reporting (e.g., health reach), but not always. In some respects the outcome level indicator findings reflect the adaptive nature of implementation as noted earlier in this evaluation report.

The convergence programme was intentionally designed to leverage existing programmes across sectors, several of which had established credibility and strong performance histories. The evaluation found robust evidence that this approach was strategically appropriate and operationally effective. Interviews with Ward Development Committees and ward councillors showed that these actors possessed considerable knowledge of local development activities, including UNICEF-supported initiatives such as positive parenting. Respondents expressed frustration with inconsistent or incomplete delivery by external actors—for example, instances where communities dug pit latrines and received slabs, but latrines were never installed.

Similar dissatisfaction was expressed regarding technical assistance from external agencies, particularly when work was carried out without coordination with local authorities, without communicating with communities, or without providing clarity on next steps. Women’s groups, although largely focused on religious and social activities rather than development objectives, played important roles in community mobilisation for fundraising and labour contributions to local infrastructure such as classrooms or health facility shelters. Male representation in community groups was low, but men generally possessed greater knowledge of development initiatives than women.

The achievement of outcomes could not be inferred solely from aggregate progress against numerical indicators; rather, outcomes were better understood through the changes that resulted from progress toward them. This underscored the importance of the narrative component of Programme reporting. However, the evaluation identified substantive limitations in the ability to interpret outcome-level results based on the information provided. Final reporting for the convergence programme concentrated primarily on delivery rather than on the effects of that delivery. As a result, reporting presented a combination of activity-based achievements—such as the number of ECE centres constructed, ECE enrolment figures, training coverage, distribution of materials, and formal registrations—while providing insufficient analysis of what these activities produced in terms of behavioural, institutional, or service-level change.

Although the report referenced broader contributions of programming, including strengthened district and provincial infrastructure and policy innovation at national level, the causal pathways and specific results associated with these developments remained unclear. In several instances, positive outcomes were asserted without adequate evidence. Findings from the endline survey further suggested that anticipated outcomes had been compromised by implementation challenges that were not resolved, including shortcomings in menstrual hygiene activities under WASH, WASH infrastructure not built to specification and therefore under-utilized, and weaknesses in community outreach whereby awareness of CP activities did not translate into meaningful change in people’s lives.

For instance, WASH infrastructure was delivered at-scale. However, its effectiveness was constrained by design deficiencies and maintenance gaps. The former were linked to insufficient engagement of community members and facility personnel in identifying and addressing basic design issues (e.g., the absence of covers for handwashing stations, inappropriate construction materials for toilets, sanitation systems installed without water connections, adult-sized toilets placed in ECE centres, and locked toilets left unused). The latter stemmed from the absence of local management systems required to maintain infrastructure functionality.

On ECD, while attendance rates were high and targets were met, the emphasis on service provision without corresponding community-level ECE engagement raised concerns regarding the appropriateness and potential reach of the intervention. Birth registration targets were not achieved; however, the evaluation noted stronger recognition among government actors regarding both the challenges and the importance of registration, suggesting that the CP contributed to building momentum for longer-term progress. Community-level recognition of the importance of improved hygiene was widespread across Programme Areas. Although the extent to which the CP strengthened this recognition could not be conclusively

determined, substantial community labour contributions and high community awareness indicated a plausible Programme influence.

The country continued to face chronic structural challenges, particularly with respect to violence, and limited progress in child outcomes reflected broader systemic issues beyond the convergence programme. Notably absent from the reporting was any demonstration of how convergence had been operationalized to advance complex objectives. For instance, the medium-term Child Protection outcome that “*children at risk of violence in target areas had access to prevention and response services*” was assessed primarily through case management challenges. Reporting did not articulate how gains in reach, training, or knowledge across education, health, and WASH sectors intersected with violence prevention or access to protective services. This highlighted the limitations of sector-specific outcomes and the lack of attention to convergent output design.

In a fragile state such as PNG, where adaptability is essential and ambitious objectives are difficult to achieve, monitoring should have been set up to provide a clear account of how implementation unfolded over time. Instead, reporting was insufficient, requiring the evaluation to rely heavily on key informant interviews to reconstruct how convergence-related results likely emerged. Despite these constraints, communities consistently valued the services and benefits facilitated by UNICEF. Frustration centred not on the relevance of interventions but on incomplete delivery and insufficient engagement with local actors. Also, the Programme demonstrated a deliberate focus on gender dynamics across sectors, including approaches to delivery, engagement with women and men, efforts to address male under-representation in health and education, and infrastructure development responsive to the needs of girls and boys. Data in Annex F indicated that, in many respects, these efforts were successful.

### **5.3.2 EFFECTIVENESS OF SECTOR STRATEGIES/POLICIES**

---

The evaluation examined the extent to which sector strategies, policies, and implementation approaches supported the effectiveness of the convergence Programme, and whether they contributed meaningfully to the overarching objective of promoting integrated, multi-sectoral service delivery. The analysis demonstrates that, although sectoral delivery was generally strong and aligned with established practice, these approaches registered limited progress toward convergence.

Across education, child protection, WASH, health and nutrition, and social policy, sector strategies were well-established and grounded in sound programme methodologies. The CP intentionally built upon existing sectoral “flagship” initiatives, many of which had proven operational track records and institutionalized delivery systems. This design contributed to notable improvements in service reach and output generation, with particularly pronounced gains observed in areas such as early childhood education expansion, vaccination outreach, and nutrition counselling. The strength of these sectoral foundations was a key driver of performance at the outcome and output levels.

Despite this, the evaluation identified limited evidence of these sector strategies being implemented in ways that yielded cross-sectoral or converged outcomes. Community-level engagement tended to occur on a sector-by-sector basis, even in locations where multiple interventions were present. Instances of linkage—such as between health and child protection services or between ECE and WASH—were primarily incidental, arising through operational proximity rather than through deliberate programme design. In the absence of structured incentives or mechanisms for joint planning or coordinated delivery, sector teams largely continued to operate independently.

The results framework for the programme further reinforced this pattern. With outcomes and associated indicators defined almost exclusively at the sectoral level, the framework did not articulate convergent outcomes, nor did it include meaningful cross-sectoral outputs. Consequently, monitoring and reporting processes centred on sector achievements rather than on the added value of integrated programming. This

structural feature of the results framework limited the extent to which operational staff perceived convergence as an area of shared responsibility and prioritization.

A further constraint was the limited integration of community engagement and participatory planning within sector strategies. While community members expressed appreciation for the services provided, rights-holders reported minimal awareness of broader programme objectives beyond discrete sectoral activities. As a result, opportunities to align interventions around holistic household needs—such as combining nutrition, early childhood development, child protection, and WASH support—were not realized. Implementing partners, including faith-based organizations, frequently mirrored this siloed approach, reflecting the sector-bound operational configuration of the convergence programme.

System strengthening efforts were also predominantly sector-specific. Although most sectors delivered comprehensive training and capacity development at district level, often exceeding planned targets, these gains did not translate into enhanced multi-sectoral coordination or integrated service delivery at ward or community level. District-level capacity limitations, together with weak cross-sectoral coordination frameworks and limited outreach capabilities, meant that system-strengthening efforts did not cascade downward in a manner supportive of convergence.

Collectively, these factors resulted in only modest contributions of sector strategies to the objectives of the convergence programme. Persistent siloed implementation approaches, the absence of operational frameworks for shared planning and delivery, and the lack of joint supervision or unified community entry points inhibited progress toward integrated service provision. Weaknesses in data systems, particularly regarding the monitoring of cross-sectoral outcomes, further constrained the ability to demonstrate convergence in practice. Consequently, despite strong sectoral performance, the CP functioned largely as a set of parallel sectoral initiatives rather than as a coherent model of integrated, multi-sectoral service delivery.

### **5.3.3 EFFECTIVENESS OF DIRECT CASH TRANSFER IN IMPROVING CHILD OUTCOMES**

---

The evaluation found that the **Direct Cash Transfer (DCT) system** used to channel funds to the two districts was **generally robust and well-structured**, drawing on Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT). The system included micro-assessments of implementing partners, clear disbursement and reporting procedures, and assurance activities such as programmatic visits, spot checks and audits. Although the arrangements were complex, especially given the multi-sectoral nature of the Convergence Programme, the DCT mechanism functioned as intended and provided a predictable basis for funding sectoral service delivery. Stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation regarded the system as technically sound and appropriate for managing financial risks in a fragile sub-national governance environment.

However, while the DCT system worked reasonably well administratively, the **translation of district-level fund flows into improved child outcomes was inconsistent**. A key challenge was that the system relied on district authorities, whose capacity, stability and accountability mechanisms were weak, to drive convergence and ensure services reached communities. Delays in the DCT process, caused by government approval steps and internal financing protocols, partly explained the periodic gaps in service delivery that communities perceived as signs that funds had been misused. The evaluation noted that such delays undermined trust and contributed to the belief among some community members that district actors had “eaten the money,” even when delays were procedural rather than corrupt.

To strengthen financial accountability and district ownership, the programme team held consultations with provincial authorities and explored enhancing provincial oversight. This effort proved challenging due to fragile and inconsistent accountability systems and differing political dynamics between provinces and districts. As a result, UNICEF increasingly shifted attention to strengthening operational collaboration between districts and faith-based partners (the primary service delivery actors). While this adjustment consumed significant time and effort, it ultimately enabled more reliable links between financial flows and on-the-ground

delivery. By the time systems had been aligned, tested, and functioning, UNICEF and implementing partners considered the arrangements solid, though the lengthy establishment period reduced the time available for achieving intended results for children.

According to personnel interviewed, the DCT system **improved aspects of district administrative efficiency**, particularly around planning, budgeting, and reporting for the Convergence Programme. Programme documents prescribed a six-month DCT cycle to support timely implementation, though in practice the actual duration of each stage of the cycle was not systematically recorded. While financial expenditure patterns suggested that funds eventually moved at sufficient speed—with a large share disbursed in the final 18 months—this late spending could reflect both the time taken to establish the system and inherent slowness in district-level HACT processes. Despite these limitations, district officials generally acknowledged that the DCT system improved their administrative functioning relative to existing practices. Table 12 provides a summary of strengths and limitations of DCTs and implications for future convergence programming in PNG.

**Table 12: Direct cash transfers (DCTs) and implications for future convergence programming**

Dimension	Strengths	Weaknesses / Limitations	Implications for Future Convergence Programming
<b>System design and compliance</b>	DCT operated within a robust HACT framework; credible and aligned with UNICEF standards.	Complex administrative arrangements; district processes slowed transactions.	Simplify financial pathways; strengthen district financial literacy early.
<b>Operational performance</b>	Funds ultimately moved consistently; district administrative efficiency improved.	Processing times not recorded; delays fuelled community perceptions of mismanagement.	Track fund-flow timelines; improve community communication and transparency.
<b>Partnerships and coordination</b>	Adapted by strengthening collaboration with districts and faith-based partners; final system solid.	Provincial oversight weak; lengthy negotiations reduced time for results.	Clarify governance roles; incorporate political economy analysis in design.
<b>Contribution to service delivery</b>	Supported delivery of sectoral outputs across ECE, WASH, health, nutrition, child protection.	Weak district capacity and limited cross-sector coordination hindered integrated delivery.	Link DCT to measurable convergence deliverables; strengthen demand-side engagement.
<b>Impact and sustainability</b>	System performed well under difficult conditions; contributed to short-term delivery.	Structural governance weaknesses limited higher-level child outcomes; convergence not institutionalised.	Embed DCT within capacity strengthening and community empowerment strategies; extend programme timelines.

Ultimately, the **effectiveness of DCTs in generating improved child outcomes was mixed**. The financial system itself performed as well as could be expected under very challenging conditions, and it contributed to the delivery of key sectoral outputs across education, health, WASH, child protection and social policy. However, persistent weaknesses in district capacity, limited community engagement, and the absence of strong cross-sectoral coordination meant that improved fund flow did not consistently translate into stronger integrated service delivery or sustained improvements for children. Overall, the evaluation concluded that while the DCT mechanism was largely effective as a financial tool, the broader institutional and contextual constraints limited its contribution to achieving the intended child outcomes of the convergence programme.

#### **5.4 SUMMARY: EFFECTIVENESS**

At the **outcome** level, ECE and WASH outcomes were largely met, while a range of health indicators were not. Child protection measures were mostly system functioning level, and for the one measure of direct delivery data were not available. The outcome level indicator findings reflect the adaptive nature of implementation. While progress is noted against a number of these outcome level indicators, outcomes are not ‘achieved’ based on aggregate totals against numerical indicators, it is more importantly what happens because of progress against the overall outcomes.

On the other hand, the programme achieved many of its **output targets** across sectors (see the detailed tables in Annex F). For education, there were significant gains in terms of early childhood education, with enrolment exceeding targets in six new centers established under the programme. For child protection, positive parenting reached many caregivers, although birth registration fell short of targets. For WASH, handwashing and menstrual hygiene targets were met or exceeded, but infrastructure functionality and community-level engagement was more problematic. For health and nutrition, high reach occurred in a number of areas including safe delivery kits and nutrition counselling, but both antenatal care and skilled birth attendance remained below intended targets. For social policy, district level social accountability mechanisms were established, although data generation and use remained limited.

Despite these achievements, the programme struggled to deliver integrated services. Most interventions were implemented as discrete sectoral activities, with limited cross-sectoral synergy. The absence of convergent outcomes in the results framework and fragmented reporting further diluted the integrative intent of the programme. Community-level actors often perceived the Convergence Programme as a collection of unrelated initiatives rather than a unified programme. While the DCT system was improved over time, the logic behind focusing on district capacity strengthening without equal attention to these broader governance problems was questionable. This undermined effectiveness and, as will be noted below, sustainability as well.

## CHAPTER 6. EFFICIENCY

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

**Efficiency: How well are resources being used?** Efficiency refers to the extent to which the Convergence Programme’s outputs and outcomes have been achieved in the best manner possible with the appropriate amount of resources (funds, expertise, time, administrative costs)

The efficiency chapter considers the extent to which the convergence programme utilized its financial, human, and technical resources in a manner consistent with the evaluation criterion of achieving results in the most economical and timely way. It examines whether programme inputs - including funds, personnel, technical expertise, and administrative systems - were organized and deployed to support coherent implementation across the five workstreams. In doing so, the chapter explores how the convergence approach was expected to contribute to more efficient delivery, reduce duplication across sectors, and optimize resource use in geographically dispersed and logistically challenging districts.

The enquiry begins by revisiting the theory of change as it relates to efficiency, outlining assumptions that strengthened district systems, integrated service delivery, and coordinated sectoral efforts would generate efficiencies in both process and cost. It also introduces the evaluation questions guiding this chapter, including how well monitoring and reporting systems were structured to support decision-making, whether resources were strategically allocated toward priority results, and how programme structures were intended to facilitate cost-effective management. Together, these elements establish the analytical basis for assessing whether the programme was positioned to use its resources wisely and what this implies for future convergence programming in Papua New Guinea.

### 6.2 THEORY OF CHANGE: EFFICIENCY

Cost-efficiency was high, which was a notable achievement given the challenging implementation environment. Funds were spent effectively, and most targets were met. The adaptive nature of CP implementation required adjustments across spending categories, which were made for valid reasons and supported efficient delivery. Less than 2 percent of funds remained unspent or uncommitted at programme close, although variations occurred across outputs due to activity changes and emerging priorities. Table 13 presents an assessment of the efficiency of the programme against the theory of change.

**Table 13: Assessment against theory of change: efficiency**

IF	THEN	BECAUSE	STATUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District, ward and community level duty-bearers are capacitated and supported to better deliver in an integrated manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duty-bearers will engage in programming in a manner reflecting a better understanding of the benefits of convergence</li> <li>Duty-bearers recognise the value added in collaborating across sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP has strengthened capacity and systems at district level in Bogia and Nawaeb districts in a manner relevant to their delivery of services to rights-holders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targets achieved for the most part, with expenditures matching expectations overall</li> <li>Value added in terms of convergence problematic</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights holders in target districts have been reached with behaviour change communications</li> <li>Rights holders in target districts are reached with improved services in an integrated fashion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights-holders are aware of Programme components and intentions and view these as desirable</li> <li>Rights-holders perceive improvements across a range of relevant social services</li> <li>Rights-holders recognise the value added in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner that has engaged local authorities in a meaningful manner, strengthening commitment to this service delivery</li> <li>The Convergence Programme and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner and at such a level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targets achieved for the most part, with expenditures matching expectations overall, often taking advantage of what was going well rather than spending in areas where the return was likely to remain poor. Adaptation, in short, worked well</li> <li>Delivery nevertheless remained sectoral, even when cost-</li> </ul>

IF	THEN	BECAUSE	STATUS
	securing a range of relevant social services	that rights-holders recognise the value of this programming	efficient, undermining cost-effectiveness objectives

Cost-effectiveness was more complex but still positive. The CP delivered well in reaching rights-holders and supporting capacity development at district and sector levels, though these gains did not strengthen convergence. The most cost-effective approach was leveraging existing, proven interventions—such as positive parenting, accelerated birth registration, health outreach, and volunteer networks—within the Programme Area. However, investments in broader community engagement had limited impact beyond sectoral volunteerism, and key actions like joint supervision, which could have reinforced convergence, were underspent. Overall, the CP achieved strong efficiency and reasonable cost-effectiveness despite significant operational challenges.

### 6.3 FINDINGS ON EFFICIENCY

**EQ4:** *To what extent has the Project proceeded in a cost-efficient and cost-effective manner?*

**EQ4.1:** To what extent did the monitoring and reporting system provide credible data and evidence on the performance of the Programme and planned results?

**EQ4.2:** Were resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) secured, allocated and utilised efficiently and strategically to track and achieve results, including equity and gender-related objectives?

**EQ4.3:** To what extent has the Programme structure, and the office structure, supported the management and coordination of the Convergence Programme? Were the chosen strategies and approaches the most cost-effective and cost-efficient? Were there alternatives to the convergence programming that would have worked better and, if so, what are these?

#### 6.3.1 COST-EFFICIENCY AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF CONVERGENCE PROGRAMMING

Data for aggregating targets and reach was provided in the final progress report. Programme delivery combined numerical and population-based targets, but gaps in overall reporting and disaggregation by sex limited accuracy. For indicators with reported targets and reach, the overall target was just under 80,000, and reach slightly exceeded 82,000. While actual reach was likely higher, data gaps prevented further estimates. Findings suggested that targets were met within the funds spent, indicating cost efficiency. Construction activities achieved high delivery levels against targets, despite noted limitations in quality and use.

Most planned outputs for policy and strategy development were delivered as anticipated, although a few were not achieved due to external factors beyond the programme (e.g., EMIS system improvements). Key achievements included registering all possible ECE centres, mobilizing school boards, establishing child protection frameworks, developing and costing WASH plans, conducting comprehensive WASH risk analysis, and updating health sector policies and guidelines. District-level mechanisms were strengthened, including social accountability systems, integration of social protection in strategies, and coordination mechanisms to improve service delivery for children and adolescents.

- Funds were fully expended as intended by Programme completion, despite significant variation across some outputs.
- Cost-effectiveness improved by integrating proven, existing programming into the convergence programme.
- Additional gains in cost-effectiveness came from leveraging high-profile events for advocacy and resource mobilization and using the convergence programme to advance strategies and policies.
- Cost-effectiveness was reduced by limited investment in sustained community engagement. Although returns from such engagement would take time, it would have been a sound investment for sustainability, even under challenging conditions.
- Greater focus on convergence-driven outcomes and indicators would have further strengthened cost-effectiveness.

Capacity development focused on training, mentoring, and systems strengthening. Training addressed technical skills, teaching methods, and incorporated gender and disability considerations. Efforts also aimed

to improve job satisfaction and reduce staff turnover. While some indicators on self-perceived capacity improvements were not measured, training exceeded expectations: the target was 636 participants, but actual reach was 1,405. Mentoring and institutional support complemented training to enhance overall capacity and sustain improvements.

Final financial data were considered sufficiently accurate for evaluation purposes. Efficiency gains emerged mid-cycle, as early months focused on building robust systems and ensuring oversight. Interviews revealed high human resource investments during the initial phase and frustration at sub-national levels due to unclear processes and delays in securing financing. The Programme’s risk matrix anticipated these challenges, allocating attention to training, mentoring, and extending timelines for fund transfers and checks.

Spending started slowly but increased significantly in the last 18 months, particularly in education and social policy, and to a lesser extent health. Less than 2 percent of funds remained unspent or uncommitted at Programme end, though variations across outputs were notable. Most sectors underspent by over 10 percent, except child protection, which overspent by just over 20 percent, mainly in the final months. Variations within sectors reflected adaptive implementation decisions documented in narrative reports, highlighting the flexibility of the programme in response to evolving needs. Table 14 presents the summary expenditures, covering programme costs, non-programme costs, and thereafter spend by sector.

**Table 14: Programme Resources and Expenditures**

Expenditure Area	Budget (USD)	Expenditures (USD)	Percent spend
Programme Costs	3,381,751.38	3,374,249.78	100
Non-Programme Costs (inc indirect support costs)	767,086.32	731,473.82	105
Education	815,569.77	797,663.32	98
Child Protection	654,506.31	611,582.04	93
WASH	651,956.96	684,629.20	105
Health & Nutrition	1,070,182.37	1,058,023.57	99
Social Policy	189,535.97	170,766.25	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,148,837.70</b>	<b>4,054,138.20</b>	<b>98</b>

Determining the cost-effectiveness of convergence programming was challenging because reporting focused mainly on outputs or numbers reached, with limited evidence of actual impacts. However, several persuasive conclusions emerged. First, while programming did not fully converge in terms of child outcome impacts, sectoral good practices delivered under the programme likely contributed to improved outcomes individually and collectively. Second, district capacity development and systems strengthening were well received by districts and faith-based partners and proved cost-effective despite limited visibility in the results. Third, implementing actors collaborated under the programme framework as best as possible, despite challenges and competing priorities.

The CP enabled UNICEF PNG to critically assess the value of convergence programming, providing lessons that could inform global discussions where evidence remains limited. Efforts to align the CP with other ongoing programmes minimized duplication and leveraged existing actions, such as WASH infrastructure, which supported cost-effectiveness. This strategic fit ensured coherence and optimized resource use across interventions

Cost-effectiveness gains were evident in leveraging high-profile events for advocacy and resource mobilization, and in advancing national priorities. The CP contributed to strengthened entities supporting ECD, updated sectoral policies, and improved curricula for health worker and educator training. While these contributions were less tangible in terms of direct attribution, they represented significant added value and reinforced the importance of convergence programming.

The CP capitalized on ongoing initiatives such as positive parenting, birth registration, and health outreach, and integrated achievements from other projects, including curriculum development, committee guidelines, and inclusive WASH facility design. It also aligned interventions with complementary programmes, such as focusing WASH efforts in Bogia District while other projects covered Nawaeb. Efficiency gains were further supported by sectoral innovations and engagement in national and regional forums, including showcasing CP models and contributing to policy development. These examples highlighted how leveraging partnerships and existing systems enhanced cost-effectiveness and sustainability.

### 6.3.2 CREDIBILITY OF DATA ON PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE AND PLANNED RESULTS

---

Programme design emphasized the need for robust monitoring and learning systems. Operational reports initially demonstrated strong problem identification and resolution processes, with clear responsibilities outlined. Examples included detailed trip reports from February and June 2024. However, reporting declined sharply after the departure of the programme coordinator (in November 2024), with dozens of operational reports in 2023 and design-focused reports in 2022, but none in 2025. Earlier reports provided valuable insights into Programme evolution, even if they focused mainly on activities and outputs. Annual reports varied in quality, with some outcome areas offering narrative summaries and others, such as education, providing detailed data—likely due to links with larger initiatives generating their own reporting.

Relatedly, partner and field reports described implementation in detail, including setbacks, problem-solving, and remaining challenges. These reports highlighted difficulties typical of remote PNG contexts, such as poor infrastructure, severe weather, contractor shortages, and limited volunteerism, which slowed progress and frustrated communities and partners. Despite these constraints, interviews and documentation indicated that partners and local leaders understood local realities and adapted implementation without undermining broader development goals. While cost-efficiency could not be clearly assessed, overall progress was judged as the best possible under challenging conditions. However, the evaluation found that learning was not systematically integrated into implementation, resulting in significant information gaps compounded by critical data shortages. This limited the ability to assess progress beyond basic outputs.

### 6.3.3 EFFICIENT AND STRATEGIC UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES

---

The programme reported progress against targets disaggregated by gender (female and male) and addressed equity considerations, which likely enhanced cost-effectiveness. Efforts to strengthen disability inclusion faced entrenched norms that limited benefits for children with disabilities, but these investments were considered a good use of funds to challenge such dynamics. Programme and partner reports reflected attention to gender and equity, including planning requirements for sustainability and risk mitigation. Reports highlighted constraints on women’s involvement, innovative strategies to overcome these barriers, outreach to isolated communities, and attempts to promote disability inclusion. Some reports were reflective, noting changes in behaviours such as positive parenting, while others focused mainly on outputs rather than tracking results.

‘Efficiency shows from the training, educators know what needs to be done and they go about it better now.’  
Government informant, Bogia

The programme reported progress against targets disaggregated by gender (female and male) and addressed equity considerations, which likely enhanced cost-effectiveness. Efforts to strengthen disability inclusion faced entrenched norms that limited benefits for children with disabilities, but these investments were considered a good use of funds to challenge such dynamics. Programme and partner reports reflected attention to gender and equity, including planning requirements for sustainability and risk mitigation. Reports highlighted constraints on women’s involvement, innovative strategies to overcome these barriers, outreach to isolated communities, and attempts to promote disability inclusion. Some reports were reflective, noting changes in behaviours such as positive parenting, while others focused mainly on outputs rather than tracking results.

#### **6.3.4 EFFICIENCY OF CONVERGENCE PROGRAMMING AGAINST AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVE MODELS**

---

The Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) performed as effectively as possible given the challenges faced, and the extended timeline to establish the system was considered a worthwhile investment. Evidence from the final progress report and interviews with UNICEF PNG staff indicated that district authorities were adequately trained and supported to engage efficiently with the system.

Despite these gains, anecdotal concerns from community members about poor fund flow and spending suggested that challenges in moving funds through Government persisted, though less severe than before. One UNICEF key informant noted that HACT worked so well compared to other modalities that it attracted interest from other districts. However, data to assess cost-efficiency were unavailable, and the exact time from fund request to allocation, spending, and accounting remained unclear, though it was presumed to align with the six-month cycle outlined in Programme documentation.

#### **6.4 SUMMARY: EFFICIENCY**

---

The convergence programme achieved strong cost-efficiency, utilizing 98 percent of the allocated budget and delivering high outputs across sectors. It improved value for money by building on existing, proven interventions such as positive parenting and health outreach. However, cost-effectiveness was weakened by underinvestment in joint supervision, community engagement, and activities specific to convergence. Although more than 1,400 individuals were trained, well above the target, limited community involvement and sector-based delivery reduced opportunities for synergistic results. Monitoring and reporting systems declined after the Programme Coordinator's departure, which restricted the ability to learn and adapt in its final phase.

## CHAPTER 7. SUSTAINABILITY

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

**Sustainability: Will the benefits last?** This refers to the continuation of benefits from the Convergence Programme after its termination

This chapter assesses the extent to which the benefits of the convergence programme were designed to continue beyond the programme period, in alignment with the evaluation criterion focused on durable, long-term outcomes. It examines the intentions to strengthen district and community systems, embed practices within government and partner institutions, and build capacities that would support continuity of services. The chapter also considers how the convergence approach was conceptualized to support sustainability through cross-sectoral linkages, strengthened governance structures, and an increased ability of local actors to maintain improvements over time.

The enquiry begins with an assessment of the theory of change as it relates to sustainability, focusing on assumptions about the ability of decentralized authorities, service providers, and communities to sustain improvements initiated under the programme. It outlines the evaluation questions guiding this chapter, including the integration of equity, gender, and disability considerations into sustainability planning, and the extent to which programme strategies and tools were intended to be institutionalized within government and civil society structures. This sets the foundation for examining how sustainability was envisioned within the programme design and what this means for future convergence efforts in Papua New Guinea.

### 7.2 THEORY OF CHANGE: SUSTAINABILITY

There is little evidence that the convergence level programme yielded sustainable results where benefits will last over time. This held for both capacity-building and systems-strengthening and convergent outcomes in terms of rights-holders and local duty-bearers. Assumptions made in the programme theory of change proved to be poor assumptions, and even as revised in the theory of change where they are more focused on less ambitious aspirations, there is no evidence that these will be sustained over time. Nevertheless, lessons have been learned that would apply to future programming. Table 15 presents an assessment of the sustainability of the programme against the theory of change.

**Table 15: Assessment against theory of change: sustainability**

IF	THEN	BECAUSE	STATUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District, ward and community level duty-bearers are capacitated and supported to better deliver in an integrated manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duty-bearers will engage in programming in a manner reflecting a better understanding of the benefits of convergence</li> <li>Duty-bearers recognise the value added in collaborating across sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP has strengthened capacity and systems at district level in Bogia and Nawaeb districts in a manner relevant to their delivery of services to rights-holders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 'if-because' achievements did not yield the 'then' result in a manner that supports sustainability</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights holders in target districts have been reached with behaviour change communications</li> <li>Rights holders in target districts are reached with improved services in an integrated fashion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rights-holders are aware of Programme components and intentions and view these as desirable</li> <li>Rights-holders perceive improvements across a range of relevant social services</li> <li>Rights-holders recognise the value added in securing a range of relevant social services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CP and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner that has engaged local authorities in a meaningful manner, strengthening commitment to this service delivery</li> <li>The Convergence Programme and associated sectoral programming have improved service delivery at community level in a manner and at such a level that rights-holders recognise the value of this programming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 'if-because' statement does not extend to an extent that yields sustainable achievements, holding for both 'because' statements' despite the 'if' statements having been achieved</li> <li>The 'then' statements do show achievement within the framework of the CP, but this does not yield sustainable achievements</li> </ul>

## 7.3 FINDINGS ON SUSTAINABILITY

**EQ5:** To what extent has the Programme delivered against its objectives around sustainability, with particular reference to the district level?

**EQ5.1:** To what extent did Programme design and implementation include measures that promoted sustainability, with particular reference to equity, gender and disability inclusion?

**EQ5.2:** To what extent have the Convergence Programme strategies, plans and tools, especially those with an equality, gender and disability focus, been institutionalised in systems, policies, mechanisms and strategies among government, NGO/civil society, and other partners and stakeholders?

### 7.3.1 ACTIONS TAKEN TO STRENGTHEN THE SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS

Documentation for the convergence programme referred to strategies aimed at ensuring “the sustainability of results of the programme and facilitate scale-up in other districts and provinces,” and highlighted eight mechanisms intended to support sustainability – in the Bogia and Nawaeb districts. Table 16 presents the strategies, as they were intended to work, with an assessment of whether they engendered sustainability.

**Table 16: Strategies to foster sustainability and progress of the convergence programme**

Strategies from Programme documents	Intended Purpose	Assessment on Sustainability
<b>Evidence generation and policy advocacy</b>	Generate ideas, influence policies and programming through evidence	Weak – Little attention during implementation
<b>Capacity development</b>	Strengthen institutional capacity for integrated, multi-sectoral planning and child-friendly governance	Weak – Could not overcome major decentralization constraints
<b>Partnerships</b>	Engage NGOs, faith-based organisations, private sector, academia, professional associations	Weak – Programming was limited to operational ties with faith-based partners, rather than building over time capacity and strengthening relationships between these organisations and communities
<b>Integration and cross-sectoral linkages</b>	Ensure sustainability through convergent programming	Partial – Worked for some sectors covered by the CP, but did not work across the CP, nor did it engender sustainable linkages within the districts
<b>Communication and advocacy</b>	Put child survival on public agenda, increase visibility and political commitment	Partial – Actions were mostly sectoral, and often effective, but there were not convergent across sectors
<b>Environment</b>	Address climate change and environmental risks through technology and community activities	Not a focus
<b>Innovation</b>	Reduce disparities and barriers through innovative approaches and real-time data systems	Partial - Adaptation to the situation on the ground took place reflecting innovation, but this was insufficient and not managed in a manner that would yield convergence in programming. Poor documentation of innovation, absence of robust data systems
<b>Service delivery</b>	Provide supplies, cash, services, and build government capacity for service delivery	Partial – Provision of services as per outputs, but government capacity for service delivery not seen to have durable results

Service delivery was notable in some key sectors, such as early childhood education and public health, but less evident in areas like WASH and nutrition. Adaptation through innovation was strong, with practical solutions addressing barriers to service delivery and reducing vulnerability. However, the use of real-time data systems was inconsistent—effective at the sectoral level but weak across the overall country programme (CP). Although CP design aimed to ensure sustainability, evaluation findings revealed significant deficiencies in six areas and challenges in two, with limited follow-up. Overall, all eight areas remain important for future programming on convergence. This could involve area-based approaches (e.g., focusing on locations with

proven success), programme-focused strategies (e.g., integrating child protection into health outreach), or horizontal convergence (e.g., strengthening systems at ward and local government levels), or a combination of these approaches.

On the **factors that undermine sustainability**, the evaluation identified significant challenges to the sustainability of the convergence programme. Evidence suggests that while sectoral programming and limited convergence activities may continue to generate outputs, the likelihood of sustained outcomes remains unclear. Moreover, the rationale for concentrating sectoral actions within the current CPD (2024-2028) could benefit from further strategic alignment.

A critical finding relates to the narrowing of stakeholder engagement over the life of the convergence programme. Initially conceived as a convergence initiative, the programme evolved into a largely sectoral effort, with linkages to national and provincial authorities occurring within individual sectors rather than at the programme level. Similarly, there were no substantive connections between the convergence programme and other development partners, including United Nations agencies. Where they existed, relationships were fragmented and did not contribute to advancing sustainability or leveraging synergies.

Efforts to strengthen district-level capacity have been constrained by systemic challenges in decentralization and the politically driven nature of provincial governance. These conditions limit the prospects for sound, decentralized decision-making unless the programme operates in areas where such systems are already functional. Programme design and implementation gaps compound these issues, particularly the lack of meaningful community engagement and empowerment, which are essential for fostering ownership and long-term impact. In this context, sustainable outcomes appear feasible only in locations with pre-existing enabling conditions.

Field observations underscore additional risks related to infrastructure sustainability. Limited community involvement in design has reduced usability and commitment to maintenance—for example, the absence of shelter over handwashing facilities. Tracking of infrastructure use was inadequate, making it difficult to assess relevance and adapt accordingly. Furthermore, construction timelines often failed to align with complementary “soft” inputs, even when education personnel were engaged, weakening the integration of hardware and software components.

- There was little evidence that CP results would sustain after its completion.
- Efforts to strengthen district administration yielded minimal impact on sustainable delivery due to severe constraints.
- Greater attention to community engagement could have improved sustainability, though constraints would have remained.
- Gender reach improved from baseline to endline, and policies and strategies incorporated gender considerations.
- Disability inclusion showed little progress in reach, but was addressed in policies, strategies, and plans.
- Sustainability was inherently challenging in PNG, particularly in remote and underserved districts.
- The short CP timeline limited sustainability prospects, and a longer timeline would likely not have resolved these challenges. Rethinking convergence and setting reasonable expectations were more likely to enhance sustainability.

### 7.3.2 MEASURES TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY, EQUITY, GENDER AND DISABILITY INCLUSION

*“With the end of external financing, stronger community management means sustainability is more likely.”*  
District informant, Bogia

Programme documentation highlighted significant progress in strengthening district administration. Improvements in financial management systems, procurement protocols, and technical oversight procedures represented important steps toward better governance and service delivery. These gains demonstrated that the programme was a catalyst in institutional strengthening and introduced more structured processes, which were critical for long-term development. District Management Teams became focal points for inter-sectoral planning, and some sectors reported enhanced coordination and accountability. While challenges such as high staff turnover and resource constraints persisted, these capacity-building efforts provided a foundation that future programmes could build upon.

Faith-based organizations played a vital role in extending the reach of the programme and ensuring service delivery in areas where government capacity was limited. Their deep roots in communities, existing networks of volunteers, and experience in health and education created opportunities for effective implementation and local ownership. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of PNG and the Archdiocese of Madang brought credibility and trust, helping to bridge gaps between communities and formal systems. These partnerships also reinforced UNICEF commitment to inclusion and equity by leveraging actors who were well-positioned to reach vulnerable populations.

*“Sustainability isn’t going to happen if it depends on our district. Look at the state of our district office right now and consider that everything is political here.”*  
Key informant, Bogia

On the other hand, there was some evidence that the prominent role assigned to faith-based organizations over the years fomented tensions with Government officials. These tensions played out at different points in the implementation of the convergence programme and will continue to undermine sustainability of all development initiatives if it is not addressed.

Programme planning documents emphasized reducing disparities and vulnerability by synchronizing resources, services, and interventions while engaging multiple levels of government, civil society, and development partners to establish a common direction. This approach aimed to overcome barriers to service delivery and strengthen equity. In practice, some sectoral initiatives demonstrated strong community engagement, such as education meetings where three-quarters of caregivers attended at least one school meeting, and positive parenting sessions that participants described as transformative for family dynamics.

The Results Framework included activities to build volunteer capacity for outreach and support networks. While challenges persisted - volunteers often lacked external support or incentives - there were notable successes. For example, faith-based organizations facilitated health awareness campaigns and mobilized community members for immunization drives, leveraging their trusted position in local communities. In some areas, volunteers supported birth registration and early childhood education outreach, helping families navigate access to services. These efforts, though limited in scale, showed the potential for community-driven action when supported by strong local actors.

While principles like Wantok align with the intent to foster community cohesion, the CP lacked concrete mechanisms to sustain volunteer-driven actions beyond kinship ties. Engagement largely reflected sectoral programming rather than true convergence. A review of the Results Framework suggests that shared, convergent outcomes—rather than sector-specific goals—could have enabled deeper community engagement and stronger local ownership. Building on positive examples such as school-based engagement and parenting programmes, future efforts could integrate these successes into a more coherent, cross-sectoral strategy to strengthen convergence at the community level.

### **7.3.3 INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF CONVERGENCE PROGRAMME STRATEGIES**

---

Evidence of sustainability was limited and largely attributed to long-term sectoral engagement by UNICEF, rather than the convergence programme itself. CP sectoral reports highlight innovations and attention to gender and inclusion, but interviews with district officers, faith-based actors, and community activists revealed little indication that convergence had become part of routine planning or delivery. Discussions remained heavily sectoral, reflecting traditional approaches such as district development plans.

The area where convergence could have yielded long lasting result - in sustained community engagement and empowerment—were critical weaknesses. Few community-based organisations were active beyond faith-linked initiatives, constrained by livelihood pressures and lack of resources. Group discussions confirmed limited volunteer engagement and organisational fragility. The Programme did little to address these gaps. While Wantok historically supported community cohesion and protection of vulnerable groups, its weakening and politicization were noted in the convergence programme document which called for coherent policy to

reinforce community action. However, the CP provided no clear strategy to strengthen this coherence as part of its objectives or delivery.

#### **7.4 SUMMARY: SUSTAINABILITY**

---

Sustainability was found to be the weakest area, with little evidence that the benefits of the programme will endure without continued external support. The short timeline and limited institutionalization of convergence strategies within government and civil society hindered long-term impact. Although some district-level capacity development occurred, systemic challenges—such as political interference, resource constraints, and high staff turnover—persisted. The narrowing of stakeholder engagement and the lack of strong community-empowerment mechanisms further reduced prospects for sustainability. These issues arose in a context of high violence, unresolved resettlement problems affecting land and service access, and chronic weaknesses in government service delivery. Nonetheless, the programme generated valuable lessons for more focused, realistic, and context-sensitive convergence programming in the future.

## CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS

---

### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

---

This section offers overall conclusions based on the findings from the evaluation, recommendations specific to the UNICEF PNG Convergence Programme, and lessons learned that consider the Convergence Programme as well as convergence programming more generally. Overall conclusions are first presented, followed by lessons and recommendations.

The complexity of the convergence programme is reflected in the discussion on evaluation results. This has necessitated the presentation of each of these issues under the evaluation questions in the **findings** Chapter 3 through Chapter 7 (as well as Annex F that offers detailed findings for effectiveness). The **conclusions** and **lessons** cut across the evaluation questions and are therefore more thematic in focus or consider issues more broadly. **Recommendations** were drafted by the evaluators, based on the findings and conclusions, and refined in a workshop with the UNICEF PNG team, to ensure their feasibility and utility.

### 8.2 CONCLUSIONS

---

Five overall conclusions are presented below.

**Conclusion 1: The idea of convergence is sound**, even in a difficult implementation environment such as PNG, and especially in a country where needs are significant across a range of sectors. The *efforts* of UNICEF PNG to make the CP work were considerable and were based on recognition of the value of such programming for children and families in PNG. The *work done* early on to engage with decentralised authorities and faith-based organisations was solid. But the factors working *against* the CP were powerful and, despite notable adaptations, weaknesses in implementation meant that these factors undermined desired outcomes and objectives. Rethinking convergence would allow UNICEF PNG to advance child development objectives.

**Discussion:** Conclusion 1 addresses findings related to the validity of convergence as an approach, the significant design and contextual challenges that impeded its implementation, and the need to rethink convergence with more realistic, context-appropriate expectations. It addresses the findings on effectiveness and efficiency, which underline the soundness of convergence programming and its success in achieving the intended efficiencies. Substantial attention was devoted to the design of a solid programme that was intended to build on programming that worked in each sector and anticipated needs based on experience from each sector. Further, careful consideration was given to where the programme should be implemented, and in understanding the situation on the ground during design. Numerous actions taken during design, both within UNICEF PNG, and in engaging with Government authorities and potential partners, reflected commitment to getting this right. The narrative around design and start-up all point to a commitment to making the CP work because it was felt to offer the hoped for return-on-investment.

Focusing on strengthening districts to support improved, more integrated delivery was sound in overall concept but failed due to poor design (including too narrow of a focus on districts when framework conditions were negative at a range of levels), when coupled with inadequate attention to community and local government engagement, highlighted challenges to the relevance and coherence of convergence approach. Poor design and the narrow nature of implementation focused on achieving targets and not linking capacity development with community delivery undermined sustainability.

Despite the problems identified in this evaluation and the challenges the Programme faced in trying to achieve its objectives, this was *not* due to convergence programming itself necessarily being a bad idea. Countries with major development challenges undermining social sector delivery are in fact solid candidates for convergence

programming because of the potential return-on-investment, consistent with the case for convergence in humanitarian situations.

**Conclusion 2: The convergence programme was not based on realistic assumptions.** Realistic objectives need to be set rather than promising too much, especially in such a challenging environment. The focus needs to be on the art of the possible, not the ideal.

*Discussion:* Conclusion 2 synthesizes a set of findings from across the evaluation that demonstrate that design assumptions were overly ambitious and did not match the operational realities in PNG. It underscores a significant gap between the ambitions of the programme and the operational realities it faced. At its core, the programme overestimated the capacity of institutions, communities, and wider systems to absorb and implement its approaches. It also underestimated the inherent complexity of coordinating interventions across multiple sectors, many of which required strengthened foundational capacities before convergence could be effective. As a result, several of the assumptions proved overly optimistic given the fragile, low-capacity context.

These challenges were compounded by expectations that exceeded what was feasible within the available timeframe and implementation conditions. The programme theory of change envisioned levels of integration and collaboration that the enabling environment was not prepared to sustain. Furthermore, the absence of clear convergent indicators and supporting structures meant the programme lacked the mechanisms necessary to operationalize and measure its own convergence ambitions. Together, these factors limited the ability to achieve its intended outcomes as originally envisioned

**Conclusion 3: “Converging outcomes” should have been the focus.** The concept behind convergence programming is that ‘thinking together across sector’ is critical to its efficacy. From planning to implementation to monitoring and reporting, the focus needs to be on convergence. This should be reflected in objectives and outcomes and, where feasible, outputs. For the CP, the identification of sectoral outcomes and outputs took attention away from the necessity to focus on convergence, and what convergence could deliver for children and families beyond what was offered by each sector. And with the Theory of Change not being a critical part of implementation and reflection, its role in ‘keeping an eye on the ball’ was undermined.

*Discussion:* Conclusion 3 addresses a cluster of findings that show the programme **failed to function as a convergence initiative** and instead devolved into **sector-by-sector delivery**. It draws together evidence showing that the design and implementation repeatedly prioritized sector-specific delivery at the expense of true convergence. Although the Convergence Programme aimed to generate added value through integrated, cross-sectoral approaches, its results framework, indicators, reporting structures, and implementation practices remained overwhelmingly sectoral, leaving no operational mechanisms to plan for, track, or demonstrate convergent outcomes.

Evidence further confirmed that cross-sector linkages occurred only incidentally, with sector teams largely operating in isolation and without a shared convergence logic to guide joint action. The absence of convergent indicators and the limited use of the theory of change weakened the ability to maintain focus on integrated pathways of change. Taken together, these findings explain why the programme functioned more as a collection of parallel sectoral initiatives than as a cohesive convergence model, underscoring the need for future programming to place convergent outcomes—not individual sectoral targets—at the centre of design, implementation, and monitoring.

**Conclusion 4: Commitment to community engagement was the weak link in the chain for implementation of the convergence programme.** While sectors involved in the CP did engage with community leaders and community members to varied extents, engagement was not standardised across the CP and not planned at CP level. Discussions with community members highlighted a lack of involvement in decision processes

and lack of even basic information provided on actions to be taken, lack of community engagement was the CP was delivered, and lack of follow-up with community members to dissemination information or discuss the efficacy of the CP.

*Discussion* Conclusion 4 directly links back to multiple findings in Chapters 3 - 7, which consistently show that the lack of strong community engagement was a major systemic weakness. Community engagement emerged as a critical weakness across all dimensions - relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. 'Nothing for us without us' is a common saying reflecting the fact that target groups are comprised of rights-holders who deserve to have a strong say in the nature, focus and intentions of development interventions. In PNG there are rather severe constraints in terms of community cohesion in a manner that would support community engagement.

Although the convergence programme delivered strong sectoral outputs, engagement with communities was neither standardized nor systematically planned, resulting in interventions that were often delivered *to* rather than *with* rights-holders. Weak participatory processes limited the ability for the programme to respond to local priorities, reinforced sectoral silos, constrained progress toward integrated outcomes, and reduced cost-effectiveness. Most significantly, the absence of community ownership undermined prospects for sustained benefits, as local structures were insufficiently involved, informed, or empowered to maintain gains beyond external support.

***Conclusion 5: The convergence programme demonstrated pockets of innovation and adaptive practice, but these were not systematically harnessed or institutionalized.*** One important feature of CP implementation was attention to innovation in response to challenges that arose, and to take advantage of opportunities as they arose. Programme implementation in PNG is necessarily adaptive, given the range of challenges, and for the CP, this was especially true because these challenges were magnified by programmatic complexity. However, this learning and innovation was not translated into a range of knowledge products that would have both strengthened implementation and contributed to the broader learning about convergence programming.

*Discussion:* Conclusion 5 addresses findings identified across the evaluation – particularly on **effectiveness** and **sustainability** of the convergence programme. The evaluation concludes that while the exhibited clear instances of innovation and adaptive problem-solving, these practices were neither systematically harnessed nor institutionalized within programme systems. Implementation teams and partners routinely adapted to the complex conditions of remote PNG—responding to logistical barriers, weak district capacity, and community-level challenges with practical, context-driven solutions—demonstrating the inherent adaptive potential of the programme. However, these innovations remained largely undocumented, and the programme lacked structured mechanisms for reflection, learning, and the use of evidence to guide strategic adjustment.

Also, the theory of change, which could have served as a guiding framework for adaptive management, was not used during implementation, resulting in missed opportunities to course-correct design flaws such as weak community engagement and the disconnect between district-level systems strengthening and community-level delivery. Monitoring and reporting systems were insufficient to capture or analyse emerging learning, especially after the departure of the Programme Coordinator, and no knowledge products were produced despite explicit intentions to generate them. As a result, adaptive practice remained largely ad hoc, focused on operational fixes rather than on strengthening convergence approaches or enhancing programme effectiveness. This finding underscores the need for future convergence programming to embed systematic learning loops, real-time documentation, and intentional knowledge generation as core pillars of programme design and delivery.

### 8.3 LESSONS LEARNED

As mandated by successive UNICEF Strategic Plans at the corporate level (SP 2018-2021, 2022-2025, 2026-2029), UNICEF PNG delivers many of its important programmes through cross-sectoral work. A key lesson from the evaluation is that future convergence programming in PNG will need to understand the difference between convergence programming and cross-sectoral work. Table 17 provides some of the key differences between the two approaches while underlining the added value of convergence.

**Table 17: Key differences between convergence programming and cross-sectoral work**

Aspect	Convergence programming	Cross-Sectoral Work
<b>Definition</b>	A strategic approach that integrates multiple sectors toward shared outcomes in a specific context.	Coordination between sectors without necessarily aligning on common outcomes.
<b>Focus</b>	Requires a conceptual framework, integrated planning, and shared understanding.	Often operational, focusing on collaboration or complementarity.
<b>Scope</b>	Recommended to be limited and context-specific due to governance and resource constraints.	Broader, can occur across routine programming without major structural changes.
<b>Implementation</b>	Needs consultative forums, political economy analysis (PEA), and adaptive delivery mechanisms.	Uses existing strategies (e.g., SBCC) to strengthen engagement across sectors.
<b>Challenges</b>	Overly ambitious goals risk failure; requires strong coordination and realistic expectations.	Less demanding but may lack depth in integration and shared accountability.
<b>Examples from PNG work</b>	Twinning ECD and WASH where feasible; integrated planning for convergence entry points.	Leveraging SBCC strategy for community engagement across programmes.

Additional lessons for the convergence programme are summarized in Table 18:

**Table 18: Lessons Learned**

Lesson Learned	Discussion
2. Set realistic objectives	Delivering in PNG is complex and difficult, resources are often constrained, and new implementation challenges constantly emerge. These problems are magnified in convergence programming. In such an environment, it is important to set realistic objectives.
3. Adapt and innovate	One of the key successes of the CP was its ability to adapt and innovate, critical in a fragile state environment. If adaptation and innovation can be done in a more systematic manner, and is documented and informs programme implementation, it can add significant value to any convergence programming and to its adoption more broadly.
4. Political economy analysis	A solid political economy analysis that covers the national context but also the specific programme area situation can substantially inform the content and intent of any convergence programming. The former is handed at overall UN level, but the latter is required at programme level. Solid PEAs that are well focused on the intervention arena and locations inform development of the Theory of Change, with particular reference to enabling and disabling factors, informs the development of the Results Framework, and strengthens the coherence of the project proposal. It also highlights where assumptions may not be valid (e.g., building district capacity in the social sector will help overcome broader district administration constraints, and also allow better delivery to communities).  Follow-up analysis a year after implementation starts would also be required, to flag emergent problems and opportunities and support course correction. Assuming an implementation timeline of 7-10 years, follow-up political economy analysis would ideally take place prior to evaluation events.
5. Formative evaluation	Despite what has been learned from the design and implementation of the CP, and from monitoring and evaluation, the focus, objectives, and overall aims of any further convergence programming needs a final check before a project document is issued to secure

Lesson Learned	Discussion
	<p>financing. A formative evaluation, conducted after the initial political economy analysis, would help ensure that any convergence programming would have the best opportunity to succeed.</p> <p>The evaluation found particular problems around relevance (is the intervention doing the right thing?) and coherence (how well does the intervention fit?), the former associated with programme design and execution and the latter associated with its fit at local level. The formative evaluation would need to devote due attention to these two considerations.</p>
6. Focused baseline and endline	A full impact evaluation of future convergence programming may not be warranted, but a tight, focused baseline–endline design would help support early implementation and assess the efficacy of core programme actions. And it would help inform future programming upon completion of the endline assessment.
7. Decide how to proceed regarding sustainability	Within a development context like PNG, expectations around sustainability should be framed within the context of what is possible. Government is likely not going to be able to deliver as needed for a range of reasons, nor is civil society. But strong engagement of various actors at community and local government levels can support both more sustainable results and a greater ability of local actors to press for services and secure additional support.

## 8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The first draft of recommendations was developed based on the key findings and conclusions, using a bottom-up approach. The evaluation team leader, assisted by the Evaluation Management team facilitated a workshop of the UNICEF PNG Country Management Team and that yielded ideas for recommendations. The ideas were redrafted into recommendations, which were reviewed and discussed with UNICEF PNG, and also shared with the Evaluation Reference Group for their input. Table 19 presents the recommendations mainly for action by UNICEF, in consultation and collaboration with relevant departments of the Government of PNG.

**Table 19: Recommendations, targeted parties/entities, and indicative timeframes**

Recommendations	Responsible Entities
<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> UNICEF should reaffirm its commitment to <b>the convergence programming approach</b> by clarifying its purpose and value, articulating a clear conceptual framework, and adopting a more strategic, context-sensitive, and realistic approach tailored to Papua New Guinea’s unique implementation environment, and engages government departments at the national, district, and local levels.</p> <p>High Priority: Initiate within the next 6 months and align with the 2026 mid-term review of the 2024–2028 Country Programme.</p>	
<p><b>Justification: Addressing Conclusions 1-3,</b> this recommendation aims to ensure that future efforts move away from a stand-alone “Convergence Programme” to “convergence programming” as an approach that seeks entry points for inter-sectoral programme planning and delivery to increase efficiency and effectiveness of interventions, and to maximize the potential to improve outcomes for children and communities in PNG. Some of the design elements that should be considered in the next iteration of convergence programming should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Clarifying the purpose and value of convergence:</b> Emphasize convergence as a means to deliver integrated, life-cycle-based, child-centred programming that aligns with core mandate of UNICEF and adds value beyond sectoral approaches.</li> <li>• <b>Adopting flexible and contextual models:</b> Explore and implement convergence models that are feasible and effective in the PNG context, considering a range of convergence options that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Targeted convergence,</b> beginning with on-going programmes (e.g., Koica 2, the DFAT funded Education programme, etc.), and carving a lean focus on specific sectors or thematic areas (e.g., ECD-health or Education-Child Protection linkages) where there was evidence of synergies and/or where tangible results were achieved.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Primary:</b> (UNICEF PNG) Deputy Representative, Sector Chiefs, Chief, Field Office</p> <p><b>Secondary:</b> Regional Advisors (Programmes) Relevant Government departments Implementing partners</p>

Recommendations	Responsible Entities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Opportunistic convergence</b> in districts with strong sectoral foundations and or stakeholder commitment.</li> <li>○ <b>Short-term convergence</b> in response to humanitarian crises, focusing on what works.</li> <li>○ <b>Vertical convergence</b> through government systems where political will and institutional capacity exist at provincial and district levels.</li> <li>● <b>Setting realistic objectives:</b> Ensure that convergence programming is grounded in achievable goals, considering the complex and resource-constrained environment. Avoid overpromising and instead focus on what is practically attainable.</li> <li>● <b>Engaging rights holders and stakeholders:</b> Collaborate first with intended beneficiaries to understand their needs, and with UNICEF regional offices, relevant government department at all levels, development partners, and the private sector to co-design and support convergence initiatives that are both impactful and sustainable.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> UNICEF should update the situation analysis for PNG by incorporating a political economy analysis to ensure that the convergence programming is informed by reasonable assumptions.</p>	
<p>Medium Priority: Initiate in the next 12-18 months as an input to the drafting of CPD 2029-2032</p>	
<p><b>Justification:</b> The evaluation highlighted the complex implementation environment in PNG, itself subject to rapid change. However, assumptions underpinning programme design - particularly those related to government capacity, community engagement, and cross-sectoral collaboration - often did not hold true in practice. Careful consideration of the context is key, hence future convergence programming should be grounded on a political economy of PNG,</p> <p>Typically, a comprehensive political economy analysis is conducted as an input into the UNSDCF, hence UNICEF should be able leverage that analysis to <b>identify enabling and disabling factors</b> that affect programme implementation in the specific districts targeted for programming, as well as governance dynamics, institutional capacity, political interests, and community-level realities. Also, incorporating a political economy analysis will enable UNICEF to frame sustainability expectations for convergence programming in a more realistic manner, recognising the limitations of government and civil society capacity, and emphasise strong engagement with community and local government actors to support sustainable outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Primary:</b> (UNICEF PNG) Deputy Representative Sector Chiefs Chief, Field Office</p> <p><b>Secondary: (EAPRO)</b> Regional Advisors (Programmes,) Regional Advisors (Emergencies, and Social Policy)</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> UNICEF PNG should prioritize the development of knowledge products that consolidate lessons from the convergence programme and develop programme guidance tools to support contextualized convergence programming approaches.</p>	
<p>High Priority: Initiate within the next 6 months and align with the 2026 mid-term review of the 2024–2028 Country Programme.</p>	
<p><b>Justification:</b> Evidence generation was a key strategy that was aimed to enhance the sustainability of results of the programme and facilitate scale-up of interventions that showed a potential to deliver the desired outcomes. The evaluation found that the convergence programme demonstrated adaptive implementation and innovation in response to challenges. However, these lessons were not documented systematically, limiting the potential for institutional learning, replication, and advocacy around convergence programming, not only for PNG, but for UNICEF as whole. <b>To address Conclusion 5,</b> UNICEF PNG should consider many of the lessons in this evaluation and lessons learned identified during the course of implementation by PNG programme teams and the generate knowledge products. The strategies for developing knowledge products should include highlighting innovations and adaptations, documenting good practices and areas that should be discontinued, among others, and also tailoring lessons and messages for different audiences.</p> <p>Also, while the concept of “convergence’ was deemed to be sound, the evaluation found that the programme lacked clear operational guidance on how to design and frame convergence results (which were largely sectoral), and how to implement it effectively. It also found that the theory of change (ToC) was not actively used during implementation,</p>	<p><b>Primary:</b> (UNICEF PNG) Deputy Representative Sector Chiefs/PME Chief, Field Office Communications teams</p> <p><b>Secondary: (EAPRO)</b> <b>Centres of Excellence</b> Regional Advisors</p>

Recommendations	Responsible Entities
<p>thus limiting the ability to translate convergence principles into practice. A critical success factor for the sustained convergence programming will be to make significant investment in developing programme guidance materials – to enable Programme teams to identify the correct convergence approaches (<i>e.g., short-term, targeted, vertical or opportunistic that are mentioned in Recommendation 1</i>), and to contextualize their programmes appropriately.</p> <p>These initial setbacks notwithstanding, UNICEF PNG is committed to the principles of convergence as articulated in their CPD (2024-2028), and the team committed to build on the progress that was made in the just-ended convergence activities and implement the principles of thematic convergence in on-going programmes.</p> <p>Beyond PNG, convergence is an important organizational strategy that is being tested and implemented at the global level and in many country offices. A UNICEF Executive Board decision was taken to <b>accelerate programmatic and organizational convergence towards outcomes for children, and to strengthen the enabling environment for convergence by codifying convergence into programming guidance, building on the experience of countries with successful pilots.</b><sup>47</sup> Hence there is an opportunity for UNICEF PNG to consider many of the lessons from this evaluation and those identified by PNG programme teams during the course of implementation and enlist the relevant expertise from UNICEF HQ and regional levels to generate programme guidance that is grounded in concrete bottom-up practice.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> UNICEF PNG should design a Social and Behavior Change Communication framework and/or approach and invest in the capacity building of UNICEF staff and partners to strengthen the demand side programming and community engagement in convergence programming and in other newly <b>initiated programmes</b> to ensure that future programming is grounded in participatory approaches and responsive to local realities.</p>	
<p>High Priority: Initiate within the next 6 months and align with the 2026 mid-term review of the 2024–2028 Country Programme</p>	
<p><b>Justification:</b> The Government of PNG has a clear commitment to community engagement in development programming. However, community engagement was identified as a critical weakness in the design and implementation of the Convergence Programme. While the programme aimed to deliver integrated services to vulnerable populations, it often relied on intermediaries without sustained, direct engagement with community members. This led to limited community ownership and understanding of the programme, missed opportunities to tailor interventions to local needs, reduced effectiveness and sustainability of programme outcomes, and frustration and mistrust among community members due to lack of transparency and participation.</p> <p>Despite these challenges, the evaluation found that community members valued the services provided and expressed a desire for more inclusive and responsive programming. Focus group discussions and participatory exercises revealed strong interest in being involved in planning and decision-making and highlighted practical suggestions for improving engagement.</p> <p><b>Addressing Conclusion 4</b>, there is a need to develop a plan to strengthen community engagement within the context of convergence programming and other programmes (Koica 2, DFAT funded education initiatives, etc.) in the final two years of the current CPD, and for the next 2029-2033 Country Programme. Some of the elements of the plan should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengthening the enabling environment</b> for community engagement by building capacities among local government and civil society actors. establishing clear protocols for inclusive consultation and feedback and promoting accountability and transparency in programme delivery.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Primary: (in UNICE PNG)</b> Deputy Representative Sector Chiefs Chief, Field Office</p> <p><b>Secondary: (in EAPRO)</b> Technical counterparts Government departments/ministries Implementing Partners Regional Advisors (Programmes,) Regional Advisers (Emergencies, and Social Policy)</p>

<sup>47</sup> [Evaluability assessment and formative evaluation of the UNICEF positioning to achieve the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025; Executive Board Decision E/ICEF/2023/3.](#)

Recommendations	Responsible Entities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Integrating community engagement into programme design and implementation</b> by co-designing interventions with rights-holders and local leaders, using participatory tools to identify priorities and power dynamics, and ensuring representation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups.</li> </ul> <p>Important implications for the sustainability of the impacts from convergence programming include stipulating indicators to monitor the reach, inclusivity, and impact of community engagement efforts.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> UNICEF PNG should articulate a clear approach to integrate convergence programming in humanitarian response, and in climate change actions.</p>	
<p>Medium Priority: Initiate in the next 12-18 months as an input to the drafting of CPD 2029-2032</p>	
<p><b>Justification:</b> UNICEF CCCs<sup>48</sup> requires UNICEF country offices to foster multisectoral integrated programming and geographic convergence in humanitarian programming. In addition, international literature on humanitarian action highlights convergence programming as good ‘fit’ in the implementation of humanitarian response. Given the range of humanitarian crises PNG faces on a consistent basis, the evaluation found that short-term convergence programming in response to humanitarian crises is a viable model for the fragile and unpredictable environment in PNG.</p> <p>However, because the programme was narrowly focussed on geographical convergence (in Bogia and Nawaeb districts) and not necessarily on “<b>convergence programming</b>” as articulated in successive (CPDs 2018-2022 and 2024-2028), convergence was not systematically implemented or tracked in other humanitarian activities and was necessarily outside the scope of this evaluation. Still, any effort to assert and/or redefine the PNG strategy for convergence programming should also address humanitarian response actions and climate action. As such, the recommendation brings completeness to the action requires to <b>address Conclusions 1-3</b>.</p> <p>On the other stream of work, UNICEF occupies an important position as a co-leader and co-convenor of influential clusters/sub-clusters in the national disaster management architecture. Alongside relevant government departments, UNICEF PNG is the co-lead for WASH, Education and Child Protection, and Nutrition clusters, and a member of the with the Inter-Agency Sector Coordination Group of the Disaster Management Team. UNICEF PNG should seek opportunities to leverage this position for convergence programming in their sector coordination responsibilities, to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian responses. These efforts should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applying short-term convergence models for emergency response and vertical convergence through government systems where capacity exists and to ensure flexibility to adapt to rapidly changing conditions and localised crises.</li> <li>• Strengthening climate action partnerships in humanitarian programming.</li> <li>• Establishing robust systems to track convergence outcomes in humanitarian and climate programming.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Primary: (UNICE PNG)</b> Deputy Representative Sector Chiefs Chief, Field Office</p> <p><b>Secondary: (in EAPRO)</b> Technical counterparts Government departments/ministries Implementing Partners Regional Advisors (Programmes,) Regional Advisers (Emergencies, and Social Policy)</p>

<sup>48</sup> Core Commitment for Children in Humanitarian Action

<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> UNICEF PNG should increase advocacy for Government to strengthen broader integration models, including convergence programming where opportunities exist.</p>	
<p>Medium Priority: Initiate in the next 12-18 months as an input to the drafting of CPD 2029-2032</p>	
<p><b>Justification:</b> Convergence programming in most countries faces sectoral approaches driven by government implementation protocols, themselves reinforced by the sectoral nature of much of development support. Nevertheless, the evaluation found that opportunities present themselves in situations of effective decentralisation, or where cross-sectoral programming is positively influenced by national initiatives. It also found that convergence programming offers a valuable opportunity to support the Government of PNG to deliver integrated, child-centred services that align with national development priorities.</p> <p>However, the success of convergence also depends on having stronger institutional capacities at the provincial and district levels, hence UNICEF PNG should, to the extent possible, consider how it can influence Government in this regard, beginning with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convening an <b>consultative forum</b> to facilitate a dialogue with Government counterparts, bilateral partners, and UN agencies to share experiences and foster a unified <b>'convergence approach'</b> to programming, and to promote alignment across development and emergency contexts, strengthen coordination mechanisms, and support joint planning and implementation strategies that are responsive to evolving needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using existing sectoral programmes as entry points for convergence to work with the Government of PNG to pilot targeted and vertical convergence models in selected districts.</li> <li>• Supporting coordination mechanisms that enable cross-sectoral collaboration by investing in district-level systems strengthening, planning, and budgeting aligned with convergence goals.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>More importantly, concerted effort should be invested in positioning future convergence programming as a clear driver for achieving the goals of the PNG Medium-Term Development Plan and SDG commitments.</p>	<p><b>Primary: (UNICE PNG)</b> Deputy Representative Sector Chiefs Chief, Field Office</p> <p><b>Secondary: (EAPRO)</b> Regional Advisors (Programmes,) Regional Advisers (Emergencies, and Social Policy)</p>

## REFERENCES

---

- Adorna, C., F. de los Angeles Bautista, and T. Nichols (2021). Evaluation of the UNICEF Parenting for Child Development (P4CD) Programme in Papua New Guinea (Pasin Bilong Lukautim Pikinini Gut), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), New York, USA. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/2556/file/P4CD-Evaluation.pdf>
- Anderson, Kirsten, C. Burke, and B. Grant (2022). The Protection of Children from All Forms of Violence and Child Focused Justice in Papua New Guinea (PNG): Mapping and Analysis of Legal and Policy Frameworks, Prepared for UNICEF Papua New Guinea Country Office by Coram International at Coram Children's Legal Centre, 41 Brunswick Square London, United Kingdom. Source: <https://coraminternational.org/the-protection-of-children-from-all-forms-of-violence-and-child-focused-justice-in-papua-new-guinea/>
- Bala, Sumithra (2022). Evaluability Assessment Of UNICEF Papua New Guinea Convergence Programme, prepared by Bala Consulting for UNICEF Papua New Guinea Country Office. Source: Unknown
- Better Evaluation (mimeo) "Overarching principles for M&E in FCV settings", Source: <https://www.betterevaluation.org/methods-approaches/themes/monitoring-evaluation-fragile-conflict-affected-violent-settings/overarching-principles-for-me-fcv-settings>
- Better Evaluation (mimeo) "Overview of M&E in FCV settings", Source: <https://www.betterevaluation.org/methods-approaches/themes/monitoring-evaluation-fragile-conflict-affected-violent-settings/overview-me-fcv-settings>
- Borkowski, Artur, J. Ortiz-Correa, D. Bundy, C. Burbano, C. Hayashi, E. Lloyd-Evans, J. Neitzel, and N. Reuge (2021), COVID-19: Missing More Than a Classroom. The impact of school closures on children's nutrition. Innocenti Working Paper 2021-01. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti. Source: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED612428.pdf>
- Butcher, Kate, J. Kaybryn, K. Lepani, M. Vagikapi, and L. Walizopa (2016). Independent Formative Evaluation of Family Support Centres in Papua New Guinea, prepared for UNICEF Papua New Guinea Country Office. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/1241/file/PNG-Reports-ChildProtection-FormativeEvaluation.pdf>
- Cownie, David, A. Loizillon, M. Bawoh, and S. Cifarelli (2023). Summative/ Formative Evaluation of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Programme in Sierra Leone (2016-2022), prepared by Lattanzio KIBS for UNICEF Sierra Leone. Source: [https://www.lattanziokibs.com/en/projects/lattanzio\\_kibs\\_together\\_with\\_unicef\\_to\\_evaluate\\_the\\_early\\_childhood\\_development\\_program\\_in\\_sierra\\_leone.html](https://www.lattanziokibs.com/en/projects/lattanzio_kibs_together_with_unicef_to_evaluate_the_early_childhood_development_program_in_sierra_leone.html)
- Fund for Peace (2023). Fragile States Index Annual Report 2023, The Fund for Peace, Washington DC, United States. Source: <https://fragilestatesindex.org/2023/06/14/fragile-states-index-2023-annual-report/>
- Government of Papua New Guinea (2009). Paper New Guinea Vision 2050, prepared by the National Strategic Plan Taskforce, Government of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1496png.pdf>
- Government of Papua New Guinea (2011). National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011-2015, Department for Community Development, Government of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Source: <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/png205113.pdf>
- Government of Papua New Guinea (2014). National Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development for Papua New Guinea, Department of National Planning and Monitoring, Government of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Source: <https://policy.asiapacificenergy.org/sites/default/files/National%20Strategy%20for%20Responsible%20Sustainable%20Development.pdf>
- Government of Papua New Guinea (2015). PNG National Nutrition Policy 2016 – 2026. Source: [https://www.health.gov.pg/pdf/PM-SNNP\\_2018.pdf](https://www.health.gov.pg/pdf/PM-SNNP_2018.pdf)
- Government of Papua New Guinea (2016). Papua New Guinea National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence 2016-2025, Government of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Source: <https://femilpng.org/wp-content/uploads/National-Strategy-to-Prevent-and-Respond-to-GBV.pdf>
- Government of Papua New Guinea (2015). National Policy on Disability 2015-2025, Department for Community Development and Religion, Government of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Source: [https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2020/02/PNG\\_National\\_Disability\\_Policy.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2020/02/PNG_National_Disability_Policy.pdf)
- Government of Papua New Guinea (2023). Medium Term Development Plan IV 2023 – 2027, Department of National Planning and Monitoring, Papua New Guinea. Source: <https://mtdp.gov.pg/MTDP%20IV/MTDP%20IV%202023-2027.pdf>

- Graham, A., M. Powell, N. Taylor, D. Anderson, and R. Fitzgerald (2013). Ethical Research Involving Children, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, Florence. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/9181/file/Ethical-Research-Involving-Children-compendium-2013-EN.pdf.pdf>
- International Development Evaluation Association (2021). Transformational Evaluation for the Global Crises of Our Times, R. van den Berg, C. Magro and M. Adrien, International Development Evaluation Association, Exeter, United Kingdom. Source: <https://ideas-global.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021-IDEAS-book-Transformational-Evaluation.pdf>
- INTRAC (2017). Outcome Harvesting, INTRAC for Civil Society. Source: <https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Outcome-harvesting.pdf>
- Mutunga, Mueni, P. Walker, and L. Dawa (2023). Delivering Essential Nutrition Services Through Community Action in Papua New Guinea, UNICEF Country Office. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/3421/file/CHS-PNGReport.pdf.pdf>
- National Statistical Office (NSO) Papua New Guinea and ICF (2019). Papua New Guinea Demographic and Health Survey 2016-18. Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, and Rockville, Maryland, USA: NSO and ICF. Source: <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-fr364-dhs-final-reports.cfm>
- Nichols, T., C. Adorna, F. de los Angeles Bautista, F. Adorna, R. Abitria, and L. Ealedona (2023). Evaluation of the UNICEF Improving Access to Justice for Children and Women (I4C) in Papua New Guinea (PNG) Project, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), New York, USA. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/3126/file/Justice%20for%20Children.pdf>
- OECD (2022). States of Fragility 2022, OECD Publishing, Paris, France. Source: [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/states-of-fragility-2022\\_c7fedf5e-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/states-of-fragility-2022_c7fedf5e-en.html)
- Robinson, Gary, Y. Jones, S. Moss, and B. Leckning (2017). Pasin bilong lukautim pikinini gut Parenting for Child Development Evaluation Report, Pilot Programme, prepared for UNICEF Papua New Guinea Country Office. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/1251/file/PNG-Reports-ParentingforChildDevelopment.pdf>
- Sachs, Jeffrey, G. Lafortune, and G. Fuller (2024). The SDGs and the UN Summit of the Future. Sustainable Development Report 2024. Paris: SDSN, Dublin: Dublin University Press. doi:10.25546/108572. Source: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/sustainabledevelopment.report/2024/sustainable-development-report-2024.pdf>
- Tuladhar, Jyoti (2015). National Department of Education Papua New Guinea Gender Audit Report, DoE and UNICEF Country Office in Papua New Guinea. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/1231/file/PNG%20Gender%20Audit%20Report.pdf>
- UNEG (2020). Ethical Guidelines in Evaluation and Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System, United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). Source: [https://www.unevaluation.org/uneg\\_publications/uneg-ethical-guidelines-evaluation](https://www.unevaluation.org/uneg_publications/uneg-ethical-guidelines-evaluation)
- UNFPA (2018). Evaluation of UNFPA Support to the Prevention of, Response to and Elimination of Gender-based Violence and Harmful Practices (2012-2017), Volume 1, UNFPA Evaluation Office, New York, USA. Source: [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/GBV\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_29\\_Nov.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/GBV_Report_FINAL_29_Nov.pdf)
- UNFPA and UNICEF (2020). Technical Note on Convergent Programming, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). Source: <https://www.unfpa.org/resources/technical-note-convergent-programming>
- UNHCR (2024). Evaluation of UNHCR’s Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement (2019–2023), Evaluation Office, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Genève, Switzerland. Source: <https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/evaluation-unhcr-s-engagement-situations-internal-displacement-2019-2023.pdf>
- UNICEF (2019). Toolkit: New Generation Situation Analysis, United Nations Children Fund, New York, USA. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/romania/media/4136/file/Annex%202.pdf>
- UNICEF (2021). Evaluation of the UNICEF Parenting for Child Development (P4CD) Programme in Papua New Guinea (Pasin Bilong Lukautim Pikinini Gut). United Nations Children Fund, New York, USA. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/reports/evaluation-unicef-parenting-child-development-programme-papua-new-guinea>
- UNICEF (2021). Formative Evaluation of UNICEF Work to Link Humanitarian and Development Programming, United Nations Children’s Fund, New York, USA. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/formative-evaluation-unicef-work-link-humanitarian-and-development-programming-0>
- UNICEF (2021). Evaluation of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and UNICEF Country Programme 2016 – 2022, United Nations Children’s Fund, New York, USA. Source: <https://mokoro.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/UNICEF-TZ-CPE-Final-Report-07.10.2021.pdf>
- UNICEF (2022). UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025. Renewed Ambition Towards 2030, United Nations Children’s Fund, New York, USA. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/documents/unicef-strategic-plan-2022-2025-draft-for-review-AS-2021>

- UNICEF (2022). Sanitation in PNG: Estimating Impacts and Investments Required to Meet Targets, UNICEF Papua New Guinea Country Office. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/2886/file/Sanitation%20in%20PNG.pdf>
- UNICEF (2023). Country Office Annual Report 2023, Papua New Guinea, UNICEF Papua New Guinea Country Office. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/reports/country-regional-divisional-annual-reports-2023/Papua-New-Guinea>
- UNICEF (2023). Country Programme Document (CPD) for Papua New Guinea, United Nations Children’s Fund, United Nations Economic and Social Council E/ICEF/2023/P/L.18. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/executiveboard/media/18336/file/2023-PL18-Papua-New-Guinea-CPD-EN-ODS.pdf>
- UNICEF (2023). Papua New Guinea Country Office Annual Report 2023, UNICEF Country Office, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/reports/country-regional-divisional-annual-reports-2023/Papua-New-Guinea>
- UNICEF (2024). UNICEF Case Study: Revolutionizing Immunization Data Management in Papua New Guinea with RT-VaMA, UNICEF PNG Country Office. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/3596/file/Case-Study-Revolutionizing-Immunization-Data-Management.pdf>
- UNICEF (2024). UNICEF Fact Sheet, Papua New Guinea Child Protection - Birth Registration, UNICEF Papua New Guinea Country Office. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/3446/file/ChildProtection-Factsheet-BirthRegistry.pdf.pdf>
- UNICEF (2024). Evaluation of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022-2025, United Nations Children’s Fund, New York, USA. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/evaluation-unicef-strategic-plan-2022-2025>
- UNICEF and the European Union (2022). Sanitation in PNG: Estimating Impacts and Investments Required to Meet Targets, prepared by UNICEF PNG and the European Union, UNICEF PNG, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Source: <https://www.unicef.org/png/media/2886/file/Sanitation%20in%20PNG.pdf>
- UNICEF PNG (mimeo) “VHAs providing crucial link between communities & health facilities. Convergence programme in Nawaeb District, Morobe Province”, UNICEF PNG country office website, <https://www.unicef.org/png/>
- United Nations Evaluation Group (2024). Guidance on the Integration of Humanitarian Principles in the Evaluation of Humanitarian Action. New York: UNEG.
- United Nations in Papua New Guinea (2024). Country Analysis 2024: The Overview of Key Development Challenges and Opportunities, prepared by the United Nations in Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Source: <https://papuanewguinea.un.org/en/284948-common-country-analysis-2024-update>
- United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office, Papua New Guinea (2023). United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2024 – 2028, United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Source: <https://papuanewguinea.un.org/en/264947-united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-2024-2028>
- Watanabe, K. (2022). Reducing Stunting in Children Under Five Years of Age - A Process Evaluation of UNICEF Papua New Guinea’s Strategies and Approaches, 2017-2022, UNICEF. Source: Unknown
- World Bank (2014). Drivers of Crime and Violence in Papua New Guinea, prepared by S. Lakhani and A. Willman for the World Bank’s Research and Dialogue Series Paper No. 2, Social Cohesion and Violence Prevention Team, Social Development Department, World Bank, Washington DC, United States. Source: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/cbe3309f-de1b-52bf-a9db-f19a6e75032f>
- World Bank (2020). Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence 2020-2025, World Bank, Washington DC, United States. Source: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/844591582815510521/world-bank-group-strategy-for-fragility-conflict-and-violence-2020-2025>
- World Bank and UNICEF (2021). Papua New Guinea High Frequency Phone Survey on COVID-19, December 2020 to January 2021. World Bank, Washington, DC. Source: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/f24f42c7-b8c2-5f0e-8e5e-9da1d6ffd115>
- World Vision (2022). UNICEF Convergence Assessment Report, Nawaeb District, Morobe Province and Bogia District, Madang Province, prepared by World Vision for UNICEF PNG. Source: <https://onedrive.live.com/:w:/g/personal/9626A096E7A5BC53/s!AIO8peeWoCaWmzx2ik4WHFIUCf9r?resid=9626A096E7A5BC53!3516&ithint=file%2Cdocx&e=mDxtf6&migratedtospo=true&redeem=aHR0cHM6Ly8xZHJ2Lm1zL3cvcyFBbE84cGVlV29DYVdtengyaWs0V0hGSVVDZjlyP2U9bUR4dGY2>