

#### **Setting the Context (4 minutes):**

This is a desktop exercise which encourages participants to think about the challenges of providing a quality basic education for everyone from the perspective of a national education strategy.

The following information is provided to give a background to the challenges facing education planners in Papua New Guinea. If time allows, consider watching a video about going to school in PNG, such as https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEavAweQ6mc

Papua New Guinea occupies the eastern half of the island of New Guinea, which is just south of the equator and 150 kilometres north of the tip of Australia. Papua New Guinea comprises over 600 islands but 85 per cent of its land area of 463,840 sq km is on the mainland. This is mostly covered by tropical rain forests and divided by massive mountain ranges. Sustainable use and protection of its natural resources, which are of global significance, have attracted worldwide interest in recent years particularly its large gold and copper deposits, oil and natural gas reserves, large areas of arable land for potential agricultural production, an abundant supply of fresh water, large tropical forests, and extensive maritime fisheries. Papua New Guinea's population is about 7.3 million and 85 per cent live in rural areas. Over 800 different languages are spoken throughout the 20 provinces. 45 per cent of the population is estimated to be below the age of 15 years.

Papua New Guinea's Primary School completion rate of 57% reflects a high number of children who do not have access to basic education. Quality education for all is an important component of long-term sustainable development. Your task in this desktop exercise is to consider what elements must be addressed in order to give young people in Papua New Guinea the best possible access to educational opportunities. To focus your thinking, review 'Figure 6' from the Papua New Guinea Universal Basic Education Plan 2010-2019. It highlights some of the reasons why so many children in Papua New Guinea do not complete primary school.

# **Activity: 15 minutes**

# Desktop Exercise - Stage 1 (4 mins) working alone:

Once you have introduced the activity and spoken about the PNG education context, encourage participants to list as many elements as they can think of which would impact upon Education in PNG. 'Figure 6' from the Papua New Guinea Basic Education Plan (on the back of the participant information card) will help to highlight some of the education challenges.

#### Elements might include:

Recruitment and training of teachers; Payment of teacher salaries; Schools fees or free education; Classrooms and infrastructure; Housing for teachers; Water and sanitation; Textbooks and equipment A curriculum/syllabus appropriate to the culture; Health care and vaccinations; Vocational education National exams; Address gender inequality

While participants are writing their lists, the facilitator could ask additional focus questions such as:

- Should classes be taught in local dialects or the national language or English?
- Do you need a school in every village or only in big centres?
- Should PNG focus on primary, secondary or tertiary education? What about vocational education?



### Desktop Exercise - Stage 2 (3 mins) working alone:

Once they have written a list, participants should prioritise their list in order from most important to least important to ensure that high priority areas will receive funding first.

#### Desktop Exercise – Stage 3 (8 mins) working in groups:

Assign participants into groups of 3-5 people. Set groups the task of creating one new list of education priorities based on the collective thinking of the group.

### **Post Activity Discussion Points (3 minutes):**

Bring the whole group back together for a short time of reflection and feedback. You may want to ask questions like:

- What were your top education priorities?
- Were there areas where your group disagreed?
- What have you learned from thinking about education in Papua New Guinea?

You may like to compare the education priorities which emerge with the official list of priorities which were developed by the PNG Education Department as part of their 2009-2019 Universal Basic Education Plan.

PNG's Universal Basic Education Plan aims to get 500,000 extra children in school. It sets out plans for training 12,000 new teachers, constructing 7,700 new houses for teachers, abolishing school fees and introducing grants for individual schools to acquire resources. Under the plan, the building of new classrooms for each school is the responsibility of the local community. (You can find out more information about the plan at http://www.education.gov.pg/QL\_Plans/plans/ube-plan-2010-2019.pdf)

In Papua New Guinea approximately half of all educational places are made available by schools run by the churches. The Anglican Board of Mission and UnitingWorld support educational improvement in Papua New Guinea by constructing teacher housing, providing water tanks for schools and providing building materials for new classrooms.

# **Evaluation Question (3 minutes):**

Why is it hard to ensure that every child in the world has access to a basic education?