



THE NATIONAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Themes

Research Themes

Research conducted under this program will be in six thematic areas: markets and market places; innovative economic activities; the betelnut economy; informal urban land and settlements; access to capital in the informal economy; and women in the informal economy. Studies under each theme will aim to analyse interventions that can best support and promote sustainable growth of the informal economy.

Theme 1: Markets and Market Places

Open markets are central to PNG's informal economy. Research undertaken under this theme will cover: issues affecting the operation of markets; options for establishing and maintaining clean, safe, and peaceful markets; and indicators for measuring the performance of market operations.

Theme Objectives

I1.1: Issues affecting PNG's open markets are understood by targeted stakeholders.

I1.2: Indicators measuring planned, safe, and peaceful open markets are developed.

Theme 2: Innovative Economic Activities

Informal economic enterprises are concentrated in only a few areas, especially fresh food crop production and sales. This is largely a result of fundamental limitations in access to finance, infrastructure, markets, and education and training opportunities. Research will be undertaken to document and analyse innovative projects and enterprises, which provide the opportunity for participants to improve earnings.

Theme Objectives

I2.1: Innovative informal economic activities, processes, and critical success factors are compiled for targeted stakeholders.

I2.2: The idea of setting up innovative informal enterprises is embraced, supported and promoted by relevant stakeholders to enable entrepreneurs to venture into new areas of business.

Theme 3: The Betelnut Economy

Betelnut cultivation and consumption is traditionally a part of the culture of many coastal communities. Its adoption and use in modern PNG has escalated to a new level and it has become a substantial income generator. Accompanying the widespread trade in betelnut are issues of safety, public health concerns, and litter, especially where large groups of people congregate. Efforts of town and city authorities to control the betelnut economy in public spaces have had limited success. Research will investigate how long-term solutions to the betelnut concerns can be developed.

Theme Objectives

I3.1: Underlying factors (for producers, consumers and the general public) that influence the betelnut economy are analysed



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I3.2: Adoption of sustainable policies and strategies for the betelnut economy are informed by research evidence.

Theme 4: Informal urban land and settlements

Limited land for housing and development purposes, and rapid urbanization and population growth, have created a huge demand and market for land. Research will analyse the dynamics of peri-urban informal land and settlement transactions, and to analyse the impacts of informal transactions. Output from this research theme will provide evidence that contributes to informed policy choices on the subject matter.

Theme Objectives

I4.1: The social dynamics of informal urban settlements and land transactions are understood.

I4.2: Policies and strategies for urban land development are better informed by an understanding of social factors.

Theme 5: Access to capital in the informal economy

Access to capital is vital for establishing and carrying out micro economic enterprises. However, the lack of capital is a key constraint, impeding widespread participation by the majority of citizens. The National Informal Economy Policy identifies this as a key area to support and promotion. The research theme will examine the factors constraining access to capital, and the extent of access. It will analyse the extent of access by region, province and gender, and will monitor the processes and outcomes of current initiatives promoted by the government and the private sector. The research outputs are intended to contribute to policies that will improve access to capital by the informal economy participants.

Theme Objective

I5.1: A monitoring system that plots progress toward increased access to capital, including its disaggregation by gender, and options for improvement, is instituted.

I5.2: Access to capital is targeted at benefitting excluded groups within and between Districts, Provinces and Regions.

Theme 6: Women in the informal economy

Women comprise the majority of entrepreneurs in the informal economy. However, opportunities for expansion and sustainability of their enterprises are impeded by deeply embedded barriers. This research theme will address the question of how women can be supported to establish sustainable informal economic enterprises.

Research outputs from this theme will identify key constraints to women's participation and options for reducing constraints. Monitoring and assessment of processes and outcomes of current initiatives will indicate their impact on women and inform future policy choices.

Theme Objectives

I6.1: Constraints to women's participation in the informal economy are significantly reduced.

I6.2: More women participate in the informal economy generating increased incomes.

I6.3: Women led informal enterprises become increasingly sustainable.



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