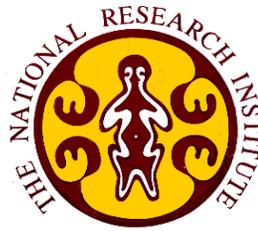


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**Universal Basic Education Policy Research Framework:
A Focal Point for Research, Monitoring and Evaluation**

by

Arnold Kukari

**NRI
National Research Institute**

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GoPNG	Government of Papua New Guinea
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
DoE	Department of Education
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
NRI	National Research Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RMT	Research Management Team
TWG	Technical Working Group
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UBEP	Universal Basic Education Plan
UBEPFRF	Universal Basic Education Policy Research Framework
UBERC	Universal Basic Education Research Committee
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WBESS	World Bank Education Sector Strategy

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Arnold Kukari

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Goal of Universal Primary Education

In 2000, the United Nations adopted the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as the minimum development priorities that governments should adopt and work towards achieving by 2015. Goal 2 explicitly states that all countries should ensure that all children have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality by 2015. This Universal Primary Education (UPE) goal has been on the development agenda of successive Papua New Guinean (PNG) governments since the colonial era, yet the target dates for its achievement have been shifted over the years (Kukari, 1992; Avalos, 1993; Webster, 1993).

PNG and many other countries accepted and committed themselves to achieving the MDGs, including UPE, by 2015. It has since been embraced by PNG as a development priority and included in subsequent development policy frameworks, including the Medium Term Development Strategy 2005–2010, the National Education Plan 2005–2014, and — more recently — Papua New Guinea Vision 2050, the Papua New Guinea Development Strategic Plan 2030 and the Medium Term Development Plan 2011–2015. A Universal Basic Education (UBE) Plan 2010–2019 has also been developed to enable PNG to fast track the goal of UBE. This plan redefined UPE, which saw the adoption of the concept of UBE to suit the aspirations and context of PNG.

1.2 Country-specific strategies for universalising basic education

A number of country-specific strategies have been developed and implemented by the Government of PNG (GoPNG) since 2000 to enable it to make positive and meaningful progress towards the goal of UBE. These actions include prioritising the goal of UBE as a development focus, reviewing and restructuring the education system, restructuring intergovernment relationships, rearranging intergovernment financing, reforming service delivery mechanisms, developing national education policies and plans, and reforming the curriculum.

1.2.1 Universal basic education as a development priority

Universal basic education has been a focal point of GoPNG's development strategy before and after independence in 1975. This is due to its importance in the overall development of people capacity and the positive impact it will have on citizens' quality of life. Thus, it has been given prominence as a development goal, and included in all development policies and plans to date. The most notable of these policies and plans are the Medium Term Development Strategy 2005–2010, Papua New Guinea Vision 2050 and the Papua New Guinea Development Strategic Plan 2010–2030. These plans provide the strategic frameworks for national action towards achieving the desired UBE outcomes.

Medium Term Development Strategy 2005–2010

The Medium Term Development Strategy 2005–2010 (MTDS), which is the overarching development strategy for PNG, includes attaining universal basic education as a development priority. It states that:

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A key focus of the MTDS will be to support the continued implementation of reforms aimed at achieving the international goal of Universal Primary Education (UPE). In Papua New Guinea, this goal is reflected in the Government's objective of Universal Basic Education (UBE) to be achieved by 2015. (p. 38).

The MTDS sets three UBE targets to be achieved by 2015; namely, a gross enrolment rate of 85%, a cohort retention rate of 70% and a youth literacy rate of 70 percent. The impetus for the MTDS's focus on achieving the goal of UBE, and setting revised access, retention and quality targets is the *Education Sector Review* (DoE, 1991).

Papua New Guinea Vision 2050

The Papua New Guinea Vision 2050 is a strategy that maps out the desired direction that PNG, as a nation, wishes to take in the next 40 years. It is underpinned by seven pillars, one of which is titled, 'Human Capital Development, Gender, Youth and People Empowerment', which is essentially about empowering people by enabling them access to quality education. The plan aims to achieve UBE by 2050 by increasing citizens' access to education from elementary prep to grade 12. Moreover, the plan aims to improve the quality of student learning outcomes by improving the quality of teacher education, establishing an independent National Curriculum Assessment and Monitoring Authority, improving teachers' terms and conditions, and establishing an Education Endowment Fund.

National Strategic Plan 2010–2030

In a way, the National Strategic Plan 2010–2030 translates the seven pillars of Papua New Guinea Vision 2050 into achievable and measurable outcomes, and proposes strategies for achieving these by 2050. The plan aims to achieve certain outcomes in the core UBE indicators, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: National Strategic Plan 2010–2030 universal basic education targets

Indicator	Target
Access	
Net admission rate (%)	70
Net enrolment rate (%)	100
Retention	
Retention rate (%)	70
Completion rate (%)	100
Quality	
Number of teachers and support staff	111 000
Teacher:pupil ratio	1:40

To achieve these targets, the plan is proposing another education reform aimed at building the absorptive capacity of the system to admit and enroll all school-age children; reforming the curriculum to align it more closely with the modern development trends and future development needs of PNG; reforming teacher education to ensure the education of quality teachers; providing an increased level of funding to the education sector; abolishing school fees; and ensuring that appropriate infrastructure and resources are provided to improve the quality of student learning.

1.2.2 Review of the PNG education system

A comprehensive review of the education system was carried out in 1991 in a response to serious concerns about the lack of access to education for most school-age children, poor student retention rates, and poor student learning outcomes. The *Education Sector Review* (DoE, 1991) noted that up to 90% of children who were of school-related age did not have access to education, the attrition rate between grades one and six was 45%, and the school curriculum was irrelevant to most Papua New Guinean children. The aim of the review was to examine the causal factors underlying the poor state of education in PNG, and look at ways of improving the system.

The review recommended both structural and curriculum reforms to the education system to address its underlying problems, particularly poor access and retention of children in school, and poor student learning outcomes. The structural reform aims to increase access and retention by increasing education coverage and the absorptive capacity of the education system by relocating grades seven and eight from high schools to community schools, and introducing elementary schools. The curriculum reform aims to make the curriculum more relevant; that is, to provide a curriculum that is more closely linked to children's cultures, and that will prepare them to go back to their communities, as well as preparing them for further education and employment.

1.2.3 Development of education policies and plans

A number of education policies and plans have been developed and implemented, with the goal of UBE reflected in each. The most notable are the National Education Plan 1995–2004, National Education Plan 2005–2014 and Universal Education Plan 2010–2019.

National Education Plan 1995–2004

The GoPNG Department of Education (DoE) was tasked to develop and implement strategies to enable the critical issues affecting children's access, retention and the quality of education highlighted in the *Education Sector Review* (DoE, 1991) to be addressed effectively. The DoE was also tasked to ensure that progress is made towards attaining UBE targets set out in the MTDS by 2015. The DoE then developed education plans and policies to provide the frameworks necessary for achieving the desired UBE outcomes. It developed its first National Education Plan (NEP) in 1995. The plan reflected the recommendations of the *Education Sector Review*. To improve basic education, the plan aimed to:

- develop an education system that meets needs of PNG and its people, which will provide appropriately for the return of children to village communities, formal employment, or continuation to further education and training; and
- provide basic schooling for all children as it becomes financially feasible.

The key NEP 1995–2004 targets were as follows:

- increase enrolments in elementary education to approximately 430 000 with equal gender access;
- train approximately 16 000 elementary school teachers;
- enable all children to have the opportunity to complete nine years of basic education;
- improve the retention rate for grades one to six;

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- improve the participation and completion rates for females;
- rationalise staff development; and
- rehabilitate existing, and construct new, infrastructure.

Two related programs were developed to help achieve the above aims and NEP 1995–2004 targets. The first program was, ‘The Education Access and Expansion Program’, which was aimed at providing basic education for all children. The second program, ‘The Relevant Education for All Program’, aimed to develop an education system that will meet the needs of PNG and its people, and provide appropriately for the return of children to their communities, formal employment, or for further education and training. Apart from these projects, there were also donor-funded activities that were closely aligned to the GoPNG’s education priorities and the objectives of the NEP 1995–2004. These included the Primary and Secondary Teacher Education Project, the Curriculum Reform and Implementation Project, PNG School Journal Project, Basic Education Infrastructure and Curriculum Materials Project, and the Institutional Strengthening Project. In addition, a number of enabling plans and policies were developed and put in place during 1995–2004. These include the Special Education Plan, Language Policy, Provincial Education Plans, Literacy Policy, and Women’s Policy. These frameworks were meant to help increase access, retention and the quality of education for all children.

However, the development and the implementation of the NEP 1995–2004, and its related education policies and programs made very minimal impact on the achievement of UBE outcomes. For example, by 1998, only 92 000 children were enrolled in elementary school — yet the total enrolment was projected to reach a revised target of 410 836 by 2004. The majority of school-age children would have been denied access to education in 1998. In primary education, it was projected that about 5 460 000 will have been in school by 1999. Again, most children would not have been enrolled in primary school in 1999.

National Education Plan 2005–2014

The second NEP, ‘Achieving a Better Future: A National Plan for Education, 2005–2014’, was developed in 2004. The prime objective of this plan is to provide a basic education for all. In addition the plan aims for:

- every six-year-old to be admitted to elementary prep by 2012 and complete three years of basic relevant education;
- the retention rate to be increased to 70% by 2015; and
- a relevant curriculum to be developed, implemented and monitored.

A number of supporting plans and policies have also been developed and implemented to ensure that the NEP 2005–2014 aims are effectively pursued and attained. These include provincial education plans, School Learning Improvement Plans, Student Behaviour Management Policy, and the Gender Equity in Education Policy. Donor-funded programs have been also developed and implemented in collaboration with the GoPNG to support the education priorities and UBE outcomes reflected in the NEP 2005–2014. These include the Basic Education Capacity Building Project, and textbook procurement and distribution programs.

Universal Basic Education Plan 2010–2019

The development of the Universal Basic Education Plan (UBEP) 2010–2019 is a serious attempt by the GoPNG to fast track the achievement of the goal of UBE in light of poor progress being made towards its full attainment thus far. The plan aims to achieve the targets set out in Table 2, by 2019.

Table 2: Universal Basic Education Plan 2010–2019 universal basic education targets

Indicator	Target
Access	
Net admission rate (%)	100
Gross admission rate (%)	100
Gross enrolment rate (%)	96
Net enrolment rate (%)	100
Retention	
Retention rate (%)	77.5
Completion rate (%)	100
Quality	
Qualified teachers	100
Teacher:pupil ratio	1:35

The plan proposes to abolish school fees, increase advocacy and awareness, and provide water and sanitation facilities in all schools to increase access for children. Increasing teacher education, providing education materials and school libraries, and maintaining school facilities and the minimum number of learning hours are all strategies recommended for improving the quality of student learning. Furthermore, the plan aims to improve school management to make it easier to achieve the access, retention and quality targets.

Yet, reforming the education system and including UBE as a development priority in government documents and policies are insufficient to enable PNG to make measured and sustained progress towards its full attainment by 2015. It requires corresponding reforms in governance structures, provision of critical resources — including finance and infrastructure — and effective delivery of basic education services.

1.2.4 Governance and service delivery reforms

The introduction of the revised *Organic Law on Provincial Governments and Local-Level Governments* in 1995 was targeted at addressing the weakness of the decentralised system of government since 1975. It is seen as a catalyst for improving relations between the national and sub-national governments, improving the implementation and fiscal capacity of the decentralised levels of government, and hence improving the overall delivery of services. A number of education responsibilities are devolved to provinces while ensuring that there is clarity and a clear demarcation between national and sub-national governments' education roles and responsibilities. Changes were made in the area of resource allocation, with provincial and local-level governments being the principal funding recipients for providing education services. Changes were also made in the education functions of national, provincial and local-level governments, enabling the lower levels of government to play a greater role in providing and managing education. This was further strengthened through reforms in the

mechanisms for delivering basic services such as the Determination on Service Delivery (2009) and the minimum priority areas.

Reforms were also made to the way basic services, including education, were funded by the GoPNG from block grants, internal revenues, goods and services tax transfers by the GoPNG, special support grants from mineral resources, and functional grants. The reforms allowed for a more equitable distribution of funds based on the development and fiscal needs of provinces, and are aimed at improving basic service delivery, including basic education, in provinces, districts and local-level government areas.

These reforms are also aimed at enabling the government to, among other development priority areas, set realistic and achievable UBE targets; develop and implement effective strategies for achieving the desired UBE outcomes; and provide the required resources to support efforts at the national and decentralised levels towards the universalisation of basic education. Moreover, the reforms aim to create an environment conducive to working towards and achieving the goal of UBE, and improving the implementation and fiscal capacity at the sub-national levels by strengthening intergovernmental relationships, intergovernmental financing and service delivery mechanisms.

1.2.5 Status of progress toward the goal of universal basic education

The 2007 enrolment data produced by DoE indicates that PNG is making some progress towards the goal of UBE, but not sufficient to enable it to achieve the desired UBE outcomes by 2015.

Access

In terms of access, the 2007 student enrolment data shows that only 11.5% of six-year-olds in PNG were admitted to elementary prep to begin their formal education (the remaining 88.5% were not admitted). The male admission was 11.2%, while the female enrolment was 11.9 percent. The reasons for this poor admission rate of six-year-olds vary; however, the most common factors include:

- lack of education coverage (DoE, 1991; Webster, 1993);
- lack of parental capacity to pay school fees (Guy *et al.*, 2001; Paraide *et al.*, 2010);
- non-availability of teachers (Kukari *et al.*, 2009);
- cultural barriers (Seta, 1993; Mead *et al.*, 1995);
- refusal by teachers to employ multigrade teaching (Kukari *et al.*, 2009);
- preference given to the enrolment of older children (DoE, 2009; Kukari *et al.*, 2009);
- biannual rather than annual intake (DoE, 2009; Kukari *et al.*, 2009);
- repetition of children (Kukari *et al.*, 2009; Kukari, 2009b);
- lack of appropriate school infrastructure and sanitation facilities (Kukari, 2008a; DoE, 2009); and
- lack of security, particularly in locations where there are tribal conflicts (Kukari, 2008b).

The 2007 prep to grade eight gross enrolment rates (GER) show that national GER was 69.8 percent. This is quite low compared to some of the provinces, who had a GER of more than 100 percent. There are a number of contributing factors, including a high enrolment of over-

aged children and distortion of student enrolment data (Kukari, 2010). In terms of male and female GER, male GER (73.3%) was higher than female GER (66.1%).

Of school-aged children (6–14-year-olds), 53% were enrolled in basic education in 2007. The other 47% of 6–14-year-olds were not in school in the same year. The male and female net enrolment rates were 54% and 51%, respectively. There are many contributing factors; most are context specific. The most common contributing factors are the admission of older children to elementary prep (Kukari *et al.*, 2009) and students dropping out of school before completing the final grade of basic education (Yeoman, 1987; Seta, 1993; Guy *et al.*, 2001) due to one or more of the relevant factors outlined above.

Retention

The 2007 annual school census data show that, of the total number of children who had access to basic education, only 45.3% completed grade eight. The other 54.7% did not complete a full nine years of basic education. The reasons for the poor retention of students in basic education vary from context to context; however, the most common reasons include:

- lack of capacity to pay school fees (Paraide *et al.*, 2010);
- student boredom (Seta, 1993);
- lack of teaching materials (Yeoman, 1987); and
- poor parental, teacher and student attitudes (Kukari *et al.*, 2009).

Poor retention is also due to one or more relevant factors discussed under ‘Access’.

Quality

To fulfill the UBE requirement, children should receive a quality education in addition to having access to education. Yet, concerns have been raised regarding the poor quality of education in the public education system. These concerns have been validated by the poor performance of grade eight students in the Basic Education Certificate Examination. The 2006 examination results show that, except for the written expression exam, the results of numeracy, literacy and general subjects were well below 40% (DoE, 2009). The reasons for poor student learning outcomes include:

- poor school infrastructure (Yeoman, 1987; Webster, 1993);
- lack of curriculum and reading materials, and teaching and learning resources (Kukari *et al.*, 2009);
- poor school organisational climate and ineffective teaching (Kukari, 1991);
- poor school governance (Kukari, 2009c);
- lack of ongoing teacher professional development (Agigo, 2010; Kukari & Honan, 2010);
- lack of teacher understanding and ineffective implementation of the curriculum (Kukari *et al.*, 2009; Agigo 2010); and
- unqualified teachers (Kukari *et al.*, 2009) (an analysis of the 2007 annual school census data showed that only 68.7% of the teachers were qualified to teach in basic education).

1.3 Conclusion and lessons learnt

Notwithstanding all efforts and initiatives discussed here, and others devised and pursued by successive governments and development partners since 2000 to universalise basic education,

it is increasingly unlikely that UBE will be achieved by the target date of 2015 (Global Monitoring Report, 2006). In 2010, an estimate of 500 000 school-age children were yet to have access to education (AusAID, 2010). Many of these children were:

- girls;
- had disabilities;
- living with (or affected by) HIV or AIDS;
- living in poverty;
- involved in child labour;
- affected by tribal conflict and natural disasters; and
- living in underserved areas of the country.

The 2007 student enrolment data shows the existence of a gender parity gap. Girls still lag behind boys in all core indicators of basic education. This can be attributed to, among other factors:

- a lack of implementation and fiscal capacity (Bray, 1984; DoE, 2004; Kukari, 2009a);
- shifting education policy and priorities (Avalos, 1993);
- poor governance (Gelu, 2010);
- ineffective policy development and planning;
- poor implementation practices; and
- a lack of systematic and meaningful integration of research, monitoring and evaluation with policy development, planning and practice at all levels.

These have been, and continue to be, the main contributing factors to poor progress towards the goal of UBE. The other factors that may have contributed to poor UBE indicators and that will require further research include poor absorptive capacity of the education system, poor organisational school climates, ineffective school inclusion policies and plans, a lack of child-friendly schools, children and parental attitudes towards education, and curriculum relevance.

A number of important lessons can be learnt from the experiences of universalising basic education in PNG since the colonial era. First, universalising basic education requires both whole-of-government as well as comprehensive, multistakeholder approaches. Second, attaining the desired outcomes of UBE requires an innovative, accountable, transparent and committed leadership at all levels of society, particularly at the national and the decentralised levels. Third, systems of governance, and the modes of delivering goods and services, must be underpinned by mutual cooperation and partnerships, built on and secured by the Five National Goals and Directive Principles found in the National Constitution, and anchored by the core values of trust, honesty, and equity. Finally, UBE initiatives have failed to achieve the desired outcomes because they were based on poor development policy choices driven by political expediency and compromises, and bureaucratic indifference towards evidence-based decision making and policy development.

To ensure that all school-age children have access to education, stay in school to complete a full cycle of basic education and attain the desired learning outcomes, the whole approach to UBE must be critically examined. The aims of such an analysis will be to:

- identify the causal factors and the gaps;

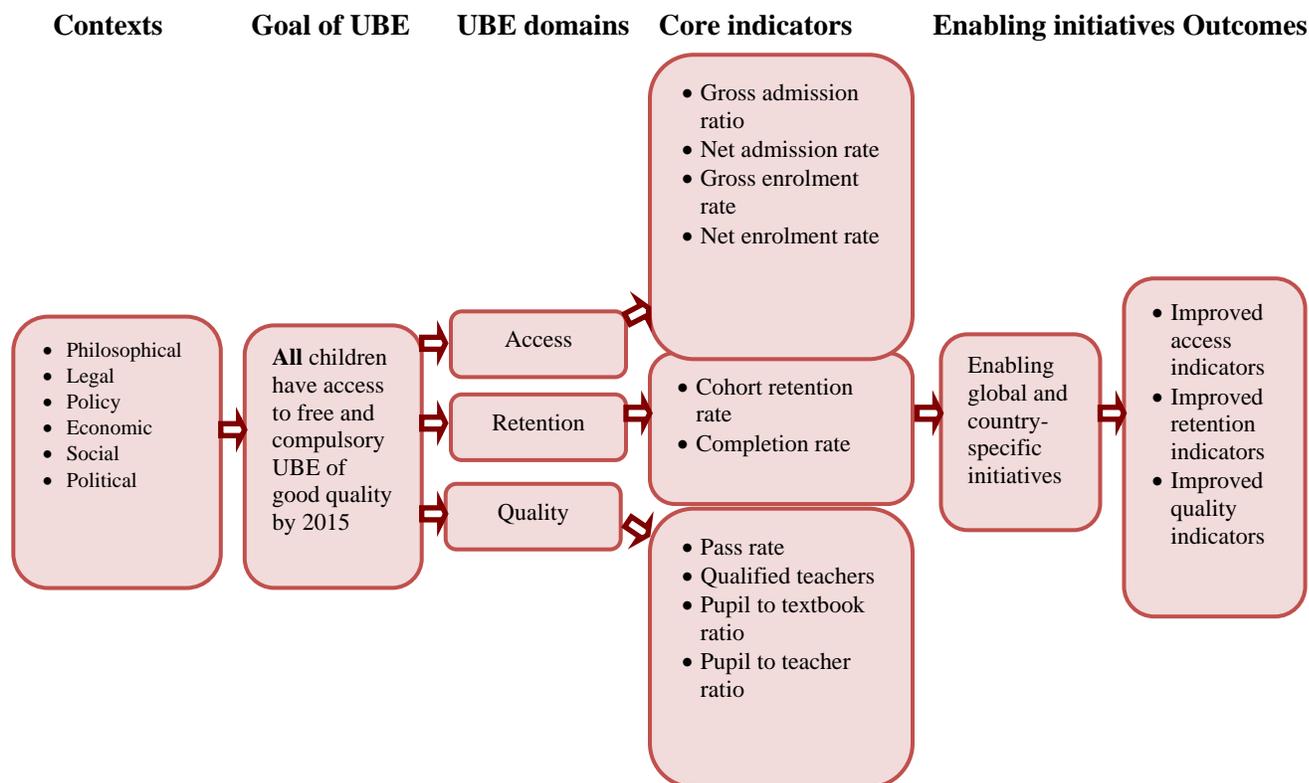
- develop and implement effective governance systems, effective and efficient goods and service delivery modes, effective policies and plans, and effective legal and accountability frameworks that will properly address the identified causal factors and gaps, and ensure the right of every child to education.

Effective interventions are urgently needed to secure the right of all children to basic education regardless of their backgrounds, close the gap in male and female enrolments in basic education, ensure that all children complete a full cycle of basic education, and receive an education of good quality. Unless this is done, the goal of UBE will take many years to achieve.

2 UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) Conceptual Framework provides the basis for understanding the UBE dialogue by showing and describing the mutual relationship among its core constituent elements. These elements are the context, the goal of UBE, the core domains of UBE and their key indicators, and the country-specific strategies for achieving the agreed UBE outcomes.

Figure 1: Universal basic education conceptual framework



2.1 Context of universal basic education

2.1.1 *Philosophical context*

The learning of essential knowledge, skills and values is critical for the emancipation and empowerment of people and communities. Nevertheless, many people and communities are unable to critically question the situations they find themselves in, and therefore cannot take appropriate actions to transform these situations to liberate themselves and, at the same time, better their own livelihoods (Freire, 1994). This is because they often do not have the necessary cultural capital — that is, knowledge, skills and values — to enable themselves to do so. A major contributing factor to this human condition is poor levels of literacy and agency among people at all levels of society, but particularly those in the remote and isolated locations; those from poor families; those affected by HIV or AIDS; working children; children with disabilities; and children affected by conflict or natural disasters. This is, in most part, due to lack of access to education.

Without adequate levels of literacy, many people and communities, particularly those in developing countries, will continue to be dominated, suppressed and condemned to a life of misery and poverty. Moreover, their ability to participate in, and benefit from, the modern development dialogue and practices will be severely restricted, and therefore place them on the periphery and render them as subjects rather than constructors of the development agenda and beneficiaries of any outcomes. Education is seen as an important key in the acquisition of the required levels of literacy that people need in order to adequately function in society and participate meaningfully in all spheres of its development (Matane, 1986; Giroux, 1989; Freire, 1970).

Access to a relevant and affordable education of reasonable quality is the only hope for many children to acquire relevant knowledge and skills required to free themselves from a life of poverty, and give them a chance of leading healthier and more meaningful lives. Education is the key of unlocking the human potential required for personal and community advancement and, hence, national development and prosperity. According to the World Bank Education Sector Strategy, education (including UBE) is, ‘the single most important key to development and poverty alleviation’ (WBESS, 1999). Many of the world’s nations have realised this, and are taking collective and country-specific actions to ensure that school-age children not only have access to education, but are given every opportunity to complete the basic education cycle.

2.1.2 Legal and policy contexts

The legal and policy contexts provide the means for enabling children to have access to, and participate in, education. They ensure that children’s rights to education are promoted and protected by governments at all levels, communities, and parents and citizens. In the global context, the most significant policies are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All Goals. In Papua New Guinea (PNG), children’s rights to education are embedded in the Five National Goals and Directive Principles found in the preamble of the National Constitution. Children’s rights to education are also enforced by various sections of the National Constitution and other related national legal frameworks, such as the *Lukautim Pikinini Act*, 2009.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

At the core of UBE is children’s right to education, as pronounced in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to education and that education should be directed at the integral human development of every child. This is reinforced in Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These frameworks stipulate the rights for all children to receive an education without discrimination on any grounds. They make it obligatory for all countries that have ratified these instruments to ensure that children’s right to education is secured through the development and implementation of relevant enabling policy and legal frameworks.

National goals and directive principles

Embedded in the Five National Goals and Directive Principles are three main principles — equality, participation and integral human development. These principles are the focal point of education dialogue and policy development in PNG. The principle of equality is an ideal that Papua New Guineans embrace. It has, in most part, underpinned decisions about education, including decisions and actions on access and participation of all school-age children in education. Participation is closely linked to equality in that participation in all spheres of PNG society, including education, is possible only if equal opportunities are provided to all citizens regardless of their circumstances. Integral human development is an overarching principle that includes equality and participation. It is through equality and participation that integral human development can be achieved. If people have equal access to, and participation in, a relevant and quality education, they can be involved dynamically in the process of freeing themselves from every form of domination and oppression, and have the opportunity to develop as a whole person.

Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All Goals

The EFA goals were agreed to by all nations present at Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990. These goals provide a list of targets that each member state should aim to achieve in the provision of education for all school-age children. This was followed by the development of the MDG by the United Nations in 2000. These goals provide minimum development priorities that all countries are expected to achieve by 2015. The second MDG states that all countries should ensure that all children have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality by 2015. The MDG and EFA goals both provide enabling frameworks for promoting and ensuring children's right to education at the global and national levels. The global community, including PNG, accepted the MDG and EFA goals, and made a commitment to attempt to achieve these by 2015.

2.2 Definition of basic education

The definition of basic education tends to reflect the perceptions of different stakeholders on which age groups should be included or excluded from receiving an education in a particular education cycle or a type of education. For example, basic education is defined as including only the primary school cycle by those formulating the MDGs and the EFA goals. Recently, this definition has been extended to include secondary education and early childhood education.

The United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines basic education as the first nine years of schooling; the first five or six years are often identified as primary education and the rest as lower secondary education. It also includes basic education for youth and adults who did not have the opportunity to complete a full cycle of primary education. Other organisations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), define basic education as including early childhood education, primary education, and formal and non-formal education for basic life skills; and literacy and numeracy training (Steer & Wathne, 2009).

In PNG, UBE is defined as including elementary and primary education. To complete a full cycle of basic education, children must complete a full nine years of schooling, which

comprises three years of elementary and six years of primary education. However, this will eventually include the secondary education sub-sector.

2.3 The goal of universal basic education

The goal of UBE, as agreed to in the formulation of the EFA goals in 1990 and later the development of the MDGs by the United Nations in 2000, is for the achievement of universal primary education by 2015. This means that all countries who committed themselves to this goal, including PNG, must make every effort to ensure that all children have equal access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality by 2015 (DoE, 1994 & 2004).

2.4 The objectives of universal basic education

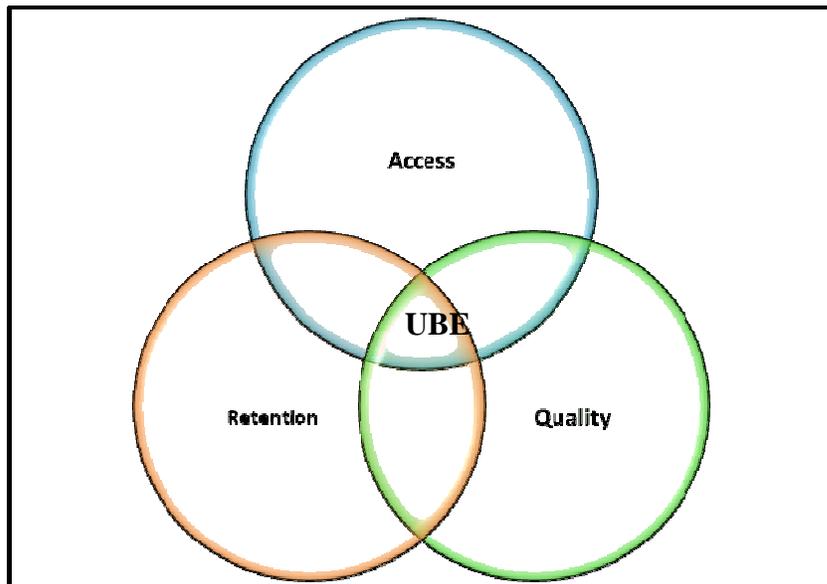
The objectives of UBE are to ensure that:

- all school age children have access to basic education;
- once admitted, all children are given every opportunity to complete a full cycle of basic education; and
- all children receive an education of a reasonable quality.

2.5 The three core domains of universal basic education

UBE is underpinned by three interconnecting domains: access, retention and quality. For the goal of UBE to be fully attained, all three domains must be simultaneously addressed, and the agreed targets in children’s access to basic education, retention and learning outcomes are fully achieved. If the target for one of these domains is not fully attained, the goal of UBE will be considered to have not been achieved (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: The core domains of universal basic education



2.5.1 Access

Access refers to the extent to which children of specified school age are able to gain access to a particular level or cycle of education (UNESCO, 1989). In PNG, access is the extent to which

all school-age children are able to gain access to basic primary education. The PNG policy has been to provide access for all children regardless of their backgrounds. The indicators for measuring children's access to education are:

- net admission ratio;
- gross admission rate;
- gross enrolment rate; and
- net enrolment rate.

2.5.2 Retention

Retention refers to children being provided opportunities to remain in school and complete a full cycle of schooling without dropping out after being admitted. However, in reality, not all children who gain access to the first level of formal education continue to complete their basic education. Children drop out of school for a variety of reasons. Student retention is measured using the following indicators:

- cohort retention rate; and
- completion rate.

These rates can also be used to calculate the retention of different categories of students, such as girls and boys, urban and rural schools, different grades, different cohorts, children with special education needs, and orphaned and vulnerable children.

2.5.3 Quality

Quality of education is often defined in relation to student learning outcomes and curriculum relevance. This is because curriculum relevance is at the heart of any education enterprise, and underpins perceptions about the usefulness and utility of what students learn in school. In the absence of more reliable and accurate measures of quality, the following proxy measures have been used to measure the quality of student learning:

- pass rate;
- qualified teachers;
- pupil:textbook ratio; and
- teacher:pupil ratio.

2.6 Enabling global and country-specific strategies

Both global and country-specific strategies are required to achieve the goal of UBE. For example, globally, developed countries are expected to support developing countries with appropriate levels of funding to increase their financial capacity and allow them to achieve the MDG, including the goal of UBE. Nationally, countries that committed themselves towards achieving the goal of UBE are required to develop and implement country-specific strategies that will make it possible for them to achieve it by the target date of 2015. In PNG, efforts towards universalising basic education are underlined by the Papua New Guinea Vision 2050, National Strategic Plan 2010–2030 and Universal Basic Education Plan 2010–2019.

3 UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

3.1 Rationale

Papua New Guinea's (PNG's) poor basic education indicators and relatively poor progress towards the goal of universal basic education (UBE) have been attributed to a number of factors, many of which are discussed in the first part of this research framework. Yet the critical role of research, monitoring and evaluation in the development of effective policies, plans, and best practice are rarely discussed. A critical gap that exists and continues to undermine efforts toward providing universal access to education in PNG is not only political and bureaucratic indifference to the significant role that research-based evidence plays in the development of effective development policies and plans and best practice, but also a critical lack of integration of research and development. This apparent lack of interest, together with lack of prioritisation, integration and funding of research, monitoring and evaluation strategies contributes directly to poor policy choices, poor planning, and poor decision-making at all levels of government and society. Furthermore, it contributes directly to failure of initiatives for achieving the desired development goals, including the goal of UBE.

Research must be meaningfully interwoven with policy development, planning and practice. This will ensure that high-quality and informed decisions are made at every phase of the policy development and planning processes. Moreover, the implementation of policies and plans should be carefully monitored so that meaningful and positive progress is made towards achieving the desired outcomes.

There is a strong link between development and research, and monitoring and evaluation. This link is critical for understanding the causes of poor performance; developing effective responses to address gaps; and improving performance towards the goal of UBE and its eventual attainment. The absence of this link has created significant knowledge gaps that have gone unnoticed due to lack of effective research, monitoring and evaluation. These knowledge gaps have severely hindered PNG from developing and implementing best practice, not only in the formulation of development strategies but also in the crafting of enabling policies and plans. This has contributed directly to the demise of many development initiatives.

Setting and prioritising PNG's development goals — including the goal of UBE — and their effective and efficient attainment requires effective and systematic use of evidence to develop and implement enabling policies and plans. Effective and systematic use of research-based evidence in policy and practice can help policy makers and planners identify problems, understand their causes, develop effective policy responses, improve policy implementation, and monitor strategies and performance (Court, *et al.*, 2006). Furthermore, a sustainable and effective use of research-based evidence can improve policy and practice, and therefore increase the likelihood of achieving UBE.

3.2 Universal basic education research, monitoring, and evaluation focal point

The Universal Basic Education Policy Research Framework (UBEPRF) will be the focal point for research, monitoring and evaluation of UBE policies, plans and practices at the national and sub-national levels. The UBEPRF will focus on generating and disseminating knowledge for

informed decision-making, policy choices and improved practice at all levels. In addition, it will be a catalyst for empowering relevant education personnel at the national and sub-national levels to carry out research, monitoring, and evaluation of UBE policies, plans and practices through capacity-building activities and collaborative research. Capacity-building activities will also be implemented to strengthen and build the capacity of NRI researchers in research, monitoring and evaluation through tailored education and training programs, staff exchanges with research organisations nationally and internationally, short and long-term attachments, and collaborative research. Towards this end, the UBEPFR promotes a multi-stakeholder, participatory and evidence-based approach to universalising basic education in PNG.

3.3 Objectives

The main objectives of the UBEPFR are to:

- contribute to and influence UBE policies at the national and sub-national levels by providing evidence from research, monitoring and evaluation;
- develop a core set of indicators for measuring national, provincial and district progress towards the goal of UBE;
- provide research support to districts with very low status indicators to identify the causal factors and assist them to develop more appropriate and effective local responses;
- verify student enrolment data in districts where there are anomalies in access, retention and data quality;
- produce and disseminate provincial and district profiles and research reports showing the performance of each province and district on key access, retention and quality indicators and targets proposed in the national Universal Basic Education Plan 2010–2019 to all stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels;
- disseminate research outcomes to the private, public and civil society stakeholders using a variety of modalities to raise awareness of the status of UBE in the country and to mobilise support for a comprehensive multistakeholder approach towards its achievement;
- develop research, evaluation and monitoring capacity at all levels on the collection, management, analysis and reporting of data on UBE indicators; and
- develop, implement and institutionalise a comprehensive, multilevel and participatory approach to research, evaluation and monitoring of UBE indicators.

3.4 Key strategic outcomes

The key outcomes of the UBEPFR are:

- increased investment in evidence-based research projects relevant to supporting provinces' and districts' UBE efforts;
- increased UBE research, monitoring and evaluation activities, and dissemination of status reports to provinces and districts;
- improved access, retention and quality indicators;
- improved provincial and district strategic policy responses towards attaining the goal of UBE;

- increased participation of provinces, districts, local-level governments, local-level government wards and schools in the collection, management, analysis and reporting on UBE indicators; and
- increased use of research outcomes to inform decision making, policy responses, planning and practice at the national and local levels.

3.5 Priority research, monitoring and evaluation projects

Research projects have been prioritised and categorised into core and enabling research projects. These projects were identified from a brief situational analysis of country-specific UBE strategies implemented since 2000, and extensive consultations with government departments, development partners, civil society, non-government organisations, faith-based organisations, the private sector, teachers, and parents and citizens.

3.5.1 Core research projects

Project 1: Monitoring of access, retention and quality indicators

Project 1 aims to measure the national, provincial and district performances towards attaining the access, retention and quality of education targets using a core set of indicators. Annual and biannual UBE performance reports will be produced and communicated to the National Department of Education, provinces and districts. Research will identify the causes of poor performance, and outcomes will be communicated to all concerned at the national and sub-national levels so that appropriate and effective interventions can be developed and implemented to address the gaps identified. This will ensure measured and meaningful progress by all provinces and districts towards the goal of UBE.

Project 2: Verification of student enrolment data

Anomalies in the student enrolment data will continue to persist despite efforts to eliminate them. These anomalies contribute to the misrepresentation of student access and retention. Data will be verified annually, targeting provinces and districts where there are clear cases of distortion in the student enrolment data. This verification will help to identify and address causal factors to improve the overall reliability and the validity of the data. Verification will also ensure that progress towards access and retention targets are measured and reported accurately.

Project 3: Localising the goal of universal basic education

This five-year project will use a multilevel, multistakeholder participatory approach to universalising basic education, aimed specifically at the district and local government levels. The project will comprise several critical components. The first component will focus on building and strengthening capacities of key stakeholders at the provincial and district levels in:

- UBE research, monitoring and evaluation;
- quantitative and qualitative data analysis;
- data management;
- report writing;
- dissemination of research outcomes;
- evidence-based UBE policy development and planning; and

- evidence-based policy advocacy.

The second component will involve:

- data collection on an agreed set of core UBE indicators;
- development and management of a database;
- entry of data into a database;
- processing of data; and
- dissemination of research reports.

The third component will focus on developing evidence-based UBE policies and plans, and advocacy messages. It is anticipated that this project will become a catalyst for delivering and attaining the goal of UBE in PNG.

Project 4: Access to education for disadvantaged children

Many school-age children have limited or no opportunities for access to schooling due to cultural, geographical and economic barriers, and the lack of education coverage. For example, children most at risk of missing schooling include most female children, children with a disability, children in child labour, children living in poverty, and children affected by HIV or AIDS. Strategies for universalising basic education in PNG must therefore include these children. The goal of UBE will not be achieved unless all children in the population of related school age have access to schooling, are retained, and complete a full cycle of basic education with the desired minimum literacy levels.

Project 4 will involve four activities. First, activity will focus on collecting baseline data on these children's access to education. Second, access, retention and academic achievement of these children will be continuously monitored and evaluated using a core set of UBE indicators. Third, research will investigate the causes of poor performance on any of the core indicators. Fourth, data will be managed and disseminated to relevant stakeholders to inform the development of equitable and inclusive education policies, plans and practices.

Project 5: Analysis of universal basic education policies

Policies have been developed and implemented to increase children's access, retention and quality of learning. However, the implementation and impact of these policies have not been clearly ascertained. Given the allocation and expenditure of substantial resources on these policies, there is a need to analyse these policies to find out whether they have had the desired impact on student access, retention and the quality of learning.

Project 6: Tracking of universal basic education expenditure

Substantial amounts of money continues to be allocated to the education sector for a variety of programs and projects aimed at improving children's access to, and participation in, education, and improving the quality of student learning outcomes. Even so, there are some concerns about the transparency and accountability of the use of these funds, particularly relating to the procurement of goods and services, and the achievement of the program and project outcomes. Anecdotal evidence indicates that funds earmarked for education projects have often been misappropriated or misapplied through corrupt practices that prevent program outcomes from

being obtained. Tracking education expenditure will ensure that the total budget and expenditure on each education program are tracked from when the appropriation is made to the delivery of the final program or project outcomes. Evidence derived from such an inquiry will help to improve the process of program funding, management and expenditure and hence the delivery of essential education services.

Project 7: Sustainable models of funding UBE

Although some studies have been done on the financing of education in general, no studies have investigated sustainable options of funding UBE. The Government of Papua New Guinea (GoPNG) has estimated that it would cost about K20 billion to universalise basic education. This estimate is not based on any research evidence. The current funding towards the implementation of the UBE plan comes from the Australian Government; this funding arrangement is not sustainable. There is an urgent need for the GoPNG to fund UBE from its own resources. Research will be carried out to identify sustainable models of funding UBE. These models will then be recommended to the government to consider and implement.

Project 8: Teacher education and training

The quality of teachers is, among other factors, determined by their teacher education and training. Although some restructuring has been done to improve the provision of teacher education and the quality of graduates, there are still underlying issues that need researching to improve the quality of teacher education in PNG. Research in teacher education and training will focus on:

- the balance between content acquisition and teaching pedagogy;
- the relationship between theory and practice of teaching;
- teaching perspectives;
- teacher identities;
- the notion of professional schools;
- the education of teachers for remote areas;
- use of computer software and pre-recorded teaching programs in one-teacher schools;
- teachers' teaching effectiveness, and
- teachers' professional learning.

Project 9: School management

School management is an important catalyst for creating and sustaining open organisational climates, which are conducive to high-quality teaching and a high level of student achievement. Progress of schools towards achieving their teaching and learning goals depends on the type of leadership, its management experiences and practice, and the knowledge and skills it brings to bear on the management of schools. Improving school-based education indicators relies, to a larger extent, on the quality of instructional leaders and how they lead their schools. Research into issues relating to school administration will help greatly in understanding the relationship between school management and the indicators of UBE at the school level. In the beginning, school-management research will focus on head teachers' roles and responsibilities as instructional leaders, and the school organisational climate.

Project 10: Curriculum development and implementation

Although some research has focused on curriculum development and implementation, much remains to be understood about the way in which curricula are conceptualised, developed, implemented and monitored at the national and sub-national levels, particularly by teachers at the school level. Teachers' understanding of curriculum theory and practice, and their effectiveness in implementing and assessing it, need to be investigated to identify the catalyst for effective curriculum development and implementation. Data generated from these kinds of research will help shape curriculum policy.

3.5.2 Priority-enabling research projects*Project 1: School governance*

The wellbeing of schools and the effectiveness in which they carry out their teaching and learning functions depend on the effectiveness and efficiency in which the national and sub-national governments, including school boards, carry out their mandated and delegated education roles and responsibilities. Very little research has been carried out in the area of school governance and its impact on education quality, access and retention. Research will be carried out in this critical area of the education system to understand how it influences the achievement of the overall outcomes of education and outcomes specific to access, retention and the quality of education. Research in this area will initially centre on the political leaders' understanding and implementation of their educational governance roles and responsibilities described in the Organic Law on Provincial and Local-Level Governments, the Determination Assigning Service Delivery Functions and Responsibilities to Provincial and Local-Level Governments, 2009, and the *Education Act* 1983 (Consolidated to No. 13 of 1995) at the national, district, local-level government and school contexts.

Project 2: Teaching and learning resources

The provision of curriculum materials continues to be a major challenge for the PNG education system. Most schools do not receive materials sent to them, and many more do not have teaching and learning materials, nor do they have the funds to purchase these materials. Moreover, most schools do not have school libraries, and therefore the opportunity for augmenting student learning using books is lost. Research will explore cost-effective ways of providing, storing, using and managing school resources so that they are available for teachers' and students' use.

Project 3: School infrastructure

The provision of adequate and quality infrastructure is important for achieving the desired UBE goals. However, providing new infrastructure, or renovating existing buildings, continues to pose a major challenge for the national and the sub-national governments. There is a need to examine how school infrastructure is provided and managed at the different levels of the education system to make sure that the lack of infrastructure does not become a barrier to children's access to education; that is, does not contribute to children's decision to withdraw from school, and that it does not impact negatively on the quality of student learning.

Project 4: Analysis of basic service delivery models

Successive governments have used a number of models to deliver basic education in PNG since independence. Despite this, PNG is still lagging behind other countries in achieving the goal of UBE. An analysis of the different models of delivering basic education in PNG will critically examine their impact on the overall goal of UBE, ascertain the discrepancies as well as the catalysts for effective and efficient delivery of UBE, and identify a model that effectively supports the delivery of UBE on a sustainable basis, leading to substantial improvements in children's access and retention, and the quality of learning outcomes.

Project 5: Pupils' attitudes towards education

Students' attitudes towards education affect their participation and the level of their academic achievement. Previous research of students' attitudes toward education has identified factors that are critical to student success in education, as well as factors that hinder students from having access and excelling in school. Despite this, there is an obvious need to monitor and report on different aspects of student attitudes toward education on a regular basis. An in-depth understanding of students' attitudes towards education will enable negative attitudes to be mitigated and positive ones encouraged to enable greater participation of all school age children in schooling. Furthermore, it will help to improve the quality of students' education experience, as well as the quality of their learning.

Project 6: Parents' attitudes towards education

Parents' attitudes towards education are an important determinant of children's access, retention and quality of learning. Achieving the UBE goals will also depend on the attitude of parents towards the education of their children. Research in this area is important because it will help to identify parents' attitudes to education, which can be targeted for change if necessary. Parental attitudes toward education will be measured using a number of indicators over time to assess the degree of change in attitudes and the factors that contribute towards this change.

3.6 Research approach

To ensure that all stakeholders are fully involved in the research process, UBE research, monitoring and evaluation will be underpinned by the principles of participatory action research. A multilevel, participatory research approach will provide the basis for involving relevant key stakeholders in researching, monitoring and evaluating UBE initiatives and outcomes. In addition, research pathways will be used to implement the research projects already identified.

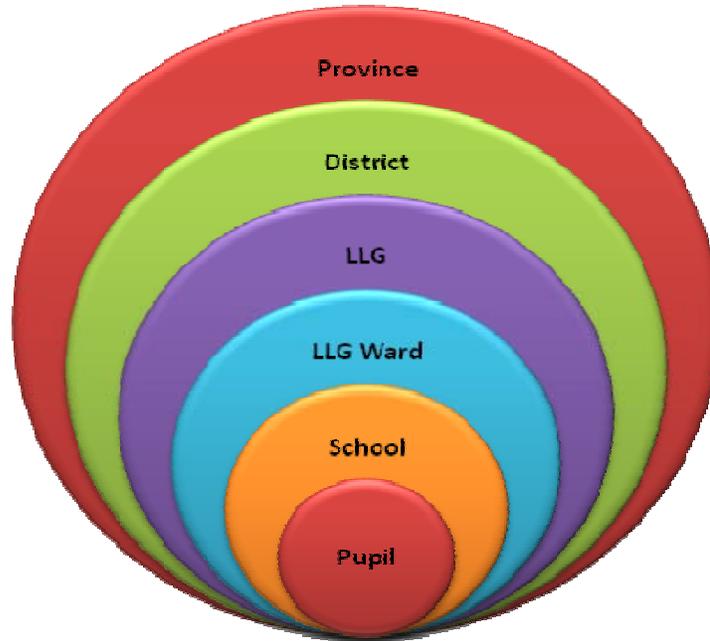
3.6.1 A multilevel, participatory research approach

A multilevel, participatory research approach will be used to collect, manage and disseminate information on the domains and indicators of UBE. This will ensure that all stakeholders who will be affected by the outcomes of research, including the implementation of the ensuing recommendations, are fully involved in the research process. The stakeholders will be involved in identifying research priorities and taking an active part in collecting, verifying, analysing and reporting data. The key stakeholders include the PNG Department of Education (DoE), the provinces, the districts, schools, development partners, and other relevant public, civil society and private stakeholders. The ultimate aim of this research approach is to gradually hand over

responsibility to the stakeholders, particularly those in the provinces, districts, local-level governments and schools, for setting the research agenda and enabling the National Research Institute (NRI) to change its role of being a researcher to that of a research facilitator.

Data on UBE indicators will be collected, managed, verified and reported at six different levels: the individual pupil level, school level, council ward level, local-level government level, district level, and provincial level (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Levels from which data for UBE indicators will be collected, managed, verified and reported



3.6.2 Research pathways

A number of research pathways will be used to research, monitor and evaluate UBE outcomes and indicators, including the Open Call and Commissioned Research Pathways. The main purpose of using research pathways is to involve stakeholders in collecting data on the outcomes and indicators of UBE. Research pathways will also help to build capacity at the national, decentralised and local-government levels on how to collect and interpret data, as well as how to write and disseminate progress reports on provincial, district and school activities.

3.7 Communication of research outcomes

Research outcomes will be communicated to all key stakeholders in the public, private and civil society sectors, specifically DoE, provinces and the districts. Research outcomes will provide evidence for informed decision making and policy development at all levels of society. It is envisaged that this will lead to the development of more effective UBE policies and improved policy outcomes. Research outcomes will be communicated in several ways, and the following publications will form the basis of the UBE Policy Research Communications Strategy:

- monographs;
- discussion papers;
- special publications;
- occasional papers;
- policy briefs; and
- journal articles.

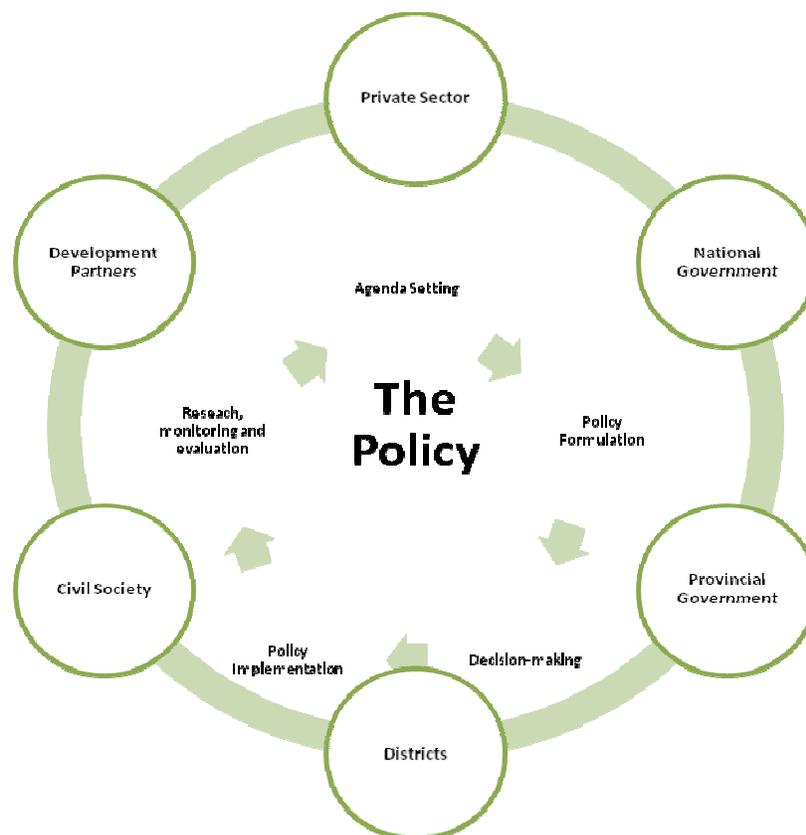
3.8 Review of performance

Reports on the performance of DoE, provinces and districts on the indicators of UBE will be provided to enable them to review their own performances and take appropriate actions to improve poorly performing indicators. The reports will clearly identify the causal factors for poor performance and recommend actions that should be taken at the national and sub-national levels to address these factors.

3.9 Policy response

National, provincial and district personnel are expected to be actively engaged in developing and implementing appropriate policy responses and interventions using research evidence to address the causal factors of poor performance. These policies must be able to make a positive and measurable impact on the attainment of UBE outcomes. The policy process is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: UBE evidence-based policy cycle showing the key components and actors



Source: Adapted from Court, et al. (2006)

Development of policy responses often include five main stages:

- At the **agenda setting stage**, evidence will be used to put UBE issues on the agenda and ensure that they are recognised as significant problems that require positive policy responses.
- At the **policy formulation stage**, evidence will be used to influence the development of effective policies that will improve UBE outcomes.
- At the **decision-making stage**, decisions about options for addressing UBE issues will be made. The presentation of evidence will help decision makers to choose more effective and relevant strategies for addressing the problems.
- At the **policy implementation stage**, evidence will be used for policy implementation.
- Finally, at the **research, monitoring and evaluation stage**, evidence will be used as the basis for researching, evaluating and monitoring the effectiveness and relevance of policies in achieving the overall goals of UBE.

3.10 Research, monitoring, and evaluation training of national, provincial and district personnel

There is a critical need to create a pool of researchers and monitoring and evaluation specialists to lead in designing and carrying out high-quality research, monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of UBE at the national and sub-national levels. Towards this end, training will be provided for national, provincial and district personnel in UBE research, monitoring and evaluation. It will focus on research design and methods, data collection and management, data analysis, report writing, and dissemination of research outcomes.

Participants will be trained to research cases of poor performance to identify and understand the causal factors, and recommend appropriate local interventions to prevent them. Participants will also be taught how to create and manage a research, monitoring and evaluation database to make sure that information is accessible to researchers, policy makers, planners, teachers, parents and citizens, and other relevant stakeholders. In addition, they will be taught how to link evidence to UBE policy, planning and practice.

It is anticipated that this will translate to informed policy choices, effective planning, and the development and implementation of best practice at the national and sub-national levels. The ultimate aim of this training is to increase the quality and quantity of research, monitoring and evaluation activities, as well as the use of evidence in decision-making, policy development and planning, and practice at all levels.

3.11 Capacity building and strengthening of NRI UBE researchers

Education and training will be provided for researchers in the NRI UBE research program to build and strengthen their research, monitoring and evaluation capacities. As the focal point of UBE research, monitoring and evaluation, it is essential that the UBE research program has the quality and quantity of staff required to lead research, monitoring and evaluation efforts toward the goal of UBE. The following education and training programs (outlined below) will be pursued.

Staff exchanges

The purpose of this staff exchange and attachment program is to allow researchers in the NRI UBE research program to swap with research staff from an overseas educational institution for short to medium periods of time. This will allow both researchers to work with colleagues in the host institution on identified, mutually agreed research, evaluation and monitoring activities, providing much-needed learning experience and knowledge sharing between all parties.

Staff attachments

The staff attachment program will be tailored to provide opportunities for NRI UBE researchers for short- to medium-term attachments with international educational institutions and organisations. The researcher will spend the time working in another research environment and culture, and learn about how research, evaluation, and monitoring are carried out in other contexts. The program will also provide an opportunity for NRI researchers to share their experiences and knowledge of research and evidence-based development policy and planning.

Postgraduate studies

Opportunities will be provided for research staff to undertake postgraduate studies, including postdoctoral studies, in-country or externally. This will assist the researchers to pursue advanced studies and research work in a field of specialisation directly related to the goal of UBE. This program will not only contribute towards strengthening the capacity of NRI researchers, it will also contribute towards building a critical mass of researchers and monitoring and evaluation specialists needed by PNG to effectively research and monitor its development goals.

Short-term training

External short-term training opportunities will be made available to researchers within the NRI UBE research program to undertake specialised training to address identified knowledge gaps and improve their research, monitoring and evaluation knowledge and skills. This type of training will normally be of a minimum of one week to less than one year.

Short-term in-house training

Short-term in-house training will be provided to address specific needs of researchers in the NRI UBE research program. This training can be as short as one day or as long as one week. Training needs will be identified and a training plan will be developed and implemented over a specified period of time.

Collaborative research, monitoring and evaluation

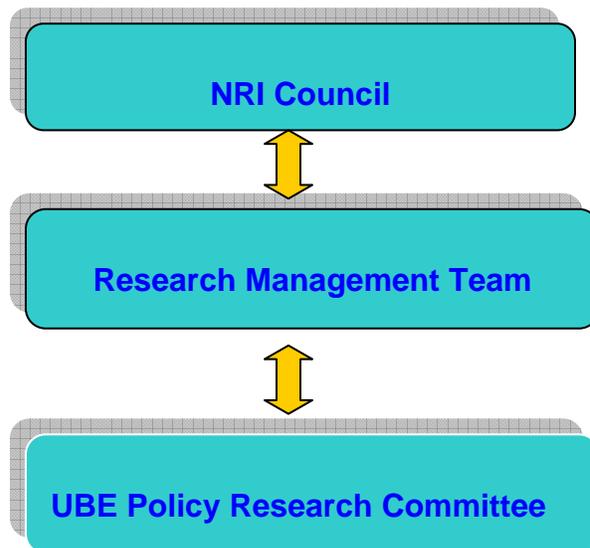
Collaborative research, monitoring and evaluation will be encouraged and facilitated to provide opportunities for researchers to work together on projects with researchers from other institutions and organisations located nationally and internationally. This will enable the researchers to learn from each other and, in the process, build and strengthen their capacities for quality research, monitoring and evaluation. This very practical approach to capacity building and strengthening is essential for establishing linkages, brokering research, and creating a stock of research knowledge and best practice that can be made available to other researchers.

4 MANAGEMENT OF THE UBE POLICY RESEARCH PROGRAM

4.1 The management framework

Effective management of the Universal Basic Education Policy Research Program is essential in ensuring that the proposed research projects are relevant and aligned to the overall goal and objectives of universal basic education (UBE). Figure 5 shows the process and the key players that will guide and manage UBE research activities.

Figure 5: UBE policy research management structure



4.2 Key actors

The key actors in the overall management of the UBE policy research are the:

- National Research Institute Council;
- Research Management Team; and
- UBE Policy Research Committee.

4.3 Key roles and responsibilities

The key roles and responsibilities of each of the actors are summarised below.

4.3.1 *The National Research Institute Council*

The National Research Institute (NRI) Council's roles and responsibilities pertaining to research programs and projects of the NRI are defined in the *NRI Act 1975* consolidated to No. 19 of 1993 Chapter 165. The NRI Council will:

- formulate policy relating to the conduct of UBE research and the dissemination of its outcomes;

- employ qualified and experienced researchers to manage and implement the research program;
- procure such financial and material resources required for the effective management and implementation of the program;
- provide an oversight of the program and ensure that the desired outcomes and outputs are delivered effectively and efficiently; and
- ensure that financial and other resources are managed prudently and expended effectively to achieve the objectives of the program.

4.3.2 The Research Management Team

The Research Management Team will:

- manage the implementation of the UBE research program and projects;
- ensure that quarterly reports are made on the progress of each research project;
- ensure that UBE research projects comply with NRI's ethical standards;
- provide an oversight of the management and implementation of UBE research activities;
- ensure that financial and other resource requirements of the research program are communicated to the Heads of Division Committee; and
- develop policies that will support the effective and efficient implementation of the research program and projects.

4.3.3 Universal Basic Education Policy Research Committee

A UBE Research Committee (UBERC) will be established to contribute towards shaping UBE research, to assist in mobilising resources and support for the UBE research program, disseminate research outcomes and relevant information on UBE to members of their stakeholder groups, and provide a general oversight of the implementation of the UBEPFR. The Committee will comprise research staff from the UBE research program and key stakeholders from the public and private sectors, and civil society. The Committee will:

- assist the UBE program in determining UBE research projects for implementation;
- oversee the implementation of the research projects;
- help raise awareness and mobilise support and resources for NRI's UBE research program and projects; and
- play an advocacy role in terms of the importance of NRI's UBE research program within the context of the overall national government agenda on human capital development.

Membership of the committee

The UBERC will comprise:

- head of People Pillar;
- head of UBE research program;
- one member representing the PNG Department of Education;
- one member representing the private sector;
- one member representing civil society and NGOs;
- one member from each of the four regions of the country;
- one member representing the universities;

- one member representing teachers;
- one member representing the development partners; and
- one member representing church agency schools.

The members of the committee will be sourced by way of an open invitation and selected using predetermined criteria. Others will be invited through a closed invitation. The chairperson will be nominated and elected in the first committee meeting.

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