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## Papua New Guinea

# Planning Together for Improved Stakeholder Support, Communication and Coordination

This brief document outlines how CARE International in Papua New Guinea (CARE PNG) works to improve stakeholder support, communication, and coordination for its program in Obura Wonenara District, Eastern Highlands Province, through its annual planning process. This approach involves multi-stakeholder reflection, dialogue, and joint planning with partners from government, and national and local organisations.

### What is the policy?

At present, there is no a planning or engagement mechanism for NGOs with District or Provincial agencies. Therefore, regular communication and coordination between NGOs and government is limited.

### What are the implementation issues?

Without planning and engagement mechanisms:

- Rolling out or replicating successful models can be challenging as there is little opportunity for Provincial levels of government to engage on issues at the District level.
- Coordination within districts can be limited, and projects can run the risk of being redundant and a drain on scarce funding resources.
- Buy-in and ownership can be difficult to establish with those who are expected to implement and ultimately take over project activities, thus projects can cease to be sustainable and readily fail.

## What is the approach?

Every year, CARE PNG brings its partners and stakeholders together for a participatory “Annual Reflection and Planning Workshop” with the objectives to:

- Present the year’s achievements in Obura Wonenara District to stakeholders;
- Reflect together on what worked well;
- Strategise ways to work together better;
- Have stakeholders provide input into the development of CARE PNG’s next annual plan for Obura Wonenara; and
- Provide donors with a better understanding of the district.

The workshop is designed to take a program-wide approach and participants are grouped into sectors (i.e. Governance and Planning; Education; Health; Agriculture; and Law and Justice), each with representation from LLG, District, and Provincial levels of government. Group members share their organisation’s plans and priorities before moving into a discussion on the potential overlaps, synergies, and ways CARE PNG could move forward within that sector. Following this, the sector groups share their proposed plans back to the workshop participants for input, outlining contributions, commitments, and areas for support and collaboration. Once all groups have presented and feedback given, an agreement is made on a draft annual plan for CARE PNG that is endorsed by all participants. Throughout the year, CARE PNG communicates progress, achievements, and next steps to government and non-government partners through quarterly reports.

## What is emerging?

- **Enhanced engagement** – This workshop is a mechanism for dialogue and facilitates interaction and connections between multiple parties and across sectors, bringing the Province, District and LLGs together. This platform offers the chance for the Member of Parliament and staff, as well as District Administrator and officers, to engage with Provincial technical departments and management lines at a forum focused entirely on their district. This is also an ideal space to discuss and promote models for rural service delivery being tried by CARE PNG and partners, including approaches that are more inclusive of gender and diversity concerns.
- **Better coordination** – This process gets stakeholders on the same page with what is needed in the district, and what can be done jointly to support development. For the District Administrator, this is an opportunity to coordinate inputs into his/her district.
- **Increased government support and ownership** – Before, the workshop focused on “gaps” in the District and what CARE would do. Now, the focus is on what all relevant groups can do together to make improvements in the District. Increasingly, government partners are taking the lead and committing funding and human resources towards shared activities and goals.