

The Old Dart Foundation Papua New Guinea Funding Strategy

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Introduction

This document sets out the Old Dart Foundation's (ODF) funding strategy in Papua New Guinea (PNG). It reflects the actions we will take based on what we have heard and learned from 55 experts, over half of whom have direct experience of PNG, including 20 who are living there now.

At the outset of this process, we were clear that we wanted to better understand the underlying causes and effects of the following thematic areas, which we understand to be some of the most pressing issues in PNG:

- Gender-based violence
- The impact of climate change
- The healthcare crisis

Synthesising the insights from our experts and concluding what it means for our funding has been a huge privilege, yet also a challenging process. There is so much we can do in PNG and how best to strike a balance between breadth and depth of funding is something to which we continue to give careful consideration. This document details our funding priorities.

What has been clear to us, almost from the outset, is that as a private funder, we are uniquely placed to help catalyse social change in PNG by supporting individuals and organisations that are woefully overlooked and underfunded but so critical to bringing about social change. With this in mind, it is our intention to place a greater emphasis on funding the following members of PNG's civil society:

- Community-based, community-led, grassroots organisations in rural areas
- Women-led work/organisations
- Youth-led work/organisations/emerging leaders

As well as giving consideration to *what* we fund, this process has also required us to give careful consideration to *how* we fund. In doing so, we have recognised we must significantly shift the power we hold to the communities we serve, in acknowledgement that they are in closer proximity to, and directly affected by the issues, and therefore best-placed to determine how our resources should be used.

As a spend-down foundation, it is a priority for us to play an integral role in strengthening civil society by mobilising other donors so that our grantees' work can continue as long as is needed and beyond our existence. This strategy includes the actions we will take to make this happen.

Francesca Mott, CEO, Old Dart Foundation



OUR VISION

A world in which PNG is able to flourish on its own terms, the diversity of its culture and ecosystems are valued and the potential of its people is fully realised.



OUR PURPOSE

We support communities by developing trusting relationships, providing resources, and fostering connections, to advance inherent rights and catalyse social change.



OUR APPROACH

We forefront self-determination and prioritise opportunities where money goes directly to frontline communities, in support of community-led initiatives.



OUR VALUES

Allyship

We know that the future of PNG belongs to the people who have been shaped by its past and present. As such, we are committed to working in service of the PNG community and will uphold their right to self-determination.

Humility

We are committed to continual learning and growth. We seek out knowledge beyond our organisation and centre the expertise of those most affected by the injustices we seek to tackle.

Ambition

We recognise the urgency and seriousness of the injustices our partners seek to address. We are ambitious for the communities we serve and uncompromising in our commitment to this work. We are bold in the face of the action required of us.

Mutual respect

We seek to engage with our grantees in a spirit of partnership, mutual understanding and respect.

Humanity

Our mission is driven by compassion for the human race and the natural world.

Trust

We believe in our partners and are led by their vision; building authentic relationships based on solidarity.

Rural Healthcare

Our research emphasised that:

- The government has consistently failed to prioritise rural healthcare and to develop services, infrastructure and medical supplies in line with the needs of the growing population.
- There is a severe shortage of qualified health professionals in rural areas (where most of the population lives). The staff that *does* exist often lacks basic knowledge such as where and how medication should be stored and how to use life-saving equipment.
- Improving PNG's healthcare system and health outcomes requires a holistic approach and must recognise the value of things such as training, upskilling and mentoring and assistance to healthcare staff including community health workers.
- The situation around women's health, specifically maternal healthcare, is particularly dire. PNG has the same number of births per year as Australia – but in Australia, there are 24,000 midwives, whereas in PNG there are less than 800 (mostly in urban areas). There are 4,500 community health workers, but this is still no comparison to Australia.
- No government scholarship is available for midwifery and women first need to train and serve as a nurse for 5 years.

How ODF can catalyse change:

By providing:

- Funding for programmes that enable trained community healthcare workers to develop a wider range of skills, so they can address the diversity of health issues in their communities, including maternal and infant health.
- Scholarships/funding to increase the number of medical professionals working rurally in PNG, including qualified midwives.

In ten years' time:

More of the rural population can access primary medical care, with more women giving birth with assistance. Rural medical practitioners have access to increased and ongoing training opportunities.

Climate: Coastal Conservation

Our research emphasised that:

- For coastal communities, the impacts of climate change are already being felt in such a profound way that people are forced to move due to rising sea levels and coastal ecosystem degradation.
- Increasingly, human activity is fuelling the environmental degradation of coral reefs. The ongoing survival of local livelihoods is contingent on the health of these reefs.
- Women are more adversely affected by the impact of climate change. When communities are displaced, it is their job to bring normalcy. For example, they have to gather resources to build homes or learn what food can grow in the changing context. There is no intervention or guidance from the government or agriculture board.
- Although many countries in the Global North now recognise the concept of Loss and Damage, funding consistently fails to reach the communities on the frontline of the climate crisis.

How ODF can catalyse change:

By providing funding and wider support for:

- Locally-led organisations that support coastal communities to protect ecosystems and sustain livelihoods.

In ten years' time:

Coastal ecosystems are better protected and the local communities can build more sustainable livelihoods.

Our Funding Priorities

Climate: Forest Protection

Our research emphasised that:

- Indigenous people have developed cultures, practices, livelihoods and institutions that prevent the over-exploitation of forests. Consequently, rates of deforestation and biodiversity loss are significantly lower in areas managed by local communities.
- Protecting local people's livelihoods can be a key lever for preventing deforestation because communities are less likely to be living in precarious financial circumstances that lead to them selling their land to logging/extractive companies.
- Despite the above, there have not been any significant shifts in policies or in financial support from funders for indigenous communities.
- Historically, less than 2% of philanthropy has gone to climate change initiatives and less than 1% of that has gone to indigenous and frontline communities, even though they are bearing the impact of climate change.

How ODF can catalyse change:

By providing:

- Funding and wider support for climate leaders/activists and community-led initiatives, through trusted local partners.
- Funding that enables the local management of forests and prioritises self-determination.

In ten years' time:

We hope that inherent land rights are formalised and respected, improving environmental outcomes and strengthening community leadership and livelihoods.

Gender-based violence (GBV)

Our research emphasised that:

- There are several root causes of GBV, including patriarchal gender norms, poverty and conflict, lack of employment opportunities and poor mental health.
- Whilst there are laws to protect women, they aren't always enforced and social norms coupled with family/community pressure, make it difficult for victims to pursue justice.
- Attitudes amongst young people are starting to change but progress is slow because (i) there is a discrepancy between what young people *learn* about GBV and what they *see/experience* in their homes and communities, and (ii) teachers are under-resourced and ill-equipped to educate children about gender-equality and healthy relationships.
- Addressing GBV requires work at the levels of the individual, family, community and society at large. Outreach is an essential part of this, so victims can know how to get help, what laws exist to protect them and what pathways are available for support.
- International approaches to ending GBV often prove ineffective because they are usually short-term and based on an 'outside' perspective of what will work.
- Local women's organisations, led by respected community members are often more effective at ending the cycle of violence but they find it difficult to access funding.
- GBV funding is usually focussed on victim support, rarely addressing the need to tackle the root causes by working with male perpetrators of violence.

How ODF can catalyse change:

By providing funding and wider support for:

- Rural, community-based, women-led organisations and emerging leaders.
- Awareness-raising and behaviour change campaigns.
- Projects specifically working with male perpetrators of violence.

In ten years' time:

We hope that social norms and behaviours around GBV have shifted, women's rights and protection from violence are the status quo, in reality, and social consciousness.

Violence Against Children

Our research emphasised that:

- Children in PNG are victims of high levels of violence in their homes, schools and communities and this perpetuates the cycle and normalisation of violence.
- Teachers are often poorly trained and minimally equipped to address violence and protect children and young people. In addition, there are rarely dedicated guidance counsellors in schools.
- Preventing or stopping violence against children at home or in school is proven to be the most important thing that can be done to reduce violence in the long term. It's what proves most effective in breaking the cycle.
- Education must be coupled with strong response systems to Family and Sexual Violence (FSV) and GBV. Otherwise, there may be situations where everyone understands that violence is wrong but survivors have difficulty accessing help.

How ODF can catalyse change:

By providing funding and wider support for:

- Work carried out with children and young people to shift social norms and behaviours around violence.
- Programmes in schools which support teachers to better safeguard children.
- Organisations supporting child survivors of violence.

In ten years' time:

We hope that homes and schools are safer places where children can live free from abuse and violence.

Our funding practices

Our research emphasised that:

- *How* we provide funding is just as, if not more important than, *what* we fund.
- Although much of what we are already doing is helpful for grantees, such as the provision of core, unrestricted funding, there is still so much more we can do to shift the power to those who are in proximity to, and directly affected by the issues. They are best placed to determine what their country needs.
- As a private funder, we are uniquely placed to help those who are in most need of support but so often underfunded.

How ODF will fund going forward:

1. Our grants: We will...

- Continue to offer unrestricted funding.
- Continue to offer core funding.
- Actively support each of our grantees to find donors that can support them beyond ODF's lifetime, so their work can continue as long as it is needed.

2. Non-financial support: We will...

- Actively help strengthen our grantees' organisations if they need this support (for example through mentoring, education and capacity building).
- Continue to communicate in ways that work for our grantees.
- Continue to invest in organisations themselves, not just projects.
- Support individuals and unconstituted groups through trusted intermediaries whose values align with our own and who have the networks and infrastructures to get funds and support directly to frontline communities.

3. Our funding process: We will...

- Actively create opportunities for the self-determination of communities. We will seek specialist support and guidance for this, to help us shine a spotlight on the ways in which our current ways of working may inadvertently be reinforcing harm.
- Be transparent about the origins of ODF's wealth.
- Build due diligence into our governance, compliance and grant-making processes, which ensure the rights of indigenous people are upheld.
- Support grantees to define success on their own terms, instead of using KPIs and milestones.

4. Our power: We will actively shift the power to the communities we serve by:

- Proactively seeking out local changemakers and supporting them in realising their own visions.
- Establishing an advisory panel that reflects the communities we serve.
- Investing in/providing cash to/collaborating with trusted, community-led intermediaries.
- Increasing the ratio of local staff/advisors/consultants to UK/Global North-based staff
- Increasing the amount of funding handled by local communities.
- Strengthening and incorporating young people's voices through our grant-making.
- Exploring grants which create a community board with decision-making authority.

5. Our role in the wider funding ecosystem: We will...

- Coordinate with other funders.
- Fund the eco-system and support it to grow.
- Talk to other funders about shifting the power.
- Do donor organising – promoting our grantees to other funders.