

Papua New Guinea National Labour Mobility Policy

CONSULTATION DRAFT

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Executive Summary.....	3
3. Context.....	4
3.1. PNG’s Labour Market and Prospects for Labour Mobility	4
3.2. PNG’s Engagement in Labour Mobility	6
3.3. Legal and Institutional Framework for Managing Labour Mobility	8
4. National Labour Mobility Policy Goals and Objectives	10
4.1. Vision.....	10
4.2. Goals	10
4.3. Objectives.....	10
4.4. National Labour Mobility Policy Framework	11
5. Action Plan	13
5.1. Promoting Opportunities for Decent Temporary Migrant Work.....	13
5.2. Protection of Temporary Migrant Workers and Support Services	15
5.3. Improving Administration of Temporary Labour Schemes.....	17
5.4. Increasing Economic Benefits and Development Outcomes.....	17
5.5. Skills Transfer and Reintegration	18
6. Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the National Labour Mobility Policy	20

1. Introduction

The Government of Papua New Guinea commenced engagement with temporary migration for employment schemes when it joined Australia's Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP) in 2010. Soon after it joined New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme, and in 2019 it joined Australia's Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS). But while having access to these three programs, little progress was made in sending workers until 2019, when the Marape Government initiated a focused program to revitalize the labour sending unit by making it an independent Unit, and set a target of 8,000 workers overseas by 2025.

Papua New Guinea has a large and growing young population, with at least 8 million citizens and possibly more. The youth bulge is large, and many graduates fail to find jobs after high school or higher education due to a low level of formal sector employment. Most work in agriculture, and those living outside the major cities are dependent on subsistence farming. But throughout the country there is innovation and entrepreneurial activity that could be expanded with the right skills and experience.

The Government of Papua New Guinea sees labour mobility as a win-win for its citizens. It provides a source of decent work and good incomes in formal jobs abroad, and it upskills workers so that they are able to expand their businesses or find better work at home. By targeting workers from rural communities for agriculture work, it is able to direct remittances to grassroots populations that can use it to significantly improve their quality of life. When remittances are spent, they contribute to Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue for rural provinces.

The Labour Mobility Unit has the sole purpose of selecting, mobilizing and managing workers for temporary migration for employment schemes. The Unit does not manage long-term migration of workers, nor does it manage higher skilled workers eligible for different visa categories beyond those set out in this policy. It focuses explicitly on those schemes providing circular migration for PNG workers in low and semi-skilled jobs. It is led by a Ministerial Steering Committee, comprising five Ministers whose portfolios are responsible for assisting mobilization of workers. The Committee is led by the Minister for Treasury.

This policy sets out the goals and objectives for labour mobility and the direction for the operations of the Labour Mobility Unit. It also provides a framework to direct whole-of-government support for labour mobility and develop policy cohesion as national action is taken.

2. Executive Summary

In 2019 the Marape Government committed to using the opportunity for temporary work overseas to help upskill and employ workers, with a focus on younger unemployed workers. A new approach to recruitment began, emphasizing placing the best workers with experience onto farms and businesses overseas so that they could make best use of new skills at home. The focus would be on rural areas with strong agriculture practices, and regional cities where workers with manufacturing and service industry experience could be drawn upon. Consultations with employers found that the cyclical nature of work in Papua New Guinea meant that there were typically more experienced workers in the community than were currently employed, leaving a pool of labour that could be drawn upon without undermining the existing industry base.

Despite little progress over the last decade, the restructured and revitalized program has resulted in increased demand and, as COVID-19 restrictions end, the Government aims to rapidly increase the number of workers accessing temporary labour opportunities in Australia and New Zealand. PNG is also focusing strategically on specific sectors to grow opportunities for workers overseas that also support industry development at home.

The vision of the PNG Labour Mobility Policy is to provide opportunities for decent, temporary work overseas for at least 8,000 youth and citizens, both women and men, per year by 2025 to grow PNG's economy both through remittances and through skills and knowledge transfer to build sustainable industry at home. Workers' experience overseas will contribute to the development of sustainable livelihoods in Papua New Guinea for individuals and their communities.

The goals for the Policy are:

1. To identify and facilitate decent work opportunities in key labour markets where PNG workers are protected by credible labour laws and regulations;
2. To develop a cohort of work-ready citizens able to perform at the highest standard as ambassadors for PNG abroad;
3. To promote the equal participation of women and men in work opportunities;
4. To ensure economic and development benefits of labour mobility are maximized for workers, their family and their community;
5. To involve all stakeholders, including departments, agencies, private sector, social sector and international partners, in good governance of labour mobility and the protection of workers overseas;
6. To adopt a whole-of-government approach to management of labour mobility and ensure cooperation, collaboration and information sharing between departments;
7. To work across government to ensure experience overseas contributes to the development of domestic industry in Papua New Guinea, with a particular focus on the agriculture industry and the replacement of foreign workers with national workers.

The work under the Policy is led by the Papua New Guinea Labour Mobility Unit, an independent unit based in the Department of Treasury and focused solely on temporary labour programs with partner countries. It is led by a Ministerial Steering Committee chaired by the Minister for Treasury and reports annually to Parliament. It will work collaboratively with other government departments and development partners to implement this Policy.

4. Context

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is one of the most diverse countries in the world. It is home to over eight million people and there are more than 800 different languages spoken. The majority of the population, around 87 percent, live a rural subsistence lifestyle, and agriculture is practiced throughout the country. It has highland and coastal populations, making its agriculture diverse. It has a growing young population, but with the majority living in rural areas they have poor access to services and few opportunities for formal employment or educational development.

Employment in the formal sector is extremely limited. Two-thirds of formal jobs are in the private sector, while one-third are public sector. The most recent survey, from 2014, estimated that from a 4.6 million working age population, over 80 percent (or around 3.7 million) were in the informal sector, and less than a million in the formal sector. The size of the formal sector peaked in 2012 during the mining boom; since then, formal sector employment has fallen and has contracted significantly in 2020 due to the COVID-19 shutdown.

The country graduates more university students than there are formal sector jobs. As a result, there is a growing underemployed educated youth bulge, alongside a growing unskilled youth bulge. Programs like the World Bank's Urban Youth Employment Program have been developed to help manage this, but the scale of population growth outstrips the potential for jobs.

In 2019 the Marape Government committed to using the opportunity for temporary work overseas to help upskill and employ workers, with a focus on younger unemployed workers. A new approach to recruitment began, emphasizing placing the best workers with experience onto farms and businesses overseas so that they could make best use of new skills at home. The focus would be on rural areas with strong agriculture practices, and regional cities where workers with manufacturing and service industry experience could be drawn upon. Consultations with employers found that the cyclical nature of work in Papua New Guinea meant that there were typically more experienced workers in the community than were currently employed, leaving a pool of labour that could be drawn upon without undermining the existing industry base.

PNG is now focusing strategically on specific sectors to grow opportunities for workers overseas.

4.1. PNG's Labour Market and Prospects for Labour Mobility

PNG's economy is based around agriculture (including forestry, fisheries, livestock and cash crops) and mining (oil, gas and minerals). While these two areas make up the vast majority of GDP, agriculture employs most of the population and particularly the 87 percent living in rural areas. Mining, oil and gas provide good-quality formal sector employment but for a small number of people. There are small manufacturing, construction, food processing and retail industries, and a small but growing tourism industry. Nursing, teaching and security (private, police and defence) employ others in the formal sector.

PNG's approach to labour mobility is to, wherever possible, match the needs of employers with the skills and experience of workers. To do this, PNG will focus particularly on those sectors that employ significant numbers of workers domestically. This will ensure skills learnt overseas have the greatest benefit to industry at home. The key sectors for employment in PNG's economy are as follows.

Agriculture

The diverse geography of Papua New Guinea makes it unique in the Pacific for its diverse agriculture. While cash crops including cocoa, coffee, copra, vanilla and palm oil make up the majority of

exports, there is a growing domestic market vegetable industry and cold-climate crops including strawberries, potatoes and apples are being grown in the highlands. Cassava, sago and sweet potato are traditional starches, and citrus fruits including varieties of limes and oranges are native to PNG. PNG also grows tropical fruits – banana, pineapple, mango and imported species such as rambutan and star fruit.

This diverse agricultural base makes PNG workers particularly suited to seasonal work. It provides an opportunity to match growers with farmers to provide on-the-job experience and teach them improved agriculture and business practices that can be used in their communities on return.

Papua New Guinea also has fisheries and forestry industry, including aquaculture, and a growing honey industry. These also provide opportunities for workplace training and upskilling by targeting those already working in these industries.

Tourism

Papua New Guinea has a small but growing tourism industry, catering mainly to business travelers and with only a few international hotel chains focused in Port Moresby. International tourism is focused primarily on the islands, and capitalizes on diving and surf tourism. There is a trained cohort of dive boat operators and scuba divers. Most tourism industry workers are based in small family-run hotels and small-scale resorts. A very few operations cater to superyachts. The majority of tourism employment is in Port Moresby, where there are an increasing number of restaurants and bars catering to the growing middle class. Managers are typically foreign workers, and management skills developed through overseas experience can contribute to nationalization of these roles.

Mining Industry

Papua New Guinea has a diverse extractive industry comprising mineral sands, precious metals, industrial and rare earth metals, oil and gas. The industry waxes and wanes as international demand, and prices, rise and fall, but there is a cohort of skilled and lower-skilled workers that can be mobilized to opportunities abroad. Many foreign workers in the mining industry have experience with new technologies and international experience can assist in nationalizing these jobs. There is also a range of semi-skilled occupations that are difficult to fill internationally and provide opportunities for Papua New Guineans. Both women and men participate in semi-skilled mining industry jobs in Papua New Guinea, and this provides an opportunity to place women in non-traditional roles overseas.

Caring Industries

There are a number of tertiary institutions in Papua New Guinea providing training in nursing or community health. While these qualifications are not accepted internationally, they provide the basis for upskilling in aged or disability care, or other caring roles. While in many countries there is a shortage of skilled nurses, in Papua New Guinea there are many trained community health workers who are not able to gain employment and this provides a good basis for training for jobs overseas.

Unlike countries in South-East Asia and the Caribbean, there is no domestic care-giver training in Papua New Guinea. This is an opportunity that could be examined in future, particularly given many partner's aging populations and growing demands for basic in-home care.

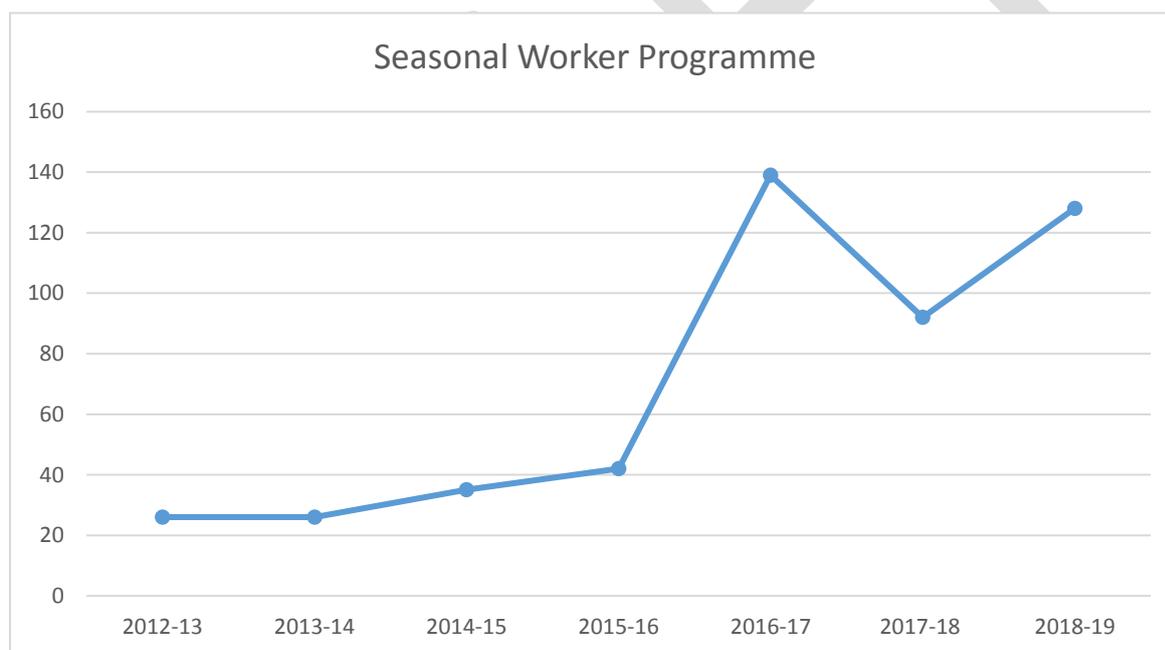
4.2. PNG’s Engagement in Labour Mobility

Despite a long history of seafaring and close ties to indigenous communities in Northern Australia, Papua New Guinea has experienced relatively little out-migration to its closest neighbours. In Australia’s 2016 census, only 18,801 people identified themselves as Papua New Guinean. In contrast, almost 76,000 identified themselves as Samoan, almost 63,000 as Nepalese and almost 31,000 as Mauritian – countries that are geographically dispersed and without the longstanding cultural and community ties of PNG. With the exception of Cairns, people of PNG ancestry make up a disproportionately small percentage of Australian communities. In New Zealand, PNG ancestry is not separately counted due to small population size.

Temporary labour programs are not a pathway to permanent migration. But they do build stronger community and cultural ties and create shared understandings between our countries. For this reason, they are important both as a source of income to PNG workers and as a cultural exchange to build closer ties between PNG and its partners.

Seasonal Worker Programme with Australia

PNG first joined the Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP) through signature of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Australia in 2010 under a pilot program, and formally commenced with the full program in 2012.



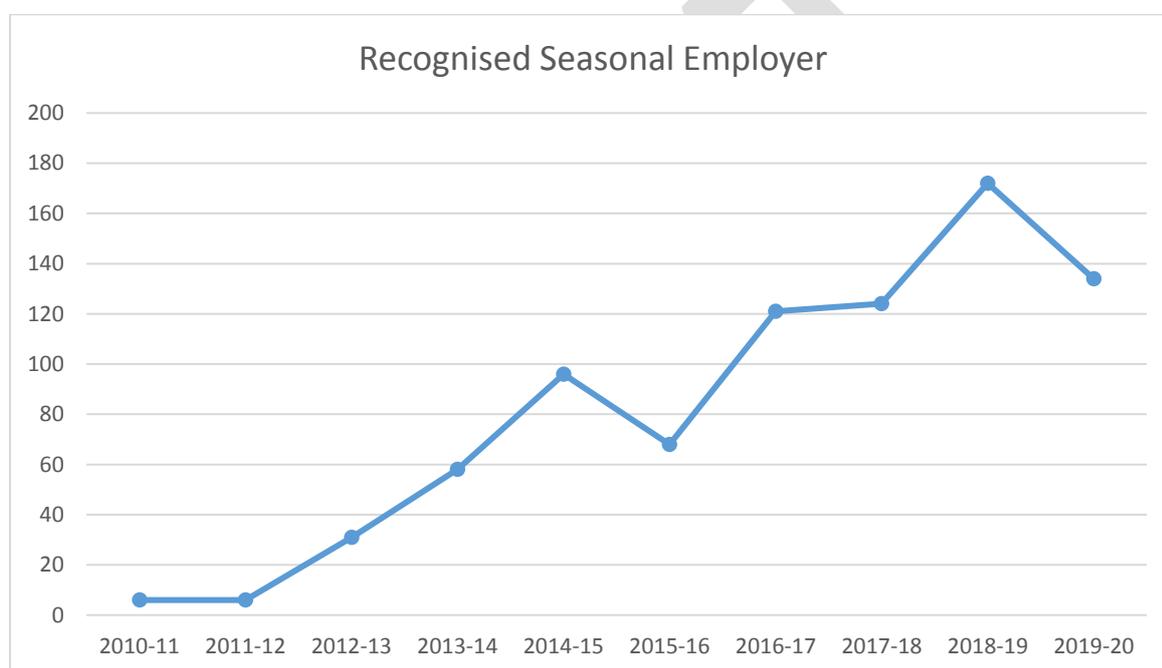
The SWP is an employer-led program focused on employment in agriculture and tourism in rural and regional Australia, and is uncapped. Employers must be approved by Australia’s Department of Employment (currently called the Department of Education, Skills and Employment) and each recruitment is scrutinized by the Department for pay and conditions before approval. Employers nominate source countries and may be farm owners or labour hire firms. The majority of PNG workers are recruited through a small group of labour hire firms. SWP participants work directly with labour sending units in Pacific island countries and Timor-Leste.

SWP numbers have grown slowly. In only one year of the past seven have numbers kept pace with the overall growth of the program, and that year is an outlier. A large recruitment to Australia's Riverland citrus region failed, and workers were not invited back the following year.

Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme with New Zealand

PNG signed an Interagency Agency Understanding (IAU) between New Zealand's Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment and PNG's Department of Labour and Industrial Relations to formally commence the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme in 2013.

The RSE is also an employer-led program but is focused exclusively on agriculture. Employers are approved by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. Participants use agents and/or national government labour mobility coordination units to recruit and send workers. The RSE has been running since 2007 and includes some south-east Asian countries, although preference is given to Pacific island countries.



RSE numbers have grown more steadily than SWP, but also remain low relative to other countries and population.

Pacific Labour Scheme with Australia

The Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS) provides opportunities for employment for between one and three years in rural and regional Australia in any industry that qualifies as low- or semi-skilled. The program is uncapped and employer-led. PNG signed the MOU with Australia governing the program in April 2019 and sent the first workers in late 2019.

There are currently 55 PLS workers in Australia (November 2020). Recruitment has been faster than other schemes as it coincided with the commencement of the regional recruitment model (see Section 3.3) and a good reputation for PNG workers was developed quickly. As a result workers were in strong demand when borders closed in March 2020 due to COVID.

Work and Holiday Maker Scheme with Australia

In 2019 Papua New Guinea made the necessary legislative changes to the *Non-Citizens Employment Act* to participate in Australia's Work and Holiday Maker (WHM) scheme. The WHM provides opportunities for tertiary graduates to spend time in Australia working without the need to obtain employment in advance. Work is typically limited to 6 months in duration at any one employer, but requirements can vary depending on the nature of the work. The WHM was suspended during 2020 due to COVID-19. PNG intends to use the WHM to match university graduates with work experience opportunities in Australia, and is exploring partnerships with IT and other STEM companies to help provide new graduates with critical skills.

COVID-19 Impacts

PNG's reformed recruitment system was starting to show strong results in early 2020. But activity halted when COVID-19 prompted border closures around the world. PNG's border with Australia and New Zealand closed in March 2020, at which time there were 134 workers in New Zealand and 140 in Australia (55 PLS and 85 SWP). A further 200 workers were due to be mobilized to Australia in April and May.

Workers in Australia were offered extended visas and moved to new locations as their contracts finished. Some workers in New Zealand were extended, but around two-thirds were returned to PNG. At the end of 2020, Australia commenced a pilot program to bring workers back to Australia in time for harvest season. It is likely the first workers to Australia will be mobilized in early 2021. New Zealand may follow soon after, but discussions are at an early stage.

4.3. Legal and Institutional Framework for Managing Labour Mobility

In 2019 Prime Minister James Marape moved responsibility for labour mobility to the Department of Treasury, recognizing its importance as a source of revenue for citizens and youth. He tasked the Treasurer with improving PNG's international performance in labour mobility to send 8,000 workers abroad in temporary labour programs by 2025.

A decision of NEC directed that an independent labour mobility unit be established to drive this goal. A Ministerial Steering Committee was appointed to oversee the establishment of the independent unit and direct its actions, comprising the Minister for Treasury, Minister for Justice, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Minister for National Planning and Monitoring and Minister for Immigration. Each of these Ministries has a role to play in preparing and sending workers overseas, and the coordination body ensures labour mobility policy is aligned with other key government policies and frameworks. In 2020 the Labour Mobility Unit was established and in 2021 the Unit will be staffed and return to full operation as COVID-19 restrictions lift.

Regional Recruitment Model

In 2019 PNG introduced a regional recruitment model, focused particularly on recruitment for agriculture and food processing industries. The regional recruitment model is set out in the Operational Policy of the Labour Mobility Unit.

With many districts larger than most Pacific island countries, PNG decided to focus recruitment in agricultural regions and take recruitment from wards and villages with upstanding communities. The first round of recruitment takes place in the district or province (the region) under the leadership of the local Member of Parliament. Regions then work through their networks to compile a long-list of recommended candidates from community leaders. Applicants are put through fitness and health

testing, mindset and work readiness training and a series of interviews. A final interview process is undertaken by an external expert, typically a contractor who has experience working with employers in Australia and New Zealand and is able to pick workers that employers will want to hire. These workers are then offered to employers for consideration.

An important part of this process is inclusion of the local community. PNG ensures all community members receive information about overseas work, conditions, pay and lifestyle. They know what to expect from the workers, and have a good and realistic understanding of the pressures workers will face and the income they will earn. This helps ensure a smooth transition to and from the workplace.

Regional administrations are also active in ensuring workers remain in contact with their families at home, and are often the first point of call for workers when issues arise. The Labour Mobility Unit remains in close contact with regional administrations and discusses any welfare or other issues that may arise during the worker's time overseas.

Women are a focus of the regional recruitment model and regions must aim for at least 35 percent of nominated workers to be female. Regions are encouraged to upskill women workers with in-demand skills, for example with driver's licenses and forklift truck driver training.

There are currently 12 regional administrations, both districts and provinces, at various stages of implementing the regional recruitment model. More will join over time.

Other Frameworks

The Non-Citizens Employment Act focuses on domestic employment and contains provisions to allow WHM entrants from Australia to work in PNG.

Temporary migration programs are an important part of PNG's foreign relations with partner countries. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade is a key stakeholder in labour mobility and typically signs the agreements governing these programs.

5. National Labour Mobility Policy Goals and Objectives

5.1. Vision

The vision of the PNG Labour Mobility Policy is to provide opportunities for decent,¹ temporary work overseas for at least 8,000 youth and citizens, both women and men, per year to grow PNG's economy both through remittances and through skills and knowledge transfer to build sustainable industry at home. Workers' experience overseas will contribute to the development of sustainable livelihoods in Papua New Guinea for individuals and their communities.

5.2. Goals

1. To identify and facilitate decent work opportunities in key labour markets where PNG workers are protected by credible labour laws and regulations;
2. To develop a cohort of work-ready citizens able to perform at the highest standard as ambassadors for PNG abroad;
3. To promote the equal participation of women and men in work opportunities;
4. To ensure economic and development benefits of labour mobility are maximized for workers, their family and their community;
5. To involve all stakeholders, including departments, agencies, private sector, social sector and international partners, in good governance of labour mobility and the protection of workers overseas;
6. To adopt a whole-of-government approach to management of labour mobility and ensure cooperation, collaboration and information sharing between departments;
7. To work across government to ensure experience overseas contributes to the development of domestic industry in Papua New Guinea, with a particular focus on the agriculture industry and the replacement of foreign workers with national workers.

5.3. Objectives

Key Objectives	Measure	Timeframe
1. Increase number of workers overseas in temporary labour	8,000 workers per annum 30,000 workers per annum	2025 2030
2. Develop a strong and reliable work-ready pool	A revolving pool of 100 workers per region, with at least 12 participating regions	2022
3. Increase participation of women	At least 35% of all workers are female	2025
4. Increase remittances to provinces	Remittances are increased; Workers are drawn primarily from rural districts and provinces	2022
5. Improved quality of life for communities and families	Communities and families increase spending on health, education and small business	2025
6. PNG industry grows as returned workers contribute to industry development	Returned workers use their remittances and skills to develop industry in PNG	2030

¹ Decent work is defined as work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

5.4. National Labour Mobility Policy Framework

In 2020, the Prime Minister's Manifesto was built around the theme of taking back Papua New Guinea (PNG). This vision is a call to rally the citizenry and development partners along a development path leading to a robust, inclusive and sustainable economy in which all Papua New Guineans have an increased stake. It rallies the country to build a stable social and political environment underpinned by a changed culture of contribution, service and civility.

The guiding doctrines of development espoused by the Five National Goals and Directive Principles, the National Strategy of Responsible Sustainable Development, and PNG's commitment to the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, have been captured in the development principles defined by Vision 2050, and Development Strategic Plan 2030, and woven into the Medium Term Development Plans II and III. The central message in these plans is for Papua New Guinean citizens to take responsibility of the socio-economic destiny of the country and reposition and develop it to be a fair and happy society, where no child is left behind.

The development of the National Labour Mobility Policy has been framed with reference to these strategies and principles, and speaks particularly to the need for Papua New Guinea to find decent work for a young and growing population. In 2020 the Labour Mobility Unit was established to take forward the Government's commitment to increase the number of participants in labour mobility to at least 8,000 workers by 2025. While COVID-19 has affected this temporarily, it has also created opportunities for more Papua New Guinea workers when borders reopen.

With few formal sector opportunities but a thriving agriculture sector, Papua New Guinea's workers are skilled and ready to take jobs in seasonal and longer-term agriculture.

Papua New Guinea has a surplus of trained workers who are unable to find consistent employment. There is a growing tourism and hospitality industry and recognized training institutions that provide career paths that can be enhanced through experience in overseas industry. Mining, manufacturing and food processing industries are growing in Papua New Guinea and also provide opportunities for workers to upskill overseas and improve their careers when they return home. Community health workers are well placed to upskill into caring industries in Australia.

The Government assesses the issue of brain drain² to be less a concern in Papua New Guinea than other countries due to the small number of participants relative to population and the high number of unemployed tertiary graduates. The Labour Mobility Unit will monitor the domestic impact of semi-skilled worker participation in temporary labour programs as employment pathways develop.

Recognising the importance of whole-of-government coordination, the Labour Mobility Unit is led by a Ministerial Steering Committee comprising the Minister for Treasury as Chair, Minister for Justice and Attorney General, Minister for Finance, and Minister for Immigration. Each of these Ministries has a role to play in preparing and sending workers overseas, and the coordination body ensures labour mobility policy is aligned with other key government policies and frameworks.

This policy also guides engagement with bilateral and regional partners and key stakeholders in labour mobility, including host countries and development partners. Papua New Guinea's engagement with these partners will ensure protections and rights-based frameworks for workers in host countries. Papua New Guinea will not engage with labour mobility programs in countries where

² Brain drain is defined as the loss of skilled and educated persons who migrate permanently overseas, leaving industries at home without enough personnel to function effectively.

sufficient worker protections are not in place, nor where there is inequitable treatment for domestic and foreign workers under law or practice.

DRAFT

6. Action Plan

6.1. Promoting Opportunities for Decent Temporary Migrant Work

To date, PNG's participation in its three temporary migration programs has been lackluster. Despite the large population on which to draw, ongoing problems with worker recruitment have meant that numbers remained low due to low demand from partner countries. In 2019, reforms to recruitment processes and the implementation of the regional recruitment approach saw significantly increased demand prior to the COVID-19 shutdown. But more needs to be done to create demand and identify opportunities for decent temporary work.

PNG's close proximity to Australia and New Zealand, its domestic skill base and large young population provides a strong basis for increased temporary work opportunities.

Increasing Opportunities for Agricultural Employment

PNG introduced its regional recruitment model in 2019. Through this model, the Labour Mobility Unit works with district and provincial administrations to identify experienced farm workers for opportunities overseas. There is a strong focus on grass-roots participation, with wards and their communities involved in nominating workers, and also on recruitment from rural wards with strong agriculture capability.

The regional recruitment model ensures that only workers with current on-farm experience are selected for mobilization to agriculture industries overseas. Workers selected must be fit, healthy and currently working in gardens. Preference is given to recruitments from rural locations, both to ensure workers are well prepared for their work in Australia and to make sure the benefits of labour mobility are spread throughout the community. In many cases this is providing formal employment where no other opportunities exist. Most workers will never have experienced formal employment.

PNG's broad agricultural base and varied climate means that most commercial crops are grown in Papua New Guinea. Apples, strawberries, citrus fruit, avocado, potato, asparagus, broccoli, a full range of Asian market vegetables and the usual tropical fruits are produced and sold in local markets. This means that PNG is uniquely placed to match experienced growers with work opportunities on farms in Australia and New Zealand.

Skill matching commenced in 2019, with inland fish farmers and honey farmers identified for specific roles in Australia. This was expanded to agriculture in 2020, with a group of experienced strawberry pickers from Enga selected to work on berry farms in Australia once borders reopened. Key skill sets – apple growing, berry picking, specific vegetables and fruits – are being identified and the workers promoted to farms where they can gain experience with modern horticulture practices that can be used at home to build sustainable businesses. Apple farmers and berry pickers are in high demand and PNG is uniquely placed to provide experienced workers to Australia and New Zealand. It is expected that this will significantly increase demand for PNG workers.

PNG will also look for opportunities in the forestry and fisheries industries, which are significant employers of domestic workers. In partnership with the National Fisheries College in Kavieng and the Madang Maritime College, the Unit will explore opportunities for seafarers and fishing fleet workers. In forestry, the Unit will work with regions with forestry industry such as Oro to identify a group of workers and explore opportunities for them in Australia.

Increasing Opportunities in Other Industries

PNG's diverse workforce and training institutions offer opportunities for work in fields beyond agriculture. The Pacific Labour Scheme provides employment in industries including, but not limited to, agriculture and PNG intends to examine opportunities for its tertiary graduates in other fields.

A particular focus for PNG is mining industry, given its large and growing mineral, oil and gas industries. Mining industry recruits a range of semi-skilled occupations and PNG has commenced work with partners including the World Bank and Pacific Labour Facility to examine opportunities in Australia for workers. These industries present a win-win for PNG; by upskilling workers through experience overseas, PNG is able to reduce the need for foreign workers. Experience overseas also helps workers grow more quickly into management roles when they return.

Tourism is a growing industry in PNG and further analysis will be done to examine opportunities for tourism and related industries. In particular, PNG will focus on dive boat and surf tourism, as well as small tourism properties, and examine the potential for business-to-business arrangements.

Caring industries are another area of opportunity. PNG has a number of programs training nurses and community health workers that can be drawn on to provide a foundation for upskilling in disability and community care, and related caring fields. With a strong tradition of caring for elders, aged care offers a pathway particularly for women to enter the workforce in Australia. PNG is testing the market with graduates trained in Fiji, and if successful will look at establishing domestic training courses to meet Australian requirements through the Australia Pacific Training Coalition.

The Work and Holiday Maker visa offers a particularly opportunity for new graduates to gain valuable experience in Australia. Once active, an initial focus for this program will be to identify work experience opportunities for ICT graduates. This will help broaden the experience base of ICT workers in PNG, and help new graduates secure good jobs on return from Australia.

Strengthening Links Between Training and International Labour Demands

As demand for workers under the Pacific Labour Scheme develops, PNG will be able to better tailor its training courses to international demand.

Discussions with the Australia Pacific Training Coalition and current employers have already identified training needs in general work readiness, driving (car, forklift and heavy machinery), meat processing and individual care. Further work will be done collaboratively to identify additional training needs, both to ready workers for mobilization to Australia and to help them reintegrate and manage their finances on return home.

PNG will also identify where the greatest demand lies for semi-skilled workers and work closely with partners to earmark scholarships and further training in those fields. This work will clearly identify demand and industry trends. Information will be published on the www.pngworkers.org website and will be used to improve courses and preparation of graduates.

Business-to-Business Partnerships

To capitalize on opportunities to increase the skill base for PNG, the Labour Mobility Unit will work with selected companies to create business-to-business partnerships. Skilled workers or potential workers will be identified for work in Australia, and will then return to the employer in PNG for a specific period after their time in Australia has ended. Partnerships are currently being explored for meat and poultry processing, honey industry and mining industry. PNG will start with the aim of creating 3-5 partnerships by 2025, and expand on this if the model is successful.

Increasing Women's Participation

Women are the primary caregivers in PNG, and often take on more responsibility for child and community care. This should not preclude them from equal representation in temporary labour mobility programs, and steps should be taken to ensure equal opportunity for participation.

PNG was the focus for the Women in Agriculture pilot program, which commenced in 2016. Its aim was to recruit women from rural areas who lacked opportunities for work, and prepare them for work in Australia. Women in the program were heads of household and had been excluded from income-earning opportunities at home. The pilot was funded by the Australian Government.

While only small numbers of women participated, it demonstrated that there was good demand from employers for well-prepared women workers. Women are a focus of the regional recruitment model and regions must aim for at least 35 percent of nominated workers to be female.

Regions are encouraged to upskill women workers with drivers licenses and forklift truck driving training, as these are in-demand skills from employers and many prefer to have women responsible for driving other workers.

The Labour Mobility Unit will look at ways to upskill women for work in Australia and New Zealand through driving training and forklift training. The Unit will also look at opportunities in food processing industries and ensure women are represented 50:50 in the majority of training.

Reaching New Partners

PNG, through the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, will continue to work with partners to explore opportunities for temporary labour mobility. After the COVID-19 travel restrictions end, opportunities can be explored with Asian countries including Philippines, South Korea and Japan, particularly with a view to upskilling workers in semi-skilled industries.

Papua New Guinea's engagement with these partners will ensure protections and rights-based frameworks for workers in host countries. Papua New Guinea will not engage with labour mobility programs in countries where sufficient worker protections are not in place, nor where there is inequitable treatment for domestic and foreign workers under law or practice.

6.2. Protection of Temporary Migrant Workers and Support Services

As workers are based overseas, they are protected by the legislation and frameworks of partner countries rather than PNG's domestic employment frameworks (as these have no extra-territorial jurisdiction). It will be important to ensure that partner countries have appropriate frameworks in place to protect PNG workers from exploitation and support them when issues arise.

Workers in Australia and New Zealand are protected by the same laws and regulations as citizens. There is no difference in conditions or benefits between national and foreign workers. Papua New Guinea will not send workers to countries where conditions and remuneration of foreign workers differs from that of citizens.

Both Australia and New Zealand have strong protection for workers from exploitation, including labour ombudsmen with the responsibility to prosecute and penalize employers that exploit workers. The Seasonal Worker Programme, Pacific Labour Scheme and Recognised Seasonal Employer all have an approval process whereby employers must be approved and registered with government before they can recruit workers. They have monitoring systems in place to oversee

worker welfare and structures to assist workers when issues arise. When employers fail to act within the legislation and frameworks, they may no longer participate in the program.

Improved preparation for workers

The success of workers in host countries stems from effective preparation. Workers need to understand not just their contract, remuneration and conditions, but must also understand the expectations of employers and host communities in terms of their behavior. Pre-departure briefing is key to a successful mobilization and minimizes the need for welfare interventions.

The Labour Mobility Unit is responsible for providing pre-departure briefing and any other training, and works closely with regional administrations to ensure it is provided in a way that best enables workers to understand and absorb the information.

Communities also have expectations about workers overseas, and must manage family and community emergencies while the worker is away. For this reason, family and community members will also be included in some pre-departure briefing to ensure everyone understands what the worker is doing, where and how they will be living, when and how often they will be able to communicate with family, when they can expect remittances to commence, and how to get assistance in the event of a family emergency. Families will also receive financial literacy training to better understand the use of remittances.

Different regions will trial different approaches to preparation and, if successful, they will be rolled out to other regions. These may include living in shared accommodation with the type of facilities they will use overseas (washing machines, induction stoves, dishwashers etc.), work-readiness training with industry employers, community projects, healthy living programs (stopping chewing betelnut or smoking, personal hygiene and fitness etc.) and small enterprise training.

The Labour Mobility Unit is responsible for ensuring a comprehensive minimum standard of pre-departure briefing takes place, and will work with regions to trial other forms of training.

Protecting workers rights and welfare abroad

As noted previously, host countries have frameworks for management of labour rights, conditions and remuneration. In Australia and New Zealand, government-sponsored welfare assistance is available and employers also have a responsibility for welfare and pastoral care. However, there are times when more assistance is needed.

The Labour Mobility Unit has an important role to play in helping workers engage with host country assistance mechanisms when issues arise. When appropriate, the Labour Mobility Unit will work with High Commissions and Embassies in host countries to assist workers. This may include personal welfare visits or video/teleconferences.

The Government of Papua New Guinea has committed to establishing a Liaison Officer position within the High Commission in Australia to assist with worker engagement and welfare issues. Regional administrations are encouraged to identify wantok in Australia who can assist when there are issues affecting workers from their region. Where these roles exist, they will be called upon by the Labour Mobility Unit and the respective High Commissions to assist. In New Zealand, the High Commission leads on worker welfare and engagement.

Workers may contact regional administrations before notifying the Labour Mobility Unit of any issues, or may speak directly to diplomatic officials. If this happens, these officers will immediately report any concerns to the Labour Mobility Unit for further discussion.

If workers report ongoing concerns with a specific employer, this will be raised with partner government officials and consideration given as to whether to continue to engage with that employer. Worker welfare will be paramount in that consideration.

6.3. Improving Administration of Temporary Labour Schemes

Numerous studies into the low level of PNG's participation prior to the establishment of the PNG Labour Mobility Unit pointed to poor administration, and in particular poor selection of workers, for its underperformance.³ The establishment of the Labour Mobility Unit was specifically to strengthen administration, selection and preparation of workers by creating a team of dedicated professionals recruited for their skills in this area. The regional recruitment model was designed through best practice learnings from other countries and is the primary mechanism for improving the performance of workers.

Enhancing the Regional Recruitment Model

With its focus on community involvement and selection of active workers from regional locations, the regional recruitment model is designed to ensure the best outcomes for employers, communities and workers. Its success lies in maintaining a close connection between regional administrations, the Labour Mobility Unit and workers. When problems arise, regional administrations and leaders are called upon to assist in resolving them.

Regional administrations need capable, high performing administrators with a can-do attitude and a high level of technology literacy. In particular, database management skills are required. The Labour Mobility Unit will work with the Department for Information and Communication Technology to ensure offices and staff have appropriate skills and equipment for successful videoconferencing, can maintain a 24/7 communication link for emergencies, and are able to manage databases and other technologies essential for administration of workers.

Strengthening international cooperation

Labour mobility has benefitted to date from strong support from host country partners. The support provided by New Zealand's Ministry of Business, Innovation and Enterprise and Australia's Pacific Labour Facility and Department of Education, Skills and Employment has underpinned PNG's engagement in labour mobility. These will continue to be important partners in coming years.

The Labour Mobility Unit will also commence work with the World Bank on a labour mobility support program, with a particular focus on expanding opportunities abroad and improving benefits at home. This will be a five year program commencing 2021.

The Labour Mobility Unit will look for other opportunities to work with development partners to improve labour sending arrangements and maximize the benefits from labour mobility.

6.4. Increasing Economic Benefits and Development Outcomes

Better remittance data and use

While remittances are significant sources of income in other Pacific countries, including Tonga (42 percent of GDP), Samoa (17.2 percent of GDP) and Fiji (5.2 percent of GDP), the percentage of

³ See for example "How can Papua New Guinea gain more opportunities for seasonal work in Australia and New Zealand?" Richard Curtain, October 2018 at <https://devpolicy.org/how-can-png-gain-more-opportunities-for-seasonal-work-australia-nz-20181005/>

remittances to GDP in Papua New Guinea is almost zero. Low numbers of overseas workers has resulted in low formal remittance transfers. But remittances can be an important source of income and are counter-cyclical (they increase during times of economic stress at home, such as after natural disasters). As worker numbers grow overseas, the Labour Mobility Unit will monitor and estimate remittances to inform Members and citizens about the value-for-money and economic benefits of the program.

There are new technologies evolving that can improve the transfer and use of remittances. These will be explored with the World Bank through the new labour mobility support program. This will improve estimates of the value and use of remittances and will help determine how best to help workers and communities maximize the benefits of remittances.

Remittance use and financial literacy will also be part of pre-departure and reintegration programs. Again with the help of the World Bank, the Labour Mobility Unit will work with regional administrations to identify the best way to maximize benefits.

Promoting community-based outcomes

Promoting positive development outcomes from remittances requires the use of those remittances within and for the benefit of home communities. For this reason, and to ensure connection to family, workers are required to go directly home without spending extended periods of time in urban centres. The Labour Mobility Unit will work with the World Bank and other partners to understand the way worker skills, experience and remittances benefit communities now, and will undertake pilot programs to find way to maximize the benefit for families and community more broadly. This may include volunteer or leadership service, additional training, small project support and other initiatives. Where successful, they will be rolled out to other regions.

6.5. Skills Transfer and Reintegration

Skills Matching and Industry Development

Overseas work experience has the potential to help industry development in PNG if harnessed strategically. By connecting workers with some industry experience or training to opportunities overseas, PNG can develop a skilled cohort of workers who can, in some cases, replace foreign labour when they return home.

The Government of PNG will focus labour mobility on strategic industries that provide employment in both host and sending countries, rather than those industries that exist only overseas.

As noted previously, PNG's broad agricultural base and varied climate means that most commercial crops are grown in Papua New Guinea. This means that PNG is uniquely placed to match experienced growers with work opportunities on farms in Australia and New Zealand, and through this to develop its own domestic industry. Skill matching commenced in 2019, and provides an opportunity to develop strategic agriculture industries like honey, fish-farming, apples and strawberries. Forestry and ocean fisheries are also opportunities for skills matching.

In other industries, PNG will look for opportunities to create business-to-business partnerships in tourism, meat processing (livestock, poultry, fish) and mining industries. These partnerships will help support the development of these industries in Papua New Guinea and, in the case of mining, provide some counter-cyclical employment opportunities when industry in PNG is disrupted.

Using the Work and Holiday Maker scheme, PNG will identify promising graduates in fields such as ICT, agriculture and engineering, and seek opportunities for work experience in Australia. This will maximize the benefit of the scheme for PNG graduates, who might otherwise find jobs in hospitality or retail.

As PNG identifies new industries for development, these focal industries will be revisited.

Reintegration Management

International experience shows that workers often struggle to reintegrate with communities after extended times away. In PNG, workers will often remain in Port Moresby rather than travel to their homes and wait for their next rotation. This creates overcrowding problems in Port Moresby and Lae, isolation from family and, as Port Moresby and Lae are expensive, reduces the benefit to communities of income earned overseas.

The Government of Papua New Guinea strongly encourages all workers to return to their homes – rather than remaining in Port Moresby or Lae, unless they originate from these cities.

The Unit will assist workers to transit quickly through Port Moresby and Lae, and help ensure they return to their homes with the assistance of their regional administration. Regional administrations will report any delays in worker arrival. If workers do not return to their families in a timely fashion, their future participation in the program may be reconsidered. This will happen on a case-by-case basis, looking closely at their personal circumstances and in consultation with their regional administration.

A pilot program will start for selected regions and workers for upskilling with a view to building sustainable industry in PNG. The focus of these pilots will be to help workers who are already building businesses to accelerate their growth on return. The pilot will target specific agriculture workers in products that show potential to scale an industry. An initial focus will be apples, citrus, market vegetables, poultry and livestock. Honey, fish farming and forestry will also be considered.

7. Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the National Labour Mobility Policy

Key Objectives	Measure	Timeframe
1. Increase number of workers overseas in temporary labour	8,000 workers per annum 30,000 workers per annum	2025 2030
2. Develop a strong and reliable work-ready pool	A revolving pool of 100 workers per region, with at least 12 participating regions	2022
3. Increase participation of women	At least 35% of all workers are female	2025
4. Increase remittances to provinces	Remittances are increased; Workers are drawn primarily from rural districts and provinces	2022
5. Improved quality of life for communities and families	Communities and families increase spending on health, education and small business	2025
6. PNG industry grows as returned workers contribute to industry development	Returned workers use their remittances and skills to develop industry in PNG	2030

The Labour Mobility Unit is responsible for the ongoing monitoring of the program and reporting to the Ministerial Steering Committee and Parliament. Reporting to third parties, including other parts of the Government of Papua New Guinea, can be requested through the Secretary of Treasury in accordance with usual government protocol and must be approved by the Chair of the Ministerial Steering Committee.

While the Government of Papua New Guinea encourages research to better understand the costs and benefits of labour mobility, the privacy of workers is paramount and no individually identifying data will be provided without the consent of the individual. Any request for data from third parties will be brought to the Ministerial Steering Committee for approval. Where data is requested that identifies workers, a Data Sharing Agreement will be signed between the Labour Mobility Unit and the third party. Workers must provide permission in writing for their data to be shared. Workers must be given full details of the use of the data and the potential for dissemination before their permission is sought.