Justice for the Poor Overview

Justice for the Poor (J4P) is a World Bank program that engages with justice reform as a cross-cutting issue in the practice of development. Grounded in evidence-based approaches focused on the perspective of the poor and marginalized, the program aims to improve the delivery of justice services and to support sustainable and equitable development processes which manage grievance and conflict stresses effectively.

Papua New Guinea Background

Tapping natural resource wealth while managing conflict and equitably sharing environmental and social costs and benefits are key issues for Papua New Guinea’s development. To date Papua New Guinea has faced difficulties in peacefully and sustainably converting wealth generated from extractive industries into improved citizen welfare.

Papua New Guinea Program Areas

The Justice for the Poor program in Papua New Guinea aims to support more equitable and effective development processes through greater understanding of the ways in which multiple rules systems interact with development processes, particularly at the local level.

Resource Distribution and Benefit Sharing

J4P in Papua New Guinea supports the design and implementation of projects by conducting research to better understand how resources are allocated and shared at the local level. Current activities focus on evaluating benefit sharing arrangements secured through the Community Mine Continuation Agreements for the Ok Tedi Mine in Western Province PNG. The process of negotiation for these agreements was consciously inclusive and includes provisions for improving women’s outcomes from mining both through participation and benefits.

Previous work focused on how resources are planned, spent, and impact communities at the district and sub-district level. Communities in Papua New Guinea have many schemes for managing benefits, forged from the relevant state regulations, but also the product of local rules systems. Private sector agreements emerge predominantly from the use of natural resources and the rules governing community benefits are often complex, making it difficult for communities to understand, negotiate, and account for the resources they are entitled to.

J4P supports the Government’s efforts to reform the system to allocate funding and functions at the local level, as well as improving understanding of the ways in which communities negotiate for, manage, and resolve conflicts around resource benefits.

National Dispute Resolution Diagnostics

J4P is working to understand dispute resolution issues across Papua New Guinea through a nationally representative household income and expenditure survey being implemented by the Papua New Guinea National Statistics Office. J4P assisted in the development of a dispute resolution module in the survey that sought to understand the substance of citizens’ most common disputes, where they seek assistance in resolving them, how much this costs, how long it takes and levels of satisfaction with the process. The survey data provides one of the first nationwide snapshots of disputes in Papua New Guinea.