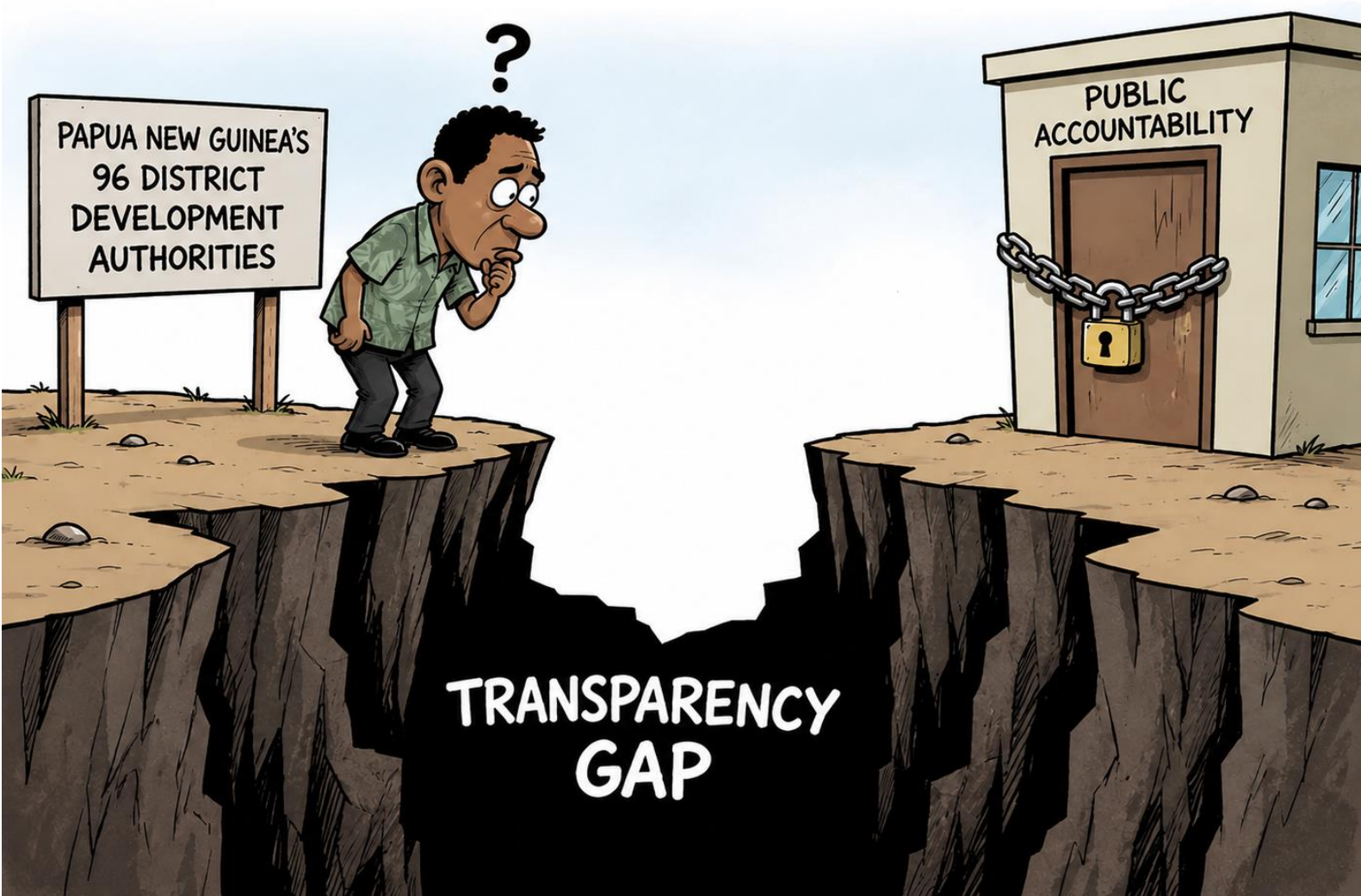


DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY WATCH

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2026

The Transparency Gap



**ACT
Now!**

DDA Watch

FOR GREATER TRANSPARENCY IN PNG

About this report

This is a publication of ACT NOW Limited

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ACT NOW! is a community advocacy organisation based in Papua New Guinea (PNG). Its vision is for a 'gutpela sindaun blong olgeta' (a just and equitable society) that embraces PNG's rich and diverse cultural and biological heritage and is based on the principles of sharing, communal land use and environmental stewardship.

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Key Findings

It is now four-years since the last National election and there is less than 12-months to go before a new election is held. However, the level of information and critical documents available from District Development Authorities (DDAs) remains appallingly low. This lack of performance is reflected in the very low rating scores for most DDAs on the DDA Watch website.

Access to information

- Only 37 out of 96 DDAs seem to have a five-year development plan for 2022-2027.
- Just 12 DDAs have a five-year plan that is publicly available
- Only 1 DDA has published its annual budget and only 1 has published an acquittal report.
- No DIRD inspection reports and no financial audits for any DDA are publicly available

Contact information

- Just 8 DDAs have a public email address
- Only 13 DDAs have a public phone number
- Only 20 DDAs have a public mailing address

Rating scores

- The highest ranking DDA has a score of 67 out of 100
- The lowest ranking DDAs, 15 in total, have a score of zero.
- Only 5 DDAs have a score of 50 or above.
- The average DDA score is just 18 out of 100.

Provincial and Regional performance

- The best performing Provinces are West New Britain and Western, with average DDA scores of 35 and 33 respectively
- The worst performing Provinces are Milne Bay, with an DDA average score of 5, and East New Britain and Hela with an average score of 8
- Regionally, there is no statistical difference in the performance of the DDAs. The average DDA score in each Region ranges from 16 - 18.

Report layout

This report presents a snapshot of the content available on the DDA Watch website as at 30 June 2026.

The report is divided into five sections:

1. Introduction
2. Key district documents
3. District contact details
4. Website Interaction and media coverage
5. Conclusion

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Introduction

The DDA Watch website, was launched by community advocacy organization ACT NOW! in June of 2023.

The website is an impartial and non-partisan resource for the public, officials and academics. It provides access to information on the work of each District Development Authority (DDA) and important documents such as Five-Year District Plans, Budgets and Acquittal Reports.

The website also has interactive features that allow constituents to score the performance of their DDA and to post public comments and upload images.

The ninety-six DDAs are all represented equally and the information about them is presented without any bias, favor or discrimination.

This is the third annual report that analyses the content on the DDA Watch website and provides recommendations based on those findings. The first and second annual reports were published in July 2024 and 2025 and can be accessed here - <https://www.ddawatch.org/resources>.

What is a District Development Authority?

District Development Authorities (DDA) were established by Parliament in 2014 with the aim to improve local infrastructure and service delivery.

DDA's are funded through the District Service Improvement Program (DSIP) and District Infrastructure Program (DIP). There are also Service Improvement Program (SIP) grants that are paid to Provincial and Local Level governments.

. In 2023, each DDA was allocated a total of K20 million in DSIP and DIP funding in the National Budget.

DSIP and DIP funds are distributed to the DDA by the Department of Finance. The DSIP Funds are intended to allocated by the DDA as follows:

- Infrastructure support services (30% / K3 million)
- Health support services (20% / K2 million)
- Education support services (20% / K2 million)
- Law and Justice services (10% / K1 million)
- Economic support services (10% / K1 million)
- Administration (10% / K1 million)

Why DDA Watch?

Despite substantial funding for the DDA system, there has been a noticeable decline in critical infrastructure and basic services such as health and education across the country. This alarming trend prompted the creation of the DDA Watch website.

The website is designed to encourage public participation in the democratic process and social auditing.

The DDA Watch Scoring System

The DDA Watch website includes a rating score for each DDA and a ranking.

The rating score assesses the performance of each DDA against a number of fixed criteria as listed below and also incorporates a public satisfaction element.

The rating score and ranking does NOT provide a comprehensive evaluation of the performance and effectiveness of an individual DDA or the quality of the services in a particular District. The score and ranking are merely an indicator of how a DDA performs against a set list of transparency and good governance indicators.

The maximum rating score for each DDA is 100 points.

Key document score: 70 points

Up to 70 points are awarded based on the public availability of key documents from the DDA and contact information:

- Current five-year development plan - 10 points
- Current annual budget - 10 points
- Acquittal report for the previous year - 10 points
- DIRD Inspection report (max 2 years old) - 10 points
- Audit report (max 3 years old) - 10 points
- Functioning email address - 10 points
- Postal address - 5 points
- Contact phone number - 5 points

All DDAs are encouraged to submit their plans, budgets, acquittals, inspection and audit reports and to provide their contact details for inclusion on the website - [contact form](#).

Public satisfaction score: 30 points

Up to 30 points are awarded to each DDA according to their average public satisfaction score.

Any member of the public can submit their satisfaction score for a DDA via the website, once they have registered by providing a name and contact telephone number.

The users name and phone details are held on a secure server and are not made public.

Satisfaction scores submitted by members of the public are recorded as 30 (very good), 20 (good), 15 (okay), 10 (bad) or 0 (very bad).

One person cannot submit a score for more than one DDA and can only have one vote recorded.

The satisfaction score used in the displayed DDA rating is the average of all the scores submitted by the public for that DDA (total score divided by number of submissions).

Where no public satisfaction scores have been submitted for a particular DDA, the DDA is awarded 15 points as its starting score.

The displayed rating score for each DDA is updated automatically and in real time as new documents are added to the DDA profile page and as more members of the public submit their satisfaction score.

The DDA ranking list displayed on the website Home Page is also updated automatically and in real time as the rating scores are updated.

Public Comments

Users of the DDA Watch website are encouraged to upload comments about the performance of individual District Development Authorities for display on the relevant DDA page.

All user submitted comments are reviewed by an ACT NOW staff member before they are approved for publication.

Any comments that include sexist, racist or homophobic language or hate speech, or language that is rude, obscene, offensive, bullying, intolerant or intended to scare or intimidate, and any comments containing personal details may be edited or deleted.

Part 1: Key District Documents

District Key Documents are essential records that provide transparency and accountability for the activities and financial management of District Development Authorities (DDAs). These documents are;

1. 5-Year Development Plan (2022-2027)
2. Acquittal Report
3. Audit Report
4. Annual Budget
5. Inspection Report

1. 5-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

DDA's are responsible for producing a district five-year development plan, a strategic document that outlines the goals, initiatives, and projects that a district aims to achieve over a five-year period. This plan is essential for guiding the district's development efforts and ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to improve local services and infrastructure. A district plan aims to ensure district's development efforts are well-coordinated, transparent, and aligned with the needs and priorities of the local community.

Plans are supposed to cover the five-year period from 2022 to 2027. We are now four-fifths or 80% of the way through that planning and implementation cycle.

KEY FINDINGS:

As at June 2026:

1. Thirty-seven (37) DDAs have a District Development Plan.
2. There are fifty-nine (59) DDAs that have yet to publish a district plan - just over 60% of the total
3. Only twelve (12) District Development Plans are publicly available.

Highlands Region

There are thirty-six (36) DDAs across 7 provinces in the Highlands region.

- Only thirteen (13) DDAs in the Highlands region have a 5-year District Development Plan.
- Only 4 plans from the region are publicly available.
- Twenty-three (23) DDAs do not have a five-year plan - more than 60% of the total.
- Western Highlands is the only Province in the region where no DDA has a five-year plan.

Figure 1 below shows the district with development plan in each province in the Highland's region.

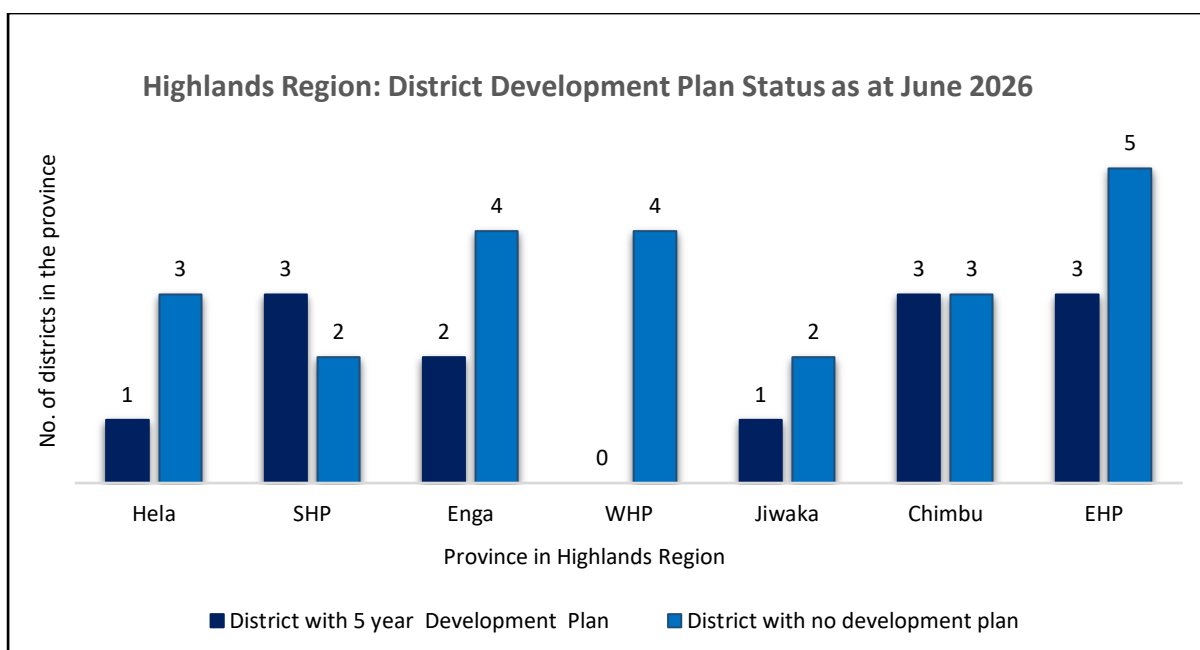


Figure 1. Highlands Region District Development Plan Status as at June 2026

Provincial breakdown

Province	DDAs	With plans	Without plans
Chimbu	6	Gumine, Kerowagi, Kundiawa	Chuave, Karimui Nomane, Sina Sina Yonggamugl
Eastern Highlands	8	Kainantu, Lufa, Obura Wonenara	Daulo, Goroka, Henganofi, Okapa, Unggai Bena
Enga	6	Wabag, Wapenamanda	Kandep, Kompiam Ambum, Lagaip, Pogera Pailea
Hela	4	Koroba Lake Kopiago	Magarima, Komo Hulia, Tari Pori
Jiwaka	3	North Waghi	Anglimp South Waghi, Jimi
Southern Highlands	5	Kagua Erave, Mendi, Nipa Kutubu	Imbonggu, Ialibu Pangia
Western Highlands	4	0	Baiyer Mul, Dei, Hagen, Tambul Nebliyer

Momase Region

There are twenty-six (26) DDAs across 4 provinces in Momase region.

- Only 7 DDAs in Momase region have a District Development Plan.
- Only 2 plans from the region are publicly available.
- Nineteen (19) DDAs do not have a five-year plan - more than 70% of the total.
- Six of the DDAs with a plan are in Morobe Province.

Provincial breakdown

Province	Total DDAs	With plans	Without plans
Morobe	10	Bulolo, Huon Gulf, Markham, Menyamya, Nawab, Wau-Waria	Finschaffen, Kabwum, Lae, Tewae Siassi
East Sepik	6	Ambunti Dreikikir	Angoram, Maprik, Wewak, Wosera Gawi, Yangoru Saussia)
West Sepik	4	0	Aitape Lumi, Nuku, Telefomin, Vanim Green
Madang	6	0	Bogia, Madang, Middle Ramu, Rai Coast, Sumkar, Usino Bundi

Islands Region

There are thirteen (13) DDAs across 5 provinces in the Islands region.

- Only 7 DDAs in the Islands region have a District Development Plan.
- Only 1 is plan from the region is publicly accessible.
- Six DDA do not have a five-year plan - 46% of the total.
- All 3 Districts in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville have a plan.

Provincial Breakdown:

Province	Total DDAs	With plans	Without plans
AROB	3	Central Bougainville, North Bougainville, South Bougainville	0
East New Britain	4	Gazelle	Kokopo, Pomio, Rabaul
New Ireland	2	Namatanai	Kavieng
West New Britain	3	Talasea, Nakanai	Kandrian Gloucester
Manus	1	0	Manus

Southern Region

There are twenty-one (21) DDAs across 6 provinces in the Southern Region.

- Only 10 DDAs in the Southern region have a District Development Plan.
- Two of the plans are publicly available.
- Eleven (11) DDAs do not have a five-year plan - 52% of the total.
- In Western Province all four districts have a plan.

Provincial breakdown:

Province	Total DDAs	With plans	Without plans
Central	5	Kairuku, Hiri Koiari	Abau, Goilala, Rigo
Gulf	2	Kikori	Kerema
Milne Bay	4	Alotau	Esa'ala, Kiriwina Goodenough, Samarai Murua

NCD	3	Moresby South	Moresby Northwest, Moresby Northeast
Northern	3	Popondetta	Ijivitari, Sohe
Western	4	Delta Fly, North Fly and Middle Fly and South Fly	0

PROVINCIAL SUMMARY

There are 22 provinces in PNG (including the Autonomous Region of Bougainville).

- In 4 provinces, Western Highlands, Madang, West Sepik and Manus, there are no districts with a five-year plan
- In 2 provinces, Western and AROB, all the districts have a plan.
- There are 9 provinces where just one district has a plan.

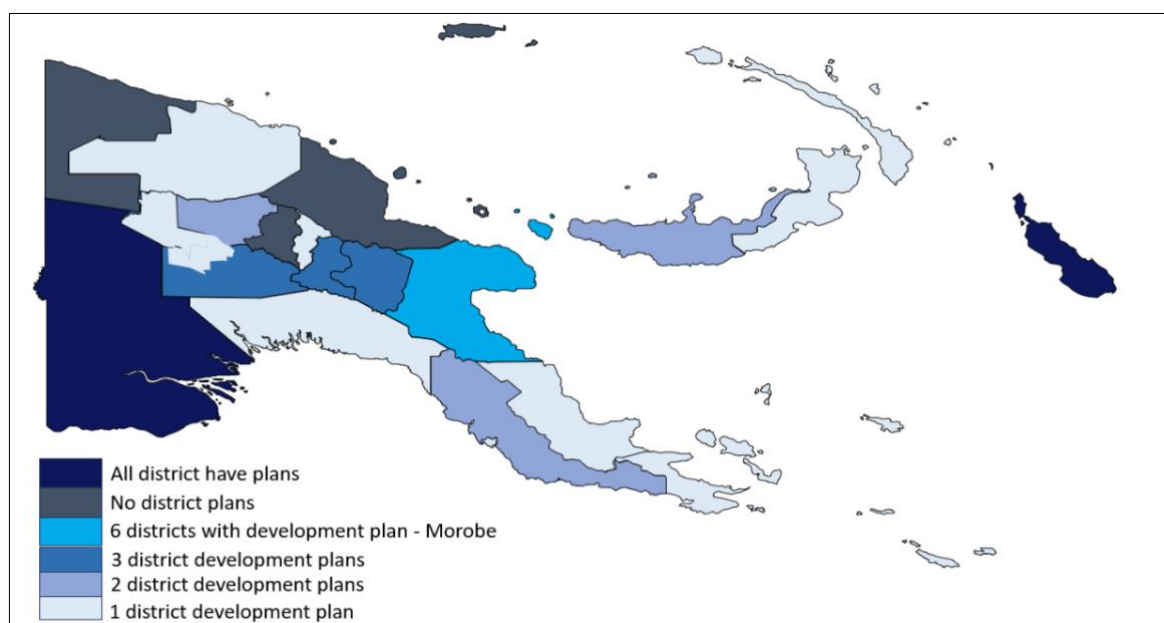


Figure 2. Provincial Breakdown of Districts with a five-year Development Plans as at June 2026

2. ACQUITTAL REPORT

District Development Authorities are required to submit financial acquittal reports to the Department of Implementation and Rural Development (DIRD) by March 31 each year. These reports are mandated under Section 102 of the Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Government and the Public Finances (Management) Act 1995. The Act also requires DDA Chief Executives to maintain accurate records of all financial transactions and project implementation.

KEY FINDINGS:

As at June 2026;

- There was no information available on how many DDAs have submitted their financial acquittal reports for 2025¹
- It is [reported](#), sixty-nine (69) DDAs have submitted their financial acquittal report for 2024.
- None of the acquittal reports are publicly available, although Talasea district has published a general presentation on its use of funds in 2024.

Highlands Region

Highlands Region has 7 provinces and thirty-six (36) districts.

As at June 2025;

- No DDAs had been reported as submitting their 2025 acquittals
- Only 28 DDAs had submitted their 2024 financial acquittals.
- 8 DDAs had yet to submit their acquittals.
- None of the acquittal reports are publicly available.

Provincial Breakdown (2024 acquittals):

Province	Total DDAs	With Acquittal	Without Acquittals
Chimbu	6	6	-
Eastern Highlands	8	5	Unggai Bena, Okapa and Kainantu
Enga	6	6	-
Hela	4	2	Komo Magarima, Koroba Lake Kopiago
Jiwaka	3	3	-
Southern Highlands	5	3	Nipa Kutubu, Ialibu Pangia
Western Highlands	4	3	Dei

Momase Region

Momase has 4 provinces and twenty-six (26) districts.

As at June 2025;

- No DDAs had been reported as submitting their 2025 acquittals
- Only 14 DDAs had submitted their 2024 financial acquittals.
- 12 DDAs had yet to submit their acquittals.
- None of the acquittal reports are public.

Provincial Breakdown (2024 acquittals):

Province	Total DDAs	With Acquittal	Without Acquittals
Morobe	10	7	Wau-Waria, Kabwum, Tewae Siassi
East Sepik	6	4	Wosera Gawi, Ambunti Dreikikir
West Sepik	4	1	Aitape Lumi, Telefomin, Vanimo Green
Madang	6	2	Bogia, Madang, Rai Coast, Usino Bundi

¹ In July 2026 it was [reported](#) Gumine was the first District to submit its 2025 acquittal report via the government's new Bilum platform. Reports submitted via the platform are not publicly available.

Islands Region

Islands region has 5 provinces and thirteen (13) districts

As at June 2025;

- No DDAs had been reported as submitting their 2025 acquittals
- Eleven (11) DDAs had submitted their 2024 financial acquittals.
- 2 DDAs had yet to submit their acquittals.
- None of the acquittal reports are public.

Provincial breakdown (2024 acquittals):

Province	Total DDAs	With Acquittal	Without Acquittals
Autonomous Region of Bougainville	3	2	Central Bougainville
Manus	1	1	—
New Ireland	2	1	Kavieng
East New Britain	4	4	—
West New Britain	3	3	—

Southern Region

Southern region has 6 provinces and twenty-one (21) DDAs

As at June 2025;

- 19 DDAs had submitted their 2024 financial acquittals.
- 2 DDAs had yet to submit their acquittals.
- None of the acquittal reports are public

Provincial breakdown (2024 acquittals):

Province	Total DDAs	With Acquittal	Without Acquittals
Central	5	5	-
Gulf	2	1	Kerema
Milne Bay	4	4	-
National Capital	3	2	Moresby Northeast
Northern	3	3	-
Western	4	4	—

Overall Summary: District Acquittal (2024)

Region	Provinces	Total DDAs	Submitted	Pending	Submission Rate	Public Availability
Highlands	7	36	28	8	78%	0
Momase	4	26	14	12	54%	0
Southern	6	21	19	2	91%	0
Islands	5	13	11	2	85%	1

Total	22	96	72	24	75%	1
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- Only 1 acquittal out of the 72 reports is publicly available.
- Southern Region leads submission performance with 91% compliance, followed by Islands (85%), while Highlands (78%) and Momase (75%) trail behind.
- A total of 24 districts across the country have yet to submit their acquittals.

3. AUDIT REPORT

An audit is a thorough examination of the financial records and operations of a District Development Authority (DDA) to ensure accuracy, compliance with regulations, and proper use of funds.

All audits are conducted by the Auditor General's Office and involve reviewing the DDA's financial statements, transactions, and records. The purpose of the audit is to verify that the funds allocated to the district, such as those from the District Service Improvement Program (DSIP) and the District Infrastructure Program (DIP), are being used effectively and transparently.

KEY FINDING:

- There are no records of any financial audits being conducted for any DDA for the period June 2022 to June 2026.

The Auditor General's Office (AGO) has reported having conducted only six audits of Service Improvement Program (SIP) funds for the period 2017-25. In total there are 492 institutions that receive SIP funds, twenty-two (22) provinces, ninety-six (96) districts and three hundred and seventy-four (374) local level governments. It is not known which were the six institutions that were audited or for what periods.

One of the main reasons given for the lack of financial audit is that the Office of the Auditor General lacks the capacity to do the audits.

4. ANNUAL BUDGET

An annual budget is a financial plan that outlines the expected income and expenditure to guide an organization's activities and priorities over a given period. A budget is crucial for managing resources efficiently and ensuring that funds are allocated effectively to cover different projects and services.

KEY FINDINGS:

Analysis of records on the DDA Watch website as of June 2026 shows;

- No DDA has published an annual budget for any year from June 2022 to June 2026.
- Six out of ninety-six DDAs announced an annual budget for the year 2025.

DDA Watch record of DDA annual budgets for 2025 announced in the media

DDA	Province	Region
Sohe	Northern	Southern
Ijivitari	Northern	Southern
Alotau	Milne Bay	Southern
Yangoru Saussia	East Sepik	Momase
Bulolo	Morobe	Momase
Talasea	West New Britain	Island

5. INSPECTION REPORT

An inspection report is a document that provides a detailed assessment of DDA projects and services funded through the District Service Improvement Program (DSIP) and the District Infrastructure Program (DIP). These reports are produced by the Department of Implementation and Rural Development (DIRD) through its Monitoring Unit, which has regional offices to conduct physical inspections and verify the expenditure of funds. The DIRD consolidates these inspection reports into quarterly and annual management reports, which are then submitted to the Central Agencies Coordinating Committee and other government agencies

KEY FINDINGS:

- As at June 2026, no inspection reports were publicly available for any year since the programs were introduced.

ACT NOW! has written on numerous occasions to DIRD and visited their offices multiple times to request copies of any Inspection Reports but none have been forthcoming.

According to the DSIP, PSIP, LLGSIP, and WSIP financial administrative guidelines, DIRD is responsible for reviewing Service Improvement Program (SIP) reports, monitoring project acquittals, and conducting physical inspections and verifications to ensure that the projects funded actually exist and represent value for money.

Media reports have highlighted the long standing failures in the effectiveness of DIRD's monitoring and inspection efforts. For example, it is reported in 2016, DIRD's project monitoring and inspection team visited only three (3) provinces and sixteen (16) districts, showing a lack of wide spread oversight.

Overall Analysis on Key DDA Documents

As at June 2026:

- Thirty-seven (37) DDA's have launched a 2023-2027 Five-year development plan, but only twelve (12) are publicly available.
- Sixty-nine (69) financial acquittal reports for 2024 were submitted to DIRD as at June 2025, but none are publicly available. There is no information on how many reports have been submitted for 2025.
- There are no DIRD inspection reports available for any DDA.
- No DDA has published an annual budget 2025 or 2026.

- There are no financial audit reports available for any DDA.

Part 2: District Contact Details

DDA contact details are crucial information in promoting good governance, accountability, and service delivery. Having the names of district CEOs, active emails, phone numbers, and postal addresses helps governance institutions and citizens stay connected, ensuring better engagement and transparency in district operations.

Contact details for each DDA are an important part of the DDA Watch website scoring system and contribute a potential 20 points:

- Functioning email address - 10 points
- Postal address - 5 points
- Contact phone number - 5 points

The DDA Watch website also provides the public with the name of each DDA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and any website address.

1. DDA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER NAMES

KEY FINDINGS:

As at June 2026;

- Eighty-eight (88) DDAs have a named CEO on the DDA Watch website.

2. DDA EMAIL ADDRESS

KEY FINDINGS:

As at June 2026;

- Only 8 DDAs have an active email address recorded on the DDA Watch website
- Eighty-eight (88) DDA do not have an active email address.

The DDAs with a recorded email address are;

DDA	Province	Region
Kerowagi	Chimbu	Highlands
Lufa	Eastern Highlands	Highlands
Delta Fly	Western	Southern
Rai Coast	Madang	Momase
Sumkar	Madang	Momase
Wau-Waria	Morobe	Momase
Talasea	West New Britain	Islands
North Bougainville	AROB	Islands

3. DDA ACTIVE OFFICE PHONE NUMBER

KEY FINDINGS:

As at June 2026:

- Only thirteen (13) DDAs have an active telephone number recorded on the DDA Watch website
- Eight-three (83) DDAs do not have a reliable phone number recorded.

The DDAs with an active phone number are;

DDA	Province	Region
Kerowagi	Chimbu	Highlands
Lufa	Eastern Highlands	Highlands
Wabag	Enga	Highlands
Vanimo Green River	West Sepik	Momase
Madang	Madang	Momase
Sumkar	Madang	Momase
Rai Coast	Madang	Momase
Wau-Waria	Morobe	Momase
Markham	Morobe	Momase
South Fly	Western	Southern
North Fly	Western	Southern
North Bougainville	AROB	Islands
Talasea	West New Britain	Islands

4. DDA POSTAL ADDRESS

KEY FINDINGS:

As at June 2026;

- Only twenty (20) DDAs have a current postal address recorded on the DDA Watch website.
- Seventy-six (76) DDAs do not have a postal address recorded.

The DDAs with a postal address are;

DDA	Province	Region
Kerowagi	Chimbu	Highlands
Kainantu	Eastern Highlands	Highlands
Lufa	Eastern Highlands	Highlands
Madang	Madang	Momase
Middle Ramu	Madang	Momase
Rai Coast	Madang	Momase
Wau-Waria	Morobe	Momase
Markham	Morobe	Momase

Lae	Morobe	Momase
Nawae	Morobe	Momase
Middle Fly	Western	Southern
North Fly	Western	Southern
South Fly	Western	Southern
Delta Fly	Western	Southern
Manus	Manus	Islands
Kavieng	New Ireland	Islands
Talasea	West New Britain	Islands
Central Bougainville	AROB	Islands
North Bougainville	AROB	Islands
South Bougainville	AROB	Islands

5. DDA WEBSITE

KEY FINDINGS:

As at June 2026;

- There are 8 DDAs with an active website.²
- Eighty-eight (88) DDAs do not have an active website.

The eight DDAs with a website are;

DDA	Province	Region
Kerowagi	Chimbu	Highlands
Lufa	Eastern Highlands	Highlands
Wabag	Enga	Highlands
Baiyer Mul	Western Highlands	Highlands
Rai Coast	Madang	Momase
Talasea	West New Britain	Islands
Goilala	Central	Southern
North Fly	Western	Southern

² There are several district focused Facebook pages administered by individuals but not by the DDA, these are not included as official DDA websites.

PART 3: Website Interaction

Visitors to the DDA Watch website can interact with the site in three different ways:

1. Vote on the performance of their DDA
2. Post public comments
3. Upload photographs

Website users can also access links to media stories about each DDA.

1. USER VOTES

User votes are scores given by website visitors to rate an individual DDA. Up to 30 points are awarded to each DDA according to their average public satisfaction score. A guide on ‘*how to score*’ a DDA is provided in the [About](#) section of the DDA Watch website.

KEY FINDINGS:

As at June 2026;

- One hundred and sixty-three (163) user votes were recorded on the DDA Watch website:
 - The highest number of votes recorded for one DDA was 11 votes
 - Thirty-two districts had just 1 vote recorded
 - Twenty-six DDAs had no votes recorded

Regional Breakdown

- Highlands: twenty-seven (27) DDAs (out of 36) with a vote
- Momase: eighteen (18) DDAs (out of 26) with a vote
- Southern: fourteen (14) DDAs (out of 21) with a vote.
- Islands: eleven (11) DDAs (out of 13) with a vote

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

KEY FINDINGS:

As at June 2026:

- Ninety (90) user comments have been posted on the DDA Watch website.
- Comments have been posted for thirty-three (33) districts from all four regions.
- The highest number of comments posted for one district is 7

Regional Breakdown

- Highlands: comments for twelve (12) out of 36 districts
- Momase: comments for fourteen (14) out of 26 districts
- Southern: comments for 4 out of 21 districts
- Islands: comments for 3 out of 13 districts.

3. NEWS LINKS

DDA Watch provides links to relevant news reports for each of the ninety-six (96) DDAs.

KEY FINDINGS:

In the period July 2025 to June 2026, 423 news links were added on the DDA Watch website.

- The highest number of news articles recorded for one DDA was 27
- There were thirteen (13) DDAs with no news articles recorded

Regional breakdown

1. Highlands: 140 news articles recorded for 36 districts.
2. Momase: 178 news articles recorded for 26 districts.
3. Southern: 53 news articles recorded for 21 districts.
4. Islands: 52 news articles recorded for 13 districts.

The table below highlights the ten (10) districts with the highest number news stories in the period July 2025 to June 2026.

Ten DDAs with the most reported news stories			
DDA	Province	Region	News Stories
Wabag	Enga	Highlands	27
Bulolo	Morobe	Momase	24
Wau-Waria	Morobe	Momase	20
Huon Gulf	Morobe	Momase	19
Rai Coast	Madang	Momase	18
Yangoru Saussia	East Sepik	Highlands	16
Nakanai	West New Britain	Islands	16
Nawae	Morobe	Momase	14
Finschaffen	Morobe	Momase	13
Talasea	West New Britain	Islands	11

Conclusion

The latest analysis of District Development Authorities (DDAs) according to the information recorded on the DDA Watch website again highlights significant gaps in transparency, accountability, and public engagement across Papua New Guinea's ninety-six (96) districts.

The level of information and critical documents available from the DDAs appallingly low. This lack of performance is reflected in the very low rating scores for most DDAs on the DDA Watch website.

The lack of available information and basic good governance is particularly concerning as it is now four-years since the last National election and there is less than 12-months to go before a new election is held.

Meanwhile, critical government agencies such as DIRD, Auditor General's Office, Ombudsman Commission and the Department of Finance continue to fail in fulfilling their critical governance oversight roles.

It therefore seems there is little prospect of any improvement in the performance of the DDAs in the immediate future and the whole system is crying out for reform.

The [announcement](#) by the Constitutional and Law Reform Commission of a review of the DDAs laws is both timely and welcome.

Key Findings:

Access to information

- Only 37 out of 96 DDAs seem to have a five-year development plan for 2022-2027.
- Just 12 DDAs have a five-year plan that is publicly available
- Only 1 DDA has published its annual budget and only 1 has published an acquittal report.
- No DIRD inspection reports and no financial audits for any DDA are publicly available

Contact information

- Just 8 DDAs have a public email address
- Only 13 DDAs have a public phone number
- Only 20 DDAs have a public mailing address

Rating scores

- The highest ranking DDA has a score of 67 out of 100
- The lowest ranking DDAs, 15 in total, have a score of zero.
- Only 5 DDAs have a score of 50 or above.
- The average DDA score is just 18 out of 100.

Provincial and Regional performance

- The best performing Provinces are West New Britain and Western, with average DDA scores of 35 and 33 respectively
- The worst performing Provinces are Milne Bay, with an DDA average score of 5, and East New Britain and Hela with an average score of 8

- Regionally, there is no statistical difference in the performance of the DDAs. The average DDA score in each Region ranges from 16 - 18.

Recommendations

- **Citizen Engagement:** We urge citizens to actively engage with their DDAs, demanding transparency, accountability, and adherence to good governance practices.
- **District Planning:** All DDAs must publish a 5-year development plan and make that plan available to the public
- **DSIP Accountability:** DDAs must promptly release detailed DSIP and DIP acquittal reports to restore public trust.
- **Audit Expansion:** Increase funding to the Auditor-General's Office (AGO) to enable it to conduct audits for all ninety-six (96) districts.
- **Budget, acquittals and district plans:** All Districts should publish their budgets, acquittals and district plans ensuring openness and fiscal responsibility. The lack of publicly available financial and planning documents raises concerns about transparency and governance.
- **Funding Restrictions:** The Department of Finance should stop distribution of further DSIP (District Services Improvement Program) and DIP (District Infrastructure Program) funds to districts with no plans, acquittals or contact details.
- **Leadership Code Enforcement:** The Ombudsman Commission (OC) should act under the Leadership Code against CEOs and DDA Board chairs who fail to publish plans, acquittals or contact details.
- **Leadership Action:** All DDAs should publish the names of their CEO, and contact phone, email and postal addresses. Improving communication channels is critical; ensuring that each DDA has a designated CEO, active email, phone number, and an official Postal address or website will strengthen public access to information.
- **Enhance Monitoring and Accountability:** Allocate additional funding to the Department of Implementation and Rural Development (DIRD) to strengthen monitoring and reporting frameworks. This will ensure comprehensive tracking and transparency of DDA activities, with a specific focus on inspection and audit reports.

Overall, while a few districts have made some attempts at improving their transparency and public engagement, all DDAs are still failing to fulfil the basic requirement for good governance. Strengthening information access, public engagement, and enforcement of governance frameworks are key to improving service delivery and ensuring that development funds are effectively utilized.