

UNDP Papua New Guinea

Bougainville Referendum Support Project



Meeting of the Project Board
20 February 2019

In attendance

Tracy Vienings	UNDP (in the Chair)
Julie Bukikun	UNDP
Patilias Gamato	PNG Electoral Commission
John Punde	Department of Prime Minister & NEC
Thomas Raivet	Deputy Chief Secretary, ABG (via phone)
Davene Vroon	New Zealand High Commission
Alicia Kotsapas	New Zealand High Commission
Johanna Stratton	Australian High Commission
Simon Burton	UK High Commission
Shinichi Maruo	Embassy of Japan
Shunsuke Saito	Embassy of Japan
Paul Rowland	IFES
Ray Kennedy	UNDP
Kate Sullivan	UNDP

Welcome and Introductions

Ms Vienings welcomed all to the first project board of 2019.

1 Project financial update

1.1 2018 expenditure

A provisional expenditure report (BRSP1/2019) was circulated. Mr Kennedy reiterated that this expenditure included assets purchased for the use of the BRC, including:

- IT equipment for enrolment;
- Print shop equipment and supplies;
- Five vehicles;
- Ocean-going vessel;
- Furniture for the BRC headquarters.

1.2 Resource mobilisation

UNDP remained thankful for the contributions from New Zealand, Australia and Japan. Ms Vienings advised that funds on-hand were largely used or committed and that UNDP would shortly circulate details on further needs. Ms Stratton noted that there remained a further tranche to be paid under the agreement with Australia and it was agreed to discuss off-line this payment.

Mr Kennedy outlined that talks continued with the EU and Ireland. Mr Burton reported that internal discussions on possible UK funding were ongoing.

1.3 Gaps

Under the current project structure, there was a significant financial gap. At the same time, it was noted that with the on-boarding of the Chief Referendum Officer, clarity on operational plans and budgets could be expected, with a flow-on impact on BRSP plans. UNDP agreed to circulate further information.

2 **Project progress report**

Mr Kennedy outlined the major achievements of the project in 2018:

- Sustained work to the development of the framework for, and the subsequent establishment of, the Bougainville Referendum Commission (BRC);
- Appointment of the Chairman, and arrangements for his engagement;
- Recruitment of the Chief Referendum Officer, who has arrived in-country;
- Work to define and staff the BRC secretariat, on which progress has been slow;
- Procurement of assets and arrangements for BRC headquarters;
- Recruitment of six advisors to be embedded at the BRC, four of whom were in-country already.

Commissioner Gamato noted that the PNGEC continues to support the BRC and to advocate for its full resources to be in place. He also noted the work done by Mr Kennedy to support the various BPA bodies (JSB, JTT, NTT) as a project achievement. He commented that arrival this week of the BRC Chairman and the Chief Referendum Officer should see operations move into a higher gear. The PNGEC will continue to support the process, both through directly seconded staff and through work done in partnership by PNGEC and BRC.

3 **Project administration**

Mr Kennedy confirmed that he was departing the project and introduced Ms Sullivan, the new Senior Advisor.

Ms Vienings noted, on behalf of UNDP and the wider UN, her appreciation for Mr Kennedy's work and his great contribution to the referendum process.

Commissioner Gamato thanked Mr Kennedy for all his work and effort, in PNG as well as Bougainville. He commented that he felt Mr Kennedy's commitment to the referendum would not end with his departure.

Ms Stratton shared thanks from all the diplomatic missions for Mr Kennedy's energy and commitment, his support to the wider stakeholder community and his willingness to help as well as his obvious enthusiasm for his work.

Mr Raivet shared the thanks of ABG and noted that he has personally enjoyed working with Mr Kennedy.

Mr Rowland noted that all assistance providers had enjoyed working with Dr Kennedy and that his openness and focus on outcomes was appreciated.

4 **Plans for 2019**

A general discussion was held on the BRC's likely plans, noting that more action and clarity was expected in the next months.

On the BRC's budget, Mr Raivet advised that the Bougainville Executive Council had recently approved 2 million Kina for the BRC with 500,000K released already.

Mr Rowland related that there were some discussions at the recent NTT meeting on funds for BRC, with 10million Kina reported to be available now and a further 10 million Kina to be remitted in March.

5 Coordination of referendum related actions

The meeting discussed the various fora in place for both working level and strategic coordination. It was agreed that the members of the project board represent a core of interested parties from GoPNG, ABG and the international community. It was agreed to use the occasion of the project board to ensure time and space for a wider discussion on coordination.

UNDP Chairperson: -----

Wiening

Date: -----

25/2/2019
