

UNDP Management Response Template

Parliamentary Strengthening Project in Solomon Islands Phase 3

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Input into and update in ERC:

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Overall comments: Overall the Management is satisfied with the evaluation findings and recommendations. The Management in particular is impressed that the consultant have taken a forward looking approach to the evaluation. In so doing have highlighted very valuable recommendations that should be taken into consideration by UNDP and future donor partners. It should be noted that under the current phase of the project it will not be possible for the project to implement some if not all of the recommendations. This is because the current funding for the remaining 3 months (January to March) only cover the salaries of the 3 staff. Thus it is not possible for the project under Phase 3 to implement any of the recommendations made in this evaluation as there is no funding left.

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 1: As requested by the 9th Parliament leadership, engage a Solomon Islander with experience working in the SI Parliament who does not have a direct stake in periodic evaluation outcome(s) and is well familiar with the overall programme of development assistance provided under the PSP. This option allows for continuity during the interregnum between the end of PSP and as yet to be determined follow on programme of assistance.

Management Response: A good recommendation and we agree. This suggestion is important in light of any new thinking by UNDP and donor partners who should show willingness to support another phase of the project as strongly suggested by the stakeholders during the evaluation exercise. The interim measure will ensure continuity after the current phase completes in March and a suggested new phase if that would be the case.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
As requested by the 9th Parliament leadership, engage a Solomon Islander with experience working in the SI Parliament who does not have a direct stake in periodic evaluation outcome(s) and is well familiar with the overall programme of development assistance provided under the PSP. This option allows for continuity during the interregnum between the end of PSP and as yet to be determined follow on programme of assistance.	No set date as this depends on the Funding	Implementing Partner	Pending	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of funds to engage a local consultant. 2. No vacant position created under the NPO establishment in 2015 to meet this recommendation. 3. NPO staff do not favour the idea of engaging local consultants who periodically “pop-up” to make recommendations for NPO staff to work on and sit on the sideline watching implementation.

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 2: Utilize existing UNDP regional resources, including Suva-based regional parliamentary support technical assistance consultant(s). ¹				
Management Response: Agree for an ongoing communication with the Pacific center. As suggested by the consultant. This is a cost-effective way of ensuring that there is continuous support. This is important especially provisions for continued professional training since there have been a high turnover rate for parliament staff since 2008. A technical consultant with local knowledge on the contexts of Solomon Islands Parliament would be excellent.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
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1. Dr. John Patterson, former UNDP PSP Project Manager (2011) provided technical support to the National Parliament. This includes a workshop held for the Autonomy Working Group (AWG) and discussion centered on some possible way forward to progress dialogue between the Executive and the National Parliament on the autonomy agenda.	September 2015	UNDP Pacific Fiji office and Implementing Partner	On going	1. Workshop focused on parliamentary autonomy and its implications on Parliament, citizens, Executive, constitution, existing laws and government structures. 2. Members of the BLC requested training on the roles of Parliamentary Committees and NPO has consulted the UNDP consultant (Suva based) for possible support towards this training and agreed to facilitate training in June 2016. 3. Parliament strategy 2012-2016 ends this year 2016 and plans are in place to develop the next strategy (2017-2021) in June 2016.
2. Further training for MPs particularly Parliamentary Committees and the Bills and Legislation Committee (BLC) tentatively scheduled to June/July 2016	June 2016		On going	
3. Strategic planning workshop for Parliament planned to be held in June 2016	June 2016			
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 3: Deepen the relationship with existing regional parliaments, including New South Wales and PNG, through the Twinning Arrangement already in place.				
Management Response: We agree. This arrangement has been helpful for the project. More consolidation should be made between the project, the National Parliament and the Twinning arrangement to ensure that there is no duplication of support from the project and the Twinning to the National Parliament. Twinning arrangements are very important in terms of long and sustainable support to the National Parliament and for secondment arrangements with New South Wales Parliament. In addition to that further and deepening relationship should also include exchange programs for Members of Parliaments and especially chairs and committee members to Twinning Parliaments.				

¹ These first two options are particularly cost-effective and of immediate impact as a locally-based Solomon Islander or regionally based consultant is provided travel and per diem by UNDP and the daily rate is proposed for host parliament sponsorship.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
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Through networking with Tasmania Parliament, 20 NPO staff, 4 from Bougainville House of Representative staff and the Clerk to the NSW Legislative Assembly attended a Parliamentary Legal Practice and Procedures Course offered by the University of Tasmania. The program developed staff capacity on Parliament Procedures and Practices and deepen the relationship between the parliaments involved including the “University of Tasmania”.	2015 through to June 2016 (Second Phase of Training)	Implementing Partner	Partially implemented	Students expected to graduate with a Post Graduate Diploma in Parliamentary Legal Practice and Procedures
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 4: Encourage a formalized separation of the current Government structure in which the Office of the Prime Minister is in primary control of the budget process toward parliamentary responsibility and management of this process.				
Management Response: Agree. Further support is needed to complete this reform. The project has engaged a consultant who has completed the necessary proposed legislations. However, parliament needs to be further supported by way of an expert who should be able to provide technical advice on setting up proper effective and efficient accounting and financial Management and human resources systems. Such support program should be for at least 3 months.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
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This recommendation hinges on the NPO administrative autonomy plan. In September 2015 the NPO Autonomy Working Group held a workshop on Autonomy. The workshop discussion centered on possible avenues where Parliament and the Executive can cooperate to amend existing legislations governing current government structure that allows the government to control Parliament budget. As part of this effort to communicate with the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (OPMC), the Speaker of Parliament in 2015 also wrote a letter to the Prime Minister seeking a dialogue on the autonomy plan. No response to this letter to date. NPO will need the political will to drive the autonomy.	August 2016	Implementing Partner	Pending	Prime Minister to respond to Letter written by Speaker of Parliament seeking dialogue on the Autonomy plan. Need political will to drive autonomy
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 5: Provide incentive for sustainable and independent parliamentary capacity and indigenous oversight of parliamentary process, procedure, training, capacity and operational Management through limited training (with some sort of ‘training of trainers’ component)				
Management Response: Good recommendation and the idea of a training of trainer’s component is a step in the right direction. Should be implemented with the support from the Twinning arrangement.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
1. As mentioned in recommendation 3, there was a training of 20 of NPO staff on Parliamentary Process using the	4 th April- 31 August	Implementing Partner	Partially Implemented	1. Continuous support of the Twinning program

<p>University of Tasmania with a course on Parliamentary Procedures and Practices. This provided staff with an understanding about Parliamentary Procedures.</p> <p>2. Three (3) senior NPO staff currently undertaking a course in Public Sector Management at the University of the South Pacific funded by the National Government through the Ministry of Public Service.</p>	<p>April-July</p>			<p>will assist in building capacity for the staff.</p> <p>2. USP course helps to develop Parliament's capacity in the area of management.</p>
<p>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 6: Encourage the development of institutional memory given the relatively high staff turnover through the enhanced storage, dissemination and availability of relevant staff procedures in the parliamentary library or other in-house information repository.</p>				
<p>Management Response: Good recommendation and should further qualify by ensuring that parliament is assisted by way of developing and adopting a training policy. The training policy should provide guidance to Parliament training needs and a proper schedule for staff trainings. In addition further support should be given to parliament to enlarge its library and digital capacity and a provision for fast and effective retrieval of information.</p>				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
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<p>There has been a progressive expansion of the Library since 2014. In 2014/2015 the Parliament secured 4 new library positions. One Chief Librarian post and 3 Research Officers' positions in late 2015. These positions indicate increase of manpower in the library to meet the rising demand. Having the Library automated has been achieved. However, certain areas need to be improved.</p>	<p>2014-2015</p>	<p>Implementing Partner</p>	<p>Partially achieved</p>	<p>This can be a continuous to retain staff of the NPO.</p>
<p>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 7: Consider a new member orientation session early in 2015 as an introduction to the fundamental precepts and successful (and sustainable) aspects of the 3-phase UNDP PSP.</p>				
<p>Management Response: Strongly agree. The project is liaising with UNDP Pacific Centre for possible support. At this stage the project manager has been approached to be part of the program will be presenting on behalf of the project to MPs. The program is set for March 2015.</p>				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
<p>MPs Induction program successfully conducted in 11-14 May 2015 although turn out is not encouraging. A subsequent mini induction for Parliamentary committees was conducted in late 2015.</p>	<p>11-14 May 2015</p>	<p>UNDP Pacific Centre and Implementing Partner</p>	<p>Achieved and completed</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 8: Encourage enhanced direct MP outreach to constituents, civic groups, and the public at large beyond the immediate parameters of the election cycle through public information sessions, on-line (website) access to the daily proceedings of parliament, social media, and radio or other traditional media outreach. This might also include the opportunity for cell phone users to follow their elected representative on Twitter or to pose questions via Facebook, the SI Parliament website, or email.</p>				

Management Response: Strongly agree. Developing an effective constituency outreach program for Members of Parliament that should bring constituents closer to elected Members, help Members address constituents' deeply felt or urgent needs, engage Members with their constituents in mutually beneficial problem identification and problem solving, inform development, introduction and enactment of, or advocacy for, legislation and ensure accountable, equitable, accessible and appropriate services for all who need them. This should be an ongoing program and should be delivered to all constituencies. In addition the capacity of the parliament Civic Education should be.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
There was a slow-down in the MP constituency outreach program, caused by budget constraints faced during the end of PSP. NPO in late 2015 created a budget head for Parliamentary Civic Education Department (PCED) under the 2016 budget. This action enables Parliament progress Constituency visits and also plans are in place to proceed with constituency tour in the middle of this year 2016. Furthermore, on a fortnightly basis, Parliament broadcast nation-wide the roles and functions of Parliament via Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC) radio. The Parliament website also updates citizens about Parliament events. There is however no portal for MPs interaction with constituents via Facebook or Twitter.	2016-Ongoing	Implementing Partner/NPO PCED	Pending	Since this program is included in 2016 budget, outreach program will be done and should continue in the coming years.
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 9: Introduce a specific and defined programme of limited training with key parliamentary staff and perhaps willing MPs on strategic planning to include time management, human resource management, and financial management and accountability.				
Management Response: Agree. Schedule staff to attend time Management coursed with the Institution of Public Management. This should be an ongoing activity.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is continuous training of NPO staff taking leadership and management courses at the Institute of Public Admin and Management (IPAM), the University of the South Pacific and Divine Word University. Staff at the NPO accounts office also attends trainings provided by the Ministry of Finance on procurement and government financial processes. As mentioned in Recommendation 2, Parliament next strategy (2017-2021) will be produced in June 2016 (tentatively) with consultation workshop to be held by consultant from UNDP 	<p>IPAM Leadership Dev Program 02 August 2015</p> <p>June 2016</p>	Implementing Partner	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>On going</p>	<p>IPAM Leadership talk held on 11 April 2016, which was attended by 3 staff from Parliament.</p> <p>Strategy workshop and consultation in June will</p>

(Ultimately the NPO aim is to achieve administrative autonomy to enable Parliament to control and manage its own finances and human resources. But since NPO is still “under the government” its processes and practices are those of government existing laws and processes)				presumably help NPO staff understand strategic planning better.
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 10: Provide opportunities for best practices sharing between and among successful individuals who have been promoted through the civil service ranks in the Parliament. This may include consideration of a “parliamentary internship programme” which could encourage young people to become more directly involved in their government. This would be a natural progression from the existing “youth in parliament” programme and act as a productive pipeline for encouraging the involvement of potential new staff once the existing cadre of parliamentary staff has moved on to other professional opportunities outside parliament. ²				
Management Response: Agree. Develop a proposal for a parliament internship program in conjunction with the Ministry of Public Service. Such program should be developed and implemented by the middle of the year.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
No progress on this. This recommendation requires an extra program that needs to be accommodated by the Public Service on top of its already “struggling to deliver basic services” program to citizens. Parliament however maintains its links with former NPO staff who are working in government ministries.	N/A	Implementing Partner	Pending	N/A
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 11: Identify new potential partnerships for parliamentary programme funding beyond the UNDP. UNDP could then provide the technical assistance (and more limited) aspect of development assistance from 2015. This may result in a gradual and logical reduction in parliamentary direct assistance while affording the opportunity for a more parliament-driven sustainable development process. ³				
Management Response: Fully and strongly agree, working with UNDP Pacific Center and such support should ensure that the Solomon Islands Government should also provide funding support.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
There were no new partners identified to provide funding	N/A	Implementing Partner	Pending	N/A

² See for example the Canadian Parliamentary Internship Programme: <https://pip-ppsp.org/home> and the Australian Parliamentary Internship Programme: <http://studyabroad.arcadia.edu/find-a-program/programs-by-country/australia/australian-parliamentary-internship/>. Accessed on August 27, 2014.

³ Early on in 2015, UNDP Solomon Islands office could provide an introduction to potential donors while gradually encouraging the parliament to take ownership of the fundraising and subsequent budgetary and programme management process. This may include existing regional donors such as Australia (AusAid) with consideration of other non-traditional donors such as China or other regional countries. See for example Lowy Institute on China: <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/issues/china-pacific>. Accessed on August 27, 2014.

sources after the end of the UNDP PSP. The Speaker has requested extension to PSP but was not considered. Parliament however maintains its links with existing partners such as the Parliament twinning with NSW Parliament and the Bougainville House of Representatives.	n/a			
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 12: Continue support for the Public Accounts Committee toward the goal of enhanced independent competencies beyond the direct review of the Auditor General’s office—particularly regarding review of Appropriations Bills. Also focus some remaining human and financial resources on ensuring the accuracy and timely transcription of Hansard records, necessary financial reports, and the parliamentary website regarding such records and proceedings for on-line notification and forward planning for PAC oversight and financial accounting and reporting purposes. Continue the established and demonstrated success of public outreach, public awareness, and public input into the legislative process through PAC activity from formation of the 10 th Parliament. ⁴				
Management Response: Agree. This should be ongoing as currently parliament through the Public Accounts Committee is working closely with the auditor general and the Ministry of Finance. Such close working relationship provides and gradual but important change to the work of the public accounts committee.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
Parliament support for the Public Accounts Committee is ongoing. A mini Induction was conducted by the Committee Secretariat for the PAC and PEC members on the roles of the PAC and the PEC. No changes made to the Standing Orders rules for the Auditor General to be the PAC Secretary.	5 August 2015	Implementing Partner	Ongoing	Other stakeholders involved in the induction include Ministry of Finance, Accountant General & Office of the Auditor General, Robert Cohen along with the PAC/PEC committee members.
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 13: Encourage the promotion of legislation to modify the budgetary allocation mechanism between the Office of the Prime Minister and the Parliament to ensure fiscal autonomy in the expenditure of public funds while minimizing the opportunity for political patronage and potential corruption of a transparent and accountable political process. This is of particular import when the parliamentary majority is of the same party as the Prime Minister and in those cases where a substantial number of MPs are concurrently serving as Ministers in the Prime Minister’s cabinet. The fact that there are 24 government ministries in a Parliament with only 50 seats supports this conclusion. ⁵				
Management Response: Agree. At the moment the proposed legislations has been drafted awaiting further consultations with cabinet and government approval. Once that is finalized further work should commence regarding any reviews to the draft legislations. The autonomy task should be accomplished by 2016.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
See notes on recommendation 4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

⁴ See PAC in Parliament: <http://www.parliament.gov.sb/index.php?q=node/670>. Accessed on September 4, 2014. See also: <http://www.parliament.gov.sb/index.php?q=node/486>.

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 14: Formulate and implement a municipal government outreach and institutional governance strategy at the local, regional and/or village level. This is particularly important given the traditionally weak central government presence in geographically dispersed, remote and traditionally governed island communities with little if any contact to date with MPs representing constituencies and the limited constituent outreach identified by interlocutors in the nation to date. ⁶				
Management Response: Whilst agreeing on this recommendation. This should be a national government program that should look at a local regional arrangement where parliament officers are station at sub government stations to educate and work with constituents on the work of parliament. This should also allow arrangements where constituency programs are develop to allow MPs to travel as a regional group to visit and talk to their constituents.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
The NPO concentrates on its Civic Education Outreach Program using Constituency tours, School visits and radio outreach program to reach out to citizens. There is no joint program with the government on this.	On going	Implementing Partner	Ongoing	N/A
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 15: Once the 10 th Parliament has been formed (or as is feasible during the forthcoming parliamentary election cycle in 2014), continue to encourage enhanced participation by women in the electoral process and thereafter in governance and civic engagement. As of September, 2014, there is only 1 woman MP among a total of 50 MPs in the National Parliament. As was noted as early as 2008, there has been discussion of the introduction of set aside seats for women in the parliamentary election process—to date without success.				
Management Response: Agree- currently the Young Women Parliamentary Group based in Parliament is doing a pilot project to find out election behave towards women. Findings should provide a baseline for further policy innovations in addressing this issue. More support should be provided to platforms like the Young Women Parliamentary Group. This will ensure a move proactive actively participate and disseminate information to relevant stakeholders and the public at large on issues facing women in leadership and creating and providing support to ongoing policy and legislations targeting women in leadership.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
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1. NPO supported a number of programs initiated by the Young Women Parliamentary Group (YWPG). For example: the launching of the “ <i>Report on voter behaviour towards women Candidates before and after the 2014 SI National General Elections</i> ”. Other YWPG activities supported by NPO include Leadership Forum co-hosted by the YWPG and National Council of Women on 10 March 2016, Children’s Drawing Competition on 10	30 Jan 2015 Ongoing	YWPG with NPO support		Report launched by YWPG at the NPO.

⁶ See for example, Pacific Institute of Public Policy paper on Solomon Islands sub-section III “Traditional Government”: <http://pacificpolicy.org/blog/2011/02/07/solomon-islands/>. Accessed on August 28, 2014.

<p>March 2016; Support for “Ending violence against Women” program on 25 Aug 2015.</p> <p>2. Parliament also nominated the Hon Freda S. Tuki to attend the Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnership in April 2015 in Fiji.</p>				

* The implementation status is tracked in the ERC.