The Challenge of “Doing Development Differently” in PNG:
Towards a Politically Informed Approach to Decentralisation Reform

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The Provincial and Local-level Governments Program is managed by Coffey, on behalf of the Australian Government
A Starting Point …

PLGP is an Australian Government program to support sub-national government
• Focus is Service Delivery

Millions of dollars invested in support to sub-national government over an extended period
• Why are Service Delivery outcomes still so poor?
Why?

- International “best practice” models
  - One size fits all?
  - Square pegs in round holes?

- Focus on the “wrong things”
  - Systems and processes, OR
  - Problems

- White Hats and Black Hats
Doing Development Differently

- Contextually Informed and Politically smart
- Problem driven
- Adaptive
- Entrepreneurial
- Locally led
Doing Development Differently: The 80/20 Challenge

‘Old’ PLGP

- Technical
- Facilitation

‘New’ PLGP

- Technical
- Facilitation
Contextually Informed & Politically Smart

• Understand what is politically feasible
  • Technically sound but not politically smart = failure
  • Back and forth – test ideas

• Understand underlying constraints
  • Tacit knowledge – the way things really work

• PNG: Requires “local knowledge”
  • Diverse cultures and social systems
Problem Driven & Adaptive

- Start with a problem to be solved – not a solution
- Get to the core of the problem – test and retest
Entrepreneurial

- Work with who you know and what you know
- Make small bets
- Harness the power of networks
- Expect surprise
- Don’t try to predict the future – try to shape it
Locally Led

• “Local actors” are the best people to find solutions in adaptive ways
  • Close to the problem
  • Understand its underlying causes
  • Have an interest in resolution of problem

• Who?
  • Government officials (central, provincial Local)
  • Private sector groups
  • Civil-society groups
  • Local communities
Who are the Stakeholders?

How much do they want to change?
Map Stakeholders

LEGEND
- X Organisations
- X Individuals
- ▲ Coalitions

Stakeholders
- Government
- Public Service
- Civil Society
- Private Sector
- Landowners

Relationships
- Formal
  - Very Strong
  - Positive
- Informal
  - Very Strong
  - Positive
  - Opposing
  - Opposing

Reform Orientation vs Power Matrix:
- DPLGA
- Sandaun Prov Admin
- PA
- DA
- Com Dev Director
- Commerce
- HR
- Technical Services
- Corporate Services
- DA - Nuku
- Acting Governor
- Opposition Leader/Nama
- PCMC
- Chamber of Commerce

Relationship Strengths:
- Formal:
  - Very Strong
  - Positive
- Informal:
  - Very Strong
  - Positive
  - Opposing
  - Opposing
Make Politically Informed Decisions

Reform Orientation

Power

Weak Strong

DPLGA
Sandaun Prov Admin
PA
DA
Com Dev Director
Commerce
HR
Technical Services
Corporate Services
DA - Nuku
Acting Governor
Opposition Leader/Nama
PCMC
Chamber of Commerce

LEGEND

Organisations
Individuals
Coalitions

Stakeholders
Government
Public Service
Civil Society
Private Sector
Private Sector
Landowners

Relationships

Formal
Very Strong
Positive
Informal
Very Strong
Positive
Opposing
Opposing

Legend

Very Strong
Positive
Opposing
Informal
Very Strong
Positive
Opposing

LEGEND

Organisations
Individuals
Coalitions

Stakeholders
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Landowners

Relationships

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LEGEND

Organisations
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Stakeholders
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Relationships

Formal
Very Strong
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Opposing
Opposing
Make Politically Informed Decisions

How do we take advantage of our relationships with these agents to get things done?
Make Politically Informed Decisions

How do we work with these agents?

Legend:
- X Organisations
- X Individuals
- ▲ Coalitions

Stakeholders:
- Government
- Public Service
- Civil Society
- Private Sector
- Landowners

Relationships:
- Formal
  - Very Strong
  - Positive
  - Opposing
- Informal
  - Very Strong
  - Positive
  - Opposing

Power

Reform Orientation

Weak

Strong

LEGEND

DPLGA
Sandaun Prov Admin
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Make Politically Informed Decisions

LEGEND

X Organisations
X Individuals
X Coalitions

Stakeholders
Government
Public Service
Civil Society
Private Sector
Landowners

Relationships

Formal
Very Strong
Positive
Opposing

Informal
Very Strong
Positive
Opposing

WEAK

Reform Orientation

Power

DPLGA
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An Example

• An Adviser working on s.119 Reports with DPLGA
  • Problem: Lack of data on Staff Situation in Provinces
• Stakeholder Analysis reveals others with the same interest in the problem
  • Parts of DPM
  • PHAs
• Network analysis reveals relationships between the stakeholders
Doing Development Differently

• What was politically feasible?
  • Could not “rewrite” the DPM database
  • Should not duplicate the DPM database
• Problem Driven
  • People needed data about staff situation
• Entrepreneurial
  • Small tool developed to explore the problem (small bets)
  • Small network – from health, DPLGA, DPM
  • Final outcome was not known

• OUTCOME:
  • Locally led – DPM owned working group with DPLGA input and PLGP support (not donor led)
  • ALL parties WANT the solution
Key Messages

More of the same is not good enough!

• Economic growth and/or more money will not fix the problems by themselves;

• ‘Western’ ideas about what works best in Western contexts will not fix PNG’s problems
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Provincial & Local-level Government Program (PLGP)
Supporting effective decentralised service delivery to the people of Papua New Guinea