Capacity Building through Development Cooperation Strategy: An analysis of Electoral Partnership between the PNG Electoral Commission and the Electoral Support Program Phase 2 (2006-2010).

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Abstract

According to Kavanamur (2009) "strategic alliance management is the process of strategically managing dynamic cooperative-competitive relationships between two or more partners involved in a simultaneous network of alliances, in order to capture synergy thereby enhancing the competitive position of each partner". It is important to know the strategic alliance management approach used in development cooperation strategy to improve electoral governance. To validate these objectives a case study of the PNG-Australia Electoral Support Program Phase 2 (2006-2010) impact is analysed. The survey revealed positive results for the Program's Impact and Effectiveness. These positive results are linked to the improved strategic alliance between the Commission and the Technical Advisors. The progress towards the overall outcomes of the program are linked to the PNGEC alliances with the key stakeholders such as the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) , Inter-Departmental Election Committee (IDEC) and the Provincial Election Steering Committee (PESCs). A survey conducted tests the effectiveness of the program's impact. The lessons learnt from the review sets the framework for the next five year strategic alliance between PNG and Australia in improving electoral governance. While the focus is on Electoral Governance, there are also other cross cutting issues such as HIV and AIDs, Gender, and Corruption that have impact on the program.

1.0. Introduction

This paper investigates electoral partnership through a donor program to sustain the management and conduct of national elections in a developing country. An important element of democracy is election. Elections are an integral part of a liberal democratic system. According to Heywood, "election is a devise for filling an office or post through choices made by a designated body of people: the electorate" (1994:217). An election is the most legitimate means by which the representatives are elected to or removed from parliament.

Backed by the 'fragility' of the PNGEC to deal with the challenges of elections, the AusAID through its Development Cooperation Strategy 2006-2010 established the Electoral Support Program in 2005 to establish the sharing of electoral management ideas and information between the PNGEC and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). This is a capacity building program targeted at strengthening the roles and responsibilities of the PNGEC to perform its statutory obligations as guided by the Organic Law on National and Local Level Government Election (OLNLLGE).

Capacity Building is much more than training and includes the following:

- Human resource development is the process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively;
- Organizational development is the elaboration of management structures, processes and procedures, not only within organizations but also the management of relationships between the different organizations and sectors (public, private and community);
- Institutional and legal framework development demands making legal and regulatory changes to enable organizations, institutions and agencies at all levels and in all sectors to enhance their capacities[1].

The PNG-Australia Development Cooperation Strategy (DCS) 2006-2010[2] outlined four main objectives of the AusAID in PNG. The four main objectives consistent with the Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) 2005-2010 and Medium Term Fiscal Strategy include;

- Improved governance and nation building.
- Sustainable broad based economic growth and increased productivity.
- Improved service delivery.
- A strengthened, coordinated and effective response to the HIV/AIDs epidemic[3].

The guiding principle of the DCS (2006-2010) reflects a genuine partnership between PNG and Australia, which is driven by PNG ownership and leadership and has a strong emphasis on sustainability and capacity building. The strategy reflects a whole of government engagement of development issues in PNG. According to the DCS (2006-2010), the impact and effectiveness of aid is inextricably linked to how the GoPNG used its own resources to support the MTDS. Under this strategy the AEC builds the capacity of the PNGEC through a twinning arrangement and supported by the ESP2.

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[1] http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/public multi.htm dated. 18th August, 2010.
[2] Papua New Guinea-Australia Development Cooperation Strategy 2006-2010 available at http://www.ausaid.gov.au/publication .
[3] Ibid.

The objective of the study is twofold:

- Fill the research gap through strategic alliance management review by developing donor capacity building model for use by strategic liaison officers in a technical cooperation program.
- Address the lack of research into value creating activities of electoral governance policies in developing countries like Papua New Guinea.

1.1. The main research problem.

It is a research requirement that the research problem must be clearly articulated so that it sets the pace for further analysis of the research topic. To address this study, the research problem identified is:

How will PNGEC alliance managers sustain its organisational capability?

The purpose of asking these questions is to develop a holistic strategic alliance management model that links the strategic focus areas of the PNGEC to the strategic alliance partners. At the same time assist in identifying the research gaps that will be further investigated in the Case Study analysis of the Commission.

1.2. Research Questions

1. What economic/technological, political/legal and cultural/social factors impact on strategic alliance management by the PNG Electoral Commission (PNGEC) in terms of its organization context, the management culture, and management process?

2. What is the state of alliance management skills between the PNGEC, the ESP2 and its key stakeholders (i.e. IDEC, CSOs and the PESCs)?

3. How did the alliance managers from the PNGEC, ESP2 and its key stakeholders utilize the established networks in the Commission's planning, monitoring and evaluation process?

4. How effective was ESP2's cultural sensitivity in its dealings with the PNG Electoral Commission?

5. How did alliance managers/liaison managers from both the PNGEC and ESP2 strategically manage the process issues of relationship bonding, trust, communication, boundary spanning, problem solving, learning, and cultural orientations through a whole of government approach?

1.3. PNGEC- Electoral Support Program Phase 2 Focus Areas

The Commission is supported by AusAID, who provide funding based on four main components including cross cutting issues. These programs have specific projects and value creating activities that are aligned to them. The main component of the Electoral Support Program includes;

- **Program Component 1**: *To support reform and development of electoral policy and improvements to the electoral system in PNG.*
- **Program Component 2**: *To improve the capacity of the PNGEC to plan, prepare and conduct elections in PNG, including by-elections, the 2007 national election and future elections in Bougainville.*
- **Program Component 3**: *To improve the awareness and understanding of voters and the community of the PNG electoral system*
- **Program Component 4**: *To improve the organisational capacity of the PNGEC to plan and run elections.*

- **Cross cutting Issues**: *HIV/AIDs, Gender, Fraud and Corruption*[4].

There are eight (8) Key Result Areas (KRAs) of the PNGEC Corporate Plan (2008-2012). These KRAs as linked to the six (6) functional areas of the Commission include;

1. **Election Administration**
2. **Policy Development**
3. **Education and Awareness**
4. **Human Resource Development**
5. **Financial Administration**
6. **Information Communication and Technology**
7. **Audit and Risk Management**
8. **Organisational Capability**[5]

The corporate plan (2008-2012) reflects the functional areas that are interrelated to conduct and manage elections in Papua New Guinea for the national and local level government elections. Under the DCS between GoPNG and GoA, there is a specific program that supports the advocacy of participatory democracy, consultative decision making, and electoral processes. The PNGEC is an independent and impartial office that needs organisational capacity building so that it is well positioned to promote mass participation through elections.

The eight (8) key result areas also reflect the structure of the PNGEC. The strategy and structure are interrelated to ensure the Commission is result driven. The ESP2 supports the KRAs through a counterpart arrangement. Each Senior Directors that heads the six branches (i.e. Human Resource, Finance, Awareness and Communication, Information Technology, Policy and Election Administration) are supported by a technical advisor who is contracted under the ESP2 Program. The performance of the technical advisors are monitored and evaluated on a six monthly basis. This is to ensure that there is progress towards alliance outcomes. The overall outcomes show how ESP2 contributes to the capacity of the Commission to manage and conduct national elections and by elections. It is hoped that this paper would also produce lessons learnt for the mid-year review of the PNGEC Corporate Plan (2008-2012).

2.0. Literature Review

Based on the foregoing perspectives the author now seeks to derive a holistic definition of strategic alliance management within the context of technical cooperation. Thus this thesis adopts the following working definition:

> **"Strategic alliance management is a medium and long-term mutually beneficial agreement between two or more strategic partners in which resources, knowledge, and compatibilities are shared with the objective of enhancing the competitive position of each other. To this end, a development cooperation strategy between two or more countries within a regional bloc is guided by the common policy objectives that demand a pooled governance to manage shared resources that are tailored towards sustainable development and the human security of the citizens within the countries engaged in the development partnership".**

The Paris Declaration 2010 contains 56 partnership commitments aimed at improving the effectiveness of aid. It lays out 12 indicators to provide a measurable and evidence-based way to track progress, and sets targets for 11 of the indicators to be met by 2010.

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[4] Electoral Support Program Phase 2 Revised Strategic Plan (2008-2010)

[5] PNG Electoral Commission Corporate Plan : 2008-2012

The Declaration is focused on five mutually reinforcing principles:

1. *Ownership*: Developing countries must lead their own development policies and strategies, and manage their own development work on the ground. This is essential if aid is to contribute to truly sustainable development. Donors must support developing countries in building up their capacity to exercise this kind of leadership by strengthening local expertise, institutions and management systems. The target set by the Paris Declaration is for three-quarters of developing countries to have their own national development strategies by 2010.

2. *Alignment*: Donors must line up their aid firmly behind the priorities outlined in developing countries' national development strategies. Wherever possible, they must use local institutions and procedures for managing aid in order to build sustainable structures. In Paris, donors committed to make more use of developing countries' procedures for public financial management, accounting, auditing, procurement and monitoring. Where these systems are not strong enough to manage aid effectively, donors promised to help strengthen them.

3. *Harmonisation*: Donors must coordinate their development work better amongst themselves to avoid duplication and high transaction costs for poor countries. In the Paris Declaration, they committed to coordinate better at the country level to ease the strain on recipient governments. They agreed on a target of providing two-thirds of all their aid via so-called "programme-based approaches" by 2010. This means aid is pooled in support of a particular strategy led by a recipient country—a national health plan for example—rather than fragmented into multiple individual projects*;*

4. *Managing for results*: All parties in the aid relationship must place more focus on the end result of aid, the tangible difference it makes in poor people's lives. They must develop better tools and systems to measure this impact. The target set by the Paris Declaration is for a one-third reduction by 2010 in the proportion of developing countries without solid performance assessment frameworks to measure the impact of aid.

5. *Mutual accountability*: Donors and developing countries must account more transparently to each other for their use of aid funds, and to their citizens and parliaments for the impact of their aid. The Paris Declaration says all countries must have procedures in place by 2010 to report back openly on their development results[6].

The negotiation framework of alliance management culture in developing countries is from a high contextual level. Papua New Guinean alliance managers are influenced by the following soft communication traits;

- Papua New Guinea is high context culture. What they say and the message convey has many meaning. PNG is more sensitive to non-verbal behavior. The non-verbal cues on intended meaning are more significant. Even the status of an interpreter and the speaker on a negotiating table is very important.
- The approach to negotiation is not base on planned time. Time to PNG is 'any-time' and not time conscious. Therefore, they do not feel the pressure of deadline.
- Papua New Guineans have a collectivist culture and they tend to pursue group-interest than as individual. Often they negotiate as group and when negotiating on home country the number of team members is unexpected.
- Decision-making is based on consensus. They use community leaders, chiefs or the 'big man' abilities and experiences but collectivism plays a greater role in decision-making.
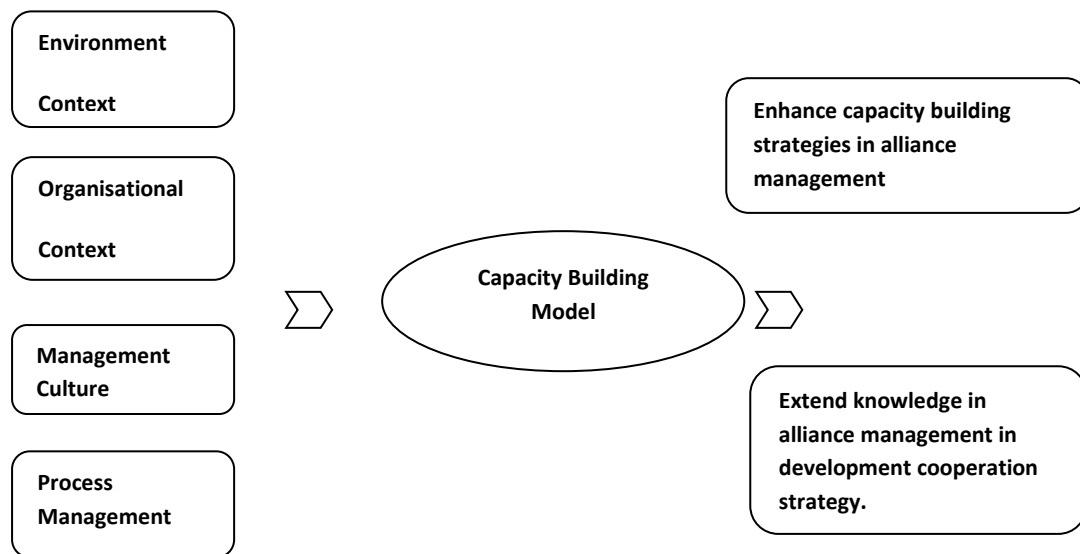
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[6] http://wikipedia.org/capacity_building/

- The language use is diffuse and they start with many justifications then, the main points afterward.
- Respect and loyalty to superiors and harmony among members is valued. Therefore, if agreement is not reach in negotiation, it is advisable to 'leave the door open' for further negotiation.
- Become aggressive and express frustration when group interests are not met. Often they are not impress with out-come of negotiation until they see actual facts.

2.1. Conceptual framework.

A conceptual framework is used to analyze the research problem. The framework was developed from theoretical insights of competitive analytical tools that are used in the study of strategic alliance management.

Figure: 1.0. Conceptual framework of a strategic alliance management model

3.0. Materials and Methods

The case study method is used in this policy review of electoral partnership between AusAID and the PNGEC. The case study is timely as the program completes its final year (2010) in program implementation. As part of the review a desktop review of the completed ESP2 reports over the last five years (2006-2010) is conducted. To back the desk stop review, an ESP2 program impact analysis survey was conduct to get quantitative and qualitative data on the progress towards the overall outcomes. This review is part of the monitoring and evaluation aspect of donor program management and administration.

At the organizational level, the process management would be analysed based on the PNGEC's performance management and evaluation systems and processes. The performance management and evaluation looks at both the process and human resource inputs to the implementation of the Commission's corporate plan (2008-2012) and individual cascaded plans within its six branches .The counterpart relationships reflect the technical advisors' support to the Commission's staff and key stakeholders. The results from the survey is compared through a within case and cross case analysis.

4.0. Results

4.1. Case summary

Table 1.0. Analytical Summary of Case findings for the ESP2 vs. PNGEC Headquarters Capacity Development.

	ESP2 versus PNGEC HQ staff/ Election Managers Alliance Performance
Environment	• ESP2 supports PNGEC in the recurrent and development budget submissions; • Clear procedures on financial management is consistent the Public Finance Management Act 2000; • Bilateral relationship between Australia and PNG is operationalised through work placement programs through the Australian Electoral Commission; • The issue of national interests takes precedence in the relationship between the ESP2 and the PNGEC. Both organizations share the values and principles of democracy; • The GoPNG-GoA DCS is guided by an in-country democratic governance program.
Organisation	• The ESP2 supported PNGEC to take a more strategic planning and budgeting approach assisting the PNGEC to develop and review its first corporate plan and supporting the Senior Management Team (SMT) to develop annual branch plans; • The ESP2 Technical advisors provide mentorship to ensure the EC working groups define the purpose, and develop an action plan; • The Technical Advisors assist the EC SMT to be smart negotiators through regular in house leadership coaching; • A significant organizational restructure designed to boost PNGEC's efficiency and effectiveness in planning and election management was undertaken and approved by Department of Personnel Management (DPM) in 2008; • The ESP2 has supported PNGEC to upgrade IT skills since 2007 and improve communication with the provincial electoral offices;
Alliance Skills	• Time is used as a must for completion of projects; • Being culturally sensitive given the EC neutral role in managing and conducting elections; • The SMT are supported in negotiation with other key stakeholders in the IDEC, CSOs and PESCs; • IT Training improved computer literacy of staff to deal with new computer hardware and software; • The SMT have confidence in public speaking, negotiation, correspondence, organising meetings.
Management Culture	• The organizational development allows for the learning process within the commission ; • The SMT is supported in managing risks through regular communication with the key stakeholders in their electoral partnerships; • There is a right mix of alliance strategies encompassing the environment and organizational process and cultural contexts.
Management Process	• The respondents reported a range of different capacity development analysis which were used by the technical advisors to assist them build the capabilities and therefore comment on such confidence; • The HQ staff expressed satisfaction in the action learning approach that ESP2 supported to build up their confidence through the working groups; • Most of the PNGEC staff said that they were now more aware of what the other branches were doing; • There was stringent financial controls that were displayed in 2007 through Provincial Election Accountants (PEAs); • The SMT embraces a monitoring and evaluation process within the Commission that allows for continous learning and improvement.
Coping Strategies	• It is stressed that getting work done within the required time, cost and with

	quality will add value to the image of the Commission; • The ESP2 supported PNGEC to take a more strategic planning and budgeting approach assisting the PNGEC to develop and review its first corporate plan and supporting the Senior Management Team (SMT); • The work groups comprise of staff from across all branches that interact openly to discuss strategies that are specifically targeted at a particular problem; • The HQ staff said that the PNGEC with the support of ESP2 has seen improvement in election management through technology innovation, upgrade and support;

4.2. Cross-Case Analysis: ESP2-PNGEC alliance with key stakeholders

The capacity building holistic model of electoral partnership between the PNGEC and ESP2 is compared with the three main strategic alliances: the PNGEC-IDEC (whole of government approach), the PNGEC-PESCs (sub national approach), the PNGEC-CSOs (mass participation approach). The ESP2 play a facilitation role in the negotiation framework between PNGEC and its key stakeholders. The success of failure of alliance with the key stakeholders is dependent on the ability of the PNGEC SMT to master the right alliance skills by harnessing the potential of key stakeholders to participate actively in the decision making process of election administration.

4.2.1. Organisational context

The right organizational systems and processes are central to an effective alliance. Within the alliance context, effectiveness depends on the partner's contribution and the extent to which liaison officers harness these resources and structures towards goal attainment. The organisational contexts of the five cases are summarised in Table 2.0. Findings in this table were derived from the alliance organization contexts analysed in the four alliance cases.

Table 2.0. Cross-case summary – Organisational context

	Alliance Organisation Context
ESP2 –PNGEC	• With technical advisory support by ESP2 advisors, the PNGEC Directors took a more strategic approach to planning which was consistent with a five (5) year corporate plan (2008-2012); • A one on one approach to mentorship between the ESP2 Advisors and PNGEC SMT is encouraged and done; • Restructure was done to organizational structure through ESP2 Human Resource Advisor consistent with GoPNG national plans; • The ESP2 technical advisor reinforced good performance with rewards and give alternatives for improvements in weak focus areas; • The ESP2 has supported PNGEC to upgrade IT skills since 2007;
IDEC	• The IDEC's operation solicited unprecedented coordination and cooperation across Whole of Government in the conduct of the 2007 general and 2008 LLG elections; • A General Election Finance Committee (IDEC Sub committee) was formed in 2007 to control expenditure through regional and provincial quality financial control; • A safety and security subcommittee formed in 2007 and coordinated between the RPNGC and the PNGEC; • Exposure to executive decision making through whole of government approach by Commission's Senior Management Team; • Regular meetings were part of the IDEC's reporting mechanism to the PNGEC;
CSOs	• The PNGEC has taken a lead role in networking and managing partnerships across government, state agencies and provincial administrations as well as civil society;

	• The ESP2 supported ICAB to obtain PNGEC membership of the PNGEC Media Council in 2009; • Well structured CSOs are encouraged to continue relationship with the Commission to promote accountability and transparency; • Program Officers of CSOs liaise with the ICAB Director in the award of CSO contracts; • The PNGEC media officer ensures there is a media protocol when dealing with media.
PESCs	• LLG Managers have shown willingness to support the operation of PESCs in the provinces; • Provincial election managers were supported by Provincial Election Accountants (PEAs); • A chart of accounts is in place to guide procurement of goods and services in headquarters and the provinces; • There is a reporting process from the PESC Chairman (Provincial Administrator) to the IDEC and monitored and controlled by the Regional Operations Managers and Election Administration Director; • The IDEC Chair receives reports from the IDEC sub committees who submit reports on security, personnel, logistics, roll improvement/maintenance, and community awareness.

4.3. Conclusions to research questions:

4.3.1. Research Question 1

What economic/technological, political/legal and cultural/social factors impact on strategic alliance management by the PNG Electoral Commission (PNGEC) in terms of its organization context, the management culture, and management process?

It is evident that a stable economy and steady economic growth ensures that there is available funding to fund statutory organizations that promote democracy. The PNGEC in 2011 had increased budgetary allocations which is evident of the improved economic outlook of the economy. The IDEC (Inter-Departmental Election Committee) is the key entity created in 2007 national elections with the ESP2 support and has proven its effectiveness and efficiency in 2011 when PNGEC was appropriated its first development budget allocations. The close relationship between the IDEC and the National Executive Council (NEC) was seen in the involvement of the then Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Manasupe Zurenuoc (Secretary to Provincial and Local Level Government Affairs) as the Chair of IDEC. His involvement resulted in the PNGEC 2011 Development Budget allocation for the first time. Political stability over the last eight (8) years have gained donor confidence and sustained social development. Fewer departmental heads changes enhanced the performance of the IDEC through whole of government approach to electoral and civic participation.

The ESP2 program (2006-2010) is guided by a development cooperation strategy (2006-2010) between the GoPNG and Government of Australia. The development cooperation strategy at a macro political level is driven by the donor country national interests and operationalised through her foreign policies. For the first time in PNG's history, a comprehensive plan in the Vision 2050 and GoPNG National Strategic Plan (2011-2030) now serves as guide to any key diplomatic relationship with PNG's closest neighbor Australia. This is a high level political alliance between two Governments that have to reach diplomatic agreements and operationalised through their foreign policies and specific national interests.

To resolve debates on the relevance of the ESP2, it is important to revisit the diplomatic agreement between the two governments to build and strengthen the peoples' to peoples' relationship that promotes human security through vibrant democratic institutions. In the

ESP2-PNGEC case study it is evident that there has been significant progress towards the whole of government approach to managing and conducting elections which is testament to an open learning environment that the Commission have adopted.

The ESP2 Technical advisors working with locally engaged program staff and their PNGEC counterparts are conscious of the high context culture that they work in. Most of the decisions are made based on the relationship building. The relationships are based on ethical conducts that protects the integrity of the actors involved. Such an observation is based on that notion that most legal disputes in the Court of Disputed Returns that the Commission deals with are policy issues that have been made complicated by the legal process. In this context, written agreements are sometimes overridden by values and principles which are linked to the local cultures.

Over the last five years the Commission has been supported by the ESP2 to open up to the international perspectives on the ICT policy. With increased innovation in the ICT industry in PNG, the Commission is driven by the demand to be more cost effective and efficient in the use of allocated resources. Through forums, and conferences, the Commission has explored ICT solutions in electronic enrolment, voting, and counting. The exposure to ICT is influenced by the international competitiveness promoted by Donor Agencies through their Democratic Governance and Participation Programs. In 2010 the PNGEC IT Director has embarked on IT documentation process to set a policy guideline that sets the framework for an open ICT system within the Commission.

4.3.2. Research Question 2
What is the state of alliance management skills between the PNGEC, the ESP2 and its key stakeholders (i.e. IDEC, CSOs and the PESCs)?

According to Kavanamur (2008), the development of alliance management skills in PNG is still in an embryonic stage with the exception of a small number of cases where staff possesses the requisite skill. The good relationship between PNGEC and ESP2 has spin-off benefit for the network with other IDEC, PESCs, and CSOs. This is an evidence of the ESP2 support to strengthening strategic alliance management of relationships between the PNGEC and its key stakeholders. The Commission's Senior Executives and senior line managers are able to deal with communications officers from the organizations that promote the prevention and management of these cross cutting issues. Communications officers from TIPNG, National AIDs Council Secretariat (NACs), Provincial AIDs Councils and the National Council of Women are partners with the Commission in addressing cross-cutting issues.

A key finding from the ESP2-PNGEC capacity building program is the transfer of alliance management skills and knowledge to the Commission's Senior Line Managers and Senior Executives. The Commission moved from a routine based organization that only waits for five (5) years to conduct elections to a more proactive human resource based entity that prepares and plan to allocate the right people at the right time with appropriate support resources. A key initiative that ESP2 supported was the establishment of working groups that involve cross-sectional learning across the organization. It is a concept based on equality in organizational learning across branches which identifies key recommendations for actions by the Senior Executives.

Communication has proven to be the driving momentum of the ESP2 progress towards outcomes. The ESP2 outcomes are evident in the PNGEC's improved capacity to communicate effectively through both soft and hard skills. They are able to use the Microsoft Outlook and their personal one on one interaction with other Commission staff. There is evidence of sharing of ideas and information from the junior staff up to the Line Managers and the Senior Executives. These communication strategies have greatly reduced communication barriers among the staff. Furthermore, it creates a demand and supply of the Commission's progress towards outcomes on a quarterly and six monthly basis. As a lead up

to the 2012 General Elections, a PNGEC Communication Strategy is already approved by the Senior Management for implementation.

Alliance skills and knowledge transfer and nurturing are evident in the ESP2-PNGEC relationship. An important aspect of these skills is the ability of the Commission Directors to complete any allocated projects within the required time, cost and ensuring there is quality output. Such principle is guided by a clear strategic management framework that is centered on performance management. An improved alliance skill is shown by the increased electoral and civic participation at the sub national level through the twenty (20) PESCs. The 20 PESCs are chaired by the 20 Provincial Administrators who work closely with the Election Manager as the liaison officers with the PNGEC HQ.

4.3.3. Research Question 3
How did the alliance managers from the PNGEC, ESP2 and its key stakeholders utilize the established networks in the Commission's planning, monitoring and evaluation process?

Unlike other statutory bodies in PNG, the PNGEC have clear and credible governance structure and control defined by a strategic planning cycle of planning and reporting. The Commission sets the tone of the management though their five year corporate plan which guided the program component supports given by the Technical Advisors. Any activities or new initiatives developed by the ESP2 must add value to the corporate image of the Commission and most importantly build citizens' confidence in the electoral and civic process. Citizens' interests and participation will only increase if they have access to the necessary voter information that guides their understanding of the electoral and civic systems and processes. Furthermore, planning is done to capture both the organization perspectives and the whole of government approach.

Both the ESP2 and the Commission share the same goals and objectives on how to promote a vibrant democracy through mass participation in the electoral and civic process. Their programs and specific projects reflect the overall outcomes of promoting whole of government approach to managing and conducting elections. Based on lessons learnt from the 2006-2010 review, any PNGEC's Strategic Plans are aligned to the National Development Priorities as specified in the Vision 2050 and cascaded in the National Strategic Plan 2011-2030. Moreover, the Commission has a strict selection and recruitment of Civil Society Organisations before awarding awareness contracts to them. A key requirement is that they promote democratic participation and most importantly are well structured with good records in both financial and human resource management.

Senior Executives and Directors from the Commission are encouraged to continuously undertake environmental scanning of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats through regional workshops, and provincial visits to assess the level of risks in the external environment. The whole of government approach to managing risks is coordinated through an IDEC safety and security sub-committee formed between the RPNGC and other disciplinary forces to maintain a safe and secure national election.

4.3.4. Research Question 4
How effective was ESP2's cultural sensitivity in its dealings with the PNG Electoral Commission?

Unlike in the past, where there was misconceptions on the role of the CSOs in awareness, today the PNGEC with the ESP2 support have improved in their dealing with the CSOs. The PNGEC Awareness Directors maintains good relationship with the CSO Program Coordinators through regular CSO Regional Workshops, and individual CSO consultations. The CSOs engaged on a contract basis have a good performance record and have gained the Commissions confidence in their awareness programs.

Generally, the ESP2 Technical Advisors including the Program Manager who come from a western culture are culturally sensitive when dealing with their counterparts. They are mindful of sensitive issues and take a more one on one mentorship role than involve directly with the Commission's affairs. They comply with the Commission's media protocol and are not allowed to mention any issues publicly in the media. In negotiations, they allow time to work out the costs and benefits of changing certain systems and processes that will improve the Commission's performance.

Most alliance managers from both the Commission and its key stakeholders have a high uncertainty avoidance behavior, therefore, the ESP2 alliance managers allow working groups to discuss new initiatives in groups to avoid individuals' inability to undertake new tasks that will add value to the Commission. The working groups are based on vertical and horizontal linkages of value creating activities to the Commission. Junior staff are able to willingly interact with senior line managers and senior executives based on the common priorities and solutions that they are assisted by ESP2 Technical Advisors to identify and prioritised.

Consistent with the GoPNG and GoA Cooperation Strategy (2006-2010), the PNGEC-ESP2 alliance reflected evidence of improved governance and public administration through sustainable partnership and ownership of the electoral management system and processes. The revised ESP2 strategic plan (2008-2010) showed AusAID's commitment to be flexible with time in the delivery of its programs. Sharing of management skills and knowledge through close interaction between the technical advisors and the local staff ensured exchange of expert strategies on how to implement the PNGEC strategic plan (2008-2012) consistent with the Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) (2005-2010) and Medium Term Fiscal Strategy (MTFS). A performance management framework designed by GoPNG is used in Performance Review and Dialogue (PRD).

4.3.5. Research Question 5
How did alliance managers/liaison managers from the PNGEC with support from the ESP2 strategically manage the process issues of relationship bonding, trust, communication, boundary spanning, problem solving, learning, and cultural orientations of different key stakeholders in PNG?

The key to the PNGEC 's harmonization of the process issues of relationship bonding, trust, communication, boundary spanning , and other learning and cultural orientations is supported by having the right mix of capacity building strategies at both the environmental, organizational, skills, and process level of the Commission. The Commission's staffs have confidence in managing communication with key stakeholders to get work done. Such perspective has greatly improved the confidence of the Commission's Senior Executives, and Line Managers to manage the risks through appropriate coping strategies. The process management encompasses a whole of government approach which demands regular updates on the progress towards Commission's strategic priorities. In the lead up to the 2012 General Elections, the Commission is demanded to manage the communication between the key stakeholders on regular basis to ensure it is prepared to face the challenges that another election would bring.

The Commission is now well positioned to manage the challenges of the 2012 General Election and other election that comes up every five years because it has adopted coping strategies that are based on its organizational learning process. It rallies its Senior Executives, Directors, and junior staff towards the achievement of its key result areas specified in its strategic plan. Solutions to the election problems are not only identified but both the internal staff and the external stakeholders. The Commission is now a learning organization determined to fulfill its statutory obligations of managing and conducting both national elections and by elections.

5.0. Conclusion

How will PNGEC alliance managers sustain its organisational capability after the completion of the Electoral Support Program Phase 2?

Upon analyzing the theoretical and empirical data available, it is important to validate whether the PNGEC is well positioned to sustain its organizational capability after the completion of ESP2. The research has revealed a number of common strategic alliance management strategies that have been adopted by alliance managers and senior executives in the PNGEC context of alliance environment, organisational component, alliance management skills, alliance management culture and coping strategies. These strategies have been illustrated in the cross-case analysis.

Consistent with Hubbard et.al (2008), the environmental context of strategic management depends on the management of a strategy through strategic planning process. This could be summarized under strategic thinking, action and analysis. Within a public sector, statutory institutions established by an Act of Parliament are faced with the challenge of minimizing political persuasion and influence. They have to embrace continous learning process to scan the external environment for the key drivers for the change. Being part of the Commonwealth nations, the PNGEC would still benefit from donor support but its senior executives are now in charge of the focus areas that need support and would request that accordingly as guided by the overarching technical cooperation.

For the first time in the history of Papua New Guinea, there is a comprehensive 20 year strategic plan (2011-2030) which is guided by the Vision 2050 of having a 'smart, wealthy, healthy nation by 2050'. In 2011 the PNGEC was appropriated its first development budget, because it aligned its key result areas to the National Development Priorities. The development budget submission was consistent with the Government's Strategic focus on Institutional Strengthening. It is shown in this relationship that ESP2 supports the sustainability of the Commission's ability to sustain its relationship with the Government's Central Agencies Coordinating Committee (CACC) and other stakeholders.

The Commission is now well positioned to manage the 2012 General Elections based as reflected by the progress towards overall outcomes. This state of readiness is consistent with ownership and sustainability framework set out in the Paris Declaration 2010. In the PNGEC-ESP2 relationship there were four program components that were linked to the Commission's Corporate Plan (2008-2012). The PNGEC's now have a stringent financial process consistent with the PNG Public Finance Management (PFM) Act 2000. Through the IDEC, a General Election Finance Committee Organisation (GEFCO) was established in 2007 to management twenty Provincial Election Accountants who ensured procurements done in the 20 provinces complied with the PFM Act. The Commission manages a whole of government relationship which demands results and ensures there is mutual accountability with all key stakeholders involved in the whole of government approach.

The ESP2 Technical advisors working with locally engaged Program Staff and their PNGEC counterparts are conscious of the high context culture that they work in. Most of the decisions are made based on the relationship building. The relationships are based on ethical conducts that protects the integrity of the actors involved. The PNGEC SMT has mastered the art of negotiating with their Senior Executives in the IDEC, PESCs and also builds good relationship with the CSOs program officers. There is regular communications through quarterly PESCs meetings and monthly IDEC meetings. These meetings would be done frequently as a lead up to the 2012 General Elections.
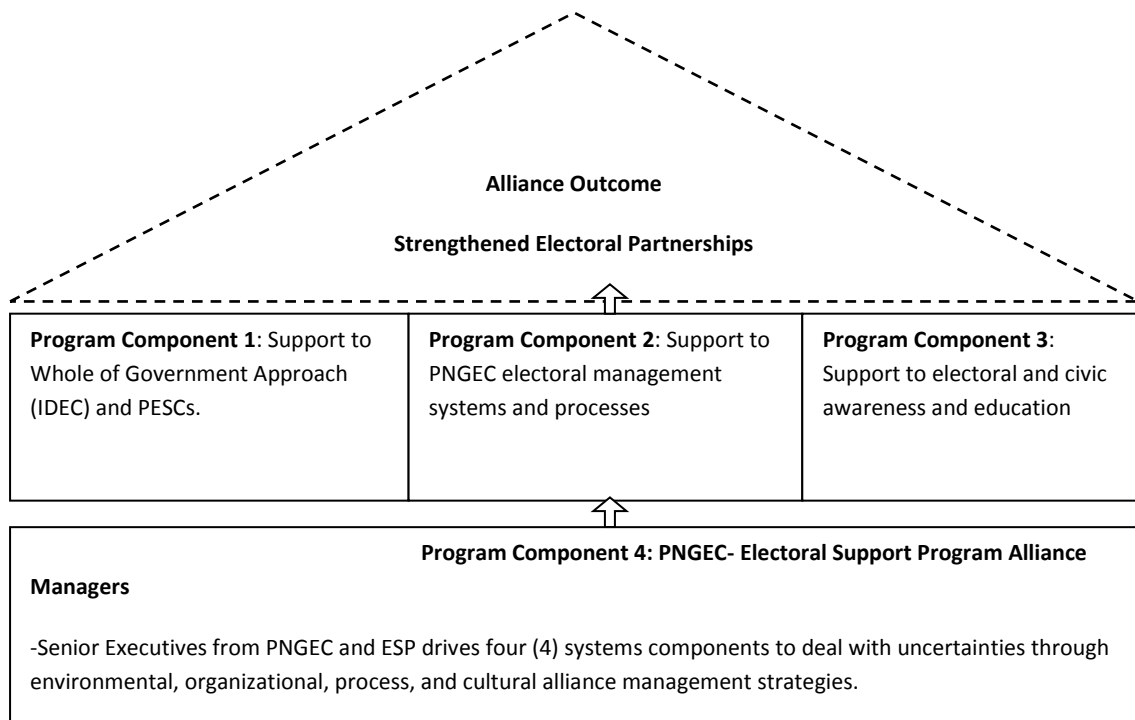
Although the public sector does not demand an industry analysis, the PNGEC through ESP2 support now embraces a good governance structure, compatible goals and values, human

resource adequacy, and the extent of communication as part its organizational culture. Such an approach allows alliance managers to leverage the key interrelated systems to achieve the PNGEC strategic intent (mass public participation in elections) and comparative advantage to deal with the environmental factors (i.e. political influence). The PNGEC have gone through an alliance management cycle through its electoral partnership with the ESP2. Its alliance with the ESP2 is at the exit level and thus a real test of its organisation capability would be observed between 2011 and 2012. The PNGEC now have a good Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF) linked to its strategic plan and individual branch plans.

The strategic capability of the PNGEC to sustain organizational capability is the result of the transfer of alliance skills and knowledge through the ESP2 capacity building strategies. A critical element of alliance skills strengthening is communication skills. Communication has proven to be the driving momentum of the ESP2 progress towards outcomes. The ESP2 outcomes are focused on ensuring that the Commission sustains its relationships with the key stakeholders (i.e. IDEC, PESCs, and CSOs).

The author concludes the thesis with a capacity building model on electoral partnerships between a donor agency and statutory organization (such as the PNGEC). This model is based on the systems approach (parent discipline)which synthesizes theoretical findings of the strategic management approach on strategic alliances (immediate discipline).

Figure 2.0. Capacity Building Model on Electoral Partnerships (Donor-State Agency)

The model underscores systems components and strategy to electoral partnerships between a donor agency and a statutory organisation. It contributes a new dimension to alliance management by adding the importance of electoral coping strategies adopted in developing country contexts for purposes of sustaining the system components of electoral partnerships.

The research affirmed the PNGEC's capacity to sustain its network with key stakeholders is based on cultural fit that is demanded by the local management context. The research on the ESP2-PNGEC alliance revealed that PNG has a relationship-oriented culture where the establishment of formal governance structures is still necessary to enhance the alliance management process if tangible results are to be derived. The Commission is challenged in

its ICT standards and practices to open up to IT companies to improve its communication network through the virtual management system.

Unlike in the past the Commission now has an improved relationship with the civil society organizations, the IDEC and the PESCs as revealed by the research and survey. With respect to PNGEC-CSO relationship, the awareness contracts awarded were based on merit-based selection and stringent monitoring and evaluation which demands performance by the CSO actors engaged. The relationship with the IDEC through whole of government approach reflects the cross-cultural relationship that displays the ability of PNGEC Commissioner and his two deputies to deal across government agencies to market the Commission's Vision and Mission of promoting mass participation in the electoral and civic process.

The research affirmed that whilst operating in a developing country context the alliance manager ensures that there is a strategic fit and operational fit maintained to avoid any strategic drift. In developing countries, the strategic management approach recognizes that process management suffers from highly volatile and information-void environments with goals being less clear. The PNGEC through ESP2 support designed coping strategies necessary for the achievement of the alliance outcome.

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