

At a crossroads? Increasing labour mobility from PNG

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**PNG is the
sleeping
giant of
Pacific labour
mobility**

	Population	No. workers in SWP/RSE	% total workers
PNG	8,251,000	300	1.2%
Tonga	108,000	5,774	23%
Vanuatu	276,200	10,094	40.2%

Recruitment of workers

- Direct selection
- Agents
- Work ready pool

What can Papua New Guinea do to lift its numbers in the seasonal worker programs of Australia and New Zealand?

Richard Curtain

Abstract

Why is it that Papua New Guinea, a country of nearly nine million people – 3.2 million of whom are aged 20 to 45 years of age, have so few workers able to access high-paying jobs in its near neighbours? In relation to opportunities for low-skilled, temporary work, Papua New Guinea in 2017-18 was only able to gain one per cent of the seasonal jobs available in Australia and New Zealand to workers from the Pacific and Timor-Leste. The actual number of PNG workers in seasonal work in Australia in 2017-18 was only 92, and in New Zealand was only 132 in the same year.

How can Papua New Guinea, with support from Australia and New Zealand, improve its prospects of gaining more seasonal work? Why is it that two small countries, Tonga and Vanuatu, have gained more jobs than any of the other eligible countries? What lessons can be drawn from the success of the two leading countries? How have other countries such as Fiji, Solomon Islands and Timor-Lest sought to win a greater share of the seasonal work? This paper explores these questions, and concludes by recommending a strategy for Papua New Guinea to improve its prospects of gaining more temporary low-skilled work in Australia and New Zealand.

Discussion Paper #70

September 2018

Series ISSN 2206-303X



“Labour mobility offers an opportunity for our workers to travel internationally for well paid jobs and enhance their skills and experience to bring back to the country.”

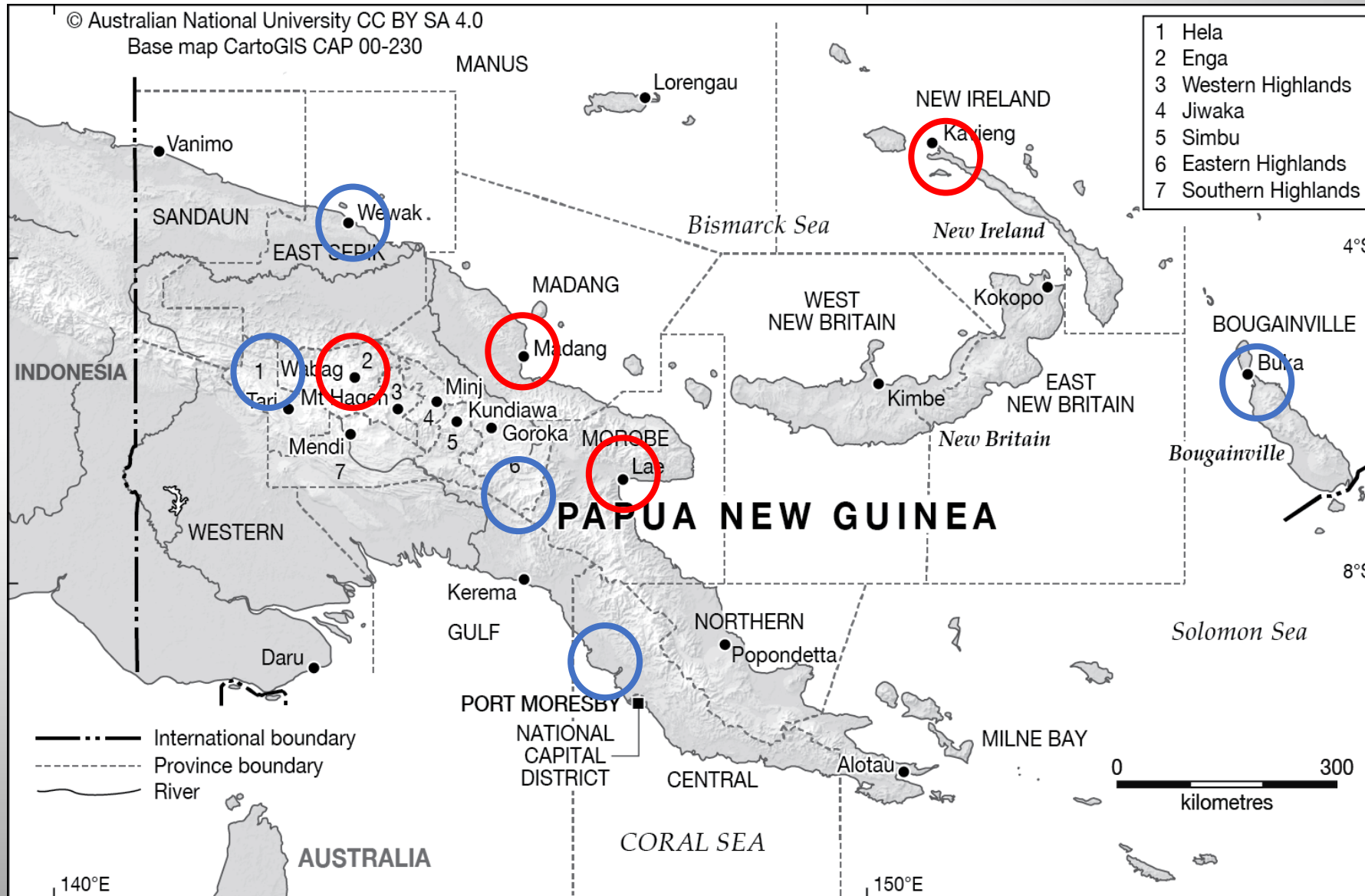
-Hon. Ian Ling-Stuckey, CMG. MP

Labour Mobility reforms

“An independent Labour Mobility Unit to report to a new Ministerial Steering Committee led by the Deputy Prime Minister will be created. It will be an independent agency staffed with officials from the Department of Labour, Immigration, and others to increase coherence across the national government to increase the number of Papua New Guineans working overseas.”

Hon. Ian Ling-Stuckey, PNG Treasurer, 2020 Budget speech

Regional Pilot Initiative (emerging areas)



Madang recruitment process

Wards

- Nominate workers

Pre-screening

DDA:

- Check residence
 - Has worked full time?
 - Do they have a passport?
 - If not → start the passport process
- Selection -----

PLF:

- Interview workshops
 - Soft skills
 - Profiles: SWP or/and PLS
- Selection -----

Labor-hire company:

- The 'approved employer'
 - Interview process
 - physical exercises
 - health checks (blood, eye test)
 - interviews
 - video re job
- Selection -----
Sends list to employer

Host Employer selection

PLF Welfare Team:

- On-arrival briefing
- Bank accounts
- Shopping
- On arrival report

Worker obtains visa
→ Host employer book ticket
---Worker goes to AUS---

DDA:

- Communicate with worker
- Assistance in this process (with PLF)

- Police checks (3-7 days K\$10)
- Obtain passport
- Obtain visa (issues Medical number)
- Medical checks (5-9 working days K\$1,500)
- PLF pre-departure briefing

Labor-hire company:

- Receives the names of selected workers
- Communicates to PLF

Mobilisation

Thank you

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