

Outcome from the 2009 CIMC National Development Forum on Agriculture and Rural Development

Commentary

This year's National and Regional Development Forums focused upon agriculture and rural development. The Forums addressed the state of the sector, its problems but also its prospects and some success stories or role models from around the country.

Considering that agriculture provides the majority their livelihood, and rural areas are where most people live, it is a sad reflection on attitudes, governance and leadership how badly the sector has been neglected over recent decades. Its biggest recent revolution has occurred with the arrival of mobile phone competition, notably Digicel recognising a market out there and providing invaluable services, contributing to the rural economy and welfare. For decades, the State has ignored rural areas, including rural roads and ports, schools, health centres and aid posts and sucking funds into the cities and bloated bureaucracies.

Recently we've finally seen some reversal, with increased funding for Districts (though under a seriously flawed and inadequately accountable programme, DSIP) and also for poorer provinces, under the recent Amendments to the Organic Law on Provincial and Local Government financing. The National Agricultural Development Plan was a positive initiative, although, sadly, so far of little value to agricultural development, being more of a lottery for a favoured few.

Villagers are crying out for information, partly on agricultural production opportunities and techniques, but especially on markets and opportunities. It is a disgrace how the agricultural institutions have been allowed to collapse. We still train some students in agriculture, but there are few jobs and they mostly head into other industries. Government's (largely provincial) extension service, which formerly provided over a thousand agricultural staff at the local level around the country, is down to a handful. The National Department of Agriculture and Livestock which used to provide a provincial support role is virtually closed for business, whilst the Statutory and commodity bodies are failing to perform effectively because board and management appointments are not made, so they are unaccountable to the farmers they're meant to serve. Many retain some good staff but poor management and lack of funding leaves them feeling redundant and disillusioned; organisations like NARI and CCI have been losing core staff they need, whilst the Cocoa Board has been napping whilst cocoa pod borer threatens to wipe out its industry. The Minister and Secretary for agriculture both appear 'missing in action' and, together with other sector managers, hide from facing their farmers and industry bodies.

In the private sector most of these sector leaders would be dumped for lack of performance, but government considers itself unaccountable to anyone, and their salaries and big cars continue. Hardly surprisingly the agriculture sector has performed poorly. Nevertheless, the sector has struggled on, because rural households need to survive and many seek to thrive. Fortunately there are some beacons of hope and constructive initiatives largely from within the private sector, but in some cases in partnership with government bodies. Successes range from small specialised agro-nucleus and marketing enterprises, like Pacific and Paradise Spices, to service providers like Bris Kanda and SSSPP, some church-led vocational and life skills training bodies,

through to the large and relatively responsible operations like New Britain Palm Oil Ltd, which, despite detractors of oil palm, has provided community participation and shown that well managed oil palm can provide extensive benefits and minimise problems associated with monocropping.

The future is not in largely, centrally controlled, bureaucracies, as some in DAL might imagine, but with more dynamic public bodies and NGOs, with good access to market and other information and more accountable to the rural community, supporting and operating together with a competitive but innovative private sector, including grower associations, smallholders and accountable cooperative organisations. Government's role is to provide basic infrastructure, like roads and ports, so the private sector can operate and farmers can get produce to markets. Government's role is to listen to the rural community and respond to its needs (not lock itself away in ivory towers in NCD, Gold Coast or overseas conferences). If government cannot even achieve the simple task of appointing boards promptly (involving PSC, as well as Ministers and Departments) with genuinely accountable members, then what can it do? Then there's a need for coordination within government, because at this moment it's more like 50 different governments, half at the national and half the provincial level, which never cooperate on anything.

Managers cannot sit on selection panels for their own position, and Boards are there to oversee management, not simply to do the Minister or manager's bidding. PNG producer organisations should have automatic membership of agricultural boards, whilst the National Forest Board should also restore NGO representation to help keep it accountable. Processes and decisions of such public boards should be publicly available. A national agricultural organisation is still required, replacing DAL, but accountable to producers through a reformed National Agricultural Council. It must perform a coordinating and support role to the sector, and be able to undertake sector studies and monitoring, including institutional performance, whilst provide guidance and oversight to a revamped and accountable NADP. It requires international support to restore capacity and accountability.

This and subsequent INA Focus features will present the recommendations from the 2009 National Development Forum, including Regional Forums and CIMC Sector Committees, as drawn up by the CIMC Secretariat. The Forums, involving hundred of participants, form part of an essential process of government, private sector and civil society dialogue, for which CIMC was established, made possible through funding from National Government and AusAID. Once again, during 2009 there was strong support from some key players in Government, including the Deputy Prime Minister and new A/Chief Secretary, and certain members of the Legislature (Parliament), but once again participants were disappointed over lack of attendance by many other key Ministers, officials and MPs, including from relevant rural development agencies, who should have contributed (and especially listened). Understandably, participants, who make the effort to come to Waigani to contribute their time and ideas to a national dialogue and towards policy formulation, expect a hearing from national leaders and officials, and not to find them too afraid or arrogant to receive wider community views.

2009 National Development Forum Outcomes (prepared by CIMC Secretariat)

Mission

The theme for the 2009 Development Forums was “Opening Up Opportunities for Agriculture and Rural Development”. The forums sought to have professionals, private sector participants Non-Government Organisation’s including churches and the private smallholder farmers discuss key aspects of agriculture – namely: governance and management, land tenure, training and extension, financial services, quality, transportation, marketing and distribution, domestic and international trade including international perspectives, with the objective to establish what is required to foster growth in the agriculture sector in Papua New Guinea.

Scope and Process

The 2009 Forum focused on sharing experiences of successful entrepreneurial and organisational models and approaches in the context of the commonly known constraints in agriculture sector; that is, promoting innovative approaches to service delivery and agri-business. Those, telling their success stories comprised: - politicians, public servants, individual entrepreneurs and agri-business companies and NGOs, including partnerships among these different groups.

Table 1: Summary of Venues, Dates and Attendance at the 2009 Development Forums.

Region	Dates	Venue	Attendance
Momase	28-29 April	Auditorium DWU- MADANG	141
Highlands	5-6 May	Rabiamul Catholic Youth Hall- MOUNT HAGEN	235
New Guinea Islands	6-7 June	Uniting Church Hall – BUKA	
Southern	2-3 July	Wanigili Education Centre - ALOTAU	151
National Development Forum	5-7 August	State Function Room- Parliament House	398

Over 398 people participated in the National Development Forum over the three day period, comprising 118 from the private sector, 110 from NGOs, 71 from Government, and 26 from research institutions. Questions and discussion were held at the end of each session, as well as 90 minutes for group discussions in the final session of the first and second days. The recommendations from the Regional Forums were presented at the National Forum. On the third day of the NDF, two sessions were dedicated to covering the wide range of issues generated through six of the CIMC Sectoral Committees: agriculture and natural resources, commerce and services, transport and infrastructure, law and order, the informal economy, and family and sexual violence issues.

Both the complete set of presentations and recommendations will be made available online at www.inapng.com/cimc .

Key Findings & Recommendation Areas

The recommendations from the Forums and Sector Committees are divided into twenty-two groups (not in order of importance) and summarized as follows:

Area 1: Transport and Infrastructure

The feeder road systems in the districts have deteriorated to the point where they are so bad that the lives of the people are affected in all ways, including hampering the progress of agriculture development.

Recommendations:

- 1) Transport/Office of Rural Development or other appropriate government agencies to identify/fund selected pilot district roads projects (overseen by the CIMC Transport and Infrastructure Sectoral Committee);
- 2) Government to apply two toea from the existing six toea fuel levy collected by Internal Revenue Commission for rural roads improvement and maintenance;
- 3) Government to have 25% (or more) of the District Service Improvement Program (DSIP) fund locked in for district road maintenance annually;
- 4) Government to allocate additional funding through budget provisions to meet the required district road improvements and maintenance;
- 5) District Administrations to establish Road Maintenance Unit to be headed by an engineer of no less than Grade 14 level;
- 6) Government through appropriate legislation, in consultation with the PNG Institution of Engineers, establish compulsory three year national service of graduate engineers and the allied professionals to support and work in the District Administration;
- 7) The electricity industry should be given a significant boost to address problems associated with regular power blackouts. Open competition in the industry should be encouraged.

Area 2: Institutional Reform

The existing arrangement of agricultural institutions is uncoordinated, unaccountable and in many cases, ineffective in delivering research, extension, and supporting sector development, and countering sector threats such as cocoa pod borer, coffee berry borer and potato blight. There is no clear lead body or effective coordination with the private sector.

Recommendations:

- 1) The National Agriculture Council (NAC) to be made responsible for policies and programs;
- 2) NAC to be fully represented by respective government agencies, private sector stakeholders (large and smallholders), and gender;
- 3) Timely appointments to the NAC and commodity boards not at the sole discretion of the Minister but through clearly established and transparent processes;
- 4) Adequately resource NAC and research and development and other agricultural institutions;
- 5) Provincial divisions of agriculture and livestock become coordinated with the National Department of Agriculture and Livestock;

- 6) Improve organisation and institutional capacities (including improving employment conditions for specialized agricultural expertise) and linkages, including with community development centres;
- 7) Strengthen existing decentralised systems and institutions through capacity building of technical, human and other sectoral aspects of agriculture;
- 8) Review and rewrite the existing legal framework to suit changing agriculture environment and practice.

Area 3: Agricultural Extension Services

Government agricultural and livestock support services in Papua New Guinea have been failing to provide the extension services needed to support smallholder farmers, especially in more remote districts. This deterioration in services has been caused by staffing and budgetary constraints, as well as a deterioration of governance at the provincial, district and local levels, rendering the existing system of farmer extension support services ineffective. There is a severe information, knowledge and skills gap among farmers in the districts and villages.

Recommendations:

- 1) That government actively focus on public-private partnerships between government extension agencies, church, NGOs, private Service Providers, and industries to provide extension services;
- 2) Farmers Resource Centres be provided in each district (shared with other service provision, and run by government or NGOs accordingly);
- 3) Current Information and Extension Services for Agriculture be strengthened, through Government/non-government mechanisms, including through the reviving of valued publications like “Harvest”;
- 4) Government support telecommunication infrastructure, including DSIP/NADP funding, using a Public Private Partnership approach;
- 5) farmer to farmer networking be promoted and encouraged;
- 6) practical agricultural extension information be integrated into educational institution curriculum;
- 7) skills training be financed by government for all provinces, through use of a PPP model, such as the Smallholder Support Services Pilot Project (SSSPP).

Area 4: Public Private Partnership Arrangements in Agriculture

There are several successful models of PPP involving agriculture in PNG, e.g. agro-nucleus enterprises (such as New Britain Palm Oil and Pacific Spices on a smaller scale), Bris Kanda, Smallholder Support Service Pilot Project (SSSPP); North Fly Rubber Limited (a cooperative approach). These PPP arrangements are able to provide services to agricultural activities, sometimes more effectively than government alone (although it should be noted that some, to date, have secured little public funding contribution). The partnerships depend upon trust and involve provision of extension and training, materials, transport and marketing.

Recommendations:

- 1) Promote Public-Private Partnership arrangements clearly defining the role of each party in the implementation of project/services in the agriculture sector;

- 2) Provide incentives for PPP arrangements in agriculture;
- 3) Monitor PPPs in agriculture and encourage replication/share information of good models.

Area 5: Ensuring Quality

In an increasingly competitive global market, including for domestic markets (e.g. with imported fresh produce), quality and meeting consumer demand is critical. PNG's produce is often of an inconsistent quality and in some cases badly deteriorated before reaching market. Sometimes a bad market reputation is established early on, as with vanilla, with farmers over-eager to capture good prices. To break into new markets requires both adequate quantity and consistent quality of verifiable standards, including for niche markets which can collect premium prices.

Recommendations:

- 1) Clear advice must be provided demonstrating the quality standards and characteristics required by the market;
- 2) Efforts must be made to ensure that premiums for quality reach producers and provide good incentives for farmers;
- 3) Government and private sector should cooperate to ensure compliance with standards,;
- 4) A national body should be established to provide reliable national certification for organic and fair trade and related standards, consistent with international standards and working with existing international certification bodies (e.g. NASA, Rainforest Alliance, CERES etc).

Area 6: Production and Marketing

Marketing requires a very different set of skills from what most farmers have. It involve market knowledge, operating depots, transportation, shipping, cool rooms and cold chain management, and communication facilities. PNG produce is unable to readily reach markets owing to poor infrastructure and transport/telecommunication services and lack of suitable market and depot facilities. Local farmers and businesses face disadvantages when competing, notably with imported fresh produce. Concerns have also been expressed that foreign companies are undercutting with cheap low quality produce.

Recommendations:

- 1) That, subject to WTO rules, consideration be given to suitable interim restraints on imports of locally grown fruits and vegetables, in parallel with efforts to reduce the domestic impediments;
- 2) Government to support a scheme for farmer training on "business acumen", for farmers to be better able to produce and ensure consistent quantity and quality to meet domestic market demand through partnership with existing institutions, like the Fresh Produce Development Agency and the private sector;
- 3) Government to facilitate establishing more market facilities with incentives for Public Private Partnership arrangements;
- 4) Encourage more downstream processing in the country, including farmers seeking to value-add 20-30% of the total export volumes of major commodities and export them as finished products, not as raw materials.

5) That bodies, such as Bris Kanda, Alele Fresh Produce and spice operations, which assist farmers to find markets, facilitate training, and liaise with businesses, be promoted.

Area 7: Independent Management of NADP Funds

In all forums regional and national; the key stakeholders expressed their preference to have an independent and impartial organization manage the National Agriculture Development Program (NADP) funds. This preference stems from two fundamental perceptions and experiences. First, the lack of transparency and accountability including through the significant political influence in the NADP process and second; that the intention of establishing the National Agriculture Endowment Fund to attract all possible funding partners to pool resources for investment in the agriculture sector will only happen when a robust mechanism is put in place.

Recommendations:

- 1) That an independent and impartial management with experience in Grant Fund Management be put in place to manage the NADP Funds reporting to an accountable oversight body with wide representation (government, private sector and civil society) and integrity;
- 2) That a larger proportion of the NADP funds be given to the National Development Bank and other qualified financial institutions to administer loans.

Area 8: Depoliticize NADP

The allocation of National Agriculture Development Program (NADP) funds has so far been too discretionary and lacking transparency. The approval process is unduly controlled at the bureaucratic and ministerial levels.

Recommendations:

- 1) That political influence and interference in the management and disbursement of funds be minimized by removing the Minister's role in performing in the final selection of NADP projects;
- 2) That funds not be disbursed through DSIP trust accounts (which members control in practice);
- 3) That a review of the NADP management structure be undertaken to include setting up an oversight body that comprises of Government, Private Sector and Civil Society representatives.

Area 9: NADP Administration

Farmers and service providers are frustrated by the complicated application forms and lengthy process and are not able to access NADP funds. Many are not aware of the NADP policies and procedures, and want to be informed. In addition, people want to be informed in a timely manner, how the money is being spent.

Recommendations:

- 1) That the NADP Secretariat conduct awareness on National Agriculture Development Plan (2007-2016) and the Implementation Guidelines, and simplify the Processes and Procedures, with clear specification of responsibilities of recipients;

- 2) That all stages of the selection process be made available to the public (including details of applications and approvals);
- 3) That the time taken between lodging of project proposal to making a final decision on the application be reduced to a maximum of six months;
- 4) That a monitoring and evaluation framework to monitor the implementation of the NADP funded projects be put in place and lessons learnt shared;
- 5) That women be assisted to access the NADP allocation for women and the funds be quarantined and should accrue in the following year if not fully spent in the preceding year.

Area 10: NADP Provincial Allocation and Vetting

There was concern about the uneven distribution of funding to date from NADP between regions, categories and crops/commodities.

Recommendations:

- 1) That certain functions in the project screening and implementation of the NADP be decentralized to Provinces and Districts or to the Commodity Institutions to improve efficiency and effectiveness;
- 2) That a more equitable allocation and ceilings of NADP funds to each region be established based on needs and quality of proposals;
- 3) That regional committees be established for screening and approval of projects;
- 4) That the K200,000 per District for District Agriculture Extension Services be released to the NADP Trust Account and not the DSIP Trust Account;
- 5) That the role of the Joint District Planning & Budget Prioritization Committee in vetting and endorsing the projects at District level be reconsidered to minimize political interference, while ensuring consistency with provincial and district agriculture plans and avoiding duplication.

Area 11: NADP Funding

NADP funding has not increased sector funding by K100 million per annum because some of these funds were provided before hand, but under different budget titles.

Recommendations:

- 1) That an additional net allocation to the sector is required per annum to make a more substantial impact on agriculture development as long as the funds are managed transparently and effectively;
- 2) More funding should be considered for agriculture development and channelled through Provincial Government Accounting System (PGAS).

Area 12: Financial Services

Due to poor enabling infrastructure (transport, telecommunication, electricity) and law and order problems, banks are unwilling to locate branches or outlets in minor centres and rural areas. The decline in the number of banks branches throughout the country from about 300 to only a

fraction of this number, now provides evidence of this situation. As a result, farmers are unable to access financial services (loans, deposits, savings, payments) for their business.

Recommendations:

- 1) Government in partnership with other bodies improve rural infrastructure;
- 2) Government in partnership with other bodies including private sector improve law and order;
- 3) Government improve opportunities for cashless banking such as mobile banking;
- 4) Government encourage Micro-finance and extension services to help rural farmers improve their performance and expand their businesses; and
- 5) there should be open competition in the financial sector including with suitable oversight, to extend financial services into rural areas.

Area 13: Freight Subsidies

The high cost of transporting produce from remote areas, makes agriculture production unprofitable. A modest freight subsidy can enable production to be viable (and worthwhile for farmers to produce) for a variety of crops. Some level of subsidy has prevailed in the past to enable crop development from remote areas.

Recommendations:

- 1) That Government allocate funding from NADP and other funding sources for community water transport, shipping, road and air freight to be provided via commodity boards and other appropriate mechanisms on the basis that the funding is of a modest amount per kilogram of produce until economic prospects have improved.

Area 14: Tax Exemptions and Incentives

It was expressed that the rising costs of agricultural inputs is contributing to the declining production including from the smallholder sector. To encourage better returns and opportunities in agriculture, including value adding, higher quality and niche products, the Government needs to consider granting tax exemptions and incentives to key stakeholder in the agriculture sector.

Recommendations:

- 1) That Government exempt all imported Agriculture inputs (seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, packaging, tools and equipment including tractors) from duty. This should include equipment for agriculture transport and processing and
- 2) That Government to provide incentives/ bonuses for farmers meeting set production and quality output.

Area 15: Cooperatives

Regional forum positively regarded the establishment of cooperatives and the programs being run by the Department of Commerce and Industry. The forum noted the three different kind of cooperatives: Marketing, Consumer, and the Credit Cooperative which could be used as vehicles for agriculture development.

Recommendations:

1) More support is required to establish cooperatives in Management/Financial Training, board of directors training, member training, capital support, audit services, regulatory support and awareness about business roles/functions and benefits of cooperatives.

Area 16: Land Reform

Population pressure is growing, particularly in peri-urban areas with customary landowners fearing forfeiture of land and settlers having no tenure security for longer term investment. Whilst landowners can develop smallholder blocks it is also difficult for them to secure cattle or partnerships for larger scale projects. Abuse of land laws, including bogus or multiple land titles and special purpose leases without landowners' informed consent have been growing problems. Land issues are increasingly perceived as having a negative impact on agriculture development. Although recent reforms, including amendments to the *Lands* and *Land Group Incorporation Acts*, address land administration, disputes and voluntary customary land registration, and provide better safeguards and real opportunities for land owners who want to develop portions of their land with private developers, nevertheless many land owners are unaware of these reforms and correct processes. At present the land registrations are deemed too costly, due to the land registration functions being centralised at headquarters.

Recommendations:

- 1) the implementation of land legislation be decentralised to provinces whilst quality control is maintained at headquarters;
- 2) decentralized land functions, including land titling, be accompanied with equivalent resources;
- 3) the Government activates Provincial Physical Planning Boards and Provincial Land Boards;
- 4) the new voluntary registration laws should be delayed until the infrastructure/capacity to regulate it is in place;
- 5) The existing land titling offices must have integrity, efficiency, independence, accountability, and be kept quite separate from the Department of Lands, because the issue of credibility of titling is quite distinct from the issue of land policy;
- 6) The Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC) and the Environmental Law Centre (ELC) and other bodies should collaborate to address issues relating to land reform in the country; constructively;
- 7) Government facilitate new projects like New Britain Palm Oil (NBPOL) in other provinces to alleviate population pressures experienced in West New Britain Province, but only following proper processes, with responsible private partners/outgrower arrangements, whilst avoiding repeating past mistakes, triggering future land pressures/disputes in these new areas, and avoiding vast bogus logging projects disguised as agro-forestry or oil palm.

Area 17: Improvement of Lease-Leaseback Systems

The weaknesses in the existing land law and its misuse or abuse by the Ministry/Department of Lands and Physical Planning, relates to some existing lease lease-backs and the special purpose agriculture leases and might apply to the new lands legislation, if poorly applied and supervised.

Recommendations:

- 1) all new lease-leasebacks must be based upon proper land group incorporation, as required under the new legislation;
- 2) immediate action be taken to suspend the increasing abuse of customary land under vast special purpose leases (lacking proper informed landowner consent) through a challenge in the courts of their legality (under both prevailing lease-leaseback legislation and new requirements);
- 3) the State must attend to the inefficiencies within the existing land registration systems;
- 4) Investment Promotion Authority should be more cautious in registering companies claiming to develop major agricultural projects, but lacking agricultural experience, but IPA should also avoid rushing into deregistering companies found to have improperly acquired land to do business in the country. Rather it should allow those responsible to be brought to justice once such illegal land deals are exposed, as in the Collingwood Bay case;
- 5) All activities relating to land registration should be put on hold and a Commission of Inquiry be instituted to immediately inquire into all lands registered so far. Work should only resume after the Commission is satisfied that all laws have been complied with and all legal loopholes that may give rise to bad practices addressed;
- 6) A national land use plan be formulated, entailing extensive consultation, that clearly specifies land suitability and designation for different purposes (this should fundamentally recognise the rights and options available for resource owners)

Area Eighteen: Public – Private Sector Dialogue

The overall concern is to have a strategy to promote private sector development, improve dialogue and making processes more transparent and reduce the high costs/slow processing time which handicap business and investment.

Recommendations:

- 1) the National Working Group on Impediments to Business and Investment (NWGIBI) be the vehicle through which public-private dialogue and the implementation of the Private Sector Growth Strategy be driven, (coordinating other Government institutions and supported by and supporting other reform and coordination mechanisms);
- 2) the Acting Chief Secretary, Chairman of the NWGIBI, call for the reconvening of the National Working Group on Impediments to Business and Investment immediately.
- 3) take other appropriate measures to address impediments to business and investment, as identified in sources such as: - the INA survey (2007) and the World Bank's annual 'Doing Business' survey

Area Nineteen: Trade and Immigration

While there have been some improvements with work permits, there has been less progress with migration/visas, and there is strong concern over the organisational capacity to deal with the major increase in demand for work permits, visas, business registration and trade facilitation, and about the capacity of these agencies to enforce (in a timely manner) laws and regulations to do with the issuance of migration visas and work permits, clearance of cargo, and deportation of illegal foreigners in PNG.

Recommendations:

- 1) ensure that work permits/visas be issued only to those meeting the required language and employment qualifications/criteria;
- 2) update outdated laws (and penalties) foreign persons involved in illegal businesses and trans-national offences (especially in the face of new businesses, including casinos etc);
- 3) additional funding for the new Immigration and Citizenship Services Office, for the Work Permits Division of Department of Labour and Industrial Relations, and for One-Stop-Shop Service along with the Business Registration of IPA;
- 4) Government to consider merging the Migration and Foreign Employment functions, as the processes are duplicative and the skilled staff could be better utilised speeding processes and verifying compliance;
- 5) improve revenue collection, strengthen international trade, security, and achieve border integrity, by Government significantly increase resources to PNG Customs (combined with extra investment in port facilities to hasten port operations); and
- 6) apply fast tracking arrangements for consistently compliant business

Area Twenty: Minimum Wages Determination Implementation

There is a delay with the implementation of the MWD as exemption provisions are still being worked out. Government should refrain from gazetting/applying such decisions unless the procedures are in order for implementation.

Recommendations:

- 1) Government authorities to consider applying blanket exemptions or reduced minimum wage rates for industry sub-sectors or crops (rather than exemptions to individual businesses), as procedures for individual firms are likely to prove impractical, and adjusting these on a simple basis in relation to the price of commodities in the agriculture sector.

Area Twenty One: Law and Order

The law and order situation requires immediate action or all other potential gains will be jeopardized, as improving law and order is essential to laying the foundations of Papua New Guinea, including the re-establishment of investor confidence.

Recommendations:

- 1) Government to fully fund the operations of the National Anti-Corruption Alliance (NACA) through the annual budget beginning in 2010;
- 2) Government to provide funding in 2010 Budget specifically for Royal PNG Constabulary to implement the outstanding key recommendations of the Police Review Report of 2004;
- 3) Government to fast track the drafting of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, through the Department of Justice and Attorney General, in consultation with civil society.

Area Twenty Two: Family and Sexual Violence

The Child Welfare Council has been defunct since 2002 and was only revived in 2006 but no longer has budgetary support. The shortfall in the budget has had adverse impacts on very important components of welfare services: Honouree Welfares Officers, who used to act on behalf of the children who were in

conflict with the law, have been done away with; There are no funds to place abused children into foster homes. All the Welfare Services (counselling, court matters etc) are barely surviving.

Recommendations:

- 1) More Social Research is required to assess the impact of major development projects on women and children;
- 2) Create a Social Mobilisation Strategy on Population Control;
- 3) National Department of Health (and hospitals) should do away with the fee for Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence cases, and all children under the age of 18 should receive free health services;
- 4) Establish Welfare Officer positions at District and LLG levels.

CIMC Secretariat believes the recommendations are realistic, appropriate and achievable within a reasonable period of time; many should be applied promptly, some over a longer time-frame. Improvements would only be realised if they are acted upon by the Government and appropriate organisations.