

AUTONOMOUS REGION
OF BOUGAINVILLE
CIVIL SOCIETY
PARTNERSHIPS
POLICY
2023 – 2027



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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

The Autonomous Bougainville Government is committed to promoting sustainable development and human rights. To do so, our Government strives to ensure that our policies and programmes are well-designed to deliver benefits to all our people across the region. We aim to maximise the impact of our limited resources to ensure that no one is left behind, by harnessing the contribution of government and non-government stakeholders.

Experience has shown that partnering with civil society is an effective way to reach those most in need. The term “civil society” encompasses non-government organizations (NGOs), community groups, faith-based organizations, and international NGOs. Civil society organizations (CSOs) operate across our region, providing a range of essential services to local communities and often advocating on behalf of people and communities that lack a voice in government decision-making. They have valuable knowledge and expertise developed from working at the grassroots level to help the public. We are grateful for the time and effort they have dedicated to supporting Bougainville’s development and contributing to ensuring that our people can enjoy better, safer lives.

In recognition of the crucial role that CSOs play in our region, we have designed the first-ever Civil Society Partnerships Policy (2023-2027). It commits our government to systematically and proactively partnering with CSOs for the benefit of Bougainville’s sustainable development. The policy outlines six directives that provide a whole-of-government approach on how to most effectively leverage the value of civil society for the benefit of all our programs and activities.

It is my honor to endorse this policy and reaffirm our dedication to forging fruitful partnerships with civil society organizations throughout the region. Together, we can extend vital aid to those most in need and fine-tune our efforts to match the unique local priorities of the communities they serve. I extend a warm welcome to the invaluable contributions of CSOs and express my profound gratitude for their unwavering service to our people, which is integral to our preparations for regional independence.

HON MORRIS OPETI, MHR

MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AUTONOMOUS BOUGAINVILLE GOVERNMENT

SECRETARY'S STATEMENT

The Department for Community Development (DCD) is a key player in bridging the gap between the government's policies and programs and the communities it is committed to serving. Our mandate requires us to ensure that the voices of people across the region are heard and integrated into government decision-making, planning, budgeting, and program implementation processes.

To be effective, we must leverage all available resources, including those outside the government system. We recognize the invaluable contributions of civil society organizations (CSOs) across the region, many of which provide essential services to our communities, particularly those in outlying and isolated areas that are still challenging for the government to reach.

Given the vital role that Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) play in facilitating sustainable development, my department resolved to develop a Civil Society Partnerships Policy that would provide strategic guidance for government departments, including DCD, to more effectively engage with CSOs in collaborative partnerships that benefit our people.

To develop the aforementioned policy, our department conducted extensive consultations throughout the region across all districts from 2021 to 2022. Our team made a concerted effort to ensure that the voices of marginalized individuals, including young people and those with disabilities, were given due consideration.

The Civil Society Partnerships Policy (2023-2027) is the culmination of our efforts, and it is with pride that I present this document to the Government and the people. The Policy includes six Policy Directives, each of which is bolstered by a series of strategic actions that my Department is committed to executing. As part of our implementation strategy, we have committed to hiring a specialized Civil Society Coordinator, who will be based at DCD and oversee coordination between government levels and civil society organizations throughout the region.

I anticipate fostering closer and more collaborative ties between our Department and civil society organizations throughout Bougainville. I recognize the substantial value of the knowledge and expertise possessed by our CSO colleagues in guaranteeing that our work is effectively targeted and meets the needs of beneficiaries.

My Department is firmly committed to proactively engaging with civil society organizations (CSOs). I highly encourage CSOs to communicate and collaborate with officials in my Department, especially with our newly appointed Civil Society Coordinator. We strongly believe that developing better partnerships can improve the impact and effectiveness of our work, ultimately benefiting the lives of people across Bougainville. Together, we can make a positive difference and contribute significantly to improving the overall well-being of the region's people.

MS MANA KAKAROUTS

SECRETARY
DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ACRONYMS

ABG	Autonomous Bougainville Government
BPA	Bougainville Peace Agreement
BSDP	Bougainville Strategic Development Plan
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CIMC	Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCD	Department of Community Development
DPs	Development Partners
DNPM	Department of National Planning and Monitoring
FBOs	Faith Based Organisations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoPNG	Government of Papua New Guinea
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
PWDs	People With Disabilities

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The successful development of the Civil Society Partnership Policy was a result of a collaborative effort between the government and the community. This policy is the first of its kind in Bougainville and PNG. We would like to extend our gratitude to all the stakeholders in Buka, Kokopau, Mahari, Torokina, Kunua, Selau/Suir, Tinputz, Wakunai, Arawa, Kieta, Koromira, Panguna, Bana, Siwai, Buin, Atolls, and Nissan who provided valuable feedback during the consultations. We acknowledge that your contributions were vital in shaping the final policy, and we appreciate your efforts in ensuring that it meets the needs and expectations of the community.

We would like to express our gratitude to the ABG Department for Community Development Secretary, Mana Kakarouts, for her valuable contributions and support in the development of the Policy. We also acknowledge the hard work of the Partnerships Policy team of the Department, including Medley Koito, Desmond Ponpon, and Alex Nava, for their tireless efforts in facilitating the consultation workshops. Their commitment and dedication to engaging with the community have been instrumental in ensuring that their voices are heard, and their feedback is incorporated into the policy. Together, their collective efforts have helped to create a policy that is inclusive, equitable, and responsive to the needs of civil society organizations and the communities they serve.

We also would like to express gratitude to UN Women for providing technical support and the Government of Australia for their financial support towards the development of this policy. Their contributions made it possible to conduct the consultations, research and analysis necessary for the development of a robust policy framework that will guide the ABG's partnerships with civil society.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) is committed to achieving sustainable development for all people within the region, in line with Bougainville’s Constitutional Goals and Directives, the Bougainville Strategic Development Plan 2, GoPNG Vision 2050, the latest PNG Mid-Term Development Plan and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. To do this, the ABG is committed to engaging effectively with all of its partners to maximise the limited development resources it has at its disposal.

Advancing sustainable development and inclusive democracy through more effective and productive partnerships with civil society actors has been part of Bougainville’s trajectory since the endorsement of the Bougainville Peace Agreement in 2001, the enactment of Bougainville’s Constitution in 2004 and the establishment of the ABG in 2005. The current ABG recognizes that civil society organisations – whether they are registered non-government organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs) or international NGOs – have a critical role to play in Bougainville’s development.

Within the broader framework of “partnerships for development”, this Policy aims to guide the Government’s engagement with the civil society groups that work tirelessly across the region to provide services and support to the people of Bougainville. Bougainville Civil Society groups are critical partners in service delivery, as well as operating as advocates for the public interest and defenders of human rights. This Policy sets out a strategic roadmap to strengthen and improve civil society mobilization, partnerships and coordination at all levels throughout AROB.

The development of this Policy is in line with the ABG strategic objective of drawing down the remaining powers and functions from the Government of Papua New Guinea (GoPNG) in the context of AROB’s aspirations for self-determination. At the time of writing, the Policy is also aligned with the PNG National Development Cooperation Policy (NDCP), which sets out a range of objectives to improve development cooperation, including improving partnerships with civil society.

This Policy aims to provide the ABG with the means to create strategic and coordinated approaches for strengthening partnerships with civil society organizations, thus enabling them to play a more effective role in the development of Bougainville, and helping the region to achieve its development priorities. As such, the policy is designed to be directly aligned to the ABG’s current long-term vision, in the context of ongoing “Independence readiness” processes.

To develop the policy, consultations were conducted across Bougainville with key stakeholders. During the consultations, civil society and local communities expressed a range of concerns regarding civil society engagement by the Autonomous Bougainville Government, including limited information-sharing, poor coordination, and ad hoc engagement in service delivery activities. These concerns have led to poorly targeted development activities, duplication in the design and implementation of programs, failure of programs to align with ABG planning/ policy frameworks, and problems with civil society accountability and their ability to transparently manage programs for outcomes. In practice, the lack of proper coordination is also resulting in the unequal distribution of projects and benefits by targeting popular areas and recipients.

Through the Department of Community Development, the ABG’s mission is to work closely with civil society partners for the benefit of Bougainville. To achieve this goal, this policy outlines a framework for the ABG to establish more effective coordination structures and mechanisms that aim to strengthen partnerships between ABG departments and civil society. It will ensure that policies, programs, and activities implemented across Bougainville benefit from the expertise and knowledge within civil society, as well as the trust and networks they have with the communities and people of Bougainville.

To achieve the stated goal of this Policy, the DCD will drive efforts on behalf of the ABG to progress six interconnected Policy Directives, namely:

Attached to this policy are a results framework, 5-year workplan and budget that will be used to guide implementation led by DCD, in cooperation with ABG Departments, civil society and other interested stakeholders. The results framework will be used to guide the development of annual workplans and budgets.

The ABG is committed to harnessing the expertise, energy and commitment of all of its people. It is evident that civil society is an enormous resource, but its full potential has yet to be utilized effectively for the benefit of all Bougainvillians. This policy aims to bridge that gap by promoting more effective collaboration between the ABG and civil society. In the upcoming years, it is envisaged that they will work together to build a Bougainville that prioritizes sustainable development and inclusive democracy for all.

	POLICY DIRECTIVE 1	A legal framework facilitates better civil society coordination
	POLICY DIRECTIVE 2	DCD operates as a “one-stop-shop” for civil society partners to facilitate collaboration with government
	POLICY DIRECTIVE 3	ABG-Civil Society coordination mechanisms are operational at multiple levels of government
	POLICY DIRECTIVE 4	Local Civil Society Fund is operational to sustainably fund civil society support for service delivery
	POLICY DIRECTIVE 5	ABG supports capacity building opportunities for civil society partners
	POLICY DIRECTIVE 6	ABG raises awareness amongst communities of the role of civil society in Bougainville’s democracy and development

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. POLICY CONTEXT

In 2015, Papua New Guinea's inaugural National Development Cooperation Policy (NDCP) was launched as a step towards effectively guiding the Government of Papua New Guinea (GoPNG) in mobilizing, coordinating, managing, and delivering development cooperation resources. This policy is part of a broader effort to implement PNG's development strategies and plans. The NDCP was updated in 2018 and covered both international development partners and non-state actors.

In addition to the NDCP (2018-2022), the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) has developed two separate policies. The Bougainville Aid Management Policy will guide the government's engagement with development partners and donors, while the Bougainville Civil Society Partnerships Policy will guide the government's engagement with civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and faith-based organizations (FBOs). The private sector will be addressed separately as a critical partner in driving Bougainville's economy and supporting the government in delivering services.

1.2. POLICY RATIONALE

The ABG is currently progressing towards achieving the region's agenda on self-determination, as captured in the transitional "Independence readiness" timeline. As part of the effort to fully draw down the remaining powers from the GoPNG, the ABG is proactively progressing the development of its own policies and laws. This is in line with one of the core objectives of the Joint Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) on the Dispensation of Constitutional Requirements relating to the Process of Transfer of Functions and Powers pursuant to Section 295 of the National Constitution (known as the "Sharp Agreement"), which was agreed in May 2021. This Policy is one of the policies identified as a priority to ensure the ABG is well-positioned to efficiently work with partners as it moves forward.

This policy also elaborates on one of the pillars of the President's Six-Point Strategy, which was announced in August 2021. The Six-Point Strategy includes Pillar 5 on "Mobilizing the Private sector and Civil Society". Under that Pillar, the Government committed to "empowering the private sector and civil society to be active members in developing Bougainville forward at all levels"¹ The Six-Point Strategy sets out the strategic direction that all ABG Departments must follow; all Departments must realign their strategic plans and policy processes to reflect the current political context of nation building, which this Policy aims to do.

As part of the ABG's Independence Readiness plans and processes, the ABG DCD has prioritized the development and review of six policies in 2022. These policies, including the Civil Society Partnerships Policy, set out a road map for achieving effective, accountable, and transparent delivery of community development services in Bougainville. The six policies are directly aligned with the major mandated functions of the Department, namely Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Youth Development and Empowerment, Sports Development, Support for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly, Arts Culture & Music, and Partnerships with CSOs, NGOs, and Churches.

1.3. POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

DCD is the lead government agency facilitating the process of developing the Civil Society Partnerships Policy, with logistics and technical support provided through a partnership with the UN Women.² This policy is grounded in the interests and needs of the people, with the aim of achieving effective, reliable, and sustainable service delivery through viable partnerships.

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/AutonomousBougainvilleGovernment/posts/news-president-toroamas-response-speech-to-pm-marapes-welcome-remarks1-prime-min/2601443086744823/>

² Funding for the policy development process is provided by the Australian High Commission through the UN Women under the DFAT Bougainville Partnership Program.

This Policy has been developed in close consultation with civil society representatives and communities throughout the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (AROB). The process began in November 2021 with a preliminary needs analysis consultation conducted with key stakeholders in Buka. Subsequently, a series of additional consultations were held in all 13 districts across AROB, to ensure that the unique challenges and needs of the different regions were identified and addressed. Final validation consultations were then organized in each regional urban center to review and finalize the Policy.

1.4. SCOPE FOR APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

The PNG Development Cooperation Policy (2018-22) describes civil society as encompassing “function organizations and institutions established mainly out of civil societies which are therefore neither part of the Government system nor the private sector yet claims the support of and therefore expresses the will of the citizens. The broader term “civil society organisation” includes non-government organizations, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations”.

This Policy applies to civil society organisations, which includes the following types of organisations:

- > **Community based organisations (CBOs)** – refers to community groups that work within Bougainville, usually at the very local levels, and which are dedicated to some kind of charitable or non-profit purpose. A key characteristic of CBOs is that they can mobilize communities by expressing demands, organizing and implementing participatory processes, accessing external development services, and sharing benefits among members. They have a wide range of functions that encompass activities relating to economic, social, religious, and even recreational issues. They will often rely heavily on volunteers and usually work in a targeted geographic area.
- > **NGOs** – refers to a non-governmental organization and is a non-profit organization that operates independently from any government and is typically formed to address social or political issues. NGOs can operate on a local, national or international level and can be focused on a wide range of issues, such as human rights, environmental protection, health, education, and poverty alleviation. They often rely on funding from donations, grants or partnerships with governments or other organizations..
- > **International NGOs (INGOs)** – refers to NGOs that operate globally and have a mission to address a particular social or environmental issue. They are typically independent of government control and are often funded through donations. International NGOs may have offices or operations in multiple countries and work with local partners to implement their programs and initiatives. They often work in collaboration with other organizations to achieve their objectives.
- > **Faith-based organisations (FBOs) / churches** – Faith-based organizations (FBOs) are entities that are founded on religious or faith-based beliefs and principles. They are typically non-profit organizations that work to serve the needs of their communities in various ways. FBOs are an important part of civil society and can play a significant role in promoting social justice, human rights, and sustainable development. In Bougainville, Christianity is the predominant religion and as a result, the majority of religious organizations that the ABG will partner with are churches. Therefore, while the term "faith-based" is used to refer to a broad range of religious organizations, in the Bougainville context, the term "churches" is often used interchangeably with "faith-based organizations."

2. SITUATION ANALYSIS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

2.1. BOUGAINVILLE LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

The Bougainville Strategic Development Plan 2018-2022 (BSDP-1) emphasises the ABG’s priorities for development. Under the vision of, “a united, safe, peaceful, healthy, educated, resilient and prosperous Bougainville that promotes respect, trust, moral, Christian and our cultural values and recognises the identity and rights of our people”, it expands a set of strategies and activities. At present, while drafting this Civil Society Partnerships Policy, BSDP-1 is undergoing a review. ABG has pledged to establish a revised five-year development plan called BSDP-2. It is recommended that this Policy be read in conjunction with the new BSDP-2.

The current BSDP-1 includes a section on partnerships but focuses primarily on the role of development partners. NGOs are mentioned only as part of sectoral policy discussions throughout the BSDP-1. Specifically, the BSDP-1 recognises the importance of “collaboration with the private sector and NGOs [to] expand employment opportunities” (p.22), the role of NGOs in supporting service delivery in the education sector (p.23) and the health sector (p.25), the value of partnering with NGOs and churches in strengthening the capacities of sporting agencies (p.26) and the role of churches and NGOs in providing safe houses for women and children (p.56).

This Policy should also be read alongside the other policies that were under development by the ABG DCD at the time of writing, which aim to guide how the DCD and ABG progress the following areas: (i) the needs of women and girls, captured by the ABG Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Policy; (ii) the needs of young men and women, captured by the ABG Youth Development and Empowerment Policy; (iii) the needs of people with disabilities, as articulated in the Bougainville Disabilities Policy (2021-2030);³ and (iv) the needs of the elderly.

2.2. GOPNG LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Vision 2050 is the framework of the Papua New Guinea Government for a long-term strategy that maps out the future direction for the country. It acknowledges the role of civil society, especially churches who are the key civil society actors across the country, as partners in national development, specifically in the delivery of health and education in remote areas of the country.

It is a mandatory requirement that CSOs are legally registered to operate in the country.⁴ The Investment Promotion Authority is the national government agency responsible for overseeing this. Civil society in PNG encompasses both incorporated and unincorporated associations, as well as membership-based and non-member based organizations. The Association Incorporation Act 1966 is the principal legislation that applies to CSOs in PNG. Under this law, a CSO can become an incorporated association if it fulfills certain criteria, such as promoting an objective that is ‘useful to the community’ and being non-profit (prohibiting the distribution of profits to members). Organizations must go through several steps in order to register, such as holding a meeting, preparing a notice for registrar, lodging and submitting the notice and then lodging an application with accompanying documentation.

The PNG National Development Cooperation Framework (NDCP) specifically recognizes that the Department of National Planning and Monitoring will “continue to lead and forge partnerships with international and national partners including... Civil Society Organizations (which include Community-Based Organizations, Faith Based Organizations and Non-Government Organizations” (p.3). The NDCP calls for annual dialogues with CSOs (see Figure 1 below).

3 http://www.ngbvs.gov.pg/_files/ugd/7f0c06_31cf15ec23ac4a3f8aeaff54e3b44b30.pdf?index=true

4 <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/file/83757/download?token=Lr6vQ08M>

The NDCP specifically states that:

CSOs will engage with GoPNG and relevant DPs through regular dialogue and consultation with the Department for Community Development, Church and Religion and the Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council (CIMC) process. CSOs will also serve as domestic and international advocates for development and aid effectiveness, stimulate public debate and improve understanding on these issues amongst stakeholders.

Figure 1: Dialogue mechanism between GOPNG & Development Partners

LEVEL	DIALOGUE MECHANISM	FREQUENCY			
NATIONAL LEVEL COORDINATION	<p>HIGH LEVEL FORUM GOVERNMENT OF PNG AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Meets annually bringing together GoPNG, DPs, Private Sector, Philanthropic Agencies, C50s > National Development priorities, progress, challenges and financing > Development Cooperation financing, achievements, challenges > Feedback from the policy/sectoral/technical level dialogues and consultation processes 	ANNUALLY			
	<p>POLICY LEVEL DIALOGUE</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p>Bilateral Aid Talks/Portfolio Reviews: GoPNG and Respective Development Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Usually on an annual basis > Country Partnership Strategies and Alignment > Aid Investment performance against MTDP3 </td> <td> <p>GoPNG and Private Sector Development Forum (annually)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Usually on an annual basis > Providing policy advice and progress on private sector development and business aspects </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <p>GoPNG and Civil Society Organizations CSOs Forum (inclusive of Philanthropic Agencies)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Usually on an annual basis > CSO role in service delivery > Policy advice and progress of CSO support </td> <td> <p>Development Partners Round Table Meeting+DNPM(and relevant agencies of Government)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Usually on an annual basis > Present current development matters > Policy discussions </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Bilateral Aid Talks/Portfolio Reviews: GoPNG and Respective Development Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Usually on an annual basis > Country Partnership Strategies and Alignment > Aid Investment performance against MTDP3 	<p>GoPNG and Private Sector Development Forum (annually)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Usually on an annual basis > Providing policy advice and progress on private sector development and business aspects 	<p>GoPNG and Civil Society Organizations CSOs Forum (inclusive of Philanthropic Agencies)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Usually on an annual basis > CSO role in service delivery > Policy advice and progress of CSO support 	<p>Development Partners Round Table Meeting+DNPM(and relevant agencies of Government)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Usually on an annual basis > Present current development matters > Policy discussions
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<p>GoPNG and Civil Society Organizations CSOs Forum (inclusive of Philanthropic Agencies)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Usually on an annual basis > CSO role in service delivery > Policy advice and progress of CSO support 	<p>Development Partners Round Table Meeting+DNPM(and relevant agencies of Government)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Usually on an annual basis > Present current development matters > Policy discussions 				
DEVELOPMENT PARTNER COORDINATION					

Under Strategy 2b, the NDCP also states that “CSOs and private sector partners are encouraged to develop and implement exit strategies that ensure the continued ownership, utilisation, and maintenance of development cooperation achievements by stakeholders and beneficiaries.” Of relevance to the ABG, Strategy 3a of the NDCP also requires that:

All development cooperation programmes and projects implemented at the subnational level shall be directed through relevant Provincial Administrations and District Development Authorities (DDA) for improved coordination and communication between sub-national level governments, relevant implementing agencies and the DNPM.

In addition, the GoPNG and the Christian Churches signed the Partnership Policy Framework for Service Delivery in 2010. The implementation of this partnership framework remains a challenge.⁵

At the time of writing, there is no current PNG national gender equality policy as the previous Policy expired at the end of 2015. The PNG National Policy on Disability (2015-2025) recognizes the role of civil society in service delivery for PWDs (see Figure 1). It also establishes coordination mechanisms, which should include representatives from the ABG and AROB civil society. The PNG National Youth Policy (2020-2030) recognizes that “Many CSOs, NGOs, and Churches have contributed very constructively towards advancing the needs of our youth population.” The Policy specifically recognizes that “District Community Development Centre’s (DCDC’s) being spearheaded by the Department for Community Development and Religion will be used to leverage the National Youth Development Authority’s partnership with Churches, NGOs and CSOs and other government Agencies” (p.27). The Policy prioritises the collection of baseline data relating to which civil society organisations are working where and on what activities, in order to improve coordination and impact.

2.3. KEY ISSUES

Recent analysis of civil society in PNG found that:

Civil society’s engagement with the government remains limited especially in remote or rural areas, where there is little government presence. Nevertheless, civil society and the government do interact through a number of forums like the Government of Papua New Guinea and Development Partners Forum on Gender and Human Rights... Civil society capacity in PNG is strong on service delivery at the local level but weak on research and advocacy at the national level. The proliferation of service-delivery organizations, particularly faith-based ones, compared with the smaller number of individual or collective rights advocacy groups, demonstrates this pattern. PNG’s civil society is also characterized by weak governance, limited management capability and minimal collaboration and networking with other sectors. Poor communications, transportation difficulties and limited financial resources also inhibit civil society capacity in PNG.⁶

The Community Justice Liaison Unit, National Council of Women (along with the provincial councils of women), National Advisory Council on Disability, National Youth Commission, and the provincial AIDS councils are all government entities that coordinate engagement with civil society. However, some of these coordinating bodies have been criticized for failing to translate policy into practice, having inadequate resources, lacking transparency or an effective mandate, and for availing themselves of scarce resources that might have been better utilized at the grassroots level.⁷

This analysis of PNG civil society largely reflects the experiences of civil society in Bougainville. Government officials have raised concerns that there are no regulatory measures within Bougainville for screening or monitoring the impact of NGO programs, which they believe has impacted on their ability to guide civil society and ensure that their activities complement the work of Government. However, some have raised concerns that attempts to tightly regulate the work of NGOs and introduce an “NGO approval process” could lead to the government becoming a gatekeeper over the work of NGOs, which could potentially undermine the rights of free speech and assembly.

5 <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/file/83757/download?token=Lr6vQ08M>

6 <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/file/83757/download?token=Lr6vQ08M>

7 <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/173264/csb-papua-new-guinea.pdf>

During consultations for the development of this Policy, civil society highlighted weak communication channels between the ABG and civil society, as well as a lack of information about possible grants and support for capacity development. While the ABG views Bougainville civil society as playing a key and valuable role in service delivery, concerns were raised about a lack of planning structures and processes to link strategic development plans to service delivery processes, including those supported by civil society. Additionally, some civil society groups were found to not follow government administration processes at both regional and community government levels when implementing service delivery activities, which can result in duplication of efforts and wasted resources. There were also particular concerns that INGOs often work in Bougainville without consulting the Government and other relevant local stakeholders, which can lead to duplication of efforts.

There are no overarching agreements signed between the government and civil society, and the Department of Community Development (DCD) has raised concerns that civil society groups do not share their work programs with them for feedback, which can result in duplication. Moreover, there is no overarching system or database whereby DCD can assist and oversee the coordination of different interventions implemented by various civil society actors across Bougainville to obtain a better understanding of the thematic and geographic areas and demographics being targeted, development goals achieved, and how their work links up with the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) and other development partners.

At the project level, concerns were raised regarding the unequal distribution of programs and benefits across the region and a lack of sustainability for the work carried out by civil society actors. Most civil society organizations depend on external donor funding, meaning that donor priorities may impact where and how much funding is allocated to certain geographic locations and issues. The ABG itself has limited funding, and the DCD, responsible for managing civil society partnerships, has no specific funding to support civil society development or skills training. Local civil society often negotiates funding from external partners with little reference back to the

ABG, DCD, and/or Community Governments, and it is not always clear that donors require civil society to align their programs with the Bougainville Strategic Development Plan 1 (BSDP-1), sectoral/departmental policies, or Community Government plans and priorities. Some stakeholders also suggested that communities and beneficiaries themselves are not always properly consulted by civil society, and no community needs assessments are produced by the ABG (either by DCD or Community Governments) to help guide civil society interventions.

There were concerns raised about the weak administration and limited internal accountability and transparency of many civil society groups, which was viewed as a broader "good governance" challenge. Some even raised concerns about corruption by civil society staff when delivering projects. Civil society groups often rely on volunteers and/or staff who may not have sufficient education or experience in project or financial management, leading to challenges in administering government or donor grants. This is especially challenging for groups operating outside of Buka and Arawa, where it may be more difficult to recruit and retain highly qualified staff. Some stakeholders also raised concerns that locals involved in projects often do not receive proper compensation for their participation in development activities, such as trainings or meetings. On the other hand some stakeholders expressed concerns that requests to be paid to attend trainings or participate in development activities undermines the principles of sustainable development and the idea that community members should be invested and motivated to participate in their own development. Officials were concerned that, when compensation is provided, it often varies greatly, with different partners providing very different levels of per diem or daily stipends. There was a suggestion to systematize such payments.

3. STRATEGIC POLICY GOALS & PRINCIPLES

3.1. GOAL

The aim of this Policy is to enhance coordination among civil society partners and the ABG to effectively utilize the energy and efforts of civil society for supporting sustainable development and reliable service delivery across Bougainville by reinforcing partnerships.

3.2. MISSION STATEMENT

The ABG is committed to working closely with civil society partners for the benefit of Bougainville. To achieve this, the ABG will implement more effective coordination structures and mechanisms specifically aimed at strengthening the partnerships between ABG Departments and civil society, under the leadership of DCD. This will ensure that the policies, programmes and activities align with the development priorities of the ABG, are sustainable and focus on the needs of the people.

3.3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Implementation of this Policy will be guided by the following overarching principles:

- > **Prioritise a whole-of-government, multi-stakeholder approach:** The Department for Community Development (DCD) will lead the ABG's efforts in overseeing the implementation of this Policy. However, it is the responsibility of all ABG departments and civil society organizations to ensure that they are guided by and implement the objectives and strategies outlined in this policy. The ABG acknowledges the value of civil society in achieving its development goals and encourages all government departments to actively engage with relevant civil society partners, leveraging their expertise, networks, and service delivery capacities in line with this policy.
- > **Respect for cultural values:** All civil society stakeholders are expected to uphold the cultural values of Bougainville society in addition to the human rights enshrined in the Constitution's Bill of Rights and the treaties that PNG and the ABG have committed to. International NGOs and development partners are specifically urged to be conscious of local cultural values and traditional practices when interacting with communities.

- > **Respect for local authorities:** Bougainville's development is driven by the ABG and Members of the Bougainville House of Representatives, in collaboration with Community Governments, all of whom are the elected leaders of Bougainville. It is essential that civil society actors, including INGOs, show respect for the role of local authorities in setting out policy frameworks that guide other development interventions. They should make every effort to coordinate and partner with local authorities, whenever possible and appropriate.
- > **Avoid duplication and respect local civil society expertise:** All civil society stakeholders, particularly international NGOs, are encouraged to coordinate their activities more effectively with government partners at all levels, as well as with other civil society actors working on the same issues and/or in the same geographic space. This is essential to ensure that resources are used efficiently. International NGOs are also requested to recognize the expertise of local government officials and civil society actors.
- > **Promote inclusivity and respect for rights:** The ABG prioritises inclusive, rights-based approaches to development. Civil society is expected to respect these priorities by ensuring their activities are inclusive of women, young people, people with disabilities, people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity, disadvantaged communities, and other marginalized groups.
- > **Design and implement for sustainability:** Past experience has shown that many civil society development activities tend to be ad hoc and heavily reliant on external funding for success. The ABG urges civil society organizations to design activities that can be made sustainable over time, by aligning them with Bougainville's development priorities, ensuring they are needs-based, and locally owned by beneficiaries. Ad hoc interventions should be avoided, and donors are encouraged to support civil society partners in considering sustainability throughout the development project cycle.

4. KEY POLICY DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITY OUTCOME AREAS



POLICY DIRECTIVE 1 – LEGAL FRAMEWORK FACILITATES BETTER CIVIL SOCIETY COORDINATION

During the consultations for this Policy, concerns were raised by officials and local stakeholders regarding the lack of coordination between the ABG and civil society, particularly by international and local NGOs supported by external donor funding. This lack of coordination results in duplication of efforts, wastage of resources, and undermines sustainable development.

To address the lack of coordination between the ABG and civil society, particularly international and locally-based NGOs receiving external funding, the ABG is considering the development of a specific ABG law governing civil society. This law would promote coordination, accountability, and transparency, while balancing the rights to free speech and association. The GoPNG already requires NGOs to register with the Investment Protection Authority, but the National Development Cooperation Policy's envisaged registration system is not operational for NGOs and INGOs operating within Bougainville. There is no database or system to track which NGOs are operational within AROB, and any Bougainville-specific registration scheme will need to have clear, impartial criteria. Development of a new law or registration scheme will only occur after extensive discussion and consultation with civil society across Bougainville and with INGOs to ensure it reflects the operating context and does not unfairly restrict civil society's work. Civil society plays a vital role in promoting human rights, democracy, and good governance, and any effort to regulate or limit their work must be done with utmost care and respect for their independence and autonomy.

STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

1. New legislation enacted to promote ABG-civil society coordination
 - > Consultant recruited to consult with government and civil society partners to produce an in-depth assessment of current approaches to civil society coordination in Bougainville and issues related to registration of civil society, including providing recommendations;
 - > Workshop organized to discuss the assessment and recommendations and provide guidance on next steps, including draft legislation or regulations related to civil society coordination;
 - > Consultant recruited to work with the ABG Justice Department to produce a draft Partnerships Bill, reflecting the principles and approaches in this Policy;
 - > 1-2 validation workshops undertaken with Civil Society partners to review and improve the draft Partnerships Bill;
 - > 1-2 briefing meetings organized for Members of Parliament on the proposed Bill;
 - > Once the Bill is passed, briefings provided to civil society partners on the new legislation, including special induction for International NGOs on their special obligations;
 - > Once the Bill is passed, new NGO/CSO registration forms are developed, as necessary.



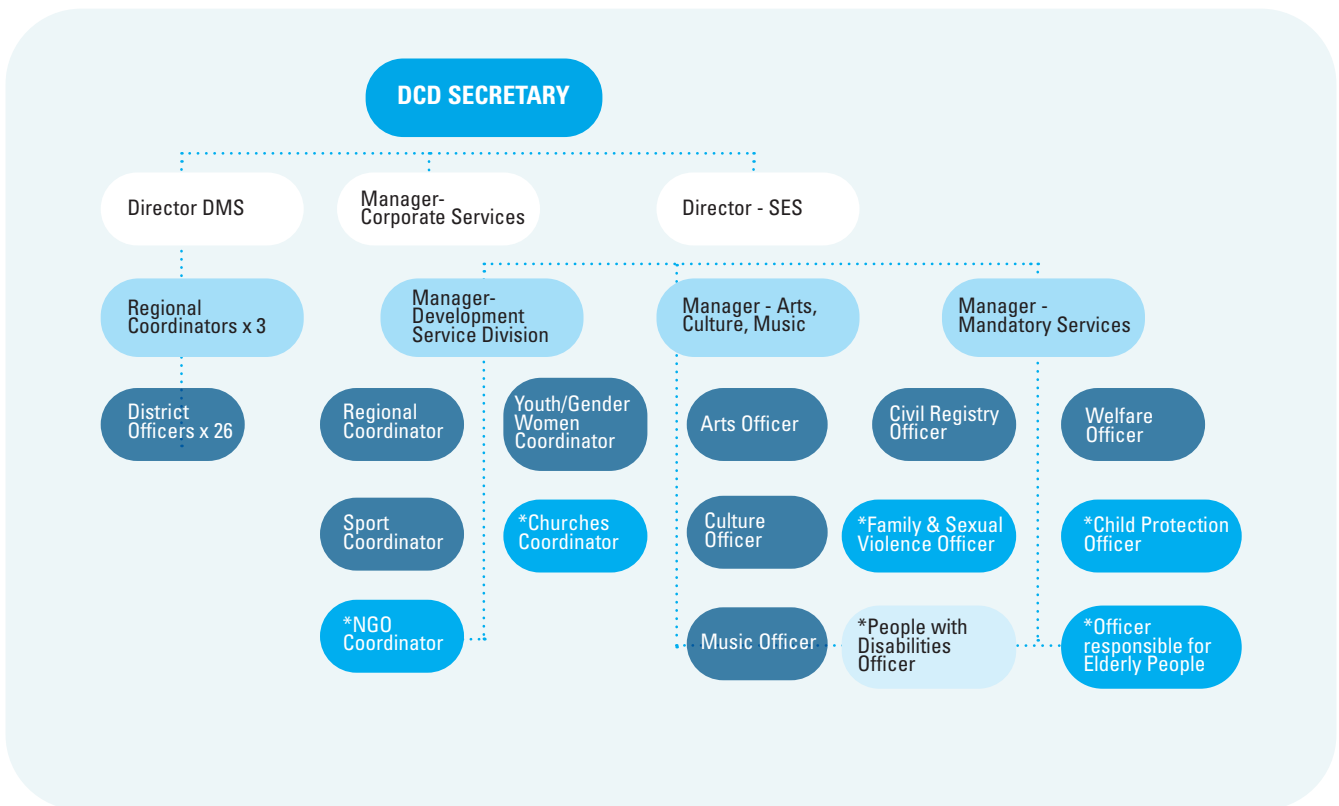
POLICY DIRECTIVE 2 – DCD OPERATES AS A “ONE-STOP-SHOP” FOR CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERS TO FACILITATE COLLABORATION WITH GOVERNMENT

One of the biggest concerns raised by civil society during the consultations on this Policy was “ineffective or lack of communication and networking between the ABG, NGOs/CSOs and FBOs [which] can be seen as contributing factors to ineffective collaboration.”⁸ The lack of clear communication and coordination channels between the ABG and civil society groups has impeded two-way information sharing and undermined opportunities for partnerships for development. Civil society stakeholders were clear that there is a “need for government organizations and NGOs to foster collaborative working relations through sharing information relating to their respective plans and priorities, and with the target groups which

these plans and priorities are set to benefit. This can help in planning realistically to avoid duplication of programs and projects in the context of limited resources and funds.”⁹

To address the current ad hoc and/or poor communication between Government and civil society, the ABG is committed to strengthening the role of the DCD as an intermediary between ABG Departments and civil society groups. DCD already has two positions in their organogram dedicated to civil society coordination, namely an NGO Coordinator and a Churches Coordinator. These have been approved in the DCD establishment but have never been recruited. As an immediate first step, DCD will work with the Department of Personnel Management to merge these positions and create a single Civil Society Coordinator. This will save money and produce efficiencies for the Government and budget savings.

Figure 2: Current structure of Department for Community Development



8 Department for Community Development (2022) “ABG Partnerships Policy Consultations: Summary Report”.

9 Ibid.

The Civil Society Coordinator will work closely with the other officers within the DCD, many of whom also have responsibilities for working closely with civil society, to operate as a “One-Stop-Shop” supporting the implementation of the policy. The Civil Society Coordinator will act as the primary contact point for civil society inquiries and will work with colleagues within DCD to answer questions, provide advice, share information, and provide other relevant support to civil society groups upon request. The Civil Society Coordinator will also facilitate connections between civil society and ABG Departments by ensuring that civil society groups are connected to the right people in relevant sectors, depending on the activities they are planning to implement.

The Civil Society Coordinator will create a Civil Society Database to compile information about civil society organizations operating throughout Bougainville. This database will be used to facilitate more efficient communication efforts, leveraging cost-effective online approaches. Regular meetings will also serve as a platform for two-way information sharing, enhancing coordination among CSOs.

STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

1. Staff member recruited within DCD (to fill existing vacant NGO Coordinator position) and funded to operate as full-time Civil Society Coordinator
 - > DCD Civil Society Coordinator’s contact details uploaded on new webpage (see below);
 - > Signboard set up outside DCD premises providing contact details of key staff, including Civil Society Coordinator (email and phone);
 - > DCD and development partners work together to provide the Civil Society Coordinator with capacity development opportunities, including working with PNG counterparts, to understand and implement their designated role and responsibilities.
2. DCD works with the ABG ICT Office to create and maintain a webpage on ABG-Civil Society Partnerships
 - > DCD Civil Society Coordinator creates content for a new webpage on the ABG website for ABG-Civil Society Partnerships, including gathering and drafting content and collecting relevant core documents of importance to civil society partners;
3. DCD produces and maintains Bougainville Civil Society Database
 - > DCD Civil Society Coordinator works with the ABG ICT Office to upload and launch new ABG-Civil Society Partnerships webpage which will be uploaded on to the existing ABG website;
 - > DCD Civil Society Coordinator works with the ABG ICT Office to ensure the webpage is regularly updated with new resources, including news items shared by partners, project documents, programme updates and information about grants and calls for proposals.
4. DCD develops a Civil Society Community of Practice to share information
 - > DCD commissions a consultant to support the DCD Civil Society Coordinator to collect information about all of the civil society organisations working across Bougainville, including their name, contact details, geographic coverage and scope of services/work;
 - > The civil society information collected will be inputted into a database, that will be created and maintained with support from the ABG ICT Office, and kept updated by the DCD Civil Society Coordinator;
 - > Summary information about civil society organisations will be uploaded and maintained on the DCD Civil Society Partnerships webpage.
5. Drawing on the Civil Society Database of organisations and contacts, the DCD Civil Society Coordinator will establish and maintain a simple email list which will be used to communicate with civil society across the region;
 - > DCD Civil Society Coordinator will use the email list to regularly share relevant information about ABG initiatives, new policies or programmes, grant opportunities, etc;
 - > DCD Civil Society Coordinator will use the email network and in-person contacts to proactively collect stories from ABG departments and civil society partners about the work they are doing, including successes, lessons learned, any additional support required, etc;
 - > DCD Civil Society Coordinator will draw on his/her information collection to produce a quarterly newsletter which showcases good practice stories on ABG-Civil Society partnerships.



POLICY DIRECTIVE 3 – ABG- CIVIL SOCIETY COORDINATION MECHANISMS OPERATIONAL AT MULTIPLE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

During stakeholder consultations, it was observed that “lack of effective coordination mechanisms has been one major barrier in having identified priorities implemented. CSOs need to have a functional and viable coordination structure that enables them to provide required support towards the government in terms of realizing service delivery goals in Bougainville.... The ABG DCD as the responsible Agency through which this policy will be implemented will have to provide the required coordination responsibilities.”¹⁰ During discussions regarding coordination, concerns were also raised that “CSOs work within their own mandates that are rarely governed or related to government processes”, with questions asked about how civil society groups can be supported to better coordinate their work with the ABG’s own development priorities, particularly in sectors where the ABG wants to work with civil society as service delivery partners. Civil society groups also asked for better data to be made available to allow them to work more effectively with communities, to better design projects to meet their specific needs and to help them more effectively engage with Community Governments.

To address the challenges of coordination, the DCD will take the lead in systematically coordinating with civil society groups. It will establish and support a Civil Society Coordination Committee that will regularly convene to facilitate information exchange between ABG Departments and civil society groups, which will aid in improving program planning and implementation by all stakeholders. Additionally, DCD will help organize annual meetings in each of the three regions to bring officials and civil society together to discuss how they can work more effectively. The DCD will also collaborate with Community Governments to promote more systematic engagement of civil society within communities by facilitating regular meetings. This will ensure that civil society and government officials can better partner in the planning and implementation of activities.

As part of the effort to improve coordination, the DCD Civil Society Coordinator will support the Civil Society Coordination Committee in developing guidelines that standardize payments made to civil society

stakeholders for their participation in development activities. To promote sustainable development and foster self-reliance, the guidelines will discourage the distribution of "sitting allowances," which most development partners do not permit, and instead highlight the significance of training activities for the personal and professional growth of civil society stakeholders. The guidelines will underscore the importance of valuing the learning experience itself, rather than solely relying on financial compensation for attending. Any guideline should address the significant differences in per diems and stipends currently being paid by some partners, which can create confusion and disputes within the civil society sector.

STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

1. DCD and DCG jointly establish and run high-level Bougainville Civil Society Coordination Committee
 - > TOR for the Coordination Committee developed by DCD after consultations with other Government Departments, and CSOs. TOR includes list of proposed Committee members (which must be representative of civil society across the region by issues and by geography);
 - > Quarterly meetings organized by DCD Civil Society Coordinator and chaired by DCD Secretary, bringing together a core group of representative civil society partners, who will discuss high level, strategic issues related to strengthening ABG-Civil Society partnerships;
 - > Minutes of each meeting produced within 2 weeks. Minutes uploaded on the ABG Partnerships webpage and circulated to all ABG Departmental Heads for information as well as being circulated to CSOs via email, WhatsApp and other local networks.
2. DCD runs annual briefing meetings for civil society partners in each Bougainville region
 - > DCD organizes annual regional briefing meetings for civil society (total of 3 per year) to review the Policy priorities, discuss each regions’ development priorities and identify concrete ways for ABG departments, community governments and civil society to better coordinate;
 - > Minutes of each meeting produced within 2 weeks and uploaded on the ABG Partnerships webpage.

3. Community Governments to meet regularly with civil society partners to share information and identify opportunities for collaboration
 - > DCD Civil Society Coordinator works with partners to organise training for Community Government officials on the value of working more closely with CSOs;
 - > DCD Civil Society Coordinator engages with District Community Development Offices to encourage them to work with Community Governments to help them connect to local CSOs;
 - > Community Governments hold meetings with civil society partners in their area, which aim to share information, promote coordination and reduce duplication;
 - > Minutes of each meeting produced within 2 weeks and shared with DCD, who will then upload those Minutes on the ABG Partnerships webpage.
4. Draft and endorse a standardized payment guideline for civil society activities
 - > The DCD Civil Society Coordinator will consult with key ABG Departments (including Human Resources, Finance and Treasury), as well as civil society organisations and development partners to identify and document the issues relating to payments to civil society and community members to participate in development activities, including identifying the different rates being paid for different activities and produce a report with recommendations;
 - > The Report produced will be discussed with the Civil Society Coordination Committee, who will provide guidance on what should be included in a new guideline;
 - > The DCD Civil Society Coordinator will work with colleagues to develop a draft guideline which will set out a standardized incentive package for development activities;
 - > The draft guideline will be submitted to the Civil Society Coordination Committee for review, amendment and endorsement.



POLICY DIRECTIVE 4 – LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY FUND OPERATIONAL TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE LOCAL SERVICE DELIVERY

During the stakeholder consultations, concerns were raised that lack of coordination has resulted in civil society “implementing identical programs due to lack of effective collaboration and sharing of plans and priorities”¹¹ This is also partly due to challenges regarding funding. Civil society groups are frequently compelled to depend on funding from external donors, who have their own geographical and sectoral preferences. This often results in civil society groups “following the money” rather than being able to respond to the most pressing needs. To address this problem, civil society stakeholders suggested that “the government has to identify appropriate approaches towards linking NGOs/CSOs and FBOs in Bougainville through its funding and resource allocation mechanisms.”¹² ABG funding would enable civil society to address the most critical areas of need while also aligning with ABG development priorities. As noted earlier, the BSDP-1 specifically recognised the critical role of civil society in supporting service delivery in relation to health, education and family and sexual violence.

To support targeted civil society activities and sustainable funding, the DCD will advocate for the establishment of a Local Civil Society Fund by the ABG. This fund will be administered by the DCD to enable the ABG to more systematically work with civil society groups. Comparative good practice from around the world demonstrates that Government-established funds accessible to civil society groups can have a positive impact, particularly in providing critical services such as legal aid, GBV support services, and access to healthcare and education. As the ABG progresses towards Independence, it is crucial that it is well-equipped to harness the contributions of civil society towards achieving its sustainable development goals.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

1. New Local Civil Society Fund scoped and established, if/when endorsed by Government
 - > DCD partners with key ABG Departments (e.g. Finance & Treasury, Law & Justice, Community Government, Health, Education) to commission a scoping study on the establishment of a grant-based Local Civil Society Fund, which will include consultations with a range of government and non-government partners to identify the need, scope and processes pertaining to any possible Fund;
 - > Scoping study validated with Government and civil society stakeholders;
 - > If approved, new Local Civil Society Fund documentation (eg. staffing requirements and TORs, results framework, grant criteria, management and oversight protocols) and budget produced and approved by ABG Cabinet.
2. New Local Civil Society Fund operational and supporting civil society for results
 - > Staff recruited/seconded and trained to manage the Local Civil Society Fund;
 - > Awareness-raising seminars organized in all 3 regions to inform civil society about the objectives of the Fund and how to apply;
 - > Annual grants process managed by DCD and ABG departmental partners;
 - > Monitoring activities undertaken to ensure grants being effectively used;
 - > Regular audits undertaken of activities funded through the Civil Society Fund;
 - > Annual Local Civil Society Fund Report captures results, good practice and lessons learned.



POLICY DIRECTIVE 5 – ABG SUPPORTS CAPACITY BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERS

During stakeholder consultations for the policy, feedback indicated that “capacity building through skills development and training programs is vital for the progress of NGOs/CSOs/FBOs in Bougainville. Some lack proper organizational and management knowledge/capacity, making it difficult for them to work in collaboration with the government, CSOs and FBOs...Capacity building initiatives or needs can be either identified by individual NGOs/CSOs/FBOs or responsible organizations through consultative meetings or workshops.”¹³ An EU report also noted that “human resources are another area in which civil society’s capacity is limited and PNG’s civil society groups have a relatively limited capacity for networking and building coalitions. Consequently, CSOs tend to work in isolation from one another.”¹⁴

To strengthen Bougainville civil society and enable them to operate effectively and sustainably, it is crucial to enhance their skills, both in terms of internal administrative capabilities (such as proposal and report writing, and financial management) and sector-specific skills (like advocacy, service delivery, and technical knowledge). While it is not feasible for DCD to conduct skills-building training for civil society alone, as the ABG focal point for civil society, DCD holds the primary responsibility to collaborate with development partners (including the UN, donors, and INGOs) to identify existing training opportunities for civil society (including those provided by the GoPNG) and to develop and provide Bougainville-specific training wherever feasible. DCD should make every effort to ensure that training is equitably accessible throughout the region.

STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

1. DCD shares information about training opportunities with local civil society partners
 - > DCD proactively engages with relevant ABG Departments, PNG Departments and development partners to identify training needs and information about training opportunities;
 - > Training opportunities are circulated via the new DCD Partnerships newsletter on the webpage and through the CSO email network.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ <https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/file/83757/download?token=Lr6vQ08M>

2. DCD/ABG provides capacity development support to Civil Society partners
 - > DCD conducts an Annual Meeting with CSOs in alignment with the ABG annual planning process to identify CSO training priorities, using a simple survey or other data collection tool to systematically collect inputs;
 - > DCD works with development partners (including the UN, INGOs and donors) to develop and deliver a comprehensive package that addresses significant capacity gaps identified by up-to-date needs assessments. At a minimum, training should include:
 - > At least 2 trainings per year to local civil society partners to support them to more effectively design, manage and report on donor-funded Projects;
 - > At least 2 trainings per year on substantive topics of interest to Civil Society, such as economic development approaches, gender-based violence, gender mainstreaming, youth engagement, etc
 - > At least 1 training a year which strengthens Civil Society Organisation's ability to promote inclusiveness, with topics including youth engagement, gender equality and women's empowerment, integrating the needs of people with disabilities / elderly people, conflict management and consensus-building.



POLICY DIRECTIVE 6 – ABG RAISES AWARENESS AMONGST COMMUNITIES ON THE ROLE OF NGOS, FBOs AND INGOs IN BOUGAINVILLE'S DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

During the stakeholder consultations, civil society raised their concerns that the public often misunderstand their role, which can lead to unreasonable expectations, particularly concerning how much they are funded and how they are able to spend their funding. Stakeholders noted that “people in communities need to be aware of what programs and plans CSOs aim to implement in Bougainville. The need for managing community expectations associated with their involvement or hosting of a program can be attributed to this [lack of understanding of the role of CSOs]. This is especially pertaining to monetary payments (allowances). Community consultation and information sharing processes need to be clearly planned and implemented as a mechanism for responding to this barrier.”

To address possible confusion and misinformation regarding how civil society organisations work, what they are responsible for and what they can fund, this Policy commits the ABG to implementing a simple, cost-effective awareness raising programme which will be run across the whole of Bougainville, in partnership with civil society, the ABG Media Bureau, Community Governments (in their role as the officials working closest to local communities) and development partners. Simple multimedia materials will be produced, including radio programmes and Public Service Announcements. Every effort will be made to ensure messaging reaches people across the whole of Bougainville, including hard to reach areas.

STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

1. DCD implements a public awareness campaign on the role of NGOs, FBOs and INGOs in Bougainville
 - > DCD works with civil society, the ABG Media Bureau, Community Governments and development partners to design a radio campaign to help the public understand how the different types of civil society organisations – including NGOs, FBOs and INGOs – work with the ABG to support Bougainville's development goals;
 - > DCD designs and rolls out a simple “Civil Society Roadshow” around all three regions of ARoB to answer the public's questions about the role of Civil Society, in partnership with a representative group of CSOs;
 - > DCD produces simple materials (posters and brochures) in Tok Pisin about the role of Civil Society in ARoB development, including what they can and cannot do for the public.

5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

5.1. INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT

Driving the implementation of this policy and monitoring its progress is the responsibility of the ABG Department of Community Development, which has the overarching mandate to support civil society partnerships on behalf of the ABG.

As the lead agency for managing the ABG’s engagement with civil society, DCD will liaise closely with other ABG Departments, to support their efforts to more effectively work with civil society partners. In particular, the BSDP-1 recognised that civil society has a key role to play in providing services in relation to education, health and the response to family and sexual violence. As such, DCD will meet regularly with those relevant departments to discuss how they are engaging with civil society and to support them to more effectively reach out to relevant civil society groups.

5.2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CIVIL SOCIETY

This Policy aims to strengthen the partnership between the ABG and Civil Society Organisations operating in Bougainville, including NGOs, CBOs, FBOs and INGOs. To be effective, it requires the support of all of those stakeholders. The ABG calls on civil society organisations to work with the Government, in particular, the DCD, in a spirit of genuine cooperation and collaboration.

Where civil society groups (both domestic and international) intend to start new programming, they are encouraged to make contact with DCD, to share

their ideas and discuss how to most effectively align their activities with the BSDP-1 and other ABG sectoral development plans. Where civil society groups are implementing projects, they are encouraged to share their project implementation reports with DCD (subject to any confidentiality requirements in their own funding agreements) to enable DCD, and the ABG more broadly, to better understand their work and whether/how the ABG could better partner with them for greater impact. Any such reports could also be shared on the new ABG Civil Society webpage to facilitate improved information-sharing and coordination.

International NGOs have a special responsibility to ensure that they are engaging effectively with local Bougainville officials and with local civil society. Ideally, the role of INGOs is to work as a support partner to local stakeholders who will drive local development. This Policy recognizes that INGOs often bring much needed resources and expertise with them. At the same time, INGOs are encouraged to recognize that local partners should be at the forefront of their own development activities, and they should be consulted and involved at all stages of conceptualization, design, and delivery of development programming.

5.3. PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

In accordance with Policy Directive 4, DCD will be responsible for establishing a Local Civil Society Fund which will be used by the ABG to provide grants to local civil society groups to implement specific activities deemed to be a priority for the ABG. In support of those grants, DCD will work with relevant Departments to develop Partnership Agreements that set out the responsibilities of the civil society grantees, to make very clear what each party’s responsibilities are. These Partnership Agreements will be used to support monitoring for results.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Department for Community Development will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this Policy in accordance with the Results Framework attached at Annex 1.

To undertake robust monitoring, it will be important for the ABG to fund the establishment of a small, dedicated Civil Society Partnerships Unit (see Policy Directive 1) which will have funding available to undertake monitoring visits to the regions to assess the implementation of this Policy. The DCD will produce Annual Civil Society Partnership Reports which provide a simple update on implementation of this Policy. The draft of the Report will be tabled with the Bougainville Civil Society Coordination Committee (see Policy Directive 2) for their review and inputs.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

The ABG faces significant institutional risks in implementing this Policy, due to an ongoing lack of sufficient funding for ABG strategies and plans across the entire Government, and related limits on the staffing available for implementation and their levels of expertise. It is imperative that the ABG dedicates adequate funding and staffing resources to implement this Policy. Without proper staffing for a small, dedicated Civil Society Partnerships Unit, it is unlikely this Policy will achieve its objectives.

The ABG also faces notable political risks, most notably the impact of the post-Referendum process which is currently underway to address the final political status of Bougainville. To address these risks, this Policy has been designed to support “Independence readiness”, with a view to ensuring that Bougainville civil society is well-prepared and positioned to work as effective partners to the ABG in a post-Referendum context.

Bougainville is prone to natural disasters and the effects of climate change that affect the livelihood of many people each year. Climate change effects will continue to bring about an increase in frequency of natural disasters that in turn increases the likelihood of humanitarian crises. The impacts of these forecasted changes are significant. Tropical cyclones, floods, droughts, tsunamis, and sea-level rise are the main extreme events that Bougainville is likely to be affected by. These events could cause abrupt changes in policy and financial decisions, which could affect the implementation of this policy. When natural disasters occur in the region, ABG departments are encouraged to reach out to DCD to identify civil society partners who are well-placed to support the ABG's natural disaster response.

8. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK & ACTION PLAN

OUTPUT / BASELINE & INDICATORS / ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME 2023-2027					BUDGET	
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
POLICY DIRECTIVE 1 – A LEGAL FRAMEWORK FACILITATES BETTER CIVIL SOCIETY COORDINATION							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Baseline: IPA registration required for NGOs but not CBOs; IPA registration information not shared with ABG by IPA > Indicators: Participatory review of legal framework completed, recommendations made and discussed > Law or regulation developed and promulgated to better guide coordination of civil society activities in Bougainville 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Consultant recruited to consult with government and civil society partners to produce an in-depth assessment of current approaches to civil society coordination in Bougainville and issues related to registration of civil society, including providing recommendations > Workshop organized to discuss the assessment and recommendations and provide guidance on next steps, including draft legislation or regulations related to civil society coordination 	10,000 5,000	0	0	0	0	Consultant Workshop	15,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Consultant recruited to work with the ABG Justice Department to produce a draft Partnerships Bill, reflecting the principles and approaches in this Policy > 1-2 validation workshops undertaken with Civil Society partners to review and improve the draft Partnerships Bill > 1-2 briefing meetings organized for Members of Parliament on the proposed Bill 	0	20,000 10,000	0	0	0	Consultant Workshops	30,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Once the Bill is passed, briefings provided to civil society partners on the new legislation, including special induction for International NGOs on their special obligations; > Once the Bill is passed, new NGO/CSO registration forms are developed, as necessary 	0	5,000	0	0	0		5,000

OUTPUT / BASELINE & INDICATORS / ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME 2023-2027					BUDGET	
ACTIVITIES	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
POLICY DIRECTIVE 2 – DCD OPERATES AS A “ONE-STOP-SHOP” FOR CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERS TO FACILITATE COLLABORATION WITH GOVERNMENT							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Baseline: No coordination point for ABG to systematically engage with civil society. NGO Coordinator and Churches Coordinator positions approved but not recruited > Indicators: DCD Civil Society Coordinator position funded and recruited > Civil Society Database of contacts operational and updated > ABG Civil Society Coordination webpage created and maintained > Quarterly newsletter and regular emails shared with civil society, government and development partners 							
DCD NGO Coordinator funded and recruited	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	Staff	300,000
DCD works with consultant to collect and collate civil society contacts from across the country in an excel spreadsheet	30,000	0	0	0	0	Consultant Travel	30,000
DCD works with ABG ICT Office to develop a proper database to maintain civil society contacts and to upload it on to the ABG Civil Society webpage	0	20,000	0	0	0	Consultant Software	20,000
DCD Civil Society Coordinator uses email to share information with civil society contacts and to produce a simple quarterly newsletter shared with partners	X	X	X	X	X	No cost	0

OUTPUT / BASELINE & INDICATORS / ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME 2023-2027					BUDGET	
ACTIVITIES	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
POLICY DIRECTIVE 3 – ABG-CIVIL SOCIETY COORDINATION MECHANISMS ARE OPERATIONAL AT MULTIPLE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline: Coordination is very limited, with ad hoc engagement between Government Depts, Community Governments and civil society > Indicators: Civil Society Coordination Committee meets annually and provides guidance to CSOs and Government to improve coordination and partnerships > At least 10 Community Governments each year report back to the DCD Civil Society Coordinator that they have proactively met with civil society > At least 1 training per year organized for Community Governments to build their understanding of why and how to collaborate effectively with civil society 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > TOR for Coordination Committee finalised and agreed by DCD and DCG > Quarterly meetings organized to discuss high level, strategic issues related to strengthening ABG-Civil Society partnerships 	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	Travel & Meeting costs	50,000
Annual Regional Meetings organised by DCD to bring together govt officials and civil society to discuss priorities and coordination	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	Travel & Meeting costs	75,000
Community Governments organise meetings bring together govt officials and civil society to discuss priorities and coordination	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	DCD travel costs – CGs cover own costs	25,000

OUTPUT / BASELINE & INDICATORS / ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME 2023-2027					BUDGET	
ACTIVITIES	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
POLICY DIRECTIVE 4 – LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY FUND IS OPERATIONAL TO SUSTAINABLY FUND CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT FOR SERVICE DELIVERY							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Baseline: Ad hoc grants given to civil society to support service delivery in some contexts > Indicators: Local Civil Society Fund properly scoped and established, with proper governance mechanisms and funds from Government > Civil Society Grants allocated annually based on competitive, merit-based processes 							
Scoping study for Local Civil Society Fund undertaken and report produced, with consultations undertaken with key officials and CSO representatives	15,000	0	0	0	0	Travel and meeting costs	15,000
DCD Civil Society Coordinator works with government officials and Civil Society Coordination Committee to establish guidelines, governance arrangements and budget proposal for Local Civil Society Fund	0	0	0	0	0	Existing staff costs	0
Annual budget proposal for Local Civil Society Fund approved (minimum budget amount included here)	0	0	100,000	100,000	200,000	Civil Society Funds	400,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Awareness raising activities undertaken with civil society to explain the Civil Society Fund > Call for proposals is launched > DCD Civil Society Coordinator supports civil society to make proposals > ABG Selection Panel reviews proposals and civil society grants allocated based on merit based selection process 	0	0	10,000	5,000	5,000	Travel and meeting costs	20,000

OUTPUT / BASELINE & INDICATORS / ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME 2023-2027					BUDGET	
ACTIVITIES	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
POLICY DIRECTIVE 5 – ABG SUPPORTS CAPACITY BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERS							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Baseline: Ad hoc training and capacity development support provided to CSOs > Indicators: DCD Civil Society Coordinator regularly shares information about training opportunities with civil society email network, on webpage and via newsletter > Programme of capacity development training designed and delivered every year 							
DCD Civil Society Coordinator uses networking and does research to identify and share information about training opportunities	X	X	X	X	X	Existing staff cost	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > DCD Civil Society Coordinator works with INGOs and development partners to design and deliver capacity development programmes > At least 2 trainings/year to local CSOs to support them to more effectively design, manage and report on donor-funded Projects > At least 2 trainings/year on substantive topics, such as economic development approaches, gender-based violence, youth engagement, etc > At least 1 training/year to promote inclusiveness, on topics such as youth engagement, gender equality and women's empowerment, PWDs / elderly people, conflict management and consensus-building 	5,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	Training costs (experts, venue, etc)	85,000

OUTPUT / BASELINE & INDICATORS / ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME 2023-2027					BUDGET	
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
POLICY DIRECTIVE 6 – ABG RAISES AWARENESS AMONGST COMMUNITIES OF THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN BOUGAINVILLE’S DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Baseline: Communities have limited understanding of the specific role of NGOs, FBOs and INGOs in Bougainville’s development > Indicators: Community awareness increased on the role of civil society (based on evaluation forms given to communities after activities) 							
Radio campaign to help the public understand how Civil Society, FBOs, INGOs work with the ABG to support AROB’s development goals	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	Radio broadcast costs	50,000
DCD works with the Civil Society Coordination Committee to design and roll out a simple “Civil Society Roadshow” around all three regions of AROB to answer the public’s questions on the role of Civil Society, in partnership with a representative group of Civil Society Organisations	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	Travel, venue and showcases	75,000
DCD produces simple materials (posters and brochures) in Tok Pisin about the role of Civil Society in AROB development, including what they can and cannot do for the public	20,000	0	0	0	0	Design & publish materials	20,000
TOTAL	190,000	190,000	245,000	240,000	340,000		1,215,000

