



THE NATIONAL  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Terms of Reference

for

Bougainville Referendum Research  
Communication Strategy

May 2017

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Application Deadline:	26 <sup>th</sup> May
Consultancy Starting Date:	By Middle of June 2017 or soon after.
Expected Assignment Duration:	Four Months.

# 1. The Bougainville Referendum Research – Communication Strategy Background Information

## 1.1. *The Bougainville Referendum*

The people of Bougainville will vote in a Referendum before June 15 2020 to determine their political future; - a choice between whether Bougainville remains a part of Papua New Guinea under an Autonomous Governance Arrangement, or to become a fully Independent State, an option to be included in the Referendum.

This is an important milestone as part of a Peace Agreement reached in 2001 following a brutal Civil War between 1989 and 1999. The conflict was initially triggered by issues over redistribution over landowner benefits from the Bougainville Copper mine, then fuelled by long held secessionist sentiments mobilised into a civil war against PNG Government forces, that later flared into localised conflicts between different factions after the government forces withdrew and maintained a blockade around the islands of Bougainville. The war resulted in more than ten thousand persons estimated to have been killed and destruction of major infrastructure as well as social disruptions leaving half the population of Bougainville displaced.

Cessation of fighting in 1998 led to negotiations for a Peace Agreement. One of the key sticky points in the negotiations was a call by factions of the Bougainville delegation on a Referendum for Independence. This was finally agreed to, but deferred to a period after fifteen years following the establishment of an autonomous Bougainville Government but before the end of twenty years.

Reports and findings from recent studies done on Bougainville indicate a lack of general information about what is a Referendum and its purpose.

It is important that the people of Bougainville are clear about the purpose of the referendum, the choices available and the implications of their choice of a political future when they cast their vote.

The Referendum outcome also has implications for the wider PNG as it challenges the essence of the PNG Nation State for maintaining a unified country of a diversified people, yet ensuring that a peaceful outcome is achieved for Bougainville. It is therefore also critical for robust informed discussions that would lead to informed decisions and outcomes over Bougainville's future as well about autonomous governance arrangements in PNG.

## 1.2. *The PNG NRI Bougainville Referendum Research Project.*

The PNG National Research Institute as part of its work in researching and analysing strategic issues for national development, consider the Referendum and Bougainville to be of a significant national event that will impact the well-being of the people of Bougainville and the people of PNG. The PNG NRI therefore independently plans to undertake a set of research projects that will generate information to inform discussions in preparation for the referendum so that the outcome is credible and respected by all parties and ensuring a peaceful outcome for the people of Bougainville.

The PNG NRI research project proposes to inquire and inform stakeholders on three key central questions:

- What is a Referendum and why is it being held?
- How can the Referendum be effectively administered?

- What are possible outcomes and how can the outcome of the Referendum be effectively managed and implemented?

The PNG NRI plans to commission experts to conduct research on key topics identified from these questions and to communicate these findings to key stakeholders. They include the PNG and ABG government agencies and officials, the people of Bougainville and the wider PNG public. The intent is not only to inform, but to stimulate informed discussions.

The findings from the research reports will provide useful background information that can be used by various government agencies of the PNG and ABG governments, civic society groups and other stakeholders in the awareness work that they undertake with the people of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.

Furthermore, it is hoped that the work will also inform the wider PNG public on the Referendum issues as well as issues of autonomy, an issue on the agenda of many provinces in PNG.

One of the challenges will be for the development of an appropriate communications strategy to disseminate the findings in an appropriate manner to the wide range of stakeholders ranging from political leaders and policy makers to the simple ordinary villager.

The effective communication of research information generated by the commissioned studies is critical. The PNG NRI has established communication systems and protocols where research information through platforms such as policy briefs for decision makers, issues papers, spotlight articles, workshops and seminars for focused groups and stakeholders. The ABG Government and other parties on AROB have also developed systems that will need to be identified and connected to assist in dissemination and discussions.

Support will need to be provided to relevant authorities and organisations to package information from the studies in order to target a wide range of audiences on Bougainville using different platforms such as materials for secondary school students.

### **1.3. Communication Strategy and Issues**

There are specific challenges for communicating the information generated from the Bougainville Research project.

First, the information communicated is expected to not only inform, but for that information to be used in promoting discussions among members of the community about the type of society and the future they want.

Bougainville remains a fragile community, where the peace process is gradually helping people to reconcile and live in harmony. However, the Referendum is going to force people to debate and discuss views and positions on the future of Bougainville. Carefully thought out strategies and planning is therefore needed to decide how information is packaged and presented to the community. What are the areas to be mindful of when communicating difficult and complex issues to a fragile community? Understanding how these have been managed in other situations would be useful.

Second, the fragility of the situation will be worsened if the differing positions among the various interest groups, including the PNG Government and the ABG Government, are not managed responsibly. Attempts to control information flow and influence particular views and positions will not be healthy. Guidelines must be developed and adhered to that promote the dissemination of balanced information that gives individuals adequate information to discuss and make up their own minds about particular positions.

There must be strong political leadership to inform and promote responsible discussions and leadership to enable the acceptance of differences and accept the outcome of a Referendum.

Political leaders will also play the important role of leading the implementation of whatever outcome the people of Bougainville choose through the Referendum.

The communication strategy will include a component on understanding problems and issues with communicating information on difficult and potentially divisive subjects in a fragile situation like Bougainville. The experiences of other countries combined with the PNG ways of doing things will assist in development of an effective communication strategy both for the PNG Referendum Research Information as well as informing other parties involved in the Referendum preparations.

This document and information will be used to inform other key players and stakeholders involved in communicating information and facilitating discussions about the Referendum on Bougainville so that important protocols and risk aversion strategies are adopted. The key stakeholders include:

- Members of the PNG Media Council.
- Political Leaders and Public Office holders in the PNG Government and the ABG Government.
- The PNG NRI Management, Researchers and Communications team.
- Facilitators of the AROB Government Communications Systems and Process.
- Other parties including community leaders involved in communication of information about the Referendum on Bougainville.

## 2. Assignment and methodology.

The study is expected to have four key elements and these are briefly:

### 2.1. *Literature Review and highlight key challenges for communication of sensitive material in a fragile environment.*

Undertake a desktop review of literature around challenges of communicating and engaging in discussions on sensitive matters in a socially fragile community. Cite examples used elsewhere to illustrate the importance of identifying risks and allowing for critical information to be disseminated and discussions facilitated among divergent groups in a fragile environment. Identify and draw similarities for the Bougainville Referendum.

### 2.2. *Outline Key Communication Platforms and Processes for facilitating Dissemination of Information and facilitating informed Discussions.*

Identify and highlight key communication platforms for use in dissemination and communication of news and information about the Referendum in PNG and on the AROB including the PNG NRI, the established media community, the PNG NRI communication systems, the AROB systems' and other Non-Government systems and processes.

### 2.3. *Propose plan for Communication Strategy.*

Propose a communication strategy utilizing the platforms identified for the dissemination of information generated from the Referendum Research Project. Propose any new communication tools and products that can be used to complement existing systems.

### 2.4. *Risks and Opportunities.*

Outline the potential risk areas that the communication systems and structures need to be mindful of in the light of issues identified in part one (1) of the study. Outline opportunities if

any, that can be captured under the communications strategy to promote the objectives of the Bougainville Referendum Project.

### 3. Key Outputs

Key outputs from this study are:

- A report of around 30 pages to be presented to the PNG National Research Institute addressing items 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4; and,
- A seminar if needed where the key areas would be presented to relevant stakeholders.

### 4. Timeline

The duration of this consultancy is expected to be from June to September 2017. Key tasks are as prescribed below, but these will be negotiated and agreed to in the final contract.

Task	Responsible	Date
Desk review	Consultant	Commence 5 June.
Submit draft outline of report to be accepted by NRI	Consultant	15 July
Stakeholder consultations	Consultant	End of July
Submit first draft of report following agreed outline. (30 pages) for NRI internal review	Consultant	5 August
Provide comments on first draft to consultant	NRI	19 August
Presentation of Report	Consultant	Last week August
Submit second draft of report incorporating comments from NRI internal review .	Consultant	9 September
Provide comments on second draft of report	External reviewer	23 September
Submit final report incorporating comments External review	Consultant	30 September
Accept, Publish and Circulate to all Stakeholders	NRI	October 2017.

## 5. Additional remarks

All written outputs have to be submitted electronically, in accordance with the *PNG NRI Style Guide*.

## 6. Terms of payment

### 6.1. *The consultancy fees will be paid in three separate payments to the Consultant as per the following payment plan, upon receipt of tax invoices:*

- Payment 1 (20% of fees): after acceptance of the first draft outlining structure and plan for the report as satisfactory by NRI;
- Payment 2 (40% of fees): after acceptance of the first draft of the report as satisfactory by NRI and presentation of report to key stakeholders if required;
- Payment 3 (40% of fees): after completion and acceptance of the final report as satisfactory by NRI.

## 7. Selection criteria

7.1 The consultant is expected to have the following qualifications and experience:

- Postgraduate degree in a relevant field;
- Proven experience in a communications environment and experience in a post conflict peace building process would be a bonus
- In-depth understanding of communications structures, systems and process and the different kinds of tools and products used in communication
- Previous research or work experience in PNG and especially on Bougainville would be desirable.

## 8. Selection process

Interested applicants should send their CV, covering letter and financial proposal to

Thomas Webster, Port Moresby at [twebster@nri.org.pg](mailto:twebster@nri.org.pg) no later than 26 May 2017.

The covering letter should address the applicant's suitability for the consultancy, specific suggestions on the approach they would take to completing the consultancy, including challenges likely to be encountered and mechanisms for addressing these challenges.

The financial proposal should include both the consultancy fees (daily rate using DFAT September 2016 Remuneration Rates and estimated number of days required for the work), and the estimated research expenses. NRI will pay consultancy fees of up to AUD 40,000 depending on proposal and other costs. In addition, the following research related expenses will be covered by NRI: A maximum of possibly two trips to Port Moresby (one trip for consultations and one trip for presentation of report) including return economy airfares to Port Moresby, accommodation in Port Moresby, and where required, transport in Port Moresby. NRI will also pay the Contractor up to \$A80 per day for per diem expenses (meals and incidentals) incurred during the stay in Port Moresby.