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Titled: Adding Value through International Cooperation

“PNG and the Pacific delivering quality library services to its people”.

1. Introduction

This brief reports presents to information members of what Papua New Guinea and Pacific intends to Library service to its people. The paper covers discusses short history of Library services in PNG from 1957 to 2015. It also discusses how the PNG and Pacific plan to deliver these services in the region and participate meaningfully.

Technology has been around for many years but many countries were unable use the technologies due lack of ICT infrastructure and technocrats. The regional partnership with member countries in Asia-Oceania for technical and other needs is the way for most of the countries in the pacific.

The theme for this year’s CDNL-AO is timely as many regions are faced with many challenges on Economic, Social, Political and Environmental. Countries in the pacific region that are affected by the rising sea level are burden to the government and trend in global commodity prices has affected countries PNG and others. International partnership in service delivery is encouraged because it is a win-win situation where everyone will all benefit.

Many of the countries in the pacific including PNG have not participated meaningfully in the Asia-Oceania meetings. The region (Asia-Oceania) share many things in common and it would be important and appropriate we all team up and raise library as a development issues for our members to support and take appropriate action, not only that but member that have advance knowledge and technology to share and enhance one and other.

2. History of Library Services in PNG 1957 to 2015

The Library service in PNG started in 1957 which was a gift of the Australian government to the people of PNG. The colonial government ensured that library service was provided to the people for learning and enjoyment. Most service were functioning effectively which it coordination and management was controlled at Waigani (PNG HQ) until 1985 when the Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Government came into forces. This law took the roles and functions away from the National Government entity called Office of Library and Archives and placed in the hands of Provincial Governments.

That was the era when all the libraries throughout the country were closed. Six (6) only exists today in the country. This was era (1985 -2015) when the country is experiencing difficulties to achieve quality teaching and learning. There are very limited resources materials for students to support their learning as a result many have dropped out.

The government passed a new law in 1993 called “Office of Library and Archives Act 1993”. This law supersedes the law on Provincial and Local Level Government Act 1985. Since then previous management of the Office of Library and Archive have failed to implement the law and certain section stipulated in the law. Also previous governments were never educated on the importance of Library Services and they have failed to fund and support the library service in the country. Today the country’s chronic library problems are worse than anywhere in the world and new management was put in place to change everything for the better.

The country currently has good government that is committed and it’s for the people. The government is has committed so much money on fee free education which 2 million children are benefiting. The country still has challenges in the area of teacher deployment, curriculum, infrastructures and resources and services (like library) that are important to achieve quality education. That dream of achieving quality education is challenging which UN has already declared that PNG has not achieved many of Millennium Development Goals.

That challenge is now for the government and the management to ensure resources are diverted to key priority areas. The CDNL-AO is timely as this paper will share many of the issues and challenges for member to adopt and maybe plan to support in whatever areas possible.

3. Way forward

The way forward for the PNG and pacific is CDNL-AO and PNG will participate meaningfully. There are many technocrats and technologies are available and affordable in the region and been a member we all learn to share ideas and support each other.

3.1. Partnership and Networking National and regional

There are some things that employees and organizations can’t achieve but can be achieved by others. PNG and pacific do not have the capacity to deliver library services effectively and we will need the support of member countries. Countries that are advance in technology can support countries that are using obsolete technologies.

PNG will needs technology and technocrats to help deliver e-Library or e-Books to the people. The government is now pushing for e-books to cut printing and shipment cost which members can harness the opportunity. Again technology and the use of internet service in developed countries are very cheap compared to the services provided in developing countries. It is very costly and there has to be pathways that members can provide to improve service delivery.

Building partnership through such avenues is good because it will pave way for many good developments. There are numerous or countless advantages or opportunities in the area of library develop within the region and through

partnership we are able to share information. Proposed are some area that can be achieve through partnership,

Job Attachment Officers in PNG and Pacific can be sent on job attachments to well established libraries in the region so that they can learn and go back and do the same.

Technical Assistance TA could come from member country support countries that need training and advice in the area of library development and management and, or countries that have products and services that are useful for developing countries can share the information.

Staff training staff could be sent to countries that offer specialised training on Library management. The types of training offered in the country are just basic training.

Awareness raising many countries in the region needs to inform its people about the importance of books so that parents can invest more in children's education. Community Outreach program should be encouraged with the help of member countries in various ways

Other Programs partnerships will enable countries to host events such Book fairs for interest citizen who are pursuing to conduct business and other activities in the country of their interest. Aspiring career development and training would be made possible through this means.

Infrastructure many countries in the region lack infrastructures (could be ict or building) to support the delivery of library services and through partnership they are able to solicit assistance.

3.2. Political Leadership

The CDNL-AO meeting needs to expand and involved political leaders that will influence decision making in various countries at a much higher level will be an advantage for CDNL-AO. Much of the efforts that we are putting in have collecting dust and there is no one pushing the agenda strongly in various countries. Some are faced with brick wall simply because the Minister's is not there, how can the minister be persuaded to support library services and realise that library is the key to success in teaching and learning.

PNG will be involving its Minister for Education to participate and there will be an NEC submission presented to the Cabinet to host CDNL – AO meeting in PNG in 2019.

Pacific the Pacific Leaders will be encouraged to join PNG and host the meeting in 2019. Library services are very vital for our people and that opportunity must not be missed in the Pacific.

Involving Minister will increase the standard of this meeting that will further strengthen ties to connect people to libraries.

3.3. Development grants

The idea of development grants must be modified and channelled to appropriate bodies CDNL –AO for coordination and sustainability purposes. PNG and the Pacific over the years were receiving assistance from developed countries for programs and projects that are not sustainable. Millions of dollars have been wasted on programs that were designed as to only benefit few but not many.

CDNL-AO could become one of the coordination agencies for library development in the region. Grants for library development in a particular country can be a challenge through the organization. This will enable member countries to provide technical assistance that is affordable. CDNL-AO is sustainable and it is important that this trend must continue.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1. Members to accept the presentation as way forward for the delivery of quality library services (in various forms) in countries that are struggling. PNG is a classic example.
- 4.2. Members review and develop partnership agreements with member countries for various activities. The partnership should not be seen as a burden to member but it should be a win-win partnership.
- 4.3. The proposed idea of involving political leadership in CDNL-AO is important as it will enable quality library service delivery in the region. PNG currently has strong political support which the Minister is pushing for E-Library, Infrastructure development and more funding support.
- 4.4. Development grants to be channelled through the CDNL-AO is appropriate as this body will secure assistance from and within the region to support member countries. CDNL-AO knows the problems of its member countries and it is able to draw support.

Thank you