

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LEVEL OF STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND LOCAL-LEVEL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA: THE CASE OF WAMPAR LOCAL-LEVEL GOVERNMENT IN MOROBE PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

The position of the authors of this article is that local community stakeholder participation is vital for successful community development reform of service delivery. In our view critics of public service delivery in Papua New Guinea (PNG) ought to appreciate that the degree of stakeholder participation in enhancing the delivery of basic services is necessary so that intended government reforms in service delivery may be further developed and justified both within and outside of government so as to attract the financial and skill capacities needed by local governments. Stakeholder participation and local-level government management in PNG under the current reform initiatives need to be evaluated to assess the contribution of citizens to the performance of Local-Level Government (LLG) in Papua New Guinea. Research on seven cases of wards in Wampar LLG in Morobe Province (PNG) using the case study method reveals that stakeholder participation in Local-level Government (LLG) is both present to some degree and is vital for effective community development in PNG and other developing countries with needs similar to Papua New Guinea.

Keywords – *Community development, Enhancing delivery of basic services, Financial and technical skill capacity, Local level government management in Papua New Guinea, Stakeholder Participation, Voluntary Participation*

INTRODUCTION

This article focuses on varying types of stakeholder participation in enhancing the delivery of basic services at the local government level in Papua New Guinea (PNG) under the current reform of Organic Law on Provincial Government and Local-level Government (OLPG & LLG). Our unit of analysis are the stakeholders and their degree of participation in enhancing the delivery of basic services to their respective wards and LLGs. In what ways, can stakeholders themselves participate in bringing basic services to fulfil their needs? The case of Wampar LLG in Morobe Province has been chosen for

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the study to assess the level of stakeholder participation in enhancing the delivery of basic services to their immediate wards. Wampar LLG has 28 Wards, out of which seven wards were selected for the study. These wards are Markham Bridge Ward, Busanim Ward, Yalu Ward, Munum Ward, Nasuapum Ward, Gobsongkeg Ward and Chivasing Ward of Wampar LLG. It took three and one-half months to complete the research and for the data to be analysed to produce the preliminary findings reported in this study.

The main research focused on the *effectiveness of local government stakeholders in enhancing the delivery of basic services that led to development in their local constituencies*. Local-level Government stakeholders' participation is vital for development in their local constituencies in PNG. This can be measured through assessing the degree of participation in community projects. The main concern is that the stakeholders are not part of the development process in PNG. In most cases they are mere spectators of the development process in PNG. There is no feasible substitute to an approach in which Local governments, with the active participation of their communities, take the initiative and responsibility for actions that are conducive to institutional development in service delivery. That is, the sustainable development of technical and financial capacity of lower level government is possible only when there is effective participation by local administrations (technical staff) and community (stakeholders). This then will generate efficiency in delivering of basic services to the wards at the Local-level Government areas (World Bank, 1995).

The importance of the article is underscored by the point that there is minimal stakeholder participation that leads to the poor LLG performance in PNG under the current reform on Provincial and Local-level government. In order to effectively deliver basic services, civil servants at the LLG and district level need to involve people at the ward level to participate more in community projects. This will lead to enhancing the effectiveness of delivery of basic services at wards.

The structure of this article is as follows: section 2 defines stakeholder participation and Local-level Government management in PNG, section 3 briefly describes the methodology used to collect data, section 4 describes the level of stakeholder participation of the seven wards of Wampar LLG and the final section concludes by answering the research problem statement.

BRIEF HISTORY OF LLGS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

An understanding of the decentralized functions of government under OLPG & LLG would better enhance the LLG system, at the same time generating ideas in latter parts of the article.

The Native Local Government Ordinance of 1949, the 1963 Local Government Ordinance and the 1969 Local Government Ordinance formed the basis for the creation of local government system in PNG. The actual implementation of local government system took place in 1952. Before the formal type of local government was introduced,

there existed a traditional local government system where people were organised into tribes, clans, hamlets and villages to govern themselves.

The notion of local government came from the devolution process of decentralization, be it political or administrative decentralization. There is no one specific definition of decentralization. It is a complex and multifaceted concept, which generates considerable debate. Despite this, decentralization in Papua New Guinea has been taken in the form of three level government systems particularly national, provincial and local governments. This three (3)-tier system was made possible through the 1977 Organic Law on Provincial Government (OLPG) which formed the basis for the creation of provincial and Local-level government.

On the 19th of July 1995, parliament passed a bill enacting a new Organic Law on Provincial Government and Local-level Government (OLPG&LLG). This Act built the new legal framework for the new system of government in Papua New Guinea. The national government abolished the provincial government system and was left with the National and Local-level Government (2-tier system of government).

The aim of the 1995 reforms was to increase the powers and responsibilities of local-level governments, to improve the delivery of basic services to people throughout the country, and to encourage people to participate in contributing necessary resources towards development in their wards and LLGs as a whole. The question one might ask is, 'how efficient and effective have the aims of reform been in realising the above intentions?' At the outset, people are still raising their concerns about not receiving basic services even after reforms. And most critics are accusing the public service machinery of being ineffective and inefficient in delivering the basic services to the populace.

The efficient and effective delivery of basic services to local government stakeholders is one of the main aims of the 1995 reform on Organic Law on Provincial Government and Local-level Government in PNG. However, the delivery mechanism (public service machinery: LLG) has been criticised as being ineffective and inefficient in delivering basic services. Although, a modicum degree of services are delivered, the recipients (stakeholders) at wards and local-level government areas must enhance the delivery of these basic service provisions.

There is currently minimal stakeholder participation leading to poor delivery of basic services by LLGs. Therefore stakeholders must actively participate in their respective Local-level governments to co-ordinate policy formulation, planning and implementation of their local-level government policies and plans. This means that stakeholders must actively participate in contributing requisite resources (i.e., finance and skilled personnel) towards the development of their wards and LLGs as a whole. They should not only be expecting the national government to do all the necessary things for them. Rather, LLGs as an important instrument used by the central government to implement its policies, must work more closely with stakeholders to enhance the delivery of basic services.

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND LOCAL-LEVEL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT

Local Governments in PNG were first established under the Native Local Government Councils Ordinance of 1949. It was influenced by British policy in Tanganyika, now Tanzania in East Africa. David Fenbury, the chief architect of local governments in PNG described it as municipal councils. Local Governments were under the regime of District officers (Kiaps). The Kiaps were the authorities who made decisions and ruled the local government areas during the colonial era. However, Kiaps lacked additional supporting staff to run the local government councils. As a result of this, local governments were poorly managed, and lacked the expertise to supervise economic and social development projects (Bonney, 1982).

Stakeholders here refer to the people in the wards that receive government services and participate in enhancing the delivery of basic services. We are interested in looking at three aspects of stakeholder contributions, financial, skilled personnel and voluntary participation. This is synonymous with "community needs analysis" (self-help) and "bottom-up planning" as important tools for development in wards and Local-level Government areas. The terms stakeholders, clients and recipients are used interchangeably in this article.

At the outset, it is essential to define stakeholder participation in relation to the LLG reform under the OLPG & LLG. Stakeholder participation involves the participation of both skilled personnel (technical staff) from the government (provider) and grassroots at the local level. The latter category comprises people with semi-professional skills or skills suitably called appropriate technology. Hence, the management of the LLG affairs will be complete if skilled personnel from government and grassroots are seriously considered. It is a two way process. Skilled personnel from government and grassroots should become partners in enhancing community development through increased interaction. To avoid 'dependency syndrome', community participation is essential. Recipients should reciprocate by providing available skills and resources to counter-fund community development process.

Alternatively, where the government fails to adequately provide basic services, skills and resources, the recipients should provide proactive measures/incentives such as initiating community projects or devising workable proposals for developmental projects. Conversely, where a community could no longer participate or is limited by other impediments like lack of infrastructure, lack of technical skills, harsh terrains, inadequate resources, and so on, the government must be readily available to answer to such situations. Its efforts should be timely and genuine. In effect, technical staff (public servants) should be providing necessary skills and resources as required under the OLPG&LLG.

From 1949 onwards to the 1970s the kiaps effectiveness and efficiency in managing local-level governments in PNG was minimal. Trained council staff were less willing to serve in remote areas and in less prestigious positions and standards of management, expertise and financial control correspondingly fell. One of the contributing factors to this problem was the radical transformation of national and provincial governments in

PNG. The local and national politicians were preoccupied with the process of transformation and neglected local governments. The new provincial government system of 1977 took over the responsibilities of local governments.

The prime task of local government councils is to develop economic, social, cultural and political aspects of the community. A local government council, for instance, is a political institution, but is also expected to play a major role in economic and social advancement. This is the advantage of councils in developing their people and their areas. The administrative term that is used to answer the development challenge is an "area development programme." If it were to work properly, these three elements are regarded as important (1) extension, (2) co-ordination and (3) resources.

The local-level government therefore, is a project in decentralization. It is a project through which processes and aspirations of decentralization are realised. Decentralization is a complex and multifaceted concept that stimulates considerable debate. Nevertheless, a definition that is at least a starting point is derived from the World Bank's definition: "Decentralization is the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from the central government to intermediate and local governments. This involves the transfer of powers and functions (political and administrative) to provincial and local level governments where lower levels of governments are given some autonomy to determine their own affairs etc..."

Before independence in 1975, the Australian administration had opted for a direct rule approach to the local governments it had established. It expected the local councils to be autonomous from the central government and self-sufficient with regard to resources (finance and human). The backlog and confusion was due not only to conflicts between traditional cultures and these alien institutions (local government councils), but also to a problem of matching local capacity and resources with the new roles that were introduced. Despite much effort, the colonial local governments never met these expectations (Peasah, 1994).

Since the inception of the idea of decentralization, the central government still controls most of the powers. In reality, it simply relocates its officers at different levels or points in the national territory. One such territory is local-level government where national government had more influence over their affairs. When such circumstances occur, it tends to foster centralization since its presence is evident in the system. This is particularly true in less developed countries where ordinary people have very little influence over allocations of resources in the modern sector involving such things as finance and skilled manpower. This is evident in many LLGs in PNG. The problems of finance (including other related resources) and skilled manpower have persisted since the 1949 Local Government Ordinance Act came to be. In *The National* of June 23, 2004: 7, the Community Development Secretary Joseph Klapat openly echoed such sentiment, which was expressed almost five decades ago, that: "Lack of skills and resources are impeding community development."

Productive life of skilled personnel is shorter in Papua New Guinea than it is in other countries in the region. This position is acutely expressed under the old OLPG. However, as the new OLPG & LLG rein in, the demand for skilled personnel at local

government and district level is likely to increase. This stems from the fact that central government's negligence has left the local level and district administrations high and dry. Relatively poor salaries and infrastructure, health and schooling facilities have not, attracted skilled personnel to these levels of administration to date. However, the basic remedy offered is that increases in salaries at these levels as well as improvements in facilities may attract some of the skilled personnel being made redundant at the national government level (Gupta & Ivarature, 1997, cited in Temu: 278).

RESEARCH METHOD

The case study method was used to collect data to address the research problem as stated in the introduction to this article. This is because the problem of effective service delivery is prevalent in the existing system of LLGs and so strategies need to be arrived at to remedy deficiencies. The use of case studies implies use of a single unit of analysis such as a company or particular persons occupying strategic positions. For our case it is the Local-level Government system. This methodology is used in a more natural setting where the data collected is rich and subjective with the emphasis on trying to understand a phenomenon. There are several methods of collecting data in case studies and the main ones are listed below:

- documentary analysis
- observations and
- interviews

In researching and writing this article we used in-depth interview and survey questionnaires to explore the phenomena (events). Case studies are often described as exploratory research because of the fact that they are used in areas where there are few theories or where there is no established body of knowledge.

In sum, the case study approach is a research methodology that has features associated with the phenomenological paradigm. Nevertheless, the case study method uses both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. In our case study analysis the primary intent was to examine organisations, groups of people or events with the motive of understanding the phenomena we discovered. [Note: To gain access to the full database used for the project analysis please contact the authors at the email addresses indicated at the end of this article.]

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION CASES OF WAMPAR LLG

Case 1-Markham Bridge Ward (Ward 5)

Markham Bridge Ward (Ward 5) has six villages. These include Puseka, Jansam, Yasua, Pile, Potsi/Buang, and Markham Bridge. It has 201 houses and a total population of 975. This is composed of 553 males and 422 females. There is mixed sentiments from the participants interviewed and the responses given on stakeholder participation differed. These responses from the interviewee(s) will be analysed following categories:

the importance of stakeholder participation, general perception on the current LLG reform and, actual participation at ward level within Wampar LLG.

Case 2-Busanim Ward (Ward 13)

Busanim ward in the Wampar LLG is located along the Okuk Highway, several kilometres from Lae. It is made up of seven settlements. They are the Buwatu settlement, the Sepik settlement, Salamotian settlement, Baptist Bible College, Guard Dog Trans (11 mile), 11-mile plantation, and Busanim station. A total of 443 houses are contained in the ward. The ward population comprises 1304 males and 1064 females, thus totalling to 2368 people. The responses from the interviewees will be analysed from the following categories: importance of stakeholder participation, general perception on the current LLG reform and actual participation at ward level within Wampar LLG.

This case analysis is based on data derived from structured survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews with technical staff of the Morobe Administration and stakeholders of Markham Bridge ward at varying times in 2004. Interviews were conducted with the council manager, DPI officer and Nursing officer of Wampar LLG; District Administrator of Huon District and the ward Councilors and Ward members of the seven cases. Secondary information from sources including the Morobe Provincial Statistics Office figures for 2000 census were used. The 2004 Joint District Planning and Budget Priority Committees Manual of Huon District (JDP & BPC) and their Budget estimate booklet were also used.

Case 3-Yalu Ward (Ward 14)

Yalu ward (ward 14) has 8 villages. This includes Yalu, Ambuasutz, Watut (Langalanga) settlement, Atzera settlement, Yalu Bridge, Pindiu (Kabwum) settlement, Yalu Plantation and Junglik Plantation. It has 486 households and a total population of 2609. This is composed of 1393 males and 1211 females. The responses from the interviewees will be analysed following these categories: importance of stakeholder participation, general perception on the current LLG reform and, actual participation at ward level within Wampar LLG.

Case 4-Munum Ward (Ward 15)

Munum ward (ward 15 of Wampar LLG) is composed of 6 villages and 3 settlements, a total of 9 villages. These include Mapoazi, Munum, Munum 2, Mumeng settlement, Muya C/School, Narakapoa settlement No 1, Dept of Works Camp, Mpofose settlement and Ramu Sugar Ranch. It has 486 households and a total population of 2765. This is composed of 1495 males and 1270 females. There were four people randomly selected as sample interviewees from this ward. The four include two males and two females. According to their personal profile relating to their level of education, one female is a grade 10 graduate, while the other female have other professional qualifications. One of two male respondents is a grade 6 graduate while the other has no formal education. The responses from the interviewees will be analysed following these categories: importance

of stakeholder participation, general perception on the current LLG reform and, actual participation at ward level within Wampar LLG.

This case analysis is based on data derived from structured survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews with technical staff of Morobe Provincial Administration and stakeholders of Yalu ward at varying times in 2004. Interviews were conducted with the council manager, DPI officer and Nursing officer of Wampar LLG, District Administrator of Huon District and the ward Councilors and Ward members of the seven cases. Secondary information from sources like the Morobe Provincial Statistics Office figures for the 2000 census, the 2004 Joint District Planning and Budget Priority Committees Manual of Huon District (JDP & BPC), and their Budget estimate booklet were used.

Case 5-Nasuapum Ward (Ward 16)

Located close to Nadzab airport, Nasuapum ward is among the smaller wards in Wampar LLG consisting of 244 households with a total population of 1402 persons of which 740 are males. This population is dispersed within smaller settlements or villages. The settlements or villages include Nasuapum, Taporan settlement, the Wantoat settlement, Ramu sugar ranch, and Saksak settlement. The Nasuapum stakeholders were fortunate that the Okuk Highway was built through their ward. Goods from Lae were consequently within about a 10 minutes drive from the ward. Despite this fact, the stakeholders in the ward still look forward to receiving government providence of basic services and the goods complementing these services. The response from the interviewee will be analysed following these categories; importance of stakeholder participation, general perception on the current LLG reform and actual participation at ward level within the Wampar LLG.

Case 6-Gabsongkeg Ward (Ward 17)

Gabsongkeg ward (Ward 17) of Wampar LLG is composed of 12 villages. These include Gabsongkeg, Wanof, Tanam, Nugagar, Gapmazung Mission Station, Nadzab P/Station, Wampar LGC Station (New Site), Wampar LGC Station (Old Site), Chururukeran Settlement, Sombembe Settlement, Durung Farm and Nadzab Airport. It has 470 households and a total population of 2517. This is composed of 1383 males and 1134 females. There were three stakeholders interviewed from this ward (Ward 17). The three are two females and one male respondent. According to their personal data profile relating to their level of education, the two females' respondents are grade 10 graduates, while the male respondents is a grade 12 graduate with vast experience in managing public office. The responses from the interviewees will be analysed following these categories; importance of stakeholder participation, general perception on the current LLG reform and actual participation at ward level within Wampar LLG.

This case analysis is based on data derived from structured survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews with technical staff of Morobe Provincial Administration and stakeholders of Gabsongkeg ward at varying times in 2004. Interviews were conducted with the council manager, DPI officer, and Nursing officer of Wampar LLG and District Administrator of Huon District and the ward Councilors and Ward members of

the seven cases. Secondary information were also used sources like Morobe Provincial Statistics Office figures for 2000 census, 2004 Joint District Planning and Budget Priority Committee Manual of Huon District (JDP & BPC) and their Budget estimate booklet.

Case7 - Chivasing Ward (Ward 19)

Chivasing ward (Ward 19) of Wampar LLG is composed of six villages. These include Chivasing, Moale Trading (40 mile), Chivasing Police Station, Kokok settlement, Markham Farm and Rice Industry. It has 460 households and a total population of 2143. This is composed of 1103 males and 1040 females. Among this 2143, only 3 people were randomly selected and interviewed. The three people interviewed were all males and are from Chivasing village. According to their data profile, all are in different age groups. One is 36 years old, the other is 53 years while the third one is a 27-year-old man. In terms of their level of education, two respondents have no formal education while one completed primary school. The responses from the interviewees will be analysed these categories: importance of stakeholder participation, general perception on the current LLG reform and actual participation at ward level within Wampar LLG.

LLG MANAGEMENT AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION CASES

This section presents a cross-case analysis of data collected from field research (See Table 1 below). The case study method was used for collection and analysis of data on participation of stakeholders. These data from the research emanated from surveys conducted in each of the seven wards of Wampar LLG in Morobe Province. Individual case reports were analyzed and written for each wards using Yin's methodological approach (1994: 106-109 as quoted in Kavanamur, 2003) within and for cross-sectional analysis. These analytical techniques were used to place specific cases/data into their respective categories of variables for assessing stakeholder participation and LLG management.

Table 1: Cross-case classification of stakeholders' participation in Wampar LLG

Wards	Respondents	Criteria's for Participation	Willing to	Not willing to	General Implications
		Voluntary			
		Financial			
		Skills			
Markham Bridge-Ward 5	#1	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily & posses skills but not finance.
		Financial		✓	
		Skills	✓		
	#2	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily & financially but
		Financial	✓		
		Skills		✓	

					lack skills.
	#3	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily & posses skills but not finance.
		Financial		✓	
		Skills	✓		
Busanim-Ward 13	#1	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, finance and skills.
		Financial	✓		
		Skills	✓		
	#2	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, finance and skills.
		Financial	✓		
		Skills	✓		
	#3	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, finance and skills.
		Financial	✓		
		Skills	✓		
	#4	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, finance and skills.
		Financial	✓		
		Skills	✓		
Yalu Village-Ward 14	#1	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, but not finance and lack skills.
		Financial		✓	
		Skills		✓	
	#2	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily & finance but not skills.
		Financial	✓		
		Skills		✓	
	#3	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily & sharing skills but not finance.
		Financial		✓	
		Skills	✓		
	#1	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing
		Financial	✓		

Munum- Ward 15	#2	Skills	✓		finance and sharing skills.
		Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance
		Financial	✓		and sharing skills.
	#3	Skills	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
		Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
		Financial	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
	#4	Skills	✓		No voluntary participation but willing to contribute finance and sharing skills.
		Voluntary		✓	
		Financial	✓		
	#1	Skills	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
		Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
		Financial	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
Nasuapum- Ward 16	#1	Skills	✓		No voluntary participation but willing to contribute finance and sharing skills.
		Voluntary		✓	
		Financial	✓		
	#2	Skills	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
		Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
		Financial	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
	#3	Skills	✓		No voluntary participation but willing to contribute finance and sharing skills.
		Voluntary		✓	
		Financial	✓		
Gabsongkeg- Ward 17	#1	Skills	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
		Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
		Financial	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
	#2	Skills		✓	No voluntary participation and lacks skills but contribute
		Voluntary		✓	
		Financial		✓	

					financially.
	#3	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
		Financial	✓		
		Skills	✓		
Chivasing Village-Ward 19	#1	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily, contributing finance and sharing skills.
		Financial	✓		
		Skills	✓		
	#2	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily but no contribution of finance and skills.
		Financial		✓	
		Skills		✓	
	#3	Voluntary	✓		Participate voluntarily and contributing finance but no skills.
		Financial	✓		
		Skills		✓	

Source: Authors, 2010

Generally, these three analytical variables are:

1. Stakeholders participate voluntarily in community projects,
2. Stakeholders' financial assistance for community projects; and
3. Stakeholders' sharing their skills to assist in community project

This within-case analysis is based on data derived from structured survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews with technical staff of the Morobe Provincial Administration and stakeholders of Chivasing ward at varying times in 2004. Interviews were conducted with the council manager, DPI officer and Nursing officer of Wampar LLG, District Administrator of Huon District and the ward Councilors and Ward members of the seven cases. Secondary information were used from sources like Morobe Provincial Statistics Office figures for 2000 census, 2004 Join District Planning and Budget Priority Committees Manual of Huon District (JDP & BPC) and their Budget estimate booklet. Moreover, data compiled from field research were analysed based on the level of evidence presented by the respondents. Therefore, within-case analysis covers the individual case profiles of each ward. Cross-case analysis gives a comparative case profile of all seven wards for analytical purposes. For instance, the within-case analysis of Markham Bridge (Ward 5) covers the degree to which people participate (voluntary), their financial contribution, and their level of skills. Comparative analysis of these three variables was made on all seven wards and constitutes our cross-case analysis.

Generally, the degree of stakeholder participation in the seven wards was found to have general ward members participating voluntarily in community projects, making some financial contributions and sharing of their grassroots skills with other ward members to enhance the delivery of basic services including education, health and water supply. Throughout the analysis, these variables were reviewed in a cross-case analysis in the context of stakeholder's participation in managing their LLG under the OLPG& LLG Law.

Three sets of stakeholder participation criteria were used to measure performance across the seven cases. First, all respondents of the seven case wards participate voluntarily in any community projects, but only three respondents of the seven wards did not participate voluntarily. Second, seventeen respondents from the seven cases had contributed financially in community projects and only six did not contribute finance for community projects. Finally, sixteen respondents were willing to share their skills to assists in community projects while the other seven respondents had no skills to contribute to the community projects.

THE IMPORTANCE OF STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Each province in PNG is in need of stakeholder participation in managing local level governments under the current reform. The importance of stakeholder participation in bringing development into the wards and LLG as a whole across the seven cases is highly evident. We found that for the seven cases the importance of stakeholder participation was not much different by case. Some cases did show selected differences on the variables measured.

All seven cases examined conformed to what one would expect to find according to the literature in the field of community participation in that stakeholders held similar views about stakeholder participation as very vital in bringing about development. According to our analysis this is owing to the fact that government services to the wards have been dismal in the past. The importance of stakeholder participation is not only a current realization of their needs but also for the long term benefits. A good example is the fact that government services in the past were also dismal because of a lack of essential resources and financing. As stated by Bonney (1982: 115), "Kiaps (early district officers) lacked additional supporting staff to run the local government councils." As a result local governments were poorly managed, and lacked the expertise to supervise economic and social development projects".

It is clear from the case studies that wards regard stakeholder participation as very important. This then could for a systemic approach to encourage participation of stakeholders for a meaningful development. Moreover, all the cases confirmed participation as being voluntary and therefore, individual stakeholder participation in this context is seen as an individual choice of whether to participate or not (See Table 2 below). Yet the need to participate has to be emphasized and this critically depends on the stakeholders' awareness of the importance of their participation. Their participation will give them a feeling of ownership of projects and all seven cases have affirmed this view. Stakeholder participation will also reduce the cost of implementing community

projects as all cases show a preferential reduction in implementation costs as a result of stakeholder participation. Furthermore, taking into account that the wards know the key issues affecting them, the possibility of increasing local level participation is very great.

Stakeholder participation is intended to bring forth great advantage to the government as it would largely strengthen the local level governments by reducing project implementation costs and it would also make the stakeholders care for the result of their own efforts. This relates to what Axline noted, "...stronger LLG could contribute greatly to the overall goals of the committee, especially with respect to broader involvement and participation of the people and delivery of services". It is perhaps at the level of local government that there is the greatest room for improvement in governance in Papua New Guinea (Axline, 1993).

Table 2: Cross-case summary: Importance of stakeholder participation

	Importance of stakeholders participation
Markham Bridge Ward (Ward 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very vital in bringing development. • Feeling of ownership to projects. • Knows key issues affecting them very well. • Voluntary participation. • Less cost for implementing community projects.
Busanim Ward (Ward 13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very vital in bringing development. • Feeling of ownership to projects. • Knows key issues affecting them very well. • Voluntary participation. • Less cost for implementing community projects
Yalu Ward (Ward 14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very vital in bringing development. • Feeling of ownership to projects. • Knows key issues affecting them very well. • Voluntary participation. • Less cost for implementing community projects.
Munum Ward (Ward 15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very vital in bringing development. • Feeling of ownership to projects. • Knows key issues affecting them very well. • Voluntary participation. • Less cost for implementing community projects.
Nasuapum Ward (Ward 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very vital in bringing development. • Feeling of ownership to projects. • Knows key issues affecting them very well. • Voluntary participation. • Less cost for implementing community projects.
Gabsongkeg Ward (Ward 17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very vital in bringing development. • Feeling of ownership to projects. • Knows key issues affecting them very well. • Voluntary participation. • Less cost for implementing community projects.

Chivasing Ward (Ward 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very vital in bringing development. • Feeling of ownership to projects. • Knows key issues affecting them very well. • Voluntary participation. • Less cost for implementing community projects.
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Source: Authors, 2010.

CONCLUSIONS

All seven cases demonstrated concern with the idle (LLG) system in Papua New Guinea, which is ineffective and inefficient in delivering the basic services to the populace at the ward level. This is plagued by lack of financial resources and skilled manpower at the local government level to deliver the expected services to the people. The research data shows that stakeholders are willing to participate in strengthening the delivery of basic services at the local government and ward level. Thus lack of government support in providing necessary resources like finance and technical manpower or human resource provide a dependency condition at the lower level of the government system. If the expected needy services are not delivered to them, they will blame the public service machinery as being ineffective and efficient in delivering basic services.

This research shows a general effort in PNG in trying to understand the constraints that impede the LLG effort in delivering basic services to the clients at the ward level. Lack of funds and skilled manpower are the major obstacles that hinder the delivery of basic services to the wards of Wampar LLG. As such this study finds that significant stakeholder contributions is likely to exert immediate discipline on LLG management; it also adds to the body of knowledge on stakeholder participation.

The research also has identified a gap in LLG management in PNG under the current provincial and LLG reform. In terms of its contribution to the immediate discipline of LLG management, the research attempts incrementally to contribute to this effort by offering a more holistic view of LLG management and its reform implementation context in local wards. In this context the systems for community participation and its reform were found to be complex and difficult to manage. Finally, it is apparent that the lack of necessary resources including financing and the insufficient availability of skilled personnel to share their knowledge are critical impediments to successful reform.

Another finding that emerged from the research is that stakeholders remain concerned about the kind of support they need from the technical staff at the LLG level to help them enhance the delivery of basic services. Stakeholders interviewed from the seven cases showed their commitment in participating voluntarily, contributing financially and

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sharing their skill within their grassroots community projects. It is evident from this study that stakeholder participation in all aspects of community life is at this point limited, thus indirectly but significantly hindering the basic functioning of LLG in PNG.

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ISSN 1662-1387