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Strongim Pipol Strongim Nesen Pre-Tender Briefing 21 September 2009

- The role of the Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs (DPLGA) is to support the Minister administer his many statutory responsibilities, including the Organic Law on Provincial Governments and Local-level Governments. This is the law that mandates the reforms of 1995.
- The reforms have two primary goals:
 1. To bring government closer to the people. It is about empowering people to make decisions on matters affecting them and to be accountable for those decisions.
 2. To deliver basic services to the people who should rightly receive those services
- The second goal follows the first – service delivery follows effective governance. Local-level governments are regarded as points of delivery of basic services to communities. These governments are also closer to the people. Since 1995 a total of 313 local-level governments have been established in the country.
- However, from complaints received from provinces and information obtained from reports of research, surveys, profiling etc carried out by Public Sector Reform Management Unit, National Research Unit, National Economic Fiscal Commission, Constitutional and Law Reform Commission on governance and service delivery, we know that services are not being delivered to communities around PNG. Why? May be we need to go back and take a closer look at governance.
- Governance issues include Organic Law (legal) compliance, enabling legislation (are these in place?), funding (are these adequate and released on a timely manner?), roles and responsibilities (do leaders and officials understand their roles and responsibilities at the various levels?), capacity (is there adequate capacity both physical and non physical at the district and local government levels?), systems and procedures (are these in place, understood and observed?), leadership (is leadership effective and in accordance to good governance principles and practices?). It is generally agreed that each of the issues affects governance one way or another, and hence service delivery.
- Some initiatives have been taken to address the problem of service delivery. These include:
 - o Structural Improvement Program
 - o Capacity Building & Institutional Strengthening Program
 - o Provincial Performance Improvement Initiative
 - o GoPNG Long Term Strategic Plan – 40 year vision
 - o Public Sector Management Reform Unit ward profiling
 - o National Research Institute's ward profiling
 - o EU's strengthening of Districts and Local-level Governments Project
- Recently, five GoPNG Service Delivery Mechanism Model (SDMM) teams were in five provinces for three months to look at service delivery and to recommend to Government a possible new service delivery mechanism. The findings submitted in their reports confirmed others' findings that the system is not working properly. This is the challenge now facing the Government.

- In early November the Government might be ready to provide certain directions on the way forward when it receives the final report from the five SDMM teams.
- A key principle of the 1995 reforms is partnership. The Government sees donors as important partners in development and delivery of services. Donors can support development in PNG by empowering people to help themselves.
- Our message for contractors is that the government currently has a wider reforms agenda, and contractors should support this agenda through intervention programs.

Finally, please involve government at all levels. A common complaint we receive from sub national levels is that donors go straight to communities rather than through Governments at those levels to ensure ownership and sustainability of projects when they leave.