



Peace & Conflict
Studies Institute
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STORIES FROM THE PANGUNA DIALOGUE PROJECT

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WE MADE RECONCILIATIONS HAPPEN: **STORIES** **FROM THE PANGUNA** **DIALOGUE PROJECT**

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MISEREOR
IHR HILFSWERK

The Panguna Dialogue Project was implemented by PaCSIA with funding from Misereor e.V.

MESSAGE FROM BISHOP BERNARD UNABALI

It is with great pleasure and satisfaction that I write this word of greeting for the brochure *Stories from the Panguna Dialogue Project*. The stories presented here confirm my deep conviction that the success of the peace process on Bougainville is based on two pillars: the Christian faith and our Bougainville culture, which is the foundation for all the peace building, internal and external. The stories from communities in the wider Panguna area, from Bolave, Ioro and Eivo-Torau, reflect the experiences and strengths of ordinary village people who are deeply grounded in faith and culture.


The stories were collected in the context of the Panguna Dialogue Project (PDP), which was conducted by a team of local facilitators and friends from PaCSIA (Peace and Conflict Studies Institute Australia) over the last eighteen

months. I strongly supported this project because it aligns very well with the Catholic Diocese's 'Balanced Life Pastoral Plan', which promotes Christian faith as the foundation for everything else. This has helped to improve the organisation of communities at bottom line level, local governance and dispute resolution capacities. In this way it has contributed to our overall peace building and reconciliation work in the diocese, as well as furthering inter-church collaboration.

I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Misereor, the Catholic funding agency from Germany, for funding the Panguna Dialogue Project and this brochure.

I highly recommend these stories to all Bougainvilleans.

Bishop Bernard Unabali



Bishop Bernard Unabali
at Siimalaka Foursquare
Gospel Church



Forming the PDP Steering Group: Michael Lapolela, Clarence Dency, Dennis Lokonai, James Tanis, Dennis Kuiai, Volker Boege, Rosemary Moses

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The Panguna Dialogue Project is deeply appreciative of the support of the people of Bougainville for the success of this project and feels honored to have been entrusted with their stories of change and strength, some of which are presented in this book. Thank you to the communities of Bolave, Ioro and Eivo-Torau.

We extend a special thanks to: Misereor e.V., the Development Agency of the German Catholic Bishops' Conference, for funding PDP; the Catholic Diocese of Bougainville and Bishop Bernard Unabali, for endorsing and supporting PDP; President Chief Dr John Momis and Vice-President Patrick Nisira, for their ongoing interest in PDP; the ABG Department for Referendum, Veterans Affairs and Peace and its Secretary, James Tanis, for founding the project and for ongoing practical support.

We also like to thank the members of the Bougainville House of Representatives of the three constituencies in which PDP was carried out: the Honourable Member and ABG Minister of Health Dennis Lokonai (Bolave),

Honourable Member Michael Lapolela (Ioro), and Honourable Member Clarence Dency (Eivo-Torau), as well as the Women's Representative for Central Bougainville in the House of Representatives, Honorable Member Marcelline Kokiai. Thanks also go to the Meekamui Government of Unity in Panguna, and in particular Meekamui Commander Moses Pipiro and his Secretary Aloysius Gaveua.

We also thank all the leaders of the communities that hosted PDP activities: chiefs, elders, church leaders, women, youth and ex-combatants leaders, as well as some persons who were particularly supportive of PDP: Peter Kalosoi, Patrick Piritam, Tony Siona, Christine Leonard, Gregory Doora.

Last but not least we acknowledge the fantastic work of the PDP Lead Facilitators Dominica Rovokea, Francis Nazia and Bonaventure Kenulei and of all the other PDP Facilitators: Aloysius Gaveua, Felix Honana, Bernard Kataia, Angela Kavarui, Scholastica Kiwi, Monica Sioma, Anscar Nionem, Rachel Pospoi and Beverly Tamis. Special thanks go to Dennis Kuiai, the PDP facilitators' advisor and mentor.

INTRODUCTION

This book is an outcome of the Panguna Dialogue Project (PDP). PDP was carried out in Bolave, Ioro and Eivo-Torau in 2015 and 2016. I developed the idea for this project in the year before, together with my friend and colleague Volker Boege from PaCSIA, Peace and Conflict Studies Institute Australia. I was very aware of the fact that on the one hand peacebuilding on Bougainville had been rather successful since the signing of the Bougainville Peace Agreement (BPA) in August 2001, but that on the other hand a lot more needed to be done, particularly at a point in time when the peace process was about to enter its final and decisive stage - the preparation for and the conduct of the referendum on the future political status of Bougainville, as agreed upon in the BPA. And I was aware that peacebuilding had to be brought closer to the communities and the people on the ground, particularly in those remote regions around Panguna where the crisis had started and where people still felt somewhat marginalised. This is why we decided to focus on the Panguna mine area, including the three constituencies of Bolave, Ioro and Eivo-Torau. Furthermore, we decided to make a deliberate effort to also include the Panguna Meekamui. The aim was to support communities to improve governance and dispute resolution capacities, based on their own key values, skills and experiences, with the overall goal to contribute to peacebuilding and the strengthening of grassroots democratic governance in Bougainville.

So we elaborated a project application along these lines and submitted it to Misereor, the Development Agency of the German Catholic Bishops' Conference. The application was successful. And so the project 'Building Capacity in Governance among Community Leaders in the Panguna Mine Area, Bougainville' (this is the official title of what then became PDP - Panguna Dialogue Project) commenced in August 2015. It began with a large gathering of community leaders of the three constituencies of Bolave, Ioro and Eivo-Torau, including Meekamui representatives, in Siimalaka village in Bolave. This meeting came up with a Memorandum of Commitment, the 'Panguna Stakeholders Bolave Commitment - Panguna Dialogue Project', which lay down the objectives, activities and management arrangements for the project and which identified the main issues and challenges which were to be addressed by PDP. A project steering group was established and a team of Bougainville project facilitators was formed.

In 2015 and 2016 these facilitators, supported by three colleagues from PaCSIA, conducted a series of dialogue workshops (which were later called Community Dialogues) in several communities in the three constituencies. Often community dialogues led to the development of community action plans, and the local facilitators accompanied communities in the implementation of these action plans. In a later stage of PDP, stories of strength and stories of change were collected

James Tanis, Secretary Department of
Referendum, Veterans' Affairs and Peace



to demonstrate the effects PDP had in the communities. Communities agreed to share their stories with a wider Bougainville public, and hence this brochure. It presents some of the stories. I think they include important lessons for grassroots peacebuilding and governance which are of significance for all of Bougainville, particularly in view of the upcoming referendum. I am of the strong conviction that this kind of work has to be continued and expanded to all of Bougainville - we need Referendum Dialogues to get Bougainville referendum-ready.

James Tanis, Secretary Department for Referendum, Veterans' Affairs and Peace, ABG



WHY A PANGUNA DIALOGUE PROJECT?

Over the last decade and a half, peacebuilding on Bougainville has come a long way. After the devastations of the crisis years in the 1990s, Bougainville peacebuilding is widely acknowledged as a success story all over the world. However, peacebuilding is not finished yet. There are still quite a number of crisis-related issues which have not been addressed or solved yet. There are still reconciliations outstanding, weapons disposal is not complete, there is the issue of missing persons, and there is still violence in the communities, the roots of which can be traced back to the crisis years. Domestic violence, caused by crisis-related trauma, or sorcery-related violence are cases in point.

Bougainvilleans are in the process of rebuilding their lives, reconstructing governance institutions, social services and the economy. The Panguna mine problem looms large. The referendum on the future political status of Bougainville has been scheduled for June 2019. It can be argued that, with the referendum coming up, Bougainville peacebuilding is now in its final and decisive stage. Communities have to become referendum-ready.

A lot has still to be done to secure sustainable peace and good governance. Peaceful, well governed communities form the basis of sustainable peace and good governance at other levels, from constituencies through districts to the level of the autonomous region and the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG). The Panguna Dialogue Project (PDP) was designed to support peacebuilding, governance capacity-building and conflict resolution at this crucial grassroots community level. Its regional focus is on the Panguna mine area, in particular the constituencies of Bolave, Ioro and Eivo-Torau. This area was at the heart of the crisis, and communities here still feel somewhat marginalised even today. They have special needs with regard to community-based peacebuilding, conflict resolution and governance capacity building.

The focus on the Panguna area furthermore allowed for the inclusion of the Panguna Meekamui into project activities. And in fact, the Meekamui have come on board and have

comprehensively participated in PDP. This led to further constructive engagement between Meekamui and the ABG, and this is very important in view of the upcoming referendum. Bougainville has to be united for the referendum.

PDP's aim is the empowerment of community leaders at the grassroots level – chiefs, elders, church leaders, women and youth leaders. These leaders have valuable experience in local governance, conflict resolution and the management of community affairs. However, due to rapid social and political change on Bougainville today, they constantly have to deal with new problems. This requires adapting to new challenges and acquiring new knowledge and skills. PDP supports them in doing so through a series of Community Dialogues (for more on the importance of dialogue and on the practice of Community Dialogues see the next section of this book).

The Community Dialogues respond directly to the needs of the people in the communities, building on the strengths and wisdom of community members. They offer an opportunity for participants to learn from each other and, together with the PDP team facilitators, to develop ideas and actions to address community problems. Shared visions for constructive change and village-centred action plans are outcomes of this process.

Many Community Dialogues have been conducted over the last months, facilitated by the PDP team, resulting in positive changes in the communities, in particular improved local governance and conflict resolution. For example, a number of reconciliation processes have been initiated through Community Dialogues, and new leadership structures have been established in some communities.

The stories in this book provide evidence of these positive changes. So I am very happy to conclude that the overall goal of PDP, which was set out in the funding proposal for this project, has been achieved: "to contribute to peacebuilding and the strengthening of grassroots democratic governance in Bougainville".

Volker Boege, Director and Project Leader, PaCSIA

THE THINKING BEHIND THE PANGUNA DIALOGUE PROJECT

During our meetings with project participants we often heard the following statement: "PDP is different from other peacebuilding projects in Bougainville." This section will try to explain why it is different, and what underlying theory has guided the design of the PDP community dialogues and storytelling sessions.

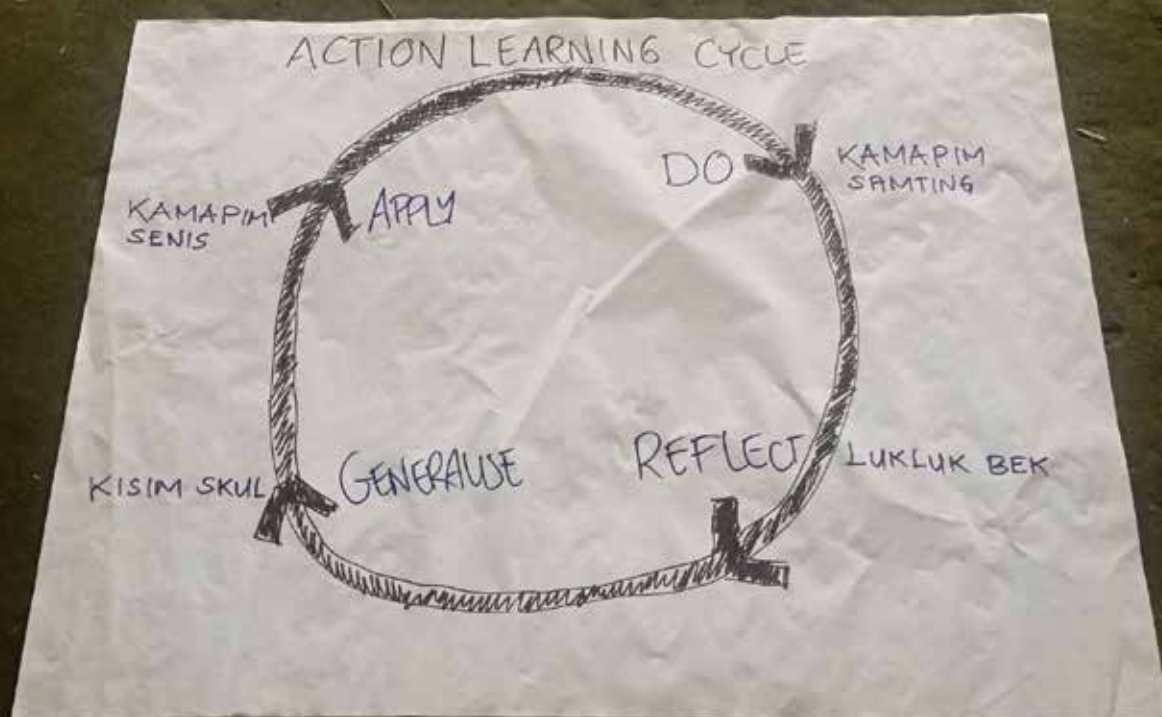
For us the word dialogue means that a group of people come together to exchange views, stories, experiences, and to build and affirm relationships and friendships. In dialogue every view is welcome and no participant aims to have the final word or to dominate the others. People in dialogue often come up with new ideas and find creative solutions to problems, because they discuss a lot of different ideas and have different opinions. The role of a dialogue facilitator is to create a safe space in which everyone present feels empowered to contribute and to have their voice heard.

When Volker Boege asked me to join the PDP team, I came with this understanding of dialogue and a lot of experience in creating such safe spaces for people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. But I had never before worked in Bougainville, and the only Bougainvilleans I knew were James Tanis and Sister Lorraine Garasu. I was not sure about the best ways in which to facilitate dialogue in Bougainville and how to help guide the team of local facilitators. However, I was sure that the best people to do such work and to decide how to do

it would be Bougainvilleans themselves. Therefore we decided to develop our project facilitation method by bringing together knowledgeable facilitators and by having a dialogue about how to do dialogue.

The way in which we developed this dialogue and in which we learned together as facilitators we call "action learning". As facilitators we shared experiences, planned the dialogue meetings, facilitated them and then met again to reflect on what we had done and what we needed to change to improve our work. This created a cycle of action, learning and planning that helped us to continually improve our work. Throughout the project we met a number of times with all members from the team, guided by the lead facilitators (first Dennis Kuiai and later Dominica Rovekea, Francis Nazia and Bonaventure Kenulai).

This "action learning" started in Buka in August 2015 when I first met Dennis Kuiai from Bana District. We met under the big tree at the boat harbour where the boats leave to cross the passage to Kokopau. Dennis had agreed to become the lead facilitator for the project and to help mentor the team of PDP facilitators. He was excited about the idea of dialogue and said right away that the project needed the input and voices of the communities involved right from the start. When I asked him how we should go about the facilitation, he said: "Let's ask the communities." The idea for the Bolave Planning Meeting in August 2015 was born.



Action Learning Cycle

From then on we created multiple opportunities to meet with Dennis and with our twelve facilitators from Ioro, Bolave and Eivo-Torau. Many of these meetings took place at Tunuru Mission Station near Arawa. During these meetings we talked about, created, designed and refined the three-day community dialogue process that is at the heart of PDP. Since then the PDP facilitators have conducted several community dialogue meetings with hundreds of people from different villages.

Originally we called these dialogues “workshops”, but at the end of the first round of dialogues, our local colleagues said that when people in the villages hear the word “workshop”, they always think about white people coming in and teaching them Western models of conflict resolution, peacebuilding or planning. In these “workshops” it is mostly the white people talking and Bougainvilleans are expected to listen. Often the outcomes of the “workshops” do not create lasting and sustainable change and everything goes back to what it was before. This is not what PDP is about. In PDP we believe that people in the villages of Bougainville are themselves the experts who know best what the problems in their area are, and what to do about them. We see it as our role to help them discuss and document these problems, and even more importantly, the sources of strength and resilience in the community. Based on these strengths, people can make decisions on how to address the problems and how to improve their lives. After this discussion we decided not to use the word “workshop” anymore, and simply to call our work “community dialogues”.

The word dialogue is very meaningful to many people in Bougainville. Dennis Kuiai told us about the “wasisi” in Bolave, the talk around the fire. In “wasisi” people from the village come together, share stories and knowledge and make important decisions. They sit around a fireplace and talk in a circle. Everyone can have input into the discussion. We think the community dialogues carry forward the tradition of “wasisi”. In Ioro people call it “mumusinaa”, the confidential talk about important issues. In the Torau language dialogue is called “atoato amini”, in Askopan it is called “basisi” and in Boira “tomosi nedned”. In Uruto they also call it “mumusina”. We have gathered these different words for dialogue during our work with the communities of Ioro, Bolave and Eivo-Torau, and we believe they show that the dialogical approach that we have described has strong roots in the communities of Bougainville.

Community participants also told us stories of how other international interveners have collected stories and recorded



Erica Rose Jeffrey, Dominica Rovokea

interviews with Bougainvilleans, but they never gave anything back to the people who told these stories. This sparked the idea of a different process of story sharing and story collecting, our “storytelling sessions”. Based on a process called “collaborative narrative practice” that we have learned from colleagues at the Dulwich Centre in South Australia we decided to visit all communities in which dialogues were conducted. During these visits we asked the participants to share with us and each other stories of change and stories of strength. The stories of change were about changes (both good and bad) that occurred after the community dialogue. The stories of strength were about achievements, knowledge, skills or values that sustained the communities and helped them through hard times. The PaCSIA team wrote these stories down in English, with the help of our local PDP team colleagues. We then printed them and read them back to the communities. After we had checked that the stories were correct, and participants had a chance to correct or add to them, we printed out a book of the stories which we handed to the local community. These stories are documents of the hard work, resilience and striving for peace of the people of the Panguna area. We felt honoured that they were shared with us, and even more honoured that all communities allowed us to take their stories and to share them with other communities.

The outcome of this story sharing is this book of stories. There were many more stories shared than there is space in this book, and they are with the communities that told them.

Serge Loode, Director and Trainer, PaCSIA



LISTENING TO AND MAKING FRIENDS WITH BOUGAINVILLE WOMEN

Women in Bougainville have played key roles in striving for peace since the early days of the crisis. Drawing on both family roles and ties as well as building networks throughout Bougainville, women were important advocates and action makers for peace at both local and national levels. This influence has continued in the peacebuilding process toward referendum.

When I was asked by PaCSIA to become a member of the PDP team, I came with great respect for the resilience and strength of Bougainvilleans and for the importance of the role of women. As it was my first time to work in Bougainville, I knew that rather than my words being the loudest that it would be more valuable for me to listen. To lean in, listen closely, not just to the words but also to the unspoken messages, the tilt of the head, the gaze of the eyes, the body language and tone.

I feel honoured to have the opportunity to work closely with all of the local facilitators and our colleagues in Bougainville, and continue to learn and grow from my exchanges with the women in our group, and the chance to meet Bougainvillean women in the villages. There are the small gestures with great weight, the exchange of gifts, the remembering of family details, sharing of songs and dances and learning of local custom. The exchange of beautiful fans, blouses, baskets and lights, which holds meaning beyond the object, and extends into the weaving of relationships.

With our PDP colleagues I had the opportunity to share stories of kastom, of faith, of loss and of hope. Some of these were big stories in the community storytelling meetings, and some of

them were small stories on the way to the market or to the river to wash. Some of them are now my own stories, such as learning how to buy 'mau' bananas and how to cook kaukau. Women of all ages shared their dreams for the future, for opportunities to start their education or to finish schooling that had been disrupted, and a desire to continue striving for a peaceful Bougainville. All of these stories are important. As we traveled together and worked with our local colleagues, I feel that the storytelling became easier between us, that we started to exchange more jokes and details of our lives, and that, like a garden, the roots of friendships have been planted.

While women were deeply involved as peacemakers during and after the crisis, there are ongoing questions about participation and representation of women in political structures. I also heard women talk about their frustration and when will it be the 'right' time for stronger political representation and female political leadership. One of the stories in this book shares the perspective that 'women are sacred but our voices are not heard' and brings up village women's desire to be more involved in reconciliation and political leadership. Bougainville is at a crossroads in its journey towards referendum, and from listening to the women, I believe that they are ready to be key players and leaders. I am inspired by the strength and leadership of the women of Bougainville and look forward to continuing to listen to women's voices and supporting their actions to create a more peaceful Bougainville.

Erica Rose Jeffrey, Director and Trainer, PaCSIA



Sharing stories at the Meekamui Government of Unity

STORIES FROM BOLAVE, EIVO-TORAU, IORO AND THE MEEKAMUI

The following stories were collected by the PDP team after the community dialogues in Ioro, Bolave and Eivo-Torau in October 2015, March 2016, July 2016 and August 2016. They are stories of strength and stories of change from the communities that engaged with the Panguna Dialogue Project. In addition to the communities that participated in the dialogues, the PDP team also met and shared stories with the Meekamui of Panguna. These are also included in the following section.

A SPECIAL HOUSE

In Bolave people sit in a special house, called “Haus Laupai”, to discuss when there is trouble. There are beds on both sides for the people to sit, and the chief will sit at the end. The people chew betel nut together. The betel nut is a symbol of discussion and dialogue. We come together in the house and make decisions there. [...]

(Bonaventure K.)

SHARING BETEL NUT

Lime, betel nut and mustard are what helps us through difficult issues. We sit together, chew betel nut, tell stories and talk about how we can solve our problems. These three items are regarded as drugs by outsiders, but to us they have been used by the chiefs from time immemorial. The building where these things are discussed is the “kara’keni”. It is also used in settling down issues. When two parties fight we break one betel nut in half. Each party chews a half. Then we break the mustard in half and one party gives the half to the other. Then the problem is settled. We call this process “karekara” in Nasioi. When there is fighting, we break the bow and arrow while we are chewing betel nut. Both enemies hold on to the bow and arrow at the same time and break it together. This is our traditional process. In earlier times betel nut has never been chewed by children and never on the road. Only by the chiefs in the kara’keni. This has changed. Now even small children chew betel nut.

(Beverly T.)

TUKUT

In my place, if I kill someone their spirit may leave them and attack me or any member of my clan. This can be a kind of sickness that cannot be healed at the hospital. If this happens then I need to make Tukut, to return their spirit to their family. I will ask all of my clan for laplap and goods to put in a basket together. There must also be shell money included. There will also be a young coconut plant which represents the head of the man who was killed. Each member of the clan must swirl the items around themselves to remove the spirit and help to send it back to its family. Even if my family lives far away, they must participate by swirling mimis or shell money. We then give the basket to the family of the man I killed and his spirit can return to his clan. This has been passed down from our ancestors and is still true today. We still have many problems in Bougainville, because even if we do a mass reconciliation, if I killed a man, I must still do either an individual reconciliation or a Tukut, otherwise the spirits are not returned.

(Bernard K.)

DISCOVERING THE PEACE OF MEEKAMUI

I am a woman from Bolave. I have not been to Panguna since the crisis. Today is the first day. I was afraid of the Meekamui people. Today I have come and I have seen that the Meekamui people here are peaceful. That is a change for me.

(Monica S.)

WITNESSING CHANGES IN THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

My name is Gregory. I was born here in Panguna. My village is Dapera village close to Panguna. I was born in 1960. When I grew up I could still recall the rivers, mountains and valleys of Panguna as they used to be. I started primary schooling at Deomary Primary School from 1968-69, then continued on at Tunuru Mission Station on the coastline of Arawa Town in 1973. By this time the new CRA had already established its prospecting and mining activities in our Panguna area. In 1973 I went on to Arawa High School for four years. I then trained as a cabinet maker. I was an apprentice with a German company, Zillmer Construction, at the Kieta wharf. In 1965 the first company came and made explorations, digging for gold. From that time onwards there were rapid changes that I saw. There was total change in the people's lives, their way of managing people. It was all changed by the company's operations. The strength of the leadership was not there. There have been a lot of changes which caused people to be traumatised remembering the original landscape.

There were also many changes to our culture and our way of living. The war ignited mainly because the company did not listen to the demands of the landowners and the people of Panguna. To address the issues of Bougainville we need to go back to the roots and see why this happened. I usually work

with the Meekamui Government in the Division of Local Level Government. I am also a secretary of the Panguna District Peace and Security Committee. Changes are still happening and are changing the lives of the people of Bougainville. Back in the days there was good communication between leaders and the people. Now that has changed because of the many groupings in the villages.

Even though we are not a party to the official peace process, we are still contributing. We conduct mediations, reconciliations and work with the people. We have participated in the negotiations for the police station of Panguna, and also for the schools. Buka had been delaying the building of the police station that we had proposed in the activity plan. So far we conducted reconciliations in Manetai, inside the boundaries of the Panguna district. We have conducted a reconciliation between Orami and the family of the late Francis Ona. Those were the only cases that we have conducted. It is difficult to do more without funding from the BPBP.

(Gregory D.)

THE PRINCIPLES OF MEEKAMUI

A strength of this government is that we are a tribe. And the other strength is our culture. And our traditional way of life. We are respecting one another. We respect our women. We respect our visitors. Also, at this table, the officers are from all over Bougainville. That is a strength. The basic principle at this table is the common good.

We have four basic principles of Meekamui. Meekamui means "everything sacred and holy". In everything that we say, we have to be god-fearing. "Osikaiang" means the natural law of "rightful ownership". "Sipung-eta" means "Indigenous people within their own law." The last one is "Muninava." This means "wealth and prosperity". We must have control over our wealth and resources. These principles help the people of Bougainville understand who they are and where they come from.

(Philip M. and Moses P.)

WE ENSURE THE PEACE IN PANGUNA

We have strength, value and knowledge here. Through agreements we unite the people and work for freedom and lead them to the referendum on independence. That is a value that we have. One important area is the men who look after the Meekamui Defence Force (MDF). We have agreed to make Panguna weapons-free. Two weeks ago a commander here fired a high-powered weapon in Panguna. He is now behind bars. Anyone doing something stupid here will have to face the consequences. I thank Moses for that. He is the commander and he keeps the peace. Anyone who will use weapons without the command of the MDF will have to face the consequences because they threaten the freedom of Bougainville.

(Moses P. and Philip M.)



Community dialogue at Manetal (Eivo-Torau)

THE FUTURE OF BOUGAINVILLE

We already made an alignment with the ABG and the UN. We are also prepared to work for referendum, including weapons disposal, good governance and economic recovery. But we have needs for governance support to set up the process and to sustain the people and the economy, even on the village assembly basis. Importantly, the people of Bougainville are with fear about the referendum. On the other side of the process, if we win the referendum with maybe 80%, the people are afraid of the PNG government. If we win referendum, the final say is in the PNG parliament. If they say no, we don't know what will happen. If they say yes, we don't know what will be the plan of PNG what will be the plan of the ABG.

After the Bolave Dialogue we had an MOA with the UN, the ABG and the veterans' administration. We also signed the MOI - Memorandum of Implementation - and the MOU -Memorandum of Understanding - with the Mining Division of the ABG. The other important thing is that Aloysius and I consulted the people to make sure things were clear. We did this without money. We have a customary way, we don't need money, we just need food. [...] Based on the MOU, I made some statements: weapons-free Panguna, and free Pangunans! That's important. I stay in here, that is my dedication. I am willing to make this awareness throughout Bougainville, but there is no budget yet.

There were changes for myself. Based on these agreements, I understand we are united, we are human and we all have to communicate. Also we talked with some NGOs because even if I

am staying isolated we need to communicate. But I feel free now even from some of my customary obligations.

For the future, I want Bougainville to unite, to come together to try to settle the issues and also reconciliations with externals. Stay free and talk with one voice for a common goal, that's important. Bougainville has an incomplete mission. Some parts are still hidden and are still missing. The Bougainville war is a holy war. If you just talk in a physical way, then we cannot settle. We have to balance our process in spiritual and physical ways. The revolution in Bougainville is different than revolutions in other nations, it is a unique war. While the British High Commissioner was visiting, I told him, "Bougainville is prepared to bring peace to the world. We are prepared, that is our mission." This story is about the past, present and future. In this moment we must become a civilised land including the six aspects: physically, spiritually, education, economics, political, and social.

We fight for land, with no land no man. Without land there is no man. It is that simple. That is why the fight was started. [...]

(Moses P.)



WE ARE PROUD OF OUR RECONCILIATIONS

Following the PDP community dialogue last October we have worked on reconciliation here in Eivo-Torau. I learned a lot about dialogue facilitation and working with different parties. Most of us witnessed the reconciliations here and have found that dialogue is important. Mediators have been set up and dialogue is under way now. Reconciliations from cases dating back from the crisis are happening. People are sitting down in dialogue and are getting their worries out. They work with the facilitators and mediators to get the parties together to find reconciliation. Sometimes they leave it to the mediators to negotiate between the parties. It is mediation mostly that is used for these cases. Dialogue is part of these mediations.

One specific reconciliation case that recently happened was called Nukupain's case. Another one is Masimam's case. They are separate but related. After the dialogue in October we engaged the parties in dialogue. The victims were not willing to accept reconciliation at first. The case was between former BRAs and Resistance fighters. It was the former BRAs who did not accept a solution. They went all the way to Wakunai and talked to the chiefs there, because some of the victims were taken all the way there, and it was believed that maybe some of the remains were in Wakunai. Unfortunately they were not able to find the remains, it is an ongoing missing persons case. [...] Maybe their bodies were dropped into the sea. They think that it is important to locate the remains before further dialogue can happen.

This is just a brief overview of what happened after the October dialogue. The dialogue gave people strength. But there were also some challenges. One problem was that when they would call for the parties to come, some would come and others would be absent. Mediation was not going well in these cases. Another difficulty is, that some people are not ready to accept the compensation offered. That is the difficulty. Sometimes interfering stories come out then and jeopardise the negotiations that are going on. These are some of the difficulties we faced. Another big problem is missing persons. In these cases the families are not ready to go into reconciliation. They want to see the remains first and want to organise a proper burial. This needs to happen before reconciliation is possible.

It is a strength, when the dialogue goes well and a reconciliation can be achieved. Some reconciliations we do with our own resources. But there is a trend going on that reconciliations are commercialised. People ask for money to facilitate. Everything is about money at the moment. People are competing with each other. Those who can write and read are often able to get a better outcome from the reconciliation than those who cannot. This means that some communities have the upper hand. This concerns me.

(Patrick P.)

OUR BOYS OWNED UP

I am going to tell a story about my community and myself in Tarara. It is a real situation that happened before the community dialogue. It involved a crisis-related reconciliation between Tarara and Panguna. The community had the confidence to achieve something through dialogue. After that the boys were free.

We also worked on the Stonewara case. The reconciliation took place immediately after the community dialogue in October. The case was about the bodies of five killed fighters who had been sunk in the sea at Tarara during the crisis. A sixth one survived and swam back. Everyone took part in the dialogue. Because of the confidence it went well. Our boys owned up, they did not hide what they had done. The case was brought to us by an outside party. We found that it was not just our side who was to blame, but both sides. The chiefs got those boys to justice. During the crisis the PNGDF decided that a group of captured fighters should be killed. Our Resistance boys only did the job for them. We all realised that it was not just the fault of our boys, but that they played their part in the killing. After the reconciliation it is not back to normal, but the people feel better. They have a sense of freeness. Peace and reconciliation are done already.

The difficulty that arose was that one person from the other family wanted to see the remains. Only one person, but his brother was a Member of Parliament in the ABG. He told his brother that the case will be directed to the International Red Cross to sort out the grievance.

Because we have made peace between the young people through this process, this has caused another problem. Now the young people from those families go to Arawa together to party, drink and take drugs. This is not good. This is something that we need to address in our next program. We are thinking of starting a sports program at Mabiri High School which is close. Hopefully this will provide some good way for the young people to spend their time without drugs. One other experience is that some of these boys have joined the Church Music Ministry group. That is a good sign that they are doing something good with their time. But we need to see more programs for our young people, more community development needs to be done and the community development office should get involved.

(Peter. K.)

LOVE IN A FAMILY

I want to share my story as a mother. After today, I understand what dialogue does. I speak as a mother of a family. I am George T.'s wife and I want to talk about an incident in the family. Love is important in a marriage. How I saw it, our marriage got disturbed. I wanted to find a way to get us back together again. I trusted myself, that I could get my husband back through dialogue. It was a hard task, I had to go on low profile to negotiate for him to come back. All I had to show was love. That made him come back. That is my big experience that I saw. I showed him my love and he came back. The other issue was the effect of the marriage disturbance on our children. We had to work together hand in hand for our children through dialogue.



Community dialogue at Manetai (Eivo-Torau)

After I got my husband back, I then used that experience to help other couples with problems. Through our experience we achieved a lot. We shared this experience with others and they learned from our experiences and also came back together. The most important thing was that peace prevailed in the family and in the community. After that I went on with a normal life with my children.

When they go out I give my children advice and teach them about our culture. An example of culture is when young boys have to build their own house when they become adults. You have to separate yourself from the family house when you grow up. That is what I teach my children. The other thing is that they should not interchange clothes, they should not share clothes with one another, especially boys and girls. This is a problem, a custom that is broken at the moment. I am an advocate of peace in my community and in my clan. I normally give a hand to others to understand my idea of peace. I did not go to any counselling training. I use my own experience to help others. My main task to deal with are broken marriages and that is how I end my story.

(Lucy T.)

THE VALUE OF FAMILY

This is a story of strength about my daughter and my family. My daughter often got beaten by her husband. If she ran away he came after her and got her back. This happened four times. Her brothers told her that if she goes back to him once more, she would come under the butcher's knife. I told my grandmother about the domestic violence and she talked to the husband and asked him why he gets her back after he has hit her. She told him to leave her alone. She said that the younger brothers were looking after her sister, but that he did not look after her properly. That made the husband think.

He asked what he needed to do to get his wife back. The brothers told him that he needed to prepare a feast for the family to ask for forgiveness. He marked the time for the ceremony. It was at the same time as the ceremony when we cut the children's hair for the first time. He cooked kakaruk and prepared all the food and prepared the right kastom procedures like chewing buai. Then he reconciled and shook hands with the family. Everyone took part to witness the ceremony, including the woman's uncles and brothers. They chewed buai together and shook hands. Then my daughter returned to him. I have assessed the situation. There is no more fighting anymore and he does not beat her anymore. Both sides are reconciled. The big feast has made a difference and the family is well now.

(Alice K.)





Community dialogue at Siimalaka Village (Bolave)

THE OCTOBER DIALOGUE INSPIRED US

I am going to speak about what changed in Telepi Ward in Bolave. In October we made three action plans and then tried to implement changes. One for each ward area. One issue we decided to address was over-population. The first thing we did was that we went to Panam Village with the Honourable Member Dennis Lokonai. We provided some political update and a family planning advocacy session with videos. We started in Panam and we continued this program in Sianeki and Waruwaru. Other villages will follow. Just yesterday we made a new policy at the village assembly level. We have decided on a three child policy for each family. This, we hope, will address the issues of land disputes and over-population. We also talked to the young unmarried youth to encourage them to observe the three child policy when they get married. And we advised the married women to seek help from aid posts or health centres in family planning. It is sometimes difficult to implement this program because of transport and funding issues. We also need stationaries and we have no money to pay an allowance to our advocacy and awareness staff.

The second issue we worked on was the Telepi Water Supply. We started fundraising in the community and so far we have raised K2000 for the project. But we do need more to start the work. We also still need to do a proper costing for the project. Another project we implemented was a FODE (Flexible Open Distance Education) study centre. The Honourable Member supported the district supervisor for the FODE program. He will supervise the program from the district office. Some students could not afford to pay the fees, but through the assistance of the Honourable Member we were able to get the poorer students into the grade eight program.

(Peter K.)

MEDIATING WITH SHELL MONEY

I speak for three villages in Telepi: Panam, Walaliu and Sianeki. I want to talk about a mediation that took place in our villages. We had a dispute over the death of a person. A woman had died. We came together to discuss the problem through our customary process, the "walking and talking". While this was happening, an argument started and nearly turned into a fight. One of the people involved secretly went to see me, the chief, to ask me to stop the fighting. It was far to walk. I walked back and got all the leaders together. I also talked to the disputing parties and advised them to stop fighting. I told them that, according to our custom, it is not good to fight when the dead person is still lying there. I also went to talk to the other party, who was from Panam. I told them that it is not proper to go to the village where the dead person is still lying unburied and to argue with the family. I found some traditional shell money and gave it to the leader of the group from Panam. This stopped them to go to the other village again to fight. I gave the other side shell money, too, and I negotiated what I would call in our custom a "traditional ceasefire." The fighting has now been stopped and the parties will have further negotiation to come to a reconciliation.

My strength in kastom still stands today. But in the law the police is not doing their job and are not arresting trouble makers. When people burned down houses of other people, the police did not arrest them.

(Andrew O.)

TAKING ACTION

I speak for Veliye Ward in Bolave. Changes happen everyday. Since October we discussed the problem of home-brew. After the meeting in October the chiefs and veterans went to the villages



and confiscated all the gas bottles of those who were known to produce home-brew. This helped to control the brewing of home-brew. There were also activities to rehabilitate young people who brewed illegally. We started a carpentry skills training for the young people. Of all the 130 young people who participated, all received certificates for their education. Since then these young people have led productive lives in the community and have not indulged in home-brew any further. Some of them have built private houses, some of them have helped with the school.

We have sixteen village assemblies in Bolave. The local member supplied hardware and timber for six village assembly offices. This year we hope to complete the next eight. This is to improve the governance in the community and to assist with the implementation of the new community government legislation. There are also improvements of roads happening and a new market house is being built. There is also a plan for cocoa rehabilitation in Bolave. There is a plan to establish three nurseries in the constituency, one in each ward. This would also produce income for the people in Bolave. There are also changes with regards to the economy. There is now a gold rush and many people go to Torokina for alluvial gold mining. This has provided them with a new source of income.

Peacebuilding and reconciliations are still happening in Bolave between different groups. They also still deal with crisis-related problems. One reconciliation took place between groups that were involved in a sorcery-related case. The Honourable Member also supported the case and provided funding for the reconciliation. There is also work being done by BPBP. They want to do only one mass reconciliation in Bana, instead of individual reconciliations. Many people supported this idea. Every crisis-related case should be covered by this reconciliation. This reconciliation ceremony is planned for June.

With regards to the widows, we have found that many widows have problems with school fees. We have established an ongoing support program, in which families fundraise for the widows. This has alleviated their problems somewhat. I also want to talk about the difficulties that we are facing. Today in our society everything is about money. No one helps someone else for free anymore. We also believe that climate change is effecting our crops, gardens and also cocoa crops. We need to work harder and have less harvest. This is a change to previous times in which we produced more crops with less work.

(James M.)

BREAKING SPEARS AND MENDING HEARTS

I will talk about “traditional ceasefires” or “watapa.” Our people used to have special ways to end fighting. This is also the way we dealt with the Bougainville crisis. It is the process we used here in Bolave.

At first the fighting parties break their arms and mend their hearts, which is called “watapa”. The next part is the “bel kol”, a preliminary payment of compensation. And the third part is the walking and talking, which is called “lagena.” During the lagena they negotiate the final compensation. Then the reconciliation and the exchange of compensation takes place. Here is a story about how we used this process:

This happened when I worked with the peace monitoring group in 2001. An incident happened in Morotona Care Centre. A small boy from the BRA was killed by the Resistance. I, Peter A., and Dono A. were called to go to a village called Mosino, which was where the boy who was killed was from. Because I spoke the language there, I was asked to facilitate the process. I asked the villagers about which process they used to deal with a killing. The old men told me that it was customary to pay compensation straight away. I told them that we in Telepi, in the upper Lamane, use three steps in dealing with conflicts like this. The first step is to talk to the armed people to get them to lay down their arms. The second step is to pay preliminary compensation and then the watapa, the breaking of arms, takes place. They agreed to this process.

Then we went to the care centre at Morotona and asked for a contribution to the process from the community there. They spread a canvas on the ground and asked people to contribute to compensation and to throw their belongings on the canvas. People contributed K8000, 27 ducks, 32 laplaps, 5 pigs and shell money. We collected all the contributions and took them back to the village. We put the shell money around the neck of the BRA commander who was the small boy’s relative. Then we were told by the villagers that there would be no more fighting. To my knowledge there is peace since then. The actual compensation and reconciliation took place later.

This process has been handed down from our ancestors and it is still the right the way to make peace.

(Andrew O.)



DIALOGUE SOLVES SORCERY CASE

I would like to present a story of change from my personal life. The skills that I gained at the community dialogue in October were very useful. I discovered that dialogue is very important. I can solve a problem or a conflict through dialogue. Since the dialogue I mediated three sorcery cases in my community. The first case was between the executive officer of Ioro 1, Peter D., and Peter P.. The second one involved Luis T. and Linus O.. The most recent one was last Saturday. It was between Charles A. and Nicolas N.. I discovered my strength when mediating these three cases.

In the first case I came in when the two parties were confronting each other. I realised that Peter P.'s family was suspecting Peter D.'s family of sorcery. I told them that I was eligible to mediate the case. During the mediation I discovered that the cause of the sorcery suspect was witchcraft advice. A short lady who lives in Peter P.'s community was accused of being responsible for the sickness of Peter P.'s family. The suspected lady was Peter D.'s wife. While mediating I realised that there were no witnesses for the witchcraft advice, it was just a belief. Then I went over to Peter D.'s family. I comforted them and advised them that the problem will be solved. They acted upon my advice. Then I gave both parties one month to cool down. After the one month was over, the two parties came together. Both parties agreed for reconciliation to take place. Then I gave them another date for the actual reconciliation ceremony. At the reconciliation Peter P.'s family paid K250 to Peter D.'s family for false accusations over sorcery. Both parties were happy with the outcome and life returned back to normal.

(Francis B.)

DIALOGUE HELPS TO ORGANISE THE VILLAGE

After my participation in the community dialogue in Ioro 1, it helped me a lot. I organised my village people together and conducted an awareness of the dialogue. I came up with a setup to organise the people into different responsibilities: chiefs, youths and women leaders. Today all of these groups are performing their given responsibilities to ensure that the peace process progresses. The church is also playing its role. This organisation makes everything easier. Life in Tekana becomes much easier. We have a better distribution of workload now. It is not just the chief who works, but everyone is playing their part. A good example is the construction of a footbridge made out of bush-twine over the Pangara river. The bridge will officially open this Saturday and will help students go to school. Because I am really satisfied with the changes in my village, I guarantee 100% support to the PDP. I would like to know where PDP is going to lead us for the next step.

(Thomas K.)

WOMEN ARE SACRED, BUT OUR VOICES ARE NOT HEARD

I will start off by talking about something that happens in our community. We see ourselves as undermined by the men when it comes to mediating conflicts. Our voices are not heard clearly. When we want to say something, the men and the chiefs stop us and undermine us. It is because in our traditional way of life, women are sacred. When women spoke, conflicts either erupted or ended. I will give you an example based on marriage. When a family is experiencing conflict, the women often assume the role of mediators. In these mediations people chew betel nut while they are mediating the conflict. These mediations do not need money. We seek assistance from church leaders and chiefs for the mediation process. At the end the marriage returns back to normal. We women are contributing.

The women also want to join the crisis-related mediation process. But the men do not let the women leaders into the process. It is the result of our traditional way of life in which the men see themselves as superior over their wives. For this very reason you will not see women occupying positions in government offices at the village level. Women are not given political positions or leadership roles in church. We want to see a change from now onwards. We want to see more women in decision-making positions. We want a dialogue between the women and the men about women leadership.

(Francisca G. and Priscilla D.)

DIALOGUE RELEASES OURSELVES AND BRINGS COMMUNITY TOGETHER

[...] I have a lot of uncomfortable issues in my life that were connected to the conflict. I searched everywhere for a person to help me solve my issues. I found it now. The dialogue team approached us and mobilised us and explained very deeply to look into our selves. During those days of dialogue in Ioro 2 I learned that I could release these issues. It is about every part of the community. We came together for those three days and expressed ourselves and our issues. We found that some of those issues were very hard to solve. Before the crisis the livelihood of this community was very plain, very lovely. During the crisis this all was destroyed. And the atmosphere from then has been totally negative. I am here of this community. I had to confront all these issues in front of the facilitators. The issues that still linger with us are about the killings that took place in the community, as well as the suspects that are happening. We have three categories of crisis: conflict, social life and leadership. Conflict has erased our true standard of living. I don't own the land, but the land owns me. That is where the conflict arose. The leadership was nowhere to activate, it was total chaos.

[...] I can see a few changes in the community, after the three days of dialogue. A few weeks ago a woman died along the riverside. Before, when a person died, the community did not turn up, only the family. But when this woman died two weeks ago, the whole community came together and brought rations of food for a celebration. That woman's family, they had no food, they had no money, but then they were looked after by the community. Three days ago we had a traditional feast and it mobilised the whole community to come together. Normally the families just make feasts for themselves. But then the whole community came together and organised a feast. This is the first time, I have seen it with my own eyes. And people talked about the dialogue. Dialogue, in my own words, is that you talk about your experience and I talk about my experience and we share our stories. But first we have to release ourselves, we have to release the stories in our heart. Our community is seeking assistance to release ourselves. The issues are still there, they are are still lingering with us.

The issues we still have with us are based on family life, clan and community. I think to myself now: how can I help solve these issues? The last part of our experience is to hold a peace and reconciliation ceremony here to solve all these issues that we have raised. Pakia is unique. There are still many issues outstanding. Many things were started here in Pakia. Pakia community has a different level of issues here.

(Kevin M.)



HELICOPTER

Barusi ninamuri

Barusi ninamuri

Bakana koropera meuroke koroarama

Bakana koropera meuroke koroarama

Miri helicopter

What a different aeroplane?

What a different aeroplane?

With it's propellers spinning in the middle

With it's propellers spinning in the middle

It's name is helicopter.

This song was composed when the CRA first brought in this equipment to the mining area.



SPACE FOR DIALOGUE

In all organisations in the community of Pakia, there was not enough cooperation among the leaders, including the churches as well. The leaders never talked, they never came to consult the people. This was before the dialogue. [...] After the dialogue, this is different. Now people are opening up. People seem to be talking to each other more and to the leaders. People are coming together, giving their hearts to the leaders.

Recently after the dialogue, there have been a lot of activities going on, like fellowship nights and feasting. And a major change that happened was that there was massive contribution from the leaders. The leaders involved themselves much more. Recently a feast was held over the body of a dead woman. She was our in-law. After the crisis, there was never any contribution from the community when someone had died. But after the dialogue there was a big change, a historical change for the community. That so many people would come together and contribute to the feast day was a historical change. If it was the family alone, they would not have been able to afford the food for the feast.

The major downfall of the Pakia community is that there is not even a place where the whole community can come together. There is no resource centre in the community, and it is difficult for the people to come together, have discussions and make plans. It is important that people can come together and have discussions about the future. The people have proposed this to the government, but no one has answered the proposal yet. There is no venue where people can come together and have discussions and dialogue. We need to take ownership and we need to keep asking for help to build a place, like a resource centre, for the community to come together. We need a place that can accommodate every organisation here in our village. Coming together for meetings like today should not be in the children's classroom, it should be in a proper building. But because of the lack of support from the agencies we cannot provide proper shelter for the people who are coming.

(Francis M.)



PDP Lead facilitators Francis Nazia, Dominica Rovokea, Bonaventure Kenulei

INVOLVING THE YOUTH

My story is that I was born after the crisis and I didn't have the experiences of the crisis. In my youth, we didn't have any idea about dialogue, even when we were in school. My mom is a facilitator for PDP, and previously when my mom was facilitating I would listen to what my mom was preaching but did not take it seriously. When the dialogue team came to Pakia, I came to observe what was going on here after school. From my point of view, I have come to realise that prior to the PDP community dialogue there were no good workshops at Pakia to open up people's minds. Now I have seen that dialogue is one of the important things for creating lots of changes, changes in the issues - like family problems and reconciliations. I would like young people to be more involved. Maybe the dialogue team could talk to youth groups or organise meetings for the youth about their involvement in the community as well as having some other resource people to talk to them. I see a role for youth.

(Rogene T.)

MI PASIN

This is the story of Pakia, right here. Before the crisis, people had good relationships, they attended to the chiefs. When they rang out the bell for the community to gather, they gathered quickly and there was respect and good mobilisation within the community. For example, in education, the students used to go on to high school, and they respected each other and they would listen to each other. There was also money to support them to go to both, primary and high school.

After the crisis, many different things happened. I have seen that many people are only self-interested, they say “mi pasin”, they are just interested in their affairs and won’t listen to others. So the situation in Pakia community is that we were not in unity. If the chief calls a meeting only a few would attend a meeting.

This dialogue was conducted here and I experienced that there are many issues that we do not feel free to talk about. Those issues we put up for discussion, it made us talk about it, it

uncovered the issues. One difference that I saw was that at first there were only some people coming to meetings, but after the dialogue, many people attended these things.

Another good thing that I have seen is in the set up of the clans and working with them. We have an outstanding case where our clan member killed a member from the other clan. It has not been talked about and always leads to disagreement. At the moment they have listed all the issues of the clans. One of my duties is to help resolve that case. This dialogue has opened minds to the issue and to take action. We have seen that dialogue is the only way forward to talk about the issues. We are looking forward to the reconciliation.

(Pauline N.)



The Panguna mine pit in 2016

UNDER MY NOSE

I got married right after the crisis. I didn't complete my education because of the crisis. During the crisis we just ran away into the bush, then there was nothing to do and we just had to get married. I have children who are going out to school and I am facing problems with school fees. With the issues in ourselves we participated in this dialogue here. Personal family stories were affected by the dialogue, and afterwards I have seen some of the changes. After I attended I have come to realise that I have resources to get money. I have used my land to plant crops to sell at the market to pay for school fees: peanuts, kaukau, and betel nut. Now I have less school fee worry.

Now I would like to share a story about faith. I have come to realise that God is always with us. Many things are right under our noses, but we do not see them. It is our faith in the Creator which helps us see them.

(Mary T.)



DIFFERENT ISSUES DIVIDE OUR COMMUNITY

Before the dialogue project there were many problems, including outstanding issues, family issues that many people did not speak out about, or felt free to dialogue about and come to reconciliation. After the dialogue, it really opened minds and hearts to talk about the problems.

Family issues are small issues that are in the families. We can show the love, they don't need money to reconcile, just give the love to make change using dialogue. This dialogue has opened minds and the issues in the family. Two cousins, they had an argument about home brew. One of them was drunk and disturbed the other one while sleeping, and it made him so angry that if he had gone outside he would have bashed him. But using dialogue now they are talking together.

Regarding clan issues we are in the process of preparing for reconciliation. Issues are about a land dispute with clan members, this is a clan to clan dispute. The process has started and they are working with the clan chiefs. I am taking a lead role, I am organising and I am a mouthpiece for the clans. They tell me issues which I bring to the chiefs. This is one of my duties in addition to being an early childhood teacher. The clans are working clan to clan. For the community issues the community chief will be taking the lead to resolve the community issues. He is also involved in the clan issues as he is the paramount chief.

Tok tok straight. This dialogue has opened our eyes, we have seen dialogue as a way to come to compromise. What I believe is that our ancestors used dialogue as one of their tools to fix up issues rather than holding the issues in and them becoming silent killers. Our people used to use this tool and somewhere along the way it disappeared. Even in the creation, God used dialogue to create the son and holy spirit.

We have been without a chief for a long time. I am thankful to this dialogue because people have worked hard to have a chief, we worked for leadership. I feel privileged to be part of the dialogue. I have been worried because we were without a chief. It was a problem for a long time.

(Jacinta I.)



General Moses Pipiro, members of the PDP team and a visitor from Misereor

WE MADE RECONCILIATION HAPPEN

This is a long story told by several people from a community in Bolave who were involved as leaders, mediators and conflict parties. It is a story that involves the whole community of Sikunam-asi village.

After the dialogue in March we took care of a problem that had been going on for a long time. Now we have addressed it through dialogue. Since the dialogue we have not experienced as much of a problem. We have communicated with each other and have solved many issues. Since then we have not had to go through as many things. The chief communicated with me and with the other person to help resolve the problem.

(Paul T.)

This story is about the most difficult issue. We have worked on this for over twenty-five years. Chief Aloysius K. has carried out the dialogue, he was the key leader. The way we dealt with the problem was the 'walking and talking'. This is what we used before we came together for reconciliation. It was the conflict between Francis A. and Kapara. We invited both people here. We will now invite them to tell all of us in Tok Ples how they are feeling now.

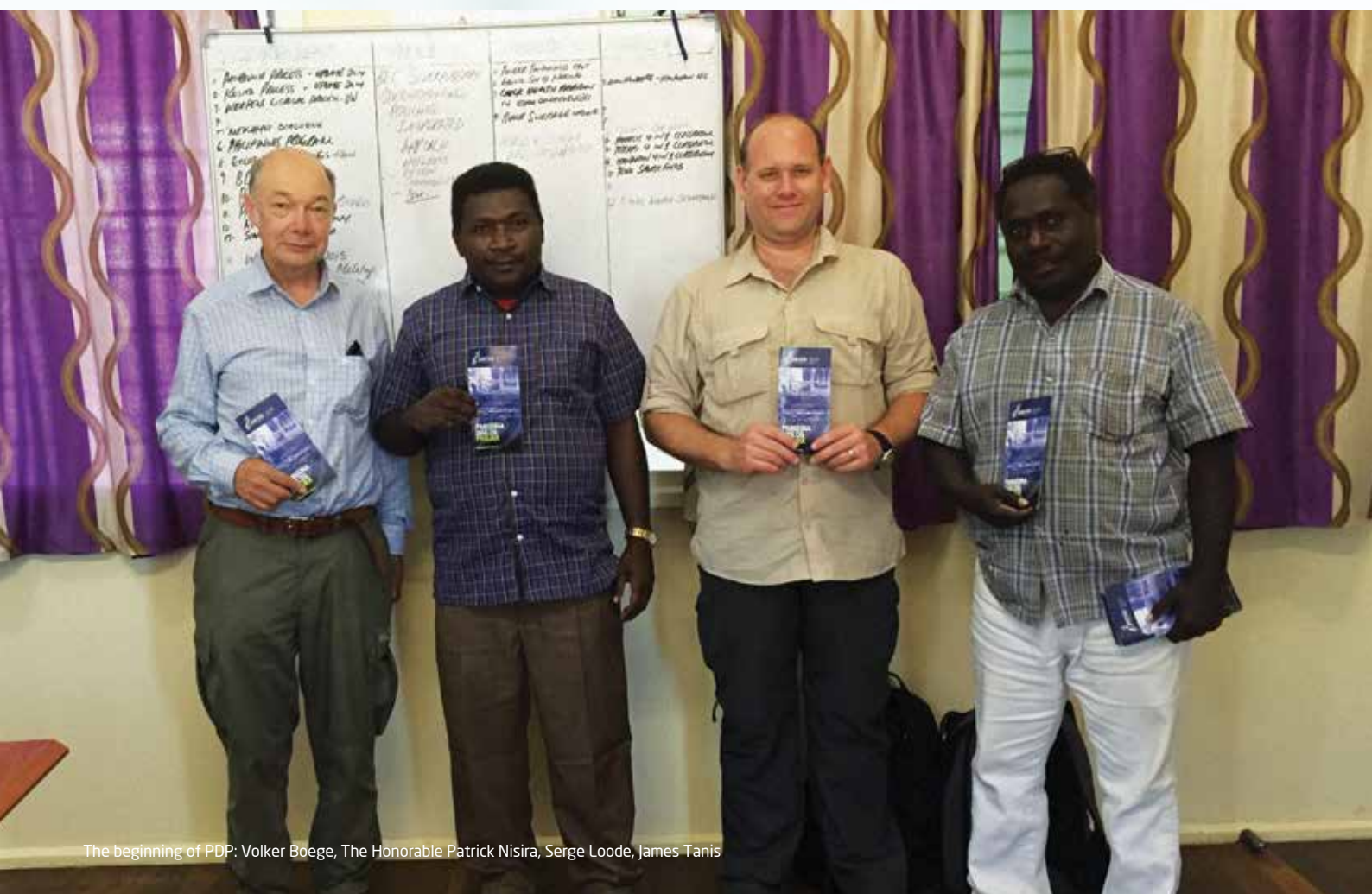
(Tony S.)

My name is Francis A. and I am of Balapa Clan. When I came to the March dialogue, it helped me to diffuse some of the confusion that I had in my mind. The problem that I carried with me, I had to carry for more than 25 years. Participating in the dialogue helped me to better understand the areas of the problem that I was involved in and also to clear my mind. The source of the problem was a sorcery case. It affected the whole clan. Back then there were people dying, and we were very suspicious that someone was causing our people to die. We suspected a member from a different group within my own clan.

During the process of negotiation and mediation we were both involved in talking about ways we could move forward. We also engaged in the traditional ways of settling the issues, the 'walking and talking' and also the killing of pigs as part of the reconciliation. We exchanged twenty kina and thirty kina, two pigs and shell money. The Church Ministry was involved under the leadership of Tony S..

After the reconciliation everybody is free now. We can talk freely without fear and can communicate as one people again. We can work together. There are no difficulties now after the reconciliation.

(Francis A.)



The beginning of PDP: Volker Boege, The Honorable Patrick Nisira, Serge Loode, James Tanis



Reconciliation at Sikunam-asi Village (Bolave)

My name is Kapara, and I am also of Balapa Clan. The beginning of the story is the same as the one from Francis A.. I was living in fear that I was the suspect of sorcery from Francis. I was hiding from the rest of the community and my morals were really down. After the dialogue commenced and the negotiation and mediation started, I was given the privilege to talk and to understand what the other party was saying. I was asked to come out of hiding and to show myself to the other party. Francis A. accepted me as a member of the clan. The contribution from the mediation team, the church and the clan leaders who talked about their values in faith and kastom helped me to diffuse what was heavily affecting me. It helped me to find release and reconciliation. Now I am free, I can walk around, I enjoy the environment, and I am accepted back into the culture. The church has welcomed me home.

(Kapara)

What made a difference in the dialogue was recognising the importance of culture and faith through the guidance of the church and the chiefs. What also helped is the knowledge that we have to stand united before the upcoming referendum. The people of Sikunam-asi need to be united.

(Tony S. and Laurence T.)

I will talk about the root of every problem here. The root of the problem is sorcery. My name is Tony S.. I am the community leader and a church elder. I want to show the way to my people. One day I got up early in the morning at 5.00am and I went to the location of my cousin brother Kapara with K100, shell money, two packets of rice, one packet of noodles and one tinned fish. I went straight to him and said to him: my cousin, we have been divided for a long time. Now is the time we need to come together again. I am sorry about what I have done to you. If you accept me then you will receive all these things that I brought for you. And my cousin told me that it was a long time, that he was hiding in the bush and that he was not free. At that moment I apologised to him and I shook hands with him. And this was the beginning of the reconciliation that we have reported today. From there my cousin confirmed: Tony, nobody will ever come out of this if they do not participate in reconciliation. We all felt the power of reconciliation. Some reconciliations have already been carried out, some are still in the pipeline.

(Tony S.)



After Tony arrived with all his gifts and after I saw his face I was so moved for the first time. I remembered all the pain and suffering that I had felt because I did not see him for such a long time. I felt so much joy when I saw Tony. All the respect that Tony felt for me and showed me changed my heart and mended the rift. The goods that Tony brought made me honour him. I shed tears of joy. We promised each other in the special reconciliation ceremony that this bond will never be broken again. As a leader and a clan elder I will work with the rest of the people and we will prepare for the major reconciliation of my brother that is coming up. Tony is a church leader and I have cultural beliefs. What Tony did was to mend our relationship. It was a form of respect and acceptance that he showed to me and that he said "you are still my cousin". There are no boundaries between the church and the culture. They can work together.

(Kapara)

BRINGING THE CHILDREN TOGETHER

I am a teacher and this is my second year that I am teaching in this school. The first time they had the dialogue in the chapel, I was with my children in school. I only came for two days and I just listened to them, what they were discussing about the dialogue. I opened my ears, so I have some experience about this community in school. Between these two parties, I am hearing that they are discussing these divisions between themselves within the community. A few weeks after the dialogue they went to some communities to have a reconciliation and to make peace in the communities. From this, in my experience, they now have peace around themselves. There was a division between the schools, the original schools and the new school here. When the reconciliation took place it has brought together the kids and their communities and they now support the school. This community has a big support for the school. It was surprising to me to hear that they built the classroom and the staff house in just four weeks. I couldn't believe it when I heard that.

(Rachel N.)

YOUNG PEOPLE CAN PLAY A ROLE

My name is Justin K. and I am with the Community Auxiliary Police Service (CAPS). I left school after grade ten. I lived in the village. I experienced that my chiefs and elders needed support from people who were a bit educated. For example, for writing up reports of activities, as well as providing security for the chiefs. I had a real interest in helping the chiefs. At that time the training of the CAPS came about, it was three weeks training. The chiefs in the village were also beginning the mediation in the sorcery dispute. After completing the training I did my practical when the Panguna Dialogue Project came about and the community dialogue happened. I was allowed to do my practical with the community dialogue. I became the extra security man to help the chiefs with the mediation after the dialogue. The change that I experienced was that as a young person I could also play a role. Often we leave these important things only to the chiefs and elders, but we young people have to help and to play a role. One of the outcomes was that the young people are now realising that they can play a major role. Someone at our level and age group is needed. Now the youths are joining together and they are free to work with the clan groups. This is a big improvement. There are no barriers now. Before the process young people kept to their locations and did not come out, now they are free to move.

There are also challenges. Being a youngster, there are people who think that I have little to contribute or little knowledge. Sometimes I was put down. But the dialogue gave me skills and knowledge to talk to them appropriately and I could convince them that I could help. The dialogue helped me to learn these things. The end of the story for me now is that I have improved a lot personally as a young man. I look forward to gaining more knowledge and to working along side the chiefs to promote peacebuilding. I have grown up to the next level. It is huge work and I love to do it and to gain experience.

(Justin K.)



DEATH OF A CHILD

There was a problem at a site of alluvial gold mining. A child was seriously injured and had its intestines come out. The child died. I was afraid the community from here would retaliate. There was growing tension and people from here were talking about going and ransacking the property of the families at the mining site. I stood up and said: "No. That is not the way. These people have a special reason to be there and they are trying to make a little money from the gold. They did not cause the death on purpose." The skills and knowledge I got from the dialogue session helped me to prevent a catastrophe and a fight between the people. That is my strength now. I feel I am mature now and can help in such conflicts.

(David K.)

RECONCILIATION HAS NO PRICE TAG

Sometimes the parties to a conflict exchange the same amount of money, sometimes the amounts are different. But in our culture we come to an agreement that is acceptable and affordable to both parties in the conflict. The offer of reconciliation has no price tag. You accept what I have. It is not about making money, it is about giving and receiving and coming together in unity.

(Tony S., Aloysius K., Laurence T.)

NEW THINGS

I go to the local school. Today is the first time I meet white people.

(Pauline W.)

DIALOGUE MADE ME SOMEBODY

I am going to talk about a little strength and how it connects to the dialogue. I felt that before the Panguna Dialogue Project came here I was somebody who could not be involved in anything. But after the dialogue the chief selected me to help with the paperwork for the negotiation and mediation, and I was part of the team that managed the reconciliation process. Now I feel that I have the skills to deal with issues of conflict. My strength is that I have the skills to write and record. I also have the skills to listen to parties in mediation. I am more confident now that I have helped to save Kapara. I have the strength to deal with conflict now and to deal with conflict that has cost lives. Before the dialogue I was a Mr. Nobody, now I am engaged in actions in peacebuilding.

(Aloysius T.)

RELATIONSHIPS SOLVE PROBLEMS

I want to share some of the strengths that I experienced in the community. When there is a problem, there is also a relationship in the community. We are in the clan system. When there is a problem the community will look at the relationship. Who are the brothers, who are the uncles, who are the nieces? They can help with the problem. We value the relationships. When someone demands money for reconciliation we will just give what we have and it will be accepted. That is a strength of our relationships.

(Paul T.)

PDP HAS BOOSTED MY CAPACITY

My name is Francis Oitapa, and I am the chief of Ketsuarapa Village Assembly of Karato area. Any visitor who wishes to enter Karato or Ketsuarapa VA has to seek permission from me.

I take you back to the March Karato Community Dialogue. That dialogue training was inspirational, I am a different chief now. My chieftaincy power has been boosted and it is evident in my improved performance. Straight after the training I made it my duty to convene an urgent meeting to check on our progress and the status of our respective action plans. It was in this dialogue that we revised our action plan. Carrying on from that meeting there has been an improved community in terms of cooperation and obedience. I keep a regular check on this improved community, I call meetings every Sunday for chiefs dialogue.

In my endeavour as a community leader, I have felt a strength which is propelling me to lead in this manner. This was evident just after the March dialogue. It is the respect the people pay, the importance and the power of a chief. One classic example is how I have utilised my value as a chief to mobilise the community to be responsible in cleaning the school, church and aid-post. As you can see it is much cleaner now. Not only that - maintenance of old buildings is also taking place. The chiefs will convene another dialogue to sort out the carpenters in terms of small payments. In my capacity as a chief I do odd things in the name of the community. Things like allowing my chainsaw to be used for fee and so forth.

Taking you back to my clan, I can proudly say that all outstanding reconciliations within my clan have now been completed. I am therefore waiting for my counter-parts to get theirs done so that we may move to the next stage which is clan to clan.

Our next task would be the election or appointment of our representatives at VA level. I have already given all the chiefs a job to do - look after a pig each. There would be a big feast during the swearing in ceremony. A bright future is my ultimate goal.

(Francis O.)

TEAM WORK BRINGS CHANGES

As a teacher in Karato Primary School, one of the greatest strength that we, the teachers, have, is working together, moulding each other and helping each other even in the absence of one teacher. This binds us teachers together and helps us work to achieve our aims, which are to educate our future leaders in the Karato area.

The greatest changes that I have come across after returning from holiday, and which shows a positive outcome in the community, is that everyone has cleaned up their homes, beautifying the place and cleaning the school area. This is a good change, which shows positive values and beliefs from our clan leaders.

After dialoguing in March the people in the Karato area are realising their roles and responsibilities. The village elders and chiefs are also very active within their roles and responsibilities. Also, currently good knowledge and wisdom shines in the Karato area. People are very attentive and committed in every area to bring a proper and good leadership to the Karato area.

(Saimos)

AN ADVOCATE OF PEACE AND HARMONY

My name is John Tovitan and I am an appointed Paramount Chief of Kuroi Clan of the Upper Karato VA area. In my role as the overall chief I have always been an advocate of peace and harmony within my clan and the community at large. I have always preached about respect as the umbrella value which will deliver peace.

Frankly speaking, my community is infested with so many social issues which I as a leader must not sit and watch. Some of these social issues are domestic conflicts such as gossiping, adultery, and the list goes on and on. After acquiring a vital tool from the March Karato dialogue, courtesy of the Panguna Dialogue Project team, I see peace being achieved here and there.

Sometimes I get threats, however, from youths with an attitude problem. These youths are the ones consuming home-brew, but that has slowed down again. So far, after the March dialogue, eleven cases have been settled. These cases range from gardening area disputes, animal thefts to adultery and other domestic issues.

To fast track reconciliation I believe in commitment and joint effort from all stakeholders.

(John T.)

I WANT TO MAKE UP FOR MY WRONG DEEDS

I am going to tell you stories about the work I do. I am the village assembly vice-chairman at my place, Ketsuarapa, and also a chairman of the Karato Parish and also a clan chief of my clan (Murua). The first work of my life was as a clan chief and at the same time a church worker. During the crisis I joined the BRA and I took part in the Kuveria Prison Operation. After the operation all the BRA were stationed at Torokina Camp. While there, we received orders to confiscate two men from the Panguna District. They were suspects..

Today I regret what I did during the crisis (shooting a man). I feel that I am not at peace. I want to reconcile with the deceased man's family and help to bring back his remains for a proper burial.

After the ceasefire I was entitled to the BETA trust fund by the ABG. I decided to get roofing irons. After receiving the materials I consulted the whole community of Karato as to what to do with the roofing irons. The community agreed to help build up the school for our children, which were here to this day, because that is what we fought for.



Community dialogue at Karato (Elvo-Torau/Torokina)

Becoming a leader I feel that working hand in hand with other chiefs, leaders and stakeholders in the community will bring about good developments and changes. One good thing about myself is the Karato people chose me to be a Parish chairman, because I live right here at the station of Karato.

We talked about the setting up of the village assembly with the Meekamui of Karato, and we needed to dialogue more about it. There is still division amongst us. There are disagreements with regards to our ideas. The Panguna Meekamui came to Karato to witness the first reconciliation we had. After this, the community dialogue was conducted here in March. This course really opened up our minds and gave us strength to talk about issues and to reconcile.

Our priority plan on reconciliation is based on first doing reconciliation family to family and then clan to clan. Finally we will reach out and do a community reconciliation. This is the principle of our process. We are looking forward to the big reconciliation with the people of Upper Karato.

One big achievement that I notice now is the clan chiefs are working together, helping each other on major issues affecting the clan members. Even when good things are happening, I still face challenges in my work. Some clan members hesitate to listen to me. But I see this as a cross for me to carry in order to bring changes.

Reflecting back on what I did during the crisis I feel that I need to sacrifice to do good things, to make up for the bad deed. Actions speak louder than words. You have to be an instrumental leader regardless of circumstances.

My vision is that I want my Karato community to develop to the same level as the rest of the Bougainville community. We must not regard Karato as a remote area and expect other people to come and develop our place.

(Justin M.)

A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY HAS COME BACK

There has been a significant change among the chiefs after the Karato Community Dialogue. Before the dialogue the chiefs paid no attention to the youths, which led to them roaming around unproductively.

After the dialogue, however, the tools acquired were utilised resulting in notable changes among the young people in the community. There was an improvement. There is much change also in the community - there is more cooperation and teamwork.

I have also noticed an effective communication between teachers and students.

(Genevieve H.)

CONCLUDING REMARKS



PDP Facilitator Team: Bonaventure Kenulei, Francis Nazia, Beverly Tamis, Rachel Pospoi, Angela Kavarui, Dominica Rovokea, Monica Sioma, Felix Honani, Bernard Kataia, Anscar Nionem

MY REFLECTIONS ON AND ASSESSMENT OF THE PANGUNA DIALOGUE PROJECT (PDP)

Firstly I commend PaCSIA, in collaboration with the ABG, for being considerate in choosing Bougainville for their vital program. The resources which we used would not have been used here in Bougainville if it was not for you. The seeds which we planted as a team have started bearing fruits as I will report in my personal assessment.

My assessment will be centred mostly around Karato, where I worked full time as a facilitator, but will also give a general reflection on the program as a whole to conclude. Firstly, choosing Karato to me was a very good decision; because of its remote location very few programs reach there. They really needed it. Visiting Karato a total of three times to me was a discovery. The community which is home to both ABG and Meekamui followers was already advanced in their clan and village set-up. They do not sleep over a domestic problem - they resolve it straight away. The community dialogue only up-skilled them to address the crisis related issues. During the storytelling a former combatant openly admitted in shooting a man, something other combatants don't do. He is willing to meet the victim's relatives and that's so far my biggest break-through as a facilitator, because it is a district to district issue. PDP will seek Government ownership on this sensitive issue.

When I read stories from our teams respective programs I

have a clear picture of how effective PDP is. The stories are our evaluation tools. A very important achievement after the dialogue in the politics circles is the lifting of General Moses's confinement at Panguna so he can travel the length and breadth of Bougainville to educate his followers of Meekamui on his current stand regarding referendum. He has also been issued a vehicle to support his tour of peace. We the PDP team also have joined hands with our sister group the Nasioi Peace Building Association to work as partners in our next program starting next year. One milestone for us as a group is that we will be a registered organisation under a new name tag. We will be known as the Bougainville Indigenous Dialogue. This to me is a baby whom the PaCSIA leaves, and the onus is on us the former team members of PDP to develop it to maturity. We of course still need PaCSIA to market us to overseas funders because of their advanced resources, which we can't find here in Bougainville and PNG for that matter.

As for us the facilitators, although we had weaknesses and challenges, we were able to cruise and gain ground with little resources. Sometimes we had to take risky journeys, especially to Karato, but those were challenges the program taught us all about. We had to take them on as mandated facilitators. I for one got a life time experience - never had I been to Karato before dialogue.

One strength why we the team members should consider ourselves as privileged is the relationship we have established with PaCSIA. One of us has been identified for overseas scholarship. Another example is next year's funding for referendum dialogues. Without PaCSIA all this would have only been dreams.

Another achievement is the feeling of oneness as a team from Panguna, this is unity. We also have links with Panguna Meekamui who we have involved in our program. They in turn have invited us in their programs like a planned trip to the Atolls, for which General Moses Pipiro has invited me to travel with them.

To conclude PDP has changed the district of Panguna and parts of South Bougainville spiritually, mentally and physically. In Karato when we went there for storytelling there was a very big landscaping difference we noticed, the place was decorated by newly planted flowers. We were later informed that they were preparing for Lady Fatima. That particular exercise is also taking place in Manetai. It is a spiritual and physical change after dialogue. A story in loro talks about a divided community whose people have come back to equal terms and rebuild their school.

Anscar Nionem, Facilitator Eivo-Torau

MY OVERVIEW OF THE PANGUNA DIALOGUE PROJECT

Panguna Dialogue Project (PDP) as stipulated aims at conducting community based dialogues in Panguna District in Central Bougainville and parts of Bana district in South Bougainville. Panguna is known to be the heart of the crisis and it is the very reason why the project intended to pilot the program in the area. The purpose of the dialogues is to provide safe and favourable environment for the people to come out and express themselves and their views about problems and issues affecting them. It is obvious that many people in Bougainville still live with unresolved problems and issues either from fear or because they are marginalized people who cannot express themselves in public.

PDP over the last ten months did a magnificent job by facilitating in the communities and helping to alleviate some of the major social, political, physical, spiritual and economic problems and issues affecting the communities. It is clearly evident that most of the communities were enlightened to some extent from the issues which lingered with them for years.

Not only that, the program also helped to build capacity, knowledge and understanding for us the facilitators, community leaders, women, youth and the general public who participated in

the dialogue programs conducted.

I never had any experience in the field of facilitating before I was selected by the member for loro constituency Hon. Michael Lapolela, and I actually learned so much and was appointed to be one of the lead facilitators in the facilitating team. We have a gender balanced facilitation team consisting of twelve people, two each (a woman and a man) from the 5 COE areas of Bolave, loro 01, loro 02, Eivo and Torau respectively, and two additional from Mekamui. Our team is very fortunate to have a team of 3 mentors from Peace and Conflict Studies Institute Australia (PaCSIA), who had vast knowledge in conflict resolution and who were able to guide us and give us some facilitation skills. However we also learned so much from the communities which participated.

Being a facilitator I also learned that our involvement with dialoguing in the communities provided a clear picture of the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities the communities have within themselves. The communities were amazed to learn that the actual tools that can be used in addressing problems and issues lie within them, some of which they have been using for years without realising it.

The dialogue programs were conducted in three phases in each community. The first phase was the community dialogue itself, at which communities identified the problems and issues, their strengths, weaknesses and opportunities and later drew up action plans to be implemented. The second phase is the follow-up of action plans, and finally the collection of stories of change in the communities.

During the final phase it was obvious that the programs conducted had significant impacts in the communities. The unseen strengths within the communities came to the fore, and this was revealed through the stories shared by individual participants. Moreover, it was evident through reconciliations which addressed problems and issues that had simmered for decades.

As a team member and lead facilitator of PDP I'm confident that we will reach out to other remote areas of Bougainville where people still live miserable lives with crisis related problems and issues. The team is now well equipped with facilitation skills and we are ready to assist in whatever way possible in facilitating and dialoguing issues to prepare Bougainville in achieving the aspirations towards referendum for independence.

Francis Nazia, Lead facilitator, loro



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