

Round Table Meeting – 31 January 2012

Hon Henry Puna

- Focus on Renewable Energy, Water & Sanitation, Economic Growth.
- Paris Declaration principles of ownership. We own the NSDP and we need your help to achieve it. We want to avoid duplication and realise harmonisation.
- Let's share resources, wisdom, and our various comparable advantages
- Special mention of our young people being the future. We have had 3 recent suicides and it saddens the PM and this country – we want our young people to thrive, and have fulfilling lives.
- Want continued dialogue and our continued committed partnerships

Hon Mark Brown

- Busan has united us into a new partnership which is a broader definition than before.
- We have completed an NSDP review; PIFA roadmap; functional review; ODA implementation plan (work in progress); and centralised climate change under OPM.

Session 1 – NSDP

- Presentations available for Education, Health, Tourism and Marine Resources

Mark Brown

- Commented that we need sector support for the CI to go from “Developing” to “Developed”
- Population crisis in our Pa Enea (Outer Islands) and we are using tourism strategies which will provide a direct benefit to our Pa Enea
- \$16k GDP per capita is good, but due to dispersed islands over 2mil sqm and for 15,000 people we need to maintain 10 ports, schools and hospitals on all islands so it can be misleading
- Youth suicide is urgent to address

Discussion

Adrian Ruthenberg – ADB

- The light at the end of the tunnel was switched off and is now switched on! Focus on the right investments giving the right social returns.

Amanda Ellis – NZ Aid Programme

- Special greeting from Murray McCully.
- Pleased to be handing over the baton to the Cook Islands who are now managing the Pacific Island Forum

Tuiloma Neroni Slade - Pacific Islands Forum - Secretary General

- Congratulations – highest admiration for NSDP given. Inclusivity of all sectors.
- Investment in people paying dividends
- Thank you to Minister Brown for your support of Busan. Excellent CI efforts in aid effectiveness and mutual respect. Carry on your regional leadership.
- PIF are fully committed to the CI and MDG achievements.
- Noted that there are enormous challenges ahead with the loss of populations
- Commented on the Maritime presentation and advised caution and a focus on preparation, planning and legislation, but more than that, the responsibility for conservations was emphasized. Ocean scape – PM leadership good.
- Financial control – congratulations. But there are disturbing signs of global instability which will affect the CI. Need to focus on deepening and strengthening PFM.
- Renewable Energy – lots of focus on this area is good. Need to additionally focus on Research and development – need data, otherwise foreign assistance will always be needed. Invest in knowledge.

Abdoul Hbaye – EU

- Satisfaction of cooperation with CI. Mid term review of 19 countries, CI judged “satisfactory” with excellent delivery.
- Increased funding is a sign of partnership and we want to align to your priorities. We will support you – you are the driver, and we are with you in your car.
- Your matrix of reform – we will follow and support you.

Nileema Noble – UN

- Gratitude expressed to be here. Viewed this meeting as a transformation from the first meeting.
- UN/UNDP are committed to working with CI.
- Timing of NSDP very important to keeping MDG measures on track for 2015.
- General secretaries presence at the PI forum last year highlighted the geopolitical importance of the region.
- 2013-17 UNDAF sees new support in Climate and the environment. We are also focussing on UN reform to ensure a coherent UN system.

Beoping Yang – WHO

- Congratulations on achieving and maintaining Health goals.

Session 2 - Richard Neeves, Peter Tierney, Pricilla Maruariki

- AMD to be renamed Development Coordination Division (DCD)
- www.mfem.gov.ck – being updated. Please access this for any updates/presentations at meeting
- Economic summary overview
- PFM Systems – aim to become “Pearl of the Pacific”
- Further technical assistance is needed. Have created a new Governance unit – will scrutinise the government budget and finances. Paul Allsworth will head this.
- General Budget assistance
- ODA policy
 - 3 outcomes identified in policy.
 - Busan building blocks are being used.
 - Inclusive working group across different sectors of the Cook Islands.
 - Want to strengthen NSDC data and information to enable them to provide better advice to cabinet.
 - Move from Aid to Development; Create space for more voice; Channel conflict of ideas into a creative policy process; Focus on achieving impact.
 - Media used this week to explain some Development terminology and engage the public.
- Public Service Review
 - Table presented showing statistics summary of reduction in population, growth in tourism and significant reduction in government staff. The review is not about staff cuts.
 - Government made a decision that any changes needs to be to the Benefit of our people and create jobs. Wants to reduce duplications and will redirect resources into core functions.
 - Wants to Improve delivery and productivity
 - Support positive changes to improve legislation.
 - Phased & cautious approach being taken.
 - 2012/13 Tech assistance, amalgamations, update legislations, strengthen institutional capacities.
 - 2013/14 review, learn and continue implementation efforts.
- Mark Brown – reference to Korea and it’s journey over 50 years (from \$200 to \$26k GDP per capita). We have a good foundation – let’s transform our country with your assistance in key areas. Functional review – not mentioned in powerpoint but also Governance systems in Pa Enea – important step to unleash potential in Pa Enea (outer islands).

Discussion

Abdoul Hbaye - EU

- Continues to be impressed
- PFM, ODA, Review – excellent to hear
- PFM & Reform – these are only yours. Partners cannot tell you how to reform yourselves. Partners must align behind you – you choose the road and we follow as much as our own procedures/policy allow. Invite government to take a further step – how can we help after

hearing your priorities? Example is the economic working group in the Solomon's in crisis time – everyone together rather than having to brief each partner separately – you are not resourced to do this. Benefit is one voice from the development partners – we need to coordinate ourselves. Force us to sit around and ask how we can help – give us the support to do this. Only the CI strategy matters. Matrix will allow you to jointly assess performance.

Wilkie Rasmussen – Leader of the Opposition

- Impressed by presentations from ministries
- I am the harshest critic of the govt – great leaps in what presentations he has seen
- Less impressed with development partners – platitudes there, but no concrete commitment that you are going to give to us. This is not to be a “talkfest” – I can see the well meaning attitudes
- Noted that exceptions were NZ, EU, Forum who have been around for a long time partnering with us
- The problem is not us – the problem is who changes the goal posts when it comes to development goals? E.g. – trade tariffs. Well meaning programmes but development partners have not stood up for us to help deliver. Depopulation is happening by the day.

Amanda Ellis – NZ Aid Programme

- NZ supportive of participating in economic working group
- Recognise important relationship NZ has with Australia
- \$2 mil on table to support public sector review

Ron Hackett – IMF

- PFM – strongest in the region
- Met the staff working on PFM- this group is impressive. Taking initiative to improve things

Maria Melei – ADB

- ADB supportive of EU/NZ coordination and suggests a joint reform group. She has seen this elsewhere and they have some learning's to share. Govt needs to lead this process. Existing work can contribute.
- PSR – happy to see approach is “your” approach
- Happy to continue to support process - \$500k additional given last year. Roadmap needs to be done
- ODA policy – commit to harmonised approach. In-country presence important.

Tuiloua Neroni Slade - Pacific Islands Forum

- Acknowledge excellent presentations
- Commends level of EU commitment re development cooperation
- Pick up on one point EU made – “to extent policy and procedures are allowed” – international evidence is telling us that governments are having to adjust to manage

development assistance, but development partners are not making a big enough effort to adjustments to help governments

Kosi Latu – SPREP

- Commented that he had a difficult question – challenges and vulnerabilities need to be looked at and we want to help the government face these challenges. He could not find in NSDP actions to address depopulation – how can we help address this pertinent issue?

Nic Notarpietro - AusAid

- Don't have understanding of local context, but others do.
- PFM – emphasis on transparency good. You get effectiveness and results through people understanding it and the PFM and related communications is a good example for others to learn from.

Depopulation question answered by MB – Tourism, Health, Education outcomes will enable people to remain in-country. EG Mitiaro homestay project. Infrastructure – enabling reduction of outward migration.

Session 3 – Renewable Energy (Tangi, Apii, Alex, Steve)

See powerpoint

- One team, many players
- No more testing/trialling – now physical implementation
- Island wide plan for all islands
- See powerpoint for islands sponsored, and those needing sponsorship
- Rarotonga - \$200mil – broken down into “pie” – technical assistance, Implementation, control and generation, project management, monitoring and evaluation.
- 10 year investment period but 2012-18 most significant investment period
- Thanks to the Forum Secretariat who are the implementing partner. SPREP, GEF, UNDP – thanks for their contribution. ADB supporting re energy efficiency programme for next 3 years. Small island States supported by NZ and NY.

Discussion

Vickie Poole – NZ Aid

- Japan/NZ partnership. Plan ambitious + funding going to be difficult. NZ committed to user pays as renewable energy still costs.
- NZ committed to support CI in the Energy sector

MB – numbers can be overwhelming. PM using “IRENA” to tap into further resources. Cost reduction options – electric vehicles, from gas to cheaper electricity. Ambitious, but on the right path, addressing “low hanging fruit” with longer term in view. Foundation work happening now.

Tangi - Cook Islands local training on installation etc

John Phillip – EIB

- EU in discussions with government for lending to leverage private sector investment – hope to come to a conclusion soon.

MB – Explained we need to look at new and different approaches. Gave example of Solar panels being cheaper cost to low income houses.

Maria Melei – ADB

- Commend government for the targets.
- Energy efficiency TA – reduce fossil fuel use. Hand in hand with communities to take ownership of going down this path.
- Possible RE project - \$11.3mil – want details of report so specialists can review
- Samoa/Tonga – have been involved so have expertise

MB - 6 megawatts of power. Viable options regarding costs - possibility

Session 4 - Achieving Improved Water Services For all

All sponsors in the room – SOPAC, NZ, Australia. Pareu for all development parties.

Presentation available.

MB – Water essential – how we go about this is dependent on how we work with our partners. Unique opportunity to work together.

Discussion

John Phillip – EIB

- EIB has been providing technical assistance. 30 mil would be the total figure and has now been moved to \$50mil?
- EIB vs China which was much lower – need to work through those costings to confirm.

Adrian Ruthenberg - ADB

- Water losses 40-50% noted. Free in CI so need to look at cost recovery. Will look to work in partnership if this is addressed.
- How do we prioritise our investment – do we need to make tougher choices and prioritise?

MB – Aged piping causing leakage (50-60 years). Cost recovery government must consider – paying for excess amounts. Household water tanks are being promoted.

Amanda Ellis – NZ

- Reiterate pleased to see the partnership approach – constructive bilateral meetings. Potential co-operation with China – additional funding may be an option.

NZ High Commissioner – John Carter

Would like to leave one thought in minds of donors. He has been impressed by policy mixes – best he has seen in his 24 years. Complete package – commendable. History of AID across the world – that it work in silo's/projects/isolation of each other. Has tended to try and be “fair” and don't want to offend by unequal distribution. Apart from the co-operation agenda we are highlighting, consider this – this country has the opportunity in the next 20 years to stand on it's own feet economically providing we are prepared to back it. Maybe a different approach is needed – perhaps consider the value of investment in CI at a greater rate to “get it across the line”. Flagship country where we got it right and we made it! Make something happen that has not happened before. Make investment now so we don't have to in the future.

Session 5

Summary

See Outcomes Powerpoint

Where to from here?

We will write to you. Set out a more concrete path for water. Follow up with Bilateral discussions. Round up with interested partners.

Our investments today will enable us to move from developing stated to developed.

Can either do the same and contribute a little bit, OR coordinated effort to transform our country.

Partnership arrangement to meet our priorities needed.

Confident that a number of things will be ticked off when we meet again in 12 months. Full confidence in the team.

Thank you to everyone.