INTRODUCTION

The Southern (or Papua) Region training event was initially scheduled to be the first of the regional Women Candidate Training (WCT) workshops. However, due to delays in finalising the funding agreement between the Office for Development of Women, Department for Community Development (ODW/DfCD) and the Centre for Democratic Institutions (CDI), the workshop was deferred twice in October 2011. It was eventually conducted in Alotau, Milne Bay Province at the Masurina Lodge from the 13th to 17th February 2012.

In the lead up to the Alotau workshop, the funding agreement with DfCD ensured that there were sufficient funds provided for this workshop and related events but a major problem was that these funds were locked-up in DfCD’s finance section; a consequence of the political and legal situation regarding proper and authorized signatories to DfCD cheques and the legitimate Head of Department. This was in turn a consequence of the ongoing legitimacy crisis facing the Government of PNG. Although funds were released for the Madang workshop during a window of opportunity when DFCD signatories could sign forms and cheques, however, that opportunity lapsed while ODW officers were still preparing the relevant paperwork and requisitions for the Alotau workshop.

The release of funds needed Secretary Joseph Klapat’s signature, however given that he was on suspension, and pursuing the case through the courts, the court action prevented a new Secretary being appointed, and Anna Solomon as Acting Secretary did not have the authority to sign. The case dragged on for weeks and months since late 2011 and adversely affected the funding and delivery of the WCT Strategy as per the agreement signed between Aus-AID, CDI and the DfCD. This is when Strongim Pipol Strongim Nesen’s (SPSN) role became invaluable as it took on direct responsibility for paying for the cost of all WCT workshops and related events with the understanding that DfCD would reimburse its funds.

PARTNERSHIP IN THE WOMEN CANDIDATE TRAINING STRATEGY

The CSO regional partner for the Southern Region was the Papua Hahine Social Action Forum (Papua Hahine), led by Sally Mokis (President) and Susan Setae (Executive Director). They were assisted by Papua Hahine’s regional coordinators and associates based in five Provinces namely Western, Gulf, Central, Milne Bay and Northern.

The ability of Papua Hahine to reach a consensus amongst different stakeholders and in terms of their preparedness to undertake the task of supporting ODW/DfCD in workshop logistics and administration is also commendable. In contrast to the Highlands case, Papua Hahine successfully managed to engage with most Provincial Council of Women Presidents and other stakeholders from the region. In this respect and in terms of following set candidate selection procedures, the Southern region was many steps ahead. Compared to other regional partners, this was partly due to their location in the NCD which allowed easy access to the DfCD/ODW office. They also had the unique advantage of working from the ODW office premises and close interaction with DfCD officers.
The consensus and understanding amongst different CSO stakeholders was in fact reached prior to the initial WCT consultative and planning forum held in Lae in March 2011. Given Papua Hahine’s experience in coordinating the 2007 general election women candidate training in Port Moresby and their foresight in having as part of its annual work plan, an activity on promoting women’s leadership and participation in politics, the Southern region was a pace setter. The organization’s success in receiving some funding from the United States Embassy in 2011 for their activity on promoting women’s political participation was a further advantage in that this funding assisted in their preparation and coordination role.

In terms of working in partnership with Papua Hahine as the regional partner, and with CDI’s role as technical adviser and ODW as the strategy leader, the relationship was generally satisfying and mutually beneficial. And as stated earlier, SPSN played a very critical role with regard to funding of the Alotau workshop.

### PARTICIPANTS

In terms of candidate selection, Papua Hahine did reasonably well. They followed the standard participant selection procedures and used the application forms designed for the purpose of selecting participants.

There were 17 candidates at the Alotau workshop. Two candidates attended without their campaign managers, whilst one campaign manager attended without her candidate. A Milne Bay participant, a candidate for the 2013 LLG president attended in place of an Open seat candidate from the same province who withdrew due to personal circumstances. Only one was definitely not contesting in the national election because she was a women’s seat candidate. A few others preferred to contest the women’s seat, but if this was not an option, it seemed likely that they would contest the Open seats. Generally, the southern region candidate selection had much more integrity compared to the Highlands region.

A major disappointment was the absence of a candidate(s) from Western Province who totally missed the opportunity to attend the Southern Region workshop. This was due to the constant change of dates and deferral of workshops in 2011, coupled with communication difficulties. I was also informed through two different sources that one of the Southern region facilitators was an intending candidate for the women’s seat.

Minor hiccups were encountered such as a candidate selecting her partner to be her campaign manager, whose conduct did not quite meet our expectations. There were some complaints from the Gulf and the National Capital District Provincial Councils of Women presidents but their complaints had more to do with their perceived right to attend the training. The two women leaders were clearly women’s seat candidates and were therefore not selected. The President of Papua Hahine received verbal abuse and threats of physical violence through her mobile phone whilst on her way to Alotau. The “NCW factor”, although contained to a large extent in the Southern region, was nevertheless another challenge to be addressed. With strong women leaders like Susan Setae and Sally Mokis, the matter was handled and settled remarkably well.

Overall, the participants were mostly genuine candidates and that their campaign managers were of good choice by their candidates, selected for their political experience and management skills.

### CONTENT OF TRAINING AND ITS RELEVANCE

In general, the content of the training was received well by the participants. This was evident from the level of engagement during all sessions by both candidates and campaign managers alike.
The content of the WCT program covered three main topics namely “Message, Machinery and Money” (MMM). Dr Norm Kelly gave an overview of the program content and stressed that the principles of campaigning are common everywhere where elections are held, but it was critical for the content to be modified and adapted to suit local contexts and circumstances.

The training was also mindful of the ongoing push for 22 reserved seats or 16% women’s seats in parliament but the need to boost percentage from 16% to 30% international benchmark was critical for PNG. The presentation I made on the session on Women in Politics looked at the overall situation – historically and the present – of women’s participation in national elections. Given that the session was interactive, it encouraged participants, both candidates and campaign managers, to ask questions or make comments on voters’ perception of women candidates and discussed how the voting public can be convinced to value women’s role in public affairs and decision-making in Parliament. Women’s chances of success depended on this factor as well as adequate resources plus support of family networks and broader social relationships. The quality and honesty of women candidates also affected women’s chances of winning in an election. It was highlighted that honesty for women candidates, however, could also become a cost to women’s success in a context where bribery and corruption is rife.

The session on the Limited Preferential Voting (LPV) system proved invaluable to the participants. Discussions were focussed on the operations of LPV and the counting process, as well as the strategies of using LPV. From the 2007 experience, some women candidates expressed more confidence in their knowledge about preference sharing, discussed the importance of gaining preferences and the benefits of aligning with like-minded candidates. Other women expressed optimism in the LPV system and stated that it does give women the chance to succeed in elections. It was highlighted that 2007 election was the first test case of LPV for PNG, and that with more and better understanding of LPV, the 2012 election could become a success story for women candidates. A mock election session was conducted to test the participants’ skills in campaigning (self profile, speech, messages, etc) and demonstrate the use of LPV which the participants found helpful.

One strong candidate in the 2007 election, Maureen Ambo, candidate for Ijivitari Open, shared her testimony that with only K20,000 funding support from the National Alliance Party, she only campaigned in three (3) villages and Popondetta township only, relying mostly on church, women and youth networks where she had strong connections. She characterised her election strategy as one “not of competition but about winning the voters heart”. She revealed that the National Alliance Party did not support her throughout the period of her campaign. Laeko Bala, candidate for the Central Provincial seat, lamented that LPV did more harm than good in terms of inducing voters to “vote 1 for the stomach; 2 for the heart, and 3 as an obligation to vote”.

In a session that required participants to reflect and brainstorm “challenges “and “strategies“ for strong effective campaign, the table below shows the result of this exercise:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cultural Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Political Parties not women-friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lack of resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Awareness training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. No support from and for women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Geographical coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Gender stereotypes and psychology of voters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Women being reactive and not proactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Money versus policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Accessibility to voters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Preparedness or half-heartedness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategies

1. Self profiling as leader
2. Use and strengthen existing network
3. Use of male champions
4. Building alliances and maintain good relationships
5. Be known to your community and to political parties
6. Target issues to locations
7. Effective communication
8. Ability to convince voters and use of appropriate approach
9. Be active on the ground
10. Strong campaign team
11. Be respected
12. LPV awareness
13. Targeting women and youth networks
14. Political education
15. Secure base votes

In relation to the challenges of campaign budgets, participants noted that the geographical terrain or topography of each electorate would very much determine the election budget for most women candidates. For instance, Matilda Koma, candidate for Goilala Open, estimated that one major expense item will be a chopper hire to reach the remotest areas of her electorate at a cost of K8,200 per hour, which is approximately K270,000 for one month.

A candidate from Milne Bay Province, Caroline Abani, did not see much of a problem with money as she has spent 20 years in her profession, travelled extensively and widely throughout her electorate and would therefore count on her ground work during her campaign. Utilising existing relationships and networks will be her key campaign strategy; as is the case with many other women candidates.

Other participants highlighted security as an issue of concern for women candidates and their supporters. A participant from Central Province recounted her experience of encountering pre-election threats of violence and intimidation. During general discussion, it was noted that women voters will most likely be victims of post-election violence or intimidation.

A key question posed to the women candidates was “why are you running for election?” This drew some interesting responses such as:

1. To deliver basic services to my people
2. Provide good leadership
3. Restore what has been denied to voters
4. Men have failed to improve people’s lives; now it is my duty
5. Deliver real and genuine changes for my people and country
6. To achieve special purpose or goals for PNG

The attendance and contribution of the Milne Bay Election Manager, Mr Dadu Daga, was a pleasant surprise. Prior attempts to enlist his participation were unsuccessful given his busy schedule. In terms of his responses to the numerous questions and comments from the participants, this was a significant boost to the session on Electoral Laws and Regulations.

In my conversation with some participants and the regional facilitators, the sessions on budget and campaign plans needed more emphasis and focus. Some participants expressed the need for more time and closer guidance, on a one-to-one basis in these areas. Individual assessments of campaign plans and budgets by trainers and facilitators were expected but these were not met at the workshop. This was partly due to an oversight on the part of facilitators as well as time constraints.

The session on public speaking was very much appreciated. From the start, the skills of candidates varied but with the practice, the participants gained more confidence, the ability to structure and
present their campaign messages. The session on developing campaign messages also proved useful in that it helped the candidates to present the issues of concern to them and the reasons why they were putting their hands up to contest. General discussions about the mock campaign rallies helped to identify strengths and weaknesses of each candidate, and also suggestions about improvement. A major issue discussed in the session was whether women candidates should present themselves as mothers and/or as women leaders. And another issue was whether or not showing emotions (being tearful) would be helpful or harmful in terms of attracting voters support.

The success of the training also depended on the skills of facilitation. One of the four CDI-trained facilitators had withdrawn due to clash in work commitment combined with ill-health. From my observation, the remaining team of facilitators, and including myself had to do a lot more in terms of sharing the workload and be fully engaged throughout all training sessions. In terms of local capacity building process, it was crucial to minimize the role of the lead trainer, Dr Norm Kelly to allow him time to provide overall supervision and guidance.

**LOGISTICS AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORKSHOP**

Timelines for planning and logistics for the Alotau workshop were tight and the likelihood of another deferral was looming. Norma Aisi, the key logistics officer in the WCT Strategy offered some useful advice:

“At least two weeks prior to a workshop, officers must submit all claims for processing well in advance. This will give more time, two weeks at least, for finance section to process and print cheques. This will also give enough time for logistics to be done because the last minute rush is very stressing. I suggest team leaders to give deadlines for claims to be submitted so that the team members work towards meeting these deadlines”.

Aisi’s advice illustrates the presence of a commitment to proper coordination and logistics but again, this commitment had to be complemented by a reliable financial procedure in DfCD; a factor beyond her control and of all other strategy partners.

Several issues were encountered in the logistics and administration of the Alotau workshop. Due to delays in paying for Air Niugini, most participants and the PNG facilitators were to travel to Alotau on Monday morning (13/02), the first day of training. One key facilitator, Eric Ani, was unable to travel on Monday and instead flew in on Tuesday (14/02), despite ODW assurance the week before that he was confirmed for Monday morning’s flight. Meanwhile, all five ODW staff had arrived by Saturday afternoon (11/02). All other ODW officers, including the Southern Region team leader Bart Sio, travelled in advance of all participants with the understanding that they would ensure all logistics regarding accommodation and workshop venue were put in place. Yet by Sunday evening, the workshop venue was not ready and had to be arranged by the regional partner. Even the accommodation reservations at Masurina Lodge were not in order upon the arrival of the majority of participants on Sunday 12 February.

In terms of ODW officers’ performance and support on the ground in Alotau, Brian Nakarakundi, the acting Executive Director of ODW was himself not impressed and stated that he “…will be dealing with them”.

Payment of allowances was a cause for concern. The money was deposited in SPSN’s liaison officer, Rebecca Piam’s personal account so that she could withdraw cash in Alotau and pay participants, including DfCD officers. Yet most of the participants did not have their own bank accounts. Delays in paying out the per diem created some tensions and, to some extent, affected the morale, attendance and participation of some participants. One vocal participant at the Alotau workshop
expressed disappointment at the low rate of per diem and argued that it was injustice caused to most of the participants who are NGO/CSO volunteers.

By Wednesday night, participants received their allowances. The delay was quite unfair on the participants and caused by the lack of flexibility in SPSN policy which required transferring the money to Alotau after receiving confirmation of actual arrival and registration of all participants for the workshop, which was not until Tuesday lunchtime. Following the payment of per diem, alcohol consumption and anti-social behavior was quite pronounced amongst the DfCD/ODW staff and a few participants, especially male campaign managers. On the whole, it was commendable that the Southern region participants were apparently upset but most were reasonable in terms of committing themselves to the training.

The issue of per diem rate or amount was a contentious issue from the start and throughout the overall implementation of the WCT Strategy. In October 2011, Papua Hahine played an instrumental role in reaching a mutual understanding between CDI, ODW/DfCD and Papua Hahine, especially in relation to calculating the per diem using a more justifiable formula. In accordance with the gazetted PNG Government policy, this formula was agreed to in consultation with CDI and DfCD.

Stationery at the workshop was inadequate mostly using left over stuff from the Mt Hagen workshop. Even though a quotation was prepared to purchase the required stationery this was not utilized.

Participants on transit from Oro Province and NCD participants with no transport to catch the early bird flight to Alotau were accommodated at the Pondorosa Hotel in Port Moresby but were advised that there were no meal allowances and some had to sleep rough because of inaccurate records of participant names at the hotel reception. During the return trip from Alotau, Sally Mokis went out of her way to provide food for the Oro participants on the night before their departure the next morning.

According to Sally Mokis, the delay in the process of signing the MOA to formalise the partnership with Papua Hahine was a cause of frustration, prior to and after the delivery of the Alotau workshop.

From ODW perspective, in terms of administrative arrangements, direction, endorsement and approvals of financial matters including allowances, Mr Nakrakundi felt that he “was totally left in the dark” whilst Rebecca Piam, the SPSN liaison officer attached to ODW gave the directions and approvals in all financial matters. This was seen as undermining Mr Nakrakundi’s role as the Strategy leader. The need for SPSN to clarify this concern was apparent.

**CONCLUSION AND LESSONS LEARNT**

The Southern Region workshop was much improved compared to the Highlands case in terms of the integrity of the participant selection process and the logistics of the workshop. The DfCD/ODW team that attended the Alotau workshop needed to be more engaged throughout the workshop and available at all times to attend to administration and logistic issues. Overall, the Southern region participants expressed the need for such training of women candidates and valued the inclusion of male campaign managers.

Many of the lessons learnt in the case of the Highlands region also apply to the Southern region. The following are specific issues from the Alotau experience.

**Capacity of CSO regional partner:**
The need for strengthening the capacity of CSO regional partners, especially women CSOs, is critical to women’s empowerment. Although Papua Hahine demonstrated the ability to handle program coordination compared to other regional partners (see appendix 2), there are internal organisational issues that require addressing to make the organisation a stronger and viable partner to work with in future programs. The fact that its coordinators operated from the ODW office is due to the fact that the organisation has yet to secure a permanent office space to conduct business. In addition, the confusion of roles between the President and the Executive Director was apparent in their coordination of the workshop logistics. The fact that only two individuals were involved is illustrative of the organisation’s lack of a proper administrative staff to handle all logistic work. The two women leaders themselves wear many leadership hats and had to balance time between the WCT strategy and other responsibilities. Driven by the passion of the individuals involved, Papua Hahine has the potential to do even better as an organisation provided, it is supported financially.

Managing relationships and sustaining partnerships:
One issue that had the potential to strain relationships and adversely affect partnerships in the delivery of the workshop was delayed payment of facilitators and regional partners’ fees, and per diem for participants. This was first experienced by the Highlands facilitators and regional partners with fees outstanding weeks after the delivery of the Mt Hagen workshop.

Papua Hahine’s ability to forge relationships and manage a broader partnership in implementing the WCT Strategy was positive. In terms of inclusiveness and broader participation of genuine participants, Papua Hahine addressed this relatively well.

Campaign Managers:
The involvement of male campaign managers was encouraging in that it helps in building a strong and broader civil society support for women’s political empowerment.

Leadership and Capacity of ODW:
The need for strengthening ODW’s role as strategy leader and a key driver of women’s empowerment programs is crucial. Refresher courses and training of staff to raise the level of public service conduct and performance is important for ODW/DfCD.

Political sensitivities:
The continuing involvement of SPSN and Aus-Aid in the process of implementing the WCT strategy had to be given careful consideration. This had implications for DfCD and ODW’s role as the lead strategy partner and local ownership.

Funding
SPSN intervention in providing emergency relief to funding the implementation of Alotau event was invaluable, but this was happening at the expense of ownership of the WCT strategy by DfCD/ODW. SPSN method of disbursing daily allowances needed to be more flexible.
## Appendix 1: WOMEN CANDIDATE TRAINING - SOUTHERN REGION PARTICIPANTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Position and Organisation</th>
<th>Seat Contesting/Not Contesting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rosemary GalowaDuwaba</td>
<td>NCD</td>
<td>Secretary/Electoral Officer - Women’s Council</td>
<td>Moresby South Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ethel K Sandery</td>
<td>NCD</td>
<td>NCD Ward Councillor</td>
<td>Moresby South Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sana Dokopa</td>
<td>NCD</td>
<td>Volunteer Community Worker</td>
<td>Moresby North West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Oini Kevari</td>
<td>Gulf</td>
<td>Community Health Worker Interim Chairman - Eagle Women’s Group</td>
<td>Kikori Open Local Level Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Juliette Ehari</td>
<td>Gulf</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
<td>Kerema Open (not contesting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kathy Tom</td>
<td>Gulf</td>
<td>Volunteer Community Worker</td>
<td>Kerema Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Laeko Bala</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>President – Central Province Council of Women Coordinator – Central Province</td>
<td>Central Provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Miriam Varimosese Lovai</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Community Health Worker</td>
<td>Rigo Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Matilda Koma</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Environment and Human Rights Coordinator – Mine Affected Women</td>
<td>Goilala Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Caroline Abani</td>
<td>Milne Bay</td>
<td>Teacher Vice President – Local Level Government</td>
<td>Milne Provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Helen D Naidy</td>
<td>Milne Bay</td>
<td>Teacher President – Milne Bay Churches</td>
<td>Esa’ala Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Betty Andrew</td>
<td>Milne Bay</td>
<td>Volunteer Community Worker</td>
<td>Samarai Murua Local Level Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Bella Amen</td>
<td>Oro</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Reserved Seats (not contesting Open seat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Maureen Ambo</td>
<td>Oro</td>
<td>Volunteer Social and Community Worker</td>
<td>Ijivitari Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Martha Betute</td>
<td>Oro</td>
<td>President - Sohe District Council of Women</td>
<td>Sohe Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Olivia Bunari</td>
<td>Oro</td>
<td>President – Oro Provincial Council of Women</td>
<td>Oro Provincial (not contesting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Margaret Embahe</td>
<td>Oro</td>
<td>Provincial Radio Announcer</td>
<td>Oro Provincial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary**

1 Open Seat  
03 Provincial Seat  
01 Not Standing  
01 LLG President
Appendix 2: Suggestions from the Southern Regional Partner, Papua Hahine

In a debrief session I had with the Southern Region facilitators and the coordinators, at the request of Papua Hahine, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Papua Hahine suggested building facilitators fees into the MOA of regional partners so that it would be paid by the Regional partners.

2. Trainers and facilitators should have travelled in advance to prepare and orient themselves for the workshop.

3. A “Certificate of Appreciation” to facilitators would help to legitimise and sustain the value of CDI’s Training of Trainers.

4. SPNS’s policy of paying per diem through bank accounts was not sensitive to the circumstances of participants because most did not have bank accounts of their own and living in rural areas with no bank services.

5. The need for CDI to share its evaluation results with regional partners for future capacity development work.