Executive Summary

Phase 4 of the PNG NGO Leadership and Management Training was undertaken from 28 October - 3 November 2001. Phases 1-3 yielded two basic objectives for Phase 4:

- To provide further targeted skills training to consolidate on training received in Phases 1-3
- To enable PNG NGO leaders to address the issue of a peak organization to represent them on a number of key issues common to PNG NGOs

Both objectives were arrived at on the initiative of PNG NGO leaders. Planning for the events to realize those objectives (on Loloata) though funded externally were driven by PNG NGO leaders involved in Phases 1-3.

The facilitation of Phase 4 was based entirely on adult learning or co-learning principles invoking full engagement of all participants. An intensive 5 day workshop was the result facilitated by Paul Nicholls (ACFOA), Mike Crooke (ACFOA) and Pierre Huetter (CDI). The consensus amongst participants was that the workshop had been arduous, beneficial and rewarding and immediately sought future opportunities for continuing training for themselves and their NGO colleagues.

Day 6 of Phase 4 saw a NGO leaders initiated meeting to discuss the process for establishing an NGO peak body. A steering committee was set up to drive the process and further meetings planned.
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1. Introduction

The Centre for Democratic Institutions (CDI) has three times contracted ACFOA to manage and run training programs for NGO leaders and managers. Two of these programs have involved NGO personnel from Indonesia. This third training program involved NGO leaders and managers from PNG, and for the first time it was agreed to add a further in-country, follow-up element to the program. The report deals with this fourth phase of the program, the training that took place at Loloata Island Resort close to Port Morseby (the Interim Report for Phases 1-3 submitted to AusAID on 28 May 2001).

In discussion with participants over the week of training, it was impressive the number of those who had attended the Australian parts of the program, that had come back and undertaken quite extensive changes in their agencies. Several agencies had been through strategic planning programs, and a few had revamped their systems.

2. The Venue

The training took place on Loloata Island Resort, a commonly used venue, some twenty-five minutes drive and a twenty-minute boat ride from Port Moresby. The advantages of using such a venue is that it is residential and it becomes much more difficult for participants to ‘escape’ to their office. More importantly however, the residential situation creates a collegiate and relaxed atmosphere, away from the security concerns of Port Moresby, in which participants readily open up and learn. This is also important for such discussions as the one which took place on Saturday 3 November, regarding the formation of a PNG NGO peak body.

3. The Organizing Process

At the completion of Phase 3 it was decided that Phase 4 should be as participatory in nature as possible, both in terms of the choice of topics for the training as well as the way in which the training was organized. In order to achieve this the Phase 4 Steering Committee was established consisting of the Port Moresby-based participants of the first three phases of the training.

It was the task of this group to consult widely with other PNG NGO personnel and establish exactly what would constitute the training, and how this would be undertaken. This process worked reasonably well in that there was a strong sense of ownership over the outcome by the Steering Committee. On the final day when the discussion on NGO cooperation and the thorny issue of an NGO peak body was to take place, the group took control and ownership, relieving the expatriate facilitator of his tasks, and undertaking the entire process themselves. This is the first time that the PNG NGO community have independently organized and facilitated such a discussion. In the past such efforts have always had outside involvement of one sort or another.

The other indicator that the Steering Committee had taken ownership of the process was that when a number of participants did not show up for the training, and did not contact the Steering Committee to indicate that they would not be attending, the
Steering Committee became quite upset, vowing to write to those responsible taking them to task and pointing out the lost opportunity this represented to others. This response is very important because when it is outsiders that are doing all the arranging, the issue of attendance versus non-attendance is neither here nor there to others in the group. This way there was a clear and growing awareness that resources had been wasted and opportunities lost.

4. The Training Process

The training in Phase 4 was undertaken over 5 days. In the first three days Paul Nichols covered Organizational Development and Management Systems. In the second two days Mike Crooke covered Monitoring and Evaluation in relation to Organizational Learning. Pierre Huetter (CDI) assisted throughout the 5 days. The approach to these topics was somewhat experimental in that it was very fluid and flexible, attempting to respond to the groups needs and levels of understanding as the training unfolded. Tools were used to undertake the training that also illustrated the concepts and ideas being conveyed, which made for a training experience that unfolded on several levels at once.

Paul used several Participatory Rule Appraisal (PRA) tools, normally used in interaction with communities, as tools to monitor the processes happening within the group as it discussed specific topics and ideas. This was done so that at any given time participants were being exposed to ideas about NGO management and development, whilst also using tools that they could take away and immediately apply. Likewise in Mike Crooke's session, he used the natural abilities of the group in storytelling to reveal new approaches to monitoring and the interpreter role that Project Managers must play between stakeholders who have very different worldviews.

This process was undoubtedly challenging, especially for those in the group who had previously experienced training techniques that assume expertise in the trainer and ignorance in the trainee. The approach taken assumes high levels of experience and knowledge in the trainees and a role for the trainer that is one of facilitating a co-learning environment and encouraging a sharing of experience. Once participants got used to the approach they dropped their reticence and began to fully participate, leading often to unexpected and new perspectives and insights.

5. The Participants

The original idea had been to invite twenty-five participants to the phase four training. A few weeks out from the training this number settled on twenty-two participants. The Steering Committee did a good job of trying to ensure that participants had committed to the training in order to ensure that the positions were all taken up, those who did not reply to their communications were taken off the list and other persons were substituted. However there was still a disappointing level of people who did not attend when it came time for the training.

The project also lost one participant on the second day due to the fact that he was injured quite badly on the Saturday night before the training commenced. He tried to
attend the training but his injuries were such that he had to be sent back to hospital and then back to his home in Mt. Hagen.

The final attendance ended up being 14 participants. Those who attended were:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization/Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yati Bun</td>
<td>Foundation for People &amp; Community Development Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia Gegeyo</td>
<td>PNG National Council of Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabi Pati</td>
<td>National Volunteer Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regina Piam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sophia Gegeyo</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly Kalit</td>
<td>WWF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linda Passingan</td>
<td>East New Britain Social Action Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diana Exon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gabriel Molok</td>
<td>ESLEF</td>
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<td>Mary Soondrawu</td>
<td>ESCOW</td>
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<td>Aung Kumal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alfred Mungkai</td>
<td>New Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wesley Sanarup</td>
<td>Madang NGO Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana-Latu Dickson</td>
<td>CORDA, Milne Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andreas Phu</td>
<td>FORD, Mt. Hagen</td>
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A further 8 participants who accepted their invitations did not attend.

The cost per person of the training was raised significantly by the ‘no-show’ rate amongst participants because many of the costs regarding those participants has already been incurred.

The Steering Committee have undertaken to write to those concerned expressing their disappointment and will also attempt to arrive at some arrangement whereby the costs related to travel may be recovered. The chances of recovering these costs, however, are very low.

Others to join the group for the Saturday discussion on a peak body were:

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<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sasa Zibe</td>
<td>Eco-Forestry Forum, NANGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damien Ase</td>
<td>CELCOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joash Yambut</td>
<td>Community Group, Kimbe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judith Ugava</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Joe Kau</td>
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<td>Greg Mongi</td>
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6. The Training Content

Broadly speaking the first three days of the training concentrated on Organizational Development, looking at keys areas of concern and interest identified by the participants on the first day. The exercise, aimed at identifying the key areas of management that NGO leaders deal with, produced the following results:

1. Vision & Purpose
2. Outcomes
3. Governance and Management
4. Financial Management
5. Staff
6. Programs

It was felt that participants had a reasonably good grip on Vision and Purpose, therefore the main areas covered on the first three days were Governance and Management, Staff and Financial management. The last two days dealt with Outcomes and Programs from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation. As mentioned above in the Training Process section, the approach was to try and help participants grasp the underlying concepts related to organizational change, especially in analyzing the impediments to change and for developing strategies to overcome these inhibiting factors.

The final two days concentrated on approaches to monitoring and the purposes of monitoring. It was decided to concentrate on monitoring, rather than try to cover both monitoring and evaluation in a broader but inevitably shallower way, because effective monitoring is the secret to useful evaluation. Again the method was to draw out the experience of the group and then unpack and examine that experience and try to make sense of it in light of the requirements from donors. This approach proved to
be very fruitful because it was constantly referring to something from the group’s reality, rather than referring to an abstract and theoretical situation.

7. Saturday Discussion

As stated above, the group took responsibility for the management and facilitation of the Saturday discussion on the possibilities of a peak body. This is the first time that PNG NGOs have called a meeting like this themselves and run it themselves, the first time they have totally owned the process. As such it was a very positive initiative, and it had a genuinely productive outcome, with all major issues being agreed by the whole group and no really divisive issues arising from the discussion.

After presentations by all the different regional and sectoral peak bodies present, the large group divided into three smaller groups the address the two questions of:

1. “What would be the main functions of a PNG NGO peak body?”
2. “What sort of organization would such a peak body be?”

The large group came back together and the results of these discussions were presented back, there was a great deal of similarity in these deliberations, and virtually no divergence. It was decided to form a working group to come together and a terms of reference were quickly put together to guide this group, tasks were set and a report back date set.

It is also worthwhile noting that the majority of those appointed to the Working Group were people who had been involved in the four phases of this NGO leadership training project. Over the course of the project these leaders had clearly had time to informally discuss PNG NGO issues with the broadest possible focus. Consequently the leaders had formed a common vision and forged strong cooperative relationships amongst themselves. Their positions on the Working Group in combination with these attributes gives the Working Group an action oriented dynamic which hopefully will pay dividends in terms of re-vitalizing (or re-creating) an NGO peak body in Papua New Guinea.

8. Evaluation

In keeping with the rest of the approach, a conventional approach to evaluation was shunned in favour of a less formal approach based on focused informal discussion and conversations after training hours. Those who attended the training had found it both stimulating and useful, they also said that they had found it inspiring and an important opportunity to withdraw from their busy schedules to reflect on their work.

There was some confusion and reticence at the beginning of the training because the methods used were demanding and potentially confronting, as it was impossible to sit back and simply ‘cruise’ through the sessions. The participatory approach demanded nothing less than full engagement. However once initial concerns were overcome the group responded well and worked hard and in a collegiate fashion.
9. Phase 4 Recommendations

It is crucial to note that Phase 4 was not simply the fourth part of a project delivered over the last several months. It is special in that the organization and conduct of Phase 4 was driven by the participants in Phases 1-3 as a result of the training received in Phases 1-3 of the course. In other words the bulk of the training and guidance occurred in the more heavily structured Phases 1-3. This follow-up in country component allowed most of the facilitation issues (topics, invitees) to be decided by the NGO leaders themselves with the assistance of the facilitators.

Consequently with the results of Phase 4 reported above, this report has little to add to the Interim Report’s recommendations and conclusion, other than to affirm the decision to ensure Phase 4 was flexible and kept in the hands of the participants.

10. Objectives and Outcomes

The broad objectives of the course, as outlined in the proposal, were:

1. To develop a stronger understanding of the organization structure, policy environment, accountability requirements and ethical principles for NGOs.
2. To establish and/or strengthen networks between Australia and PNG NGOs.
3. To strengthen coordination among PNG NGOs by assisting them to develop skills in the management of a peak body.

The Interim Report discussed outcomes and the meeting of objectives after Phases 1-3. In this final report it can be added that a substantial additional contribution was made to Objective 3. As discussed above in sections 7 and 9 the close association and cooperation between participants throughout the project enabled them to informally and formally build their vision for a PNG NGO peak body, facilitate a broader meeting of NGO leaders and then (several of them) be appointed to the peak body Working Group.

Consequently there is cause for optimism on the issue of the (re-)creation of a NGO peak body in Papua New Guinea.

11. Future options

CDI/ACFOA would like to continue their involvement in the process of strengthening civil society leadership in PNG. In view of the sensitivities of any Australians' relationship with PNG nationals and given the responsible way in which the steering committee organized phase 4 of the program, the best approach is to respond to the group's requests. The options include

1. conducting a similar training course for a new cohort selected on a collegiate basis including by participants at the first course
2. providing further experiential training for the leading members of the group
3. responding to calls for assistance from any new peak body
These are not necessarily alternatives and with innovative management, it might be possible to combine aspects of these three programs. With the PNG elections scheduled for mid-2002 and civil society leaders likely to be busy in a time of heightened political activity, we would look to the 2002-03 financial year for the next stage of this program.