Bougainville Referendum
INTERIM REPORT

30 January 2020

www.bougainville-referendum.org
30 January 2020

HON. JAMES MARAPE, MP
Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea

HON. GRAND CHIEF DR JOHN MOMIS, MHR
President of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville

RE: INTERIM REPORT ON THE BOUGAINVILLE REFERENDUM

Dear Prime Minister and President,

The 40-day period for petitions against the Bougainville Referendum has now closed (as of 20 January 2020) and no petitions were received. The Bougainville Referendum Commission is now pleased to provide both governments with this interim report for your reference. It commends to both governments the satisfactory completion of the electoral process of the Referendum, and the uncontested result of what has been universally declared to be a ‘free, fair and credible’ process by observer groups.

The Commission has now formally commenced a three-month wind up of operations in accordance with the BRC Charter. This includes the preparation of a full report on the Referendum which will be provided to the two governments before the completion of this period ending 20 April 2020. This will provide all parties with a complete financial audit of Commission operations, assets list and arrangements for their disposal, together with what we think are notable lessons and innovations for future electoral events in Bougainville and Papua New Guinea. The Commission is also producing a high-quality publication on the Referendum as a public record of this historic event.

After the completion of the wind up period, the Commission will revert to its transitional commission status, with the two Electoral Commissioners as co-chairs and the two Chief Secretaries.

I thank you once again for the enormous support that both you and your governments have provided the Commission and the Referendum process, and particular the constructive and collaborative attention of your two Ministers Hon. Sir Puka Temu and Hon. Albert Punghau to the process. Combined, this paved the way for the success of this national event.

I wish you both all the best and will continue to follow the progress of post-Referendum negotiations as the Bougainville peace process continues.

Your sincerely,

Hon. Bertie Ahern
Chairman

CC: Hon. Dr Sir Puka Temu KBE CMG, MP, Minister for Bougainville Affairs
Hon. Albert Punghau, MHR, ABG Minister for Peace Agreement Implementation
Amb. Isaac B. Lupari, CBE, Chief Secretary to the Government of PNG
The Chief Secretary to the Autonomous Bougainville Government
CONTENTS

1. STATEMENT FROM THE COMMISSION (AT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2019) .............................................................. 6
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ........................................................................................................ 6
3. KEY DATA ................................................................................................................................ 7
4. REFERENDUM TIMELINE ........................................................................................................ 8
5. PREPARATIONS AND POLLING .......................................................................................... 10
   5.1 PREPARATIONS ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS .................................................. 10
   5.2 ENROLMENT ...................................................................................................................... 10
   5.3 POLLING ............................................................................................................................ 11
   5.4 SCRUTINY AND COUNTING ............................................................................................ 12
6. VOTER AWARENESS .............................................................................................................. 13
7. SECURITY .................................................................................................................................. 13
8. PARTNERS AND CONTRIBUTORS .......................................................................................... 14
9. FUNDING .................................................................................................................................. 14
10. VIEWS OF OBSERVER GROUPS ........................................................................................... 15
10. KEY INNOVATIONS ............................................................................................................... 17
ANNEX 1: THE BALLOT PAPER ................................................................................................. 19
ANNEX 2: MAP OF BOUGAINVILLE ............................................................................................ 20
Statement from the Commission

WE THE BOUGAINVILLE REFERENDUM COMMISSION do hereby make the following statement regarding the conduct of the Bougainville Referendum 2019.

Number of votes for Greater Autonomy: 3,043
Number of votes for Independence: 176,928
Number of informal ballot papers: 1,096

We thank the two governments of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, and the people of the Bougainville for their outstanding participation in this historic process – one part of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. We recognise the Referendum has been a national event, and so also acknowledge and thank the people of Papua New Guinea.

As an electoral process that aspired to meet international standards, it is for observers, scrutineers and the media, and indeed the people themselves, to determine whether the conduct of the Referendum was inclusive, accessible, free and fair. We thank in particular scrutineers, and observers from here and overseas for bringing transparency and credibility to the process, and we look forward to their reports over the coming days and weeks.

However, as the mandated independent body appointed to conduct the Bougainville Referendum, it is our conclusion from what we witnessed ourselves throughout the process - through enrolment, polling and scrutiny – was an orderly process, following the laws and regulations provided, and was peaceful. We witnessed voting that was informed, free of fear and accessible.

Some of the numbers also tell an important story:

- The Referendum roll had equal numbers of women and men voting
- The Referendum roll had 25 per cent first time voters
- The voter turnout, of at least 85 per cent, was high when compared with international democratic electoral experience, and is the highest of any electoral process in Papua New Guinea
- The informal vote of 1,096 was low when compared with international democratic electoral experience and national elections.

We acknowledge the benefit of some new electoral practices for inclusive voting, including:

- Enrolment of Bougainvillean in every province of PNG
- Display of the preliminary Referendum roll for public objections and scrutiny
- Postal voting for those travelling, sick or otherwise unable to access a polling place
- Provisional voting, for those not on the Referendum roll at their place of polling
- Out of country voting (in Solomon Islands and Australia)
- Special polling at hospitals, for people for with disabilities.
We are grateful for the resources, financial and human, provided to conduct the Referendum to this inclusive standard. These have been provided by the two governments, the electoral commissions of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville, and the international community. The latter has been provided from the United Nations and Australia, Germany, Ireland, Japan New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

We thank the Chief Referendum Officer and staff of the Secretariat for their tireless work. We also thank the Returning Officer, the 34 Assistant Returning Officers, and the thousands of temporary workers who carried out their role in a determined way, to deliver a credible process to the people of Bougainville.

Many other organisations also contributed to the good conduct of the Referendum. The Bougainville Police Service, and their counterparts from the Regional Security Mission with police from New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, together with support from the Royal PNG Constabulary, provided for good law and order, and secure transport of polling materials. We also thank PNG High Commissions in Australia and Solomon Islands, and acknowledge local service providers.

Finally, we thank the people of Bougainville living far and wide in Australia, Solomon Islands, outside Bougainville in Papua New Guinea, and of course here in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville - who have come out to have their say.

We wish the two governments all the best in taking forward the Referendum result through a process of consultation, and on to the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea for final ratification as part of the ongoing peace process.

On Friday, we look forward to returning the Referendum Writ to the Governor-General in Port Moresby.

Chair, Bertie Ahern

Commissioner Patilias Gamato
Commissioner George Manu
Commissioner Patrick Nisira
Commissioner Robert Igara
Commissioner Ruby Mirinka
Commissioner Dr Thomas Webster
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As promised by the Bougainville Peace Agreement, a referendum on the future political status of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (Bougainville) was held between 23 November and 7 December 2019. The process was conducted according to the laws set out in the Peace Agreement, the Constitutions of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, and the Organic Law.\(^1\)

The result of the Referendum was declared on 11 December 2019 in Buka by the BRC Chair, Hon Bertie Ahern. Independence received 176,928 (97.71%) votes, while 3,043 (1.68%) voted for Greater Autonomy. A record voter turnout for a national electoral process (87.4% or 181,067 votes) and subsequent declarations by observer groups that the process was ‘free and fair’ lent credibility to the result.

On 13 December 2019, the Bougainville Referendum Commission (BRC) returned the Writ to the office of the Governor-General of Papua New Guinea (PNG). No petitions were subsequently lodged during the 40-day period following the return of the Writ, which ended 20 January 2020. The next steps under the Peace Agreement, as printed on the Referendum ballot paper, are as follows:

- National Government and the ABG to consult
- National Parliament to make the final decision (ratification).

The National Government of PNG and the Autonomous Bougainville Government (henceforth ‘the two governments’) established the BRC to deliver the electoral process with absolute independence. An independent Chair, internationally renowned former Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of the Republic of Ireland, Mr Bertie Ahern was selected by the two governments. Six Commissioners were drawn equally from PNG and Bougainville including the Electoral Commissioners of Bougainville and PNG.

The Commission was supported by a Secretariat headed by Chief Referendum Officer Mr Mauricio Claudio, an internationally recognised electoral administrator. The BRC was formalised in 2018, but due to the late appointment of a Chief Referendum Officer and delivery of operational funds, preparations meaningfully commenced in March 2019. The Secretariat was staffed by locally-engaged personnel supported by international advisors. More than 2,000 people were engaged during the Referendum.

The conduct of a referendum was a first for PNG. It required the establishment of a range of new processes, including a highly inclusive three-phase enrolment process, the delivery of a multi-platform voter awareness campaign, and a voting and counting process catering for a single question referendum to be conducted in Bougainville, PNG Provinces and overseas.

Set with these challenges, the BRC delivered a credible Referendum to an international standard on time and within its reduced budget. It produced many electoral ‘firsts’ for PNG operating within the laws provided to maximise participation and inclusion. This including three phases of enrolment, overseas enrolment and polling, postal, declaration and provisional voting. These were applied by a dedicated team staffed overwhelmingly by Bougainvilleans, and applauded especially by voters with disabilities.

The success of the Referendum was the result of the hard work, partnership and dedication of many - and all are to be congratulated for their efforts. However, the outstanding success of the Referendum was the peaceful participation of voters in a festival-like atmosphere. This was built on extensive community engagement and consultations to encourage participation and establish confidence in the BRC as an independent agency delivering a safe, free and fair process. This high level of participation, together with positive observers reports and the absence of petitions, are testament to what has been an historic, inclusive, transparent and professional process.

---

\(^1\) Organic Law on Peace Building in Bougainville, Autonomous Bougainville Government and Bougainville Referendum, 2002
3. KEY DATA

THE BUDGET
- PGK28.1m provided by the two governments with support from the international community

THE COUNT
- Independence: 176,928 (97.71%) votes
- Greater Autonomy: 3,043 (1.6%) votes
- Informal: 1,096 votes (0.6%)
- 181,067 votes were cast (87.4% voter turnout) with 25,664 (12.6%) enrolled not voting²

THE VOTE
- 249 polling teams attended 829 polling locations
  - every ward in Bougainville
  - all provinces of Papua New Guinea³
  - overseas polling was provided in Solomon Islands (Honiara and Gizo) and Australia (Brisbane and Cairns)
- For first time in a national electoral process, three new forms of voting were offered to increase the inclusion of voter:
  - postal (435 postal votes received and 303 admitted), and
  - declaration and provisional voting (combined, 11,617 declaration and provisional votes received and 8,404 admitted).

THE VOTER ROLL
- Three phases of voter enrolment, conducted in Bougainville, all PNG provinces, and overseas:
  1. Verification of base roll (2015 ABG roll) by Ward Recorders against their Ward Register
  2. House to house enrolment of new voters in Bougainville, and at all 21 PNG Electoral Commission provincial offices, and four special work sites: Ok Tedi Mine, Lihir Mine, Porgera Mine and Ramu Plantation, and Australia (Brisbane and Cairns) and Solomon Islands (Honiara and Gizo)
  3. Public display of preliminary roll for corrections, additions and objections
- The Referendum roll reflected an increase of about 20% on the 2015 ABG roll
- 206,731 voters appeared on the Certified Roll of Voters, 25% of whom were first-time voters, approximately equal men and women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting District</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Blank*</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident Bougainvilleans</td>
<td>98,565</td>
<td>95,371</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>194,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Resident Bougainvilleans</td>
<td>6,846</td>
<td>5,844</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12,715 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>105,411</strong></td>
<td><strong>101,215</strong></td>
<td><strong>105</strong></td>
<td><strong>206,731</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 'Blank' denotes gender of the voter was not specified
** 11,505 in PNG, 269 in Solomon Islands and Australia

- The Final Roll included 482 additional provisional voters whose were admitted to the count after they were found on the preliminary roll. This brought the total number of voters to 207,213.

OBSERVERS/SCRUTINEERS/MEDIA
- 20 observer groups (8 international and 12 national/Bougainville) provided over 250 observers covering Bougainville, PNG, Solomon Islands and Australia
- Over 750 scrutineers were provided in accordance with Referendum laws by 14 Registered Interest Groups and officials from the two governments
- Over 70 accredited media officials representing over 20 local, national and international outlets covered the event, achieving vast and global coverage of the Bougainville Referendum.

² As a comparison, the voter turnout in the 2015 ABG election was around 60%.
³ Except Southern Highlands Province where no eligible Bougainville voters were enrolled.
4. REFERENDUM TIMELINE

At the Joint Supervisory Body (JSB) meeting of 20 May 2016, the two governments established a ‘target date’ of 15 June 2019 for the Referendum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target date</td>
<td>JSB decision to assist planning</td>
<td>20 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRC Charter</td>
<td>Signed by Governor-General</td>
<td>30 August 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment of Chair</td>
<td>Agreement of the two governments: Mr Bertie Ahearn</td>
<td>Early 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting rights of non-resident Bougainvileans</td>
<td>JSB agreed to the voting rights and eligibility criteria for non-resident Bougainvileans</td>
<td>29 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment of Commissioners and Chief Referendum Officer</td>
<td>Appointment of all Commissioners by each government (C. Nisira and Mirinka were endorsed by the JSB 15 December 2017) - First BRC meeting held 15 October 2018 - CRO commenced work February 2019</td>
<td>29 June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referendum question and ballot paper text</td>
<td>JSB decision: Do you agree for Bougainville to have: (1) Greater Autonomy; or (2) Independence? Explanation of process: 1. Eligible people of Bougainville will vote in the referendum 2. National Government and the ABG will consult 3. National Parliament will make the final decision.</td>
<td>12 October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referendum descriptions approved</td>
<td>Two governments issue BRC with approved descriptions for greater autonomy and independence</td>
<td>29 May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Referendum date: 23 November</td>
<td>Two governments publicly announce deferral of issue of Writ to 27 September, with polling to commence 23 November. Exchange of letters between Prime Minister Marape and A/President Masono, 11 July, formalised at JSB 12 September 2019</td>
<td>2 August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polling preparation</td>
<td>Issue Writ / Roll closes to new enrolments and transfers</td>
<td>27 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polling schedule display</td>
<td>mid October to early November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accreditation of observers</td>
<td>early November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accreditation of scrutineers/registration of interest groups</td>
<td>early November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application period for postal voting</td>
<td>15 October to 22 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polling</td>
<td>Polling period starts (for 2 weeks)</td>
<td>23 November 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrutiny/Counting</td>
<td>Scrutiny and counting period starts</td>
<td>8 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results declaration</td>
<td></td>
<td>11 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return of Writ</td>
<td></td>
<td>13 December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petition period</td>
<td>For a period of 40 days following the Return of the Writ</td>
<td>until 20 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRC wind up</td>
<td>Three-month period following end of petition period</td>
<td>until 20 April</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. PREPARATIONS AND POLLING

5.1 Preparations administrative arrangements

The BRC Secretariat is based in Buka at Hutjena, but also has three regional offices in Buka, Arawa and Buin BRC. The Commission appointed Mauricio Claudio as Chief Referendum Officer to oversee the Secretariat and Referendum operations. The BRC also appointed one Returning Officer, John Sisiesi, to manage two voting districts (the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and outside of Bougainville). The Returning Officer appointed 34 Assistant Returning Officers (AROs), one for each ABG constituency (a constituency has been designated as an administrative unit for the purpose of referendum operations), and one based in Port Moresby to manage non-resident Bougainvillean polling in all PNG provinces and overseas. The latter was in conjunction with the PNG Electoral Commission and with the PNG High Commissions in Australia and the Solomon Islands.

The BRC ‘team’ also included Community Governments in Bougainville. From these, the BRC recruited 441 Ward Recorders to conduct enrolment, including carrying out an intensive house to house exercise. In addition, BRC undertook an extensive voter awareness campaign using roadshows, media, print, advertising, video, social media and mobile phone materials, and engaged 500 awareness officers in its awareness enrolment phases. Ahead of polling, it doubled awareness officers to 900 (equal men and women) to ensure all Bougainvillean were informed (see below Voter Awareness).

5.2 Enrolment

The BRC developed a comprehensive three phase voter enrolment process for the Referendum. This was in response to widespread community concerns regarding the low quality of voter rolls typically used in PNG/Bougainville elections. There was also a strong desire, voiced during community
consultations, for the BRC to work through Community Governments – the second tier of government in Bougainville – to develop the roll and ensure both quality and inclusion.

**Phase one**: verification of base roll (2015 ABG roll) by Ward Recorders against Ward Register

**Phase two**: house to house enrolment of new voters in Bougainville wards, 21 PNG Electoral Commission provincial offices, special work sites Ok Tedi Mine (WP), Lihir Mine (NIP), Pogera Mine (Enga) Ramu Plantation (Madang), and Australia (Brisbane and Cairns) and Solomon Islands (Honiara and Gizo)

**Phase three**: public display of preliminary roll for scrutiny and revision.

A number of first were achieved during enrolment including:
- Enrolment of Bougainvilleans in every province of PNG
- Enrolment of Bougainvilleans, who are also PNG citizens, living overseas
- Public display of preliminary roll for corrections, additions and objections.

### 5.3 Polling

The Writ for the Bougainville Referendum was issued by the Governor-General to the BRC on 27 September 2019, with polling to commence for a period of two weeks on 23 November 2019.

The BRC recruited and trained over 2,000 temporary Referendum workers to help deliver polling and counting. In total, 249 teams attended 829 polling locations. Each polling team comprised (as a minimum) a Presiding Officer, Assistant Presiding Officer, Poll Clerk and Door keeper:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Polling Location</th>
<th>Polling Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous Region of Bougainville</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG provinces and four special work sites: Ok Tedi Mine, Lihir Mine, Pogera Mine and Ramu Plantation</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas: Australia (Cairns and Brisbane), Solomon Islands (Honiara and Gizo)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>829</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For first time in a national electoral process, three new forms of voting were offered to increase the inclusion of voter:

**Postal voting**
A voter could apply for a postal vote if during the polling period they could not vote because they were:
- Outside their voting district, more than 16 km from an open polling booth open or travelling or be away from their residence; or
- Seriously ill or infirm, and by reason of that illness or infirmity, including pregnancy or care of a child; or for religious reasons or beliefs.

Applications for postal voting were available from the Issue of the Writ plus 11 days, and ended the day before the start of polling (22 November). Applications could be made at the three regional centres and Port Moresby, or downloaded and emailed from the BRC website. Postal voting kits were then delivered by the BRC by hand or courier (including one to a voter in Nauru) and returned to the ARO or designated locations before the end of the polling period (7 December).

**Declaration voting**
There are two categories by law where a voter could make a Declaration vote:
- Where a voter’s name has already been crossed off the roll, but they claim not to have already voted
• Where the voter has been issued with a Postal Vote Certificate but claims to vote at a polling place due to non-receipt or return unused of the Postal Vote.

All Declaration votes are checked against the Referendum voter roll at the Count Centre before being admitted to the count.

**Provisional voting**
Where a voter’s name is not found on the Referendum Roll at the polling place, or they believe their name has been omitted in error from the roll, they may apply for a Provisional vote. All Provisional votes are checked against the Referendum voter roll and the Preliminary Referendum Roll at the Count Centre before being admitted to the count.

### 5.4 Scrutiny and counting

Scrutiny and counting of ballot papers was undertaken at a single Count Centre in Buka. All materials and ballot papers were extensively verified, and where necessary, checked against the roll (for provisional, declaration and postal votes). All ballot papers (from Bougainville and outside Bougainville) were then added single bin for mixing before counting. This anonymised regional voting patterns, a security measure designed to minimise the risk of disharmony post-result.
6. VOTER AWARENESS

A comprehensive voter awareness campaign was conducted in Bougainville, PNG, Australia and Solomon Islands to ensure voters and stakeholder groups understood and were engaged in the electoral process. This included support to enrolment, polling and count phases:

- **Media**: 68 media releases over eight months, regular press briefings in both Bula and Port Moresby, daily media conferences during vote, print and radio advertising, and regular attendance on talkback radio
- **Face to face**: 500 awareness officers for enrolment, 900 awareness officers (equal men and women) for pre-polling, and multiple roadshows around Bougainville and to key PNG provincial capitals
- **Online**: Active BRC website and social media pages with regular and highly responsive posting and audience interaction for voter information and issues management
- **Voter information materials**: English and Tok Pisin posters, fact sheets and video awareness materials
- **Mobile phone**: regular SMS mobile blasts with enrolment and voter information.

7. SECURITY

While referendum operations were the responsibility of the BRC, all security arrangements were the responsibility of the Bougainville Police Service (BPS). The BRC established a security committee headed by BRC Commissioner Patrick Nisira, with membership of BRC Commissioner Robert Igara and Deputy Commissioner and Chief of BPS Francis Tokura. This committee led coordination with the BPS and other security stakeholders including the Royal PNG Constabulary and the New Zealand-led Regional Security Mission, which had contributions from around 20 officers from Australia, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Ahead of polling, the BRC security committee undertook extensive consultations with Community Governments to identify and manage security issues. It found that aside from two small Meekamui factions, all Community Governments were confident of a peaceful vote. This was evident during polling with minimal disturbances to voters and operations. There was one incident in Konnou Constituency, not directly-related to voting, which caused a deferral of polling by one polling team for a day. However
voters in that location were able to vote at neighbouring polling stations, with some travelling to Buin to cast their vote. BPS provided security during polling, transport of teams and materials, and at the Count Centre. They also provided security during BRC public events held around the region in the lead up to the vote. In all, the conduct of the vote and counting was widely seen by police and observers as peaceful and a credit to all, with security of voters and polling materials assured throughout the process.

8. PARTNERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

Funds and resources were provided to BRC and Referendum process by the international community: the United Nations, Australia, Germany, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The BRC worked with the PNG Electoral Commission to conduct enrolment and polling operations for Bougainvilleans living outside Bougainville across the 21 Provinces. To conduct overseas enrolment and polling, the BRC worked with the PNG Department of Foreign Affairs, and their diplomatic missions in Australia and Solomon Islands.

BRC directly hired some staff for the Secretariat and its regional offices, and as well as having staff seconded from the ABG and the Office of the Bougainville Electoral Commissioner. We also worked with international expertise provided by the New Zealand Electoral Commission, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (or IFES), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and agencies supported by the Australian Government.

9. FUNDING

The two governments of Papua New Guinea and Bougainville were responsible for funding the BRC to a final total of PGK28.1 million. Donor contributions to cover a funding gap were made by Australia, New Zealand, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany, Ireland, United States and the United Nations. The original budget submitted was PGK55 million.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>AMOUNT (millions PGK)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous Bougainville Government</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Government</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors (funding gap)</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>28.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. VIEWS OF OBSERVER GROUPS

Many observer groups have already released public statements or preliminary findings on the Referendum. They confirm the Commissioners view that it was conducted in a free and fair manner, with many noting innovative efforts to ensure voting was accessible and inclusive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bougainville</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bougainville Women’s Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bougainville Disabled Persons Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Buin District Women’s Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lenoke CG Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tonolei CG Women’s Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Hako Women’s Collective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Transparency International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Integrity of Political Parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>National Youth Development Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Divine Word University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Papua Native Landowners Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>ANU/UPNG Observers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>US Embassy Port Moresby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>British High Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>EU Delegation to PNG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Japanese Embassy in PNG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Australian High Commission in PNG, Buka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>New Zealand High Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pacific Islands Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Commonwealth Secretariat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: List of accredited observers
SUMMARY OBSERVER REPORTS

Australia
“Australia congratulates the Papua New Guinea and Autonomous Bougainville governments, and the people of Bougainville, on the successful conduct of the Referendum on the future political status of Bougainville. The work of the independent Bougainville Referendum Commission, ably chaired by former Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern, was integral to the credibility of the polling process. I welcome in particular the effort to achieve an inclusive vote, including ensuring women and people with a disability were able to cast their vote unhindered.”

Commonwealth Observer Group
“The Commonwealth Observer Group...has issued a Preliminary Statement concluding that the referendum process was credible, transparent and inclusive...There were several encouraging features of the referendum. The Referendum Roll showed that equal numbers of women and men voted; 25 percent were first time voters; the turnout was 85 per cent. New innovations introduced for the referendum included enrolment of Bougainvilleans in every Province of Papua New Guinea; display of the preliminary Referendum Roll for public scrutiny and objections; postal voting for those travelling, sick or otherwise unable to access a polling place; provisional voting for those not on the Referendum Roll at their place of polling; out of country voting (in Australia and Solomon Islands); and special voting at hospitals and for people with disabilities.”

European Union
“The Delegation of the European Union...welcomes the peaceful conduct of the referendum and the constructive approach taken by both the Government of PNG and the Autonomous Bougainville Government. The strong choice expressed by the people of Bougainville opens a new chapter in the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement.”

Haku Women’s Collective
“We congratulate the Bougainville Referendum Commission, all the polling teams, the police, CAPS and veteran scrutineers for a well-run referendum in Haku... Haku Women’s Collective observers endorse the referendum voting as being credible, free and fair. This voting experience is the best standard Bougainville has ever experienced.”

Japan
“The Government of Japan welcomes the holding of the referendum on November 23, in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, was held peacefully.”

New Zealand
“Foreign Minister Winston Peters has congratulated the Government of Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Bougainville Government for completing a well-conducted referendum on the future political status of Bougainville.”

Transparency International PNG
“Voter surveys were almost all entirely unanimous in their assessment that there were no undue or coercive behaviours, e.g. Bribery, Threats of Violence, Block Voting, etc. Almost all respondents responded that they had not experienced or witnessed issues that have plagued elections in Papua New Guinea in the past, and this was corroborated by the TIPNG Observer teams. On the whole the TIPNG Bougainville Referendum Observation preliminary finding is that while there were minor procedural issues, if measured against the standard of previous elections in PNG, the Bougainville Referendum was free, fair & safe and credibly reflects the will of the people of Bougainville.”
6.1 Out of country voting
Overseas enrolment and voting were provided for the first time to Bougainvilleans who are also Papua New Guinea citizens. Four locations with high Bougainville populations were selected in Australia (Brisbane and Cairns) and Solomon Islands (Gizo and Honiara).

6.2 Postal voting
Postal voting was provided for enrolled voters who are:
1. Sick, infirm, pregnant or more than 16kms from polling place
2. Travelling during the polling period and unable to reach a polling station.

Voters had to visit a BRC regional centre (or download forms from the BRC website and email) by 22 November to apply for a postal voting kit which was later sent to them by the BRC. The process is according to law and secure. People with a disability especially saw postal voting as highly inclusive, and one eligible voter sent her postal vote from Nauru.

6.3 Provisional voting
BRC provided provisional voting for the first time in a Papua New Guinean electoral process for two situations:
1. Human error from our side during data entry and developing the final roll - whereby someone enrolled, but their name does not appear on the roll when they vote.
2. For voters who go to a polling station outside the constituency where they enrolled – such as a student who enrolled in Port Moresby who is now back home voting in Bougainville.
Enrolled voters not found on the roll at the polling place must declare that they are enrolled and have not yet voted in the Referendum. They are given a ballot paper which is placed in a special ‘provisional ballot’ envelope. The name is checked against a master roll at the Count Centre before admission for scrutiny and included in the count. The process is according to law and secure. Provisional voting is not a new chance to enrol, but instead provides a safety net to ensure all who enrolled can vote, no matter where they vote. As a result, 482 voters whose were finally counted, would have been normally turned away at the polling booth because their names were not on the final roll. This innovation reduced possible problems at the polling booth and was inclusive as the errors were on the BRC side.

6.4 Special voting teams for Upes, hospitals and police lock up
BRC provided special male-only voting teams for young men undertaking their Upe initiations. Special teams also visited Buka and Arawa hospitals, and the Buka Police lock up to ensure everyone had a chance to vote who would not have been able to access normal polling places.

6.5 Polling in every ward in Autonomous Region of Bougainville
Polling stations in every ward meant greater participation by bringing polling closer to people’s place of residence.

6.6 Polling in every PNG province with enrolled Bougainvilleans
BRC provided enrolment in every PNG province, and polling to Bougainvilleans through every provincial PNG Electoral Commission office. Enrolment and polling was also provided at four special work sites where the BRC found significant populations of Bougainvilleans (Lihir Island, Ramu Sugar, Ok Tedi and Porgera).
ANNEX 1: THE BALLOT PAPER

Under the Peace Agreement, the question, together with accompanying descriptive text was provided to the BRC by the two governments. The BRC was responsible for the subsequent design and printing of 300,000 ballot papers.
ANNEX 2: MAP OF BOUGAINVILLE