



International Centre for Democratic Partnerships

Australia-Pacific Connections
for a Digital Future

Innovative and disruptive technology in PNG agriculture

Pacific Connect Business Network Dialogue • 1-3 April 2019, Port Moresby



Participants of the 2019 Business Network Dialogue, Port Moresby.

Executive Summary

The International Centre for Democratic Partnerships (ICDP) hosted the *Pacific Connect* Business Network Dialogue at the Airways Hotel in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on 1-3 April 2019.

Under the *Pacific Connect* theme of ‘Australia-Pacific Connections for a Digital Future’, the Dialogue brought together 20 current and emerging leaders from Australia and Papua New Guinea to discuss the challenges and vast potential for digital connectivity in the country and the wider region. Dialogue discussions and project outcomes focused on how improved digital connectivity and disruptive technologies can generate new commercial and economic opportunities for the Papua New Guinean agricultural industry.

The aim of the Dialogue was to establish and strengthen networks between current and emerging leaders in PNG and Australia, particularly in both nations’ ICT and agricultural sectors. The Dialogue provided a forum for participants to forge relationships, to identify challenges to solve and, to subsequently select practical projects to take forward. It built upon the strong connections and progress developed at the Inaugural *Pacific Connect* Business Network Dialogue, held in Port Moresby one year earlier.

The Dialogue was supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and was facilitated by **Mr Andrew Carriline**, ICDP Ambassador, Chair of Pacific Connect Business Council & Non-Executive Director of Kina Securities, and **Mr John Pora**, CEO of Niugene PNG. A copy of the dialogue programme is [attached](#).

Discussions

Twenty emerging leaders – six from Australia and fourteen from Papua New Guinea, began the Dialogue with an introductory roundtable and brainstorming session, which was followed by a Networking Dinner. Emerging leaders also had the opportunity at a welcome dinner to engage with prominent business leaders from Australia and Papua New Guinea. A networking event following the dialogue also provided the opportunity for emerging leaders to discuss projects and meet with other members of the *Pacific Connect* Community, including some of last year’s Business Network Dialogue participants.

The Dialogue continued the following day, with brainstorming, open discussions and project conceptualisation using the second track process. Participants discussed how improved digital and disruptive technology can generate new commercial opportunities in agriculture.

Projects

The projects that resulted from the Dialogue are varied and reflect the ideas and input from the participants who were selected for their diverse backgrounds and significant experience which proved especially relevant to the discussions. Participants are able to work on their projects of interest using a dedicated *Pacific Connect* Slack online forum. Three distinct projects came from the Dialogue, each with significant potential They are as follows:

- A digital marketplace that will better connect marketplaces and farmers to customers;
- Improving and enhancing the supply chain of produce from rural areas to urban centres in PNG; and
- A platform that makes key agricultural data, information, insights and learnings available to key stakeholders across PNG.

Feedback

Participants attending the *Pacific Connect* 2019 Business Network Dialogue were able to frankly and directly communicate their experience, expertise and ideas thanks to a common meeting space and community environment which effectively built rapport and created a common purpose. After the Dialogue, participants were invited to provide feedback on the event to ICDP through an online survey developed by the University of Technology, Sydney.

Out of the twenty participants, twelve completed the survey with 100% indicating that they were committed to attending future Pacific Connect events and 75% of the respondents agreeing that *'Pacific Connect cultivates meaningful and enduring relationships between Australia and the Pacific'*. Interestingly, seven respondents established a business relationship with contacts either during or following the Dialogue. These survey results provide constructive feedback which enables ICDP to effectively improve in-country events and the *Pacific Connect* program in general.

Next steps

Project leaders and members are continuing to engage on ICDP's Slack online forum to develop their projects. Buoyed by the enthusiasm coming from of the event, participants are actively seeking industry financial and technical support to refine and scale their ideas before pitching them to prominent business leaders and ICDP's wider business community network for seed funding.

Dialogue Participants

Facilitators

- Andrew Carriline, Chair of ICDP Business Network Council; ICDP Ambassador; Non-Executive Director, Kina Securities
- John Pora, Director of Niugene PNG

Papua New Guinean Participants

- Patricia Aimapa, Founder & Director of Afore Computer Training Institute
- Lucina Gulluman-Kisip, Senior Advisor – Sustainable Development, Oilsearch
- Jack Imbu Jr, IT Consultant, Sahulink PNG
- Albert Kamar, IT Consultant, World Bank project office – Productive Partnership in Agriculture Projects (PPAP)
- Mollina Kapal, Principal Projects Engineer – ICT Applications, National Information and Communications Technology Authority (NICTA)
- Wendy Bai Magea, APEC SMEWG Research Officer, Small Medium Enterprise Corporation
- Hans Onga, Managing Director, El Mana Investments
- Rex Paura, Co-founder, Coin-sure PNG
- Jane Ravusiro, Senior National Coordinator, PHAMA Plus Program
- Andrew Runawery, Director and Managing Partner, StratCom
- Fenella Sam, Entrepreneur, Advocate & Social Enterpriser, Hope Community Services
- Jaive Smare, Founder & Director, JYVX Ltd
- Julliane Terry, Managing Director, Tok Stret Consulting
- Shalom Warrey, Entrepreneur & Small Business Owner

Australian Participants

- Tom Atkinson, Director, Think Technology
- Benjamin Blackshaw, Social Media Manager, ICDP
- James Fraser, Associate, Minton Ellison
- Simon Gilmore, Senior Programme Manager, DFAT
- Joanne Murphy, Owner & Manager, Clothes Peg Station
- Matt Steine, Head of Digital City Strategy, Townsville City Council

ICDP

- Simone Pensko, Chief Executive Officer, ICDP
- Tina Briggs, Program Manager, ICDP



Day 1 Dialogue brainstorming session

Pacific Connect Welcome Dinner Attendees

Isikeli Tauraka, Non-Executive Chairman, Kina Securities Ltd

Simon Gilmore, Australian High Commission, PNG

Matt Ducie, Area Operations Manager, Exxon Mobil PNG Ltd

Sundar Ramamurthy, INVOC Pty Ltd

Brent Thomson, General Manager, Black Swan International (PNG)

Wayne Kasou, General Manager for Government Affairs, Oilsearch Ltd

John Nilkare, Corporate Affairs Manager, South Pacific Brewery

Summary of Proceedings

Day 1 – Leadership Roundtable & Welcome Dinner

Introductions of Programme, Participants & Second Track Process

Dialogue facilitator, Mr Andrew Carriline, commenced the first session with an introductory roundtable, during which the participants were given an opportunity to introduce themselves and their backgrounds whilst also outlining their goals and expectations of the Dialogue. ICDP CEO, Ms Simone Pensko, and Mr Carriline provided participants with an overview of ICDP and an understanding of the ‘Second Track’ process, along with the organisation’s expected outcomes of the event.

Brainstorming session – digital agriculture in Papua New Guinea: Challenges and opportunities

Under the theme of ‘*digital agriculture in Papua New Guinea: challenges and opportunities*’, Mr Pora began with a presentation outlining PNG’s rapid development and challenges, along with the importance of “adding value to the economy”. Mr Pora stressed the importance of improving data and efficiencies in the value chain. In what was an inspiring presentation for the participants, Mr Pora outlined the rapid development of PNG’s society since the 1950s, with the acceleration of the transport industry allowing goods, ideas and people to be transported around the country quicker than previously imagined. He went on to say that agriculture is the bedrock of the PNG economy and so the next generation of development can be underpinned by digital innovations in the agricultural sector. It was suggested that through collaboration, the development of project ideas has less risk and allows project members to focus on and prioritise their own aspects and experiences to develop their ideas.

“The speed of communication is unbelievable; we just need to harness it. Digital disruption, I believe, is this generation’s most powerful opportunity to address economic and social inclusion into the value chain of Papua New Guinea.”

The cultural, geographical and social context provided by Mr Pora along with the expectations of the participants expressed in the introductory roundtable shaped the first brainstorming session of the Dialogue. The participants came from a variety of backgrounds, including business, government, agriculture, legal and not-for-profit sectors. This mix of knowledge and experience generated a determined and collaborative energy that enabled frank and constructive discussions between the participants, aided by the facilitators. Participants quickly identified numerous challenges and opportunities for coming up with solutions:

- *Access to data and information in a centralised stream*
- *E-Government*
- *ICT, digital and mobile training*
- *Logistics and supply chain optimisation for agriculture*
- *Sustainability and traceability*
- *Digital marketplaces*

Additionally, it was emphasised in the discussions that participants should focus on the logistics and planning of their ideas, for without logistics and planning, many ideas do not make it past the drawing board. A wholistic approach was also taken with the introduction of a 'national PNG brand' upon which business ideas can be based. For example, it was noted that Australia is particularly well known for its wool products and Japan with its beef, and therefore generating a unique and marketable brand for PNG agriculture will help it grow in line with digitally disruptive projects.

This session was then followed by a Networking Dinner hosted by ICDP which was attended by 30 Papua New Guineans and Australians. The gathering highlighted the strong and growing *Pacific Connect* community that covers many different sectors. Mr Carriline spoke to the attendees about the networking potential of the *Pacific Connect* community and noted the presence of many Australian and Papua New Guinean business leaders. He spoke about his experience in the country and the untapped strengths of the PNG people which could be realised through digital transformation, ultimately driving development.

DAY 2 – Project Planning, Identification and Conception

The first session of day 2 was led by Mr Carriline, where participants were encouraged to review and discuss the outcomes of the first day. During the 'project identification' session, it was then up to the participants to refine the six ideas from day 1. This resulted in three ideas that the participants were willing to take forward. The 'project conceptualisation' session saw the participants focus and develop their chosen projects through smaller collaborative group work, with advice and input given by Mr Carriline and Mr Pora. To conclude the Dialogue, the projects were then presented in a 'pitch' manner to the rest of the participants and facilitators where they could ask questions, provide feedback and suggest key networks to further develop the ideas.

Details of projects:

A digital marketplace that will better connect marketplaces and farmers to customers

Underlined by a wholistic approach that seeks to create a 'Craigslist of agricultural products', this idea seeks to use digital technologies to augment a current door-to-door organic product distribution service in Port Moresby. The objectives of the project are:

- Expand farmers' market opportunities
- Greater efficiencies for farmers
- Less waste
- Greater consumer access to farmers
- Generating increased trust through the introduction of a rating system

The project seeks to provide farmers access to a platform where they can post relevant information through which supermarkets and other bulk buyers can obtain produce, with the platform being the 'middleman' of this process. As a next step, the project team will utilise *Pacific Connect's* broader network to source more information regarding the creation of such a platform.

Improving and enhancing the supply chain of produce from rural areas to urban centres in PNG

This project seeks to overcome current issues faced in the PNG domestic market, including problems in the supply chains and quality assurance issues of fresh produce. It was noted that consumers are choosing imported produce rather than supporting local producers due to these issues. As such, this digital application and supply chain project aims to increase the consistent supply and quality of

fresh produce from regional PNG farmlands to urban centres which will ultimately increase confidence in local consumers and add value to the PNG economy.

This project is based on a current digital supply chain platform that allows farmers to understand the optimal harvesting and planting times and when to take fresh produce to the distribution centre. Digital solutions will be used to train and network farmers to assist with producing the highest quality produce. Renewable energy for logistical equipment, such as refrigerators, shipping container and agricultural equipment is envisaged to be used. Project members strongly believe that partnerships are vital for this project, and the team members and leaders aim to cooperate with existing agencies, including the Fresh Produce Development Authority and digital service providers to develop the project further.

A platform that makes key agricultural data, information, insights and learnings available to key stakeholders across PNG

Demonstrated by the slogan ‘information is power’, this project seeks to make important data information, insights and learnings available to key stakeholders across PNG, particularly the country’s agricultural sector. The platform also aims to increase transparency and competition and upskill local primary producers on value added to their crop. The project members have identified that critical information isn’t available and thus cannot be accessed by farmers in a timely way manner. Such data can include production information, pricing, service costs, insurance, financing and consumption demands.

The project seeks to identify current platforms that can be altered to create an ‘information and stock-trading platform’ for PNG. The platform would provide key agricultural data including current pricing, detailed information and pricing of agricultural products, stock trading and service provision listing information. The information is provided through a central database through which industry partners can add information and services. Potentially, this platform could better inform producers about a) when to go to market and b) what market to go to, leading to greater efficiencies and sales.



Dialogue participants working on group projects

DAY 3 – Visit to art exhibition

Pacific Connect Business Network Dialogue participants were able to conclude their time in Port Moresby with a visit to the Papua New Guinea National Museum & Art Gallery for the latest exhibition: 'A Bit na Ta'. David Bridie, producer of the exhibition, invited participants for a thought-provoking and emotional tour which included a film highlighting the culture and struggles of the Tolai people of East New Britain. The film was produced in collaboration with photographer Gideon Kakabin and singer George Telek.



'A Bit na Ta' Exhibition tour

Feedback

Post dialogue, all participants were asked to complete an online survey developed by the University of Technology Sydney. **Of the 20 participants, 12 completed the survey.** A summary of the survey raw data is provided in the [attached](#) Dialogue Findings Report.

The key findings from the Dialogue are below.

- All participants expectations of the dialogue were either exceeded **(75%)** or met **(25%)**
- **100%** agreed that they would be committed to attending a future *Pacific Connect* event and believed that future joint projects with other participants will emerge
- **100%** of participants indicated that the programme will be helpful to their work in the future
- **Seven** respondents established a business relationship with contacts either during or following the Dialogue.
- **75% (9)** of participants indicated that the programme strengthens Australian-Pacific relations, contributes to economic development, enhances good governance and cultivates meaningful enduring relationships between Australia and the Pacific
- **25% (3)** participants disagreed with the above statements indicating there is some room for improving programme communication and implementation
- **4** participants believed the dialogue's strength was in the opportunity to expand contacts and networks, a further **4** indicated that the diversity of the participants' background was the dialogue's strongest attribute.

There were no phone interviews conducted for this dialogue, therefore key findings are based solely on the online survey completed by participants.

Post-Dialogue collaboration

During the Dialogue, participants were invited to connect to the dedicated *Pacific Connect* Slack online channel, which also provides them with access to the broader *Pacific Connect* Community, such as other Dialogue participants, facilitators and industry experts. The platform, successfully utilised during and after other Dialogues and Workshops, fosters project collaboration, allowing team members to work on their projects remotely.

Participants from this Dialogue will have the opportunity to strengthen connections and further discuss projects at the planned *Pacific Connect* Networking Event, to be held in Sydney on 18-19 September 2019.

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Pacific Connect Business Network Dialogue • 1-3 April 2019, Port Moresby

PROGRAMME

Day One – Monday, 1 April 2019

12:30PM Arrival and check-in

Airways Hotel
Jackson International Airport
Jacksons Parade, 7 Mile Boroko
Port Moresby

INNOVATIVE & DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN PNG AGRICULTURE PACIFIC CONNECT BUSINESS NETWORK DIALOGUE

Dakota Ballroom
Airways Hotel

2:30PM *Registration & official welcome*

2:45PM Introductory Roundtable
Facilitator – **Mr Andrew Carriline**, Chair, *Pacific Connect* Business Network Council
Ambassador, International Centre for Democratic Partnerships (ICDP)
Non-Executive Director, Kina Securities, PNG

4:00PM *Break*

4:15PM Brainstorming Session
Digital Agriculture in Papua New Guinea: Challenges and Opportunities
Facilitator – **John Pora**, Director, NIUGENE PNG Limited

5:30PM Extra-curricular activities & free time

NETWORKING DINNER

Bacchus Restaurant
Airways Hotel

6:30PM *Welcome Drinks*

7:00PM **Keynote Address**
Guest Speaker – **The Hon. Charles Abel**, Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer of
Papua New Guinea (tbc)

9:00PM *Close*

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Day Two – Tuesday, 2 April 2019

INNOVATIVE & DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN PNG AGRICULTURE PACIFIC CONNECT BUSINESS NETWORK DIALOGUE

**Dakota Ballroom
Airways Hotel**

- 8:45AM** *Participants check-in & networking*
- 9:00AM** First Planning Session
Innovative & Disruptive Technology in PNG Agriculture
Facilitator – **Andrew Carriline**, ICDP Ambassador
Outcomes of Day One
The “why” and “what”
- 10:00AM** **Project Identification**
Brainstorm ideas
Facilitators – **Andrew Carriline**, ICDP Ambassador and **John Pora**, Director,
NIUEGENE PNG Limited
- 10:30AM** *Morning tea*
- 10:45AM** **Project Conception**
Small group discussion
Facilitators – **Andrew Carriline**, ICDP Ambassador and **John Pora**, Director,
NIUEGENE PNG Limited
- 12:30PM** *Lunch*
- 1:30PM** **Project Conception continued**
Facilitators – **Andrew Carriline**, ICDP Ambassador and **John Pora**, Director,
NIUEGENE PNG Limited
- 2:15PM** Final Session
Project presentations
Outcomes and Next Steps
Facilitator – **Andrew Carriline**, ICDP Ambassador
- 3:00PM** Close & free time
- 6 – 7PM** **Pacific Connect Community Network Drinks** **Vue Lounge - Airways**

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Day Three – Wednesday, 3 April 2019

INNOVATIVE & DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN PNG AGRICULTURE PACIFIC CONNECT BUSINESS NETWORK DIALOGUE

Airways Hotel

6.00AM - *Early transfers to airport for some participants
onwards*

8:30AM *Late departing participants transported to art exhibition*

PNG National Museum & Art Gallery

9:00AM Background discussion and tour
A Bit na Ta Exhibition
PNG National Museum and Art Gallery
Project Leader, Musician & Producer – **David Bridie**

10.00AM Return to hotel, check out and transfer to airport for departure

Australia-Pacific Connections for a Digital Future

Pacific Connect Business Network Dialogue ***Innovative & Disruptive Technology in PNG Agriculture*** **1-3 April 2019, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea (PNG)**

Communiqué / Call to Action

1. We, the participants of the *Pacific Connect* Business Network Dialogue, met in Port Moresby on Monday, 1 April and Tuesday, 2 April 2019 at the invitation of the International Centre for Democratic Partnerships (ICDP). The Dialogue was co-facilitated by Mr Andrew Carriline, Chair of *Pacific Connect* Business Network Council, and Mr John Pora, Director of NIUGENE PNG Ltd, and supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).
2. We congratulate the Dialogue organisers – ICDP – on assembling a diverse group of participants with expertise across a range of sectors and organisations, including government, non-government organisations (NGOs), law, community development, business services, information and communications technology (ICT), marketing and communications, forestry and agriculture. We thank all the participants for their constructive and enthusiastic contributions to the Dialogue and their willingness to continue their engagement and collaboration on projects emanating from the event.
3. We welcome Australia's interest in forging stronger and more enduring strategic relationships with Pacific Island nations. We see the planned *Pacific Connect* Dialogues as an opportunity for current and emerging PNG and Australian leaders to extend their networks, work on solutions to common challenges through the 'second track' process and develop long-term relationships through shared experiences and ongoing collaborations.
4. We thank Mr Carriline for the opportunity to participate in self-reflection and 'check in' exercises and Mr Pora for his presentation on the rapid rise of PNG since 1950 and the potential that emerging leaders have in transforming the country through digital innovation. We appreciate their joint Dialogue facilitation and their collective value in revealing mutual interests and creating common purpose within the group. These approaches assisted in strengthening the bonds required to maintain ongoing relationships and generate long-term tangible outcomes.
5. PNG's strength is in its people and, as agriculture is a vital sector and income generator for the majority of the population, we see opportunities for innovative digital approaches to boost economic growth and improve livelihoods through increasing efficiencies in the supply chain and provision of access to platforms for farmers and customers to connect to marketplaces, to enable upskilling and informed purchasing choices.

6. We believe that simple, robust and existing technology should be used wherever possible in future solutions in PNG, allied to active marketing and education to ensure user take-up. We also recognise that viable commercial models for service provision could prove more sustainable than relying on government action or grants.
7. We are confident that people in PNG will embrace new technology and use it with ingenuity, if it meets their needs. However, we acknowledge that a lack of income and electricity, combined with a range of cultural, financial and educational problems, can limit the take-up of new solutions, unless they are tailored to PNG's circumstances.
8. We are confident that cooperation with existing Australian and PNG stakeholders in government, business and community sectors will leverage resources and encourage their support.
9. We hope that pooling our expertise, experience and passion for change will help drive transformative change in PNG. We will call on our shared contacts to investigate the creation, adoption or adaption of our ideas. These include developing proposals to identify a range of solutions and access resources for three project areas:
 - Establishment of a technology platform that will better connect marketplaces and farmers to customers, starting local and building from there, with additional options for storage and logistics to be incorporated if required;
 - Improvement and enhancement of the supply chain of fresh produce from rural areas of PNG to urban centres with a focus on solutions addressing inconsistent supply and quality;
 - Make important data, information, insights and learnings available to key stakeholders across PNG and the broader agriculture value chain. The platform will also increase transparency in pricing, create increased competition and upskill local primary producers on value adding to their crop.
10. We acknowledge that partnerships and other business collaborations, including exploration of enhancing Sister Cities relationships between Townsville and Port Moresby and creation of a Global Shapers Hub in PNG, will continue post-Dialogue. We will also continue to connect using various mechanisms, including through further meetings and ICDP's dedicated Slack forum for the *Pacific Connect* Community.
11. We believe the Dialogue met our expectations by addressing topics of importance to PNG, providing a forum for open and honest discussion, expanding our networks and contacts, and initiating joint tangible projects to take forward.
12. We thank David Bridie for inviting a number of participants to a thought-provoking and emotional tour of 'a Bit na Ta', an exhibition at the PNG National Museum and Art Gallery in Port Moresby. The Exhibition includes a film made by David Bridie, in collaboration with the Tolai people of East New Britain, particularly photographer/historian Gideon Kakabin and singer George Telek.
13. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the planned *Pacific Connect* Networking event, to be held in Sydney on 18-19 September 2019, and look forward meeting with other Dialogue participants across the Pacific.