



PEER REVIEWS of Development Coordination

Peer reviews were mandated by Pacific Forum Leaders at their annual meeting in Cairns, Australia in August 2009. They are part of a package of development coordination initiatives among Forum Island Countries (FICs) and development partners being coordinated by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in Suva. They intend to review and focus action on the ways that FICs, with support of development partners, use their own money and the aid they receive to ensure a better life for their people and make progress towards achieving their national priorities and the Millennium Development Goals.

Peer reviews are an opportunity for mutual learning between FICs on the one hand and their peers from other FICs and develop-

“There is a lot that we can learn to improve on through the Cairns Compact process... We would like our aid donors to address what we consider to be our priority areas. We want them to do this in a way that is suitable for us taking into consideration our current capacity to absorb such assistance and the processes we need to undergo to access this assistance.”

Hon Dr Kieren Keke, Minister for Finance and Planning
Nauru Peer Review, March 2010

“We are very keen to find better ways of engaging with our donors... We acknowledge our capacity constraints and would also like to see donors coordinating among themselves.”

Mr Atanteora Beiatou
Kiribati Secretary for Finance
Kiribati Peer Review, April 2010

ment partners on the other, about how best to address development challenges. The peer review is based on the idea that if an FIC wants to make improvements in its development efforts, it may be better to seek advice from Pacific neighbours who may be facing, and could have found solutions to, exactly the same dilemmas rather than to call in international experts.

A peer review is carried out by government officials from other FICs plus a development partner representative, all selected by the country that volunteers to undertake a peer review. It looks at how FICs formulate their priorities, turn them into budgets, implement plans and monitor and report on results; and just as importantly, how development partners act collectively and individually to support those priorities and processes. The peer review does not question the policy direction of the country being reviewed, but considers how the choices made by that country are supported through planning, budgeting and coordination of resources. It aims to come up with simple and practical actions tailored to local capacity and based on regional experience which can be implemented in the short-term to medium-term to improve development coordination in country.

Nauru and Kiribati peer reviews (2010)

In 2010, Nauru volunteered to undertake a peer review by the Cook Islands and Tonga with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Kiribati invited Papua New Guinea with the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to undertake their review. The peer review reports are available at www.forumsec.org. Since the completion of their peer reviews in 2010, Nauru and Kiribati have strengthened their development coordination systems and processes including the completion of *Public Expenditure Financial Accountability assessments (PEFAs)* and resultant improvements in financial accounting and management systems. Nauru with the support of the *Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility (PRIF)* has completed its Public Infrastructure Investment Plan. Both countries now hold more regular dialogue with development partners resulting in better coordination and management of development partners' engagements in Nauru and Kiribati.

Vanuatu, Tuvalu and Niue peer reviews (2011)

In 2011, three additional Forum Island Countries, Vanuatu, Tuvalu and Niue, have volunteered to undertake the Peer Reviews. Vanuatu has invited officials from Papua New Guinea, Samoa and India and from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to undertake a peer review of its national development planning, budgeting, public financial management and aid management systems and processes. Tuvalu has invited officials from Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu and from UNESCAP to undertake their peer review. Niue has invited officials from the Cook Islands and Samoa and from AusAID to undertake their peer review. All peer review teams will be supported by a team from the Forum Secretariat and nationally identified government focal points.



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