

**Minutes of the ESGC held on the 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2009  
Kitano Mendana Hotel**

Members in Attendance:

**MEHRD**

- |     |                  |   |                                    |
|-----|------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Mylyn Kuve       | - | Permanent Secretary (MEHRD)        |
| 2.  | Tim Ngele        | - | US/Administration                  |
| 3.  | Donald Malasa    | - | US/Tertiary                        |
| 4.  | Peter Potter     | - | Education Sector Adviser           |
| 5.  | Thomas Misibini  | - | Financial Controller               |
| 6.  | Tom Rarakani     | - | CAO/HRM                            |
| 7.  | Emma Furai       | - | CPO/PCRU                           |
| 8.  | Charles Matanani | - | Secretary/NEB                      |
| 9.  | Nancy Palmer     | - | TA/TSD                             |
| 10. | Audrey Rusa      | - | Chief Education Sector Secretariat |

**DP's**

- |     |                      |   |                                      |
|-----|----------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 11. | Rebecca Spratt       | - | Manager NZAID (Honiara)              |
| 12. | Kathleen Pearce      | - | Programme Manager NZAID (Wellington) |
| 13. | Juan Carlos Hinojosa | - | Education Adviser EU (Honiara)       |

**PSD**

- |     |                      |   |               |
|-----|----------------------|---|---------------|
| 14. | Luke Mua             | - | US/Policy-PSD |
| 15. | Walter Hubert –Rhein | - | TA/Policy-PSD |

**MoF**

- |     |                |   |                                      |
|-----|----------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 16. | Dalcy Tozaka   | - | Director/FEDU-MoFT                   |
| 17. | Paul Wakio     | - | Finance Officer/FEDU-MoFT            |
| 18. | Sam Watson     | - | Officer/Budget Unit-MoFT             |
| 19. | Johnson Sokani | - | Official/Finance Reporting Unit-MoFT |

**MDPAC**

- |     |              |   |                            |
|-----|--------------|---|----------------------------|
| 20. | Jane Waetara | - | Permanent Secretary -MDPAC |
| 21. | Daniel Rove  | - | Director -MDPAC            |

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Registration and distribution of materials (folder with power-point printouts) were shared as invitees arrive.

The Permanent Secretary welcomed the presence of DP's, especially Kathleen Pearce from NZAID Wellington and Rebecca Spratt (NZAID Honira) and Juan Carlos Hinojosa-Martinez (EU) and reps from the three Ministries to the first ESGC meeting. In particular the presence of the PS from Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Co-ordination, Jane Waetara was appreciated.

## II. INFORMATION SHARING

- 1) The Permanent Secretary shared information on the purpose and the goals of the Education Sector Governance Committee. The purpose is to enable the key government stakeholders; MoF, MDPAC and MPS to have a better understanding of the programmes and developments in the Ministry of Education and Human Resources and provide the actions needed to improved co-ordination and collaboration in the education sector. She emphasized that this year is the final year of Phase II (2007-2009), the review of the PEAP, NEAP and SWAp are to be undertaken and the necessary information sharing with and collaboration from the three main stakeholder Ministries.
- 2) The PS also explained the purpose and goals of setting up the new dialogue structure in the education sector which aims at widening participation from many different stakeholders. *See for more details, presentation I. Purpose and Goals of ESGC.*
- 3) A brief summary on the current planning process and levels was presented by the CPO/PCRU. This includes the Whole School Development Planning, Provincial and National medium and longer term planning. School development planning was only introduced from last year 2008 and the other planning documents as PEAP and NEAP will be under review this year, including a review of the SWAp. The CPO gave an explanation of the objectives of the different planning documents and the management of the SWAp. Monitoring mechanisms to measure NEAP-progress were also clarified. *See for more details, presentation II, Education Sector Planning.*

## III. DISCUSSION

- 1) The Financial Controller of MEHRD presented a power point presentation on the budgeting and budget preparation process. He mentioned achievements as well as challenges. Budget preparations based on good costings, prioritization, policy financial implications, avoidance of supplementary budget can still be improved. *See for more details Presentation III Budgeting process.*
- 2) Financing gaps in the different areas (such as access, infrastructure, quality and management) were indicated by the Under Secretary HR. The aim was to inform Government and Development Partners where financial support could be intensified. *See for details the presentation IV Financing gaps..*

Discussion started around three prepared questions:

- a) How to further improve the budget preparation process with MoF, MDPAC and MPS?
  - b) How to get MoF's support/collaboration on the costing of policies, development of MTEF, sharing information on resources envelop in short, medium and longer term?
  - c) How to best engage Development Partners into funding of 'financial gaps'?
- Director FEDU (Financial and Economic Development Unit) asked how the Ministry had been able to improve the budget preparation and implementation process. PS and MEHRD-Education Advisor explained that a budget committee is established, regularly vote control reports are produced, accounts organizes meetings with Heads of the Divisions and costing is scrutinized by accounts as well. The main

improvements made are in the areas of strategic planning and more precise budgeting. However, still improvements can be made, in particular on teacher establishment predictions. Director FEDU said that the Fiscal Medium Term Strategy, because of the financial crises needs to be fully reviewed.

- FEDU supported the request from the Ministry of Education for access to VRS-data and costing out education policies and underlined the commitment of this Unit to cooperate with the MEHRD.
- MoF asked for regularly and timely reporting on the progress in the education sector, in particular financial reporting.
- MoF/FEDU plans for a public financial management reform and would like to start a public financial management working group.
- The current process to implement the development budget is a challenge for the Ministry in terms of lack of capacity to implement but also the approval process and actual access to the funds. The budget preparation process, however, has been approved by introducing specific formats for development bids.
- MEHRD also recognized the efforts from MDPAC to co-ordinate the development support in the country by organizing high level strategic meetings to which the MEHRD is invited with the main donors such as EU, AusAID, NZAID, Japanese Embassy/JICA etc.
- The current financial crisis was discussed, including the 10% reservation on the recurrent budget, which makes it more difficult to implement all the activities in the NEAP.
- The representatives of the DP's recognised that all the Ministries present are already engaging well with the DP's by different formal forums. In particular, the MEHRD has a very fruitful co-operation by having the SWAp in place. Also this new forum of ESGC is a helpful initiative to raise the main strategic issues, and the DP's are eager to know the priorities of the MEHRD, together with the other Ministries, with a view to aligning to them in a coordinated manner. The DP's concurred that this clear identification of priorities, shared with the DP's as a group, is very beneficial.

Coffee break was called for at this juncture

#### **IV. DISCUSSION (continued)**

- 1) Discussions continued on the challenges faced by the Human Resources Division after a short presentation by the HR/Manager. Challenges faced where in the area in the budget process, recruitment and performance monitoring (discipline) process. In particular the 'freezing' of personnel by MPS on advice of MoF because of financial problems in the country is affecting the planned recruitment process of the Ministry and indirectly also the implementation of the NEAP.
- 2) The MEHRD would like to improve the communication with MPS on the priorities for establishment and salary positioning. There are also a lot of internal complaints about the slow follow up on HRD-issues by the Admin Division and PSD/MPS. The Ministry has a problem with leadership of divisions, most of the leading staff have only a teaching background.

Discussion started on:

- a) How to improve the slow process of recruitment, promotions and follow up on housing issues?
- b) How to motivate and also how to take disciplinary measures for non-motivated staff?

- c) How to strengthen leadership of divisions and in provinces?
- d) How to react on the 'freezing' of new recruitment announced by MPS?
  - MPS-representatives suggested that MEHRD could prioritise positions and might be able to withdraw some positions as an exchange for filling in more strategic positions. If not, they suggested to keep on discussing at the highest level, between PS and PS. All Ministries are still able to finalise the recruitment processes already started before 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2009. Other suggestions were contracting out, if there would be sufficient other sources of financial support (e.g. from DP's).
  - The rental scheme for public officers is 'frozen' as well. It now costs the government between 40-53 million SBD. Staff accommodation is a major concern for MEHRD as there is still a long list of officers waiting to be approved under the rental scheme
  - PS MDPAC referred to the important programme of PSIP, Public Service Improvement Programme, to see where co-ordination between MEHRD and national programme could be improved. IPAM is another institute, where the Ministry could seek collaboration with. MEHRD revealed that there is already a good and regular contact with the PSIP, but that this programme is in an initial phase and not yet able to react on the tailor made requests from MEHRD for leadership, customers' training and areas such as job description review and the introduction of appraisal processes. MEHRD is at the moment recruiting participants for diverse IPAM-training.
  - Another representative of the MDPAC explained the development of the NHRDTC, the National Human Resources Development and Training Council, its secretariat for which the MDPAC takes the initiative. The first expected output of the NHRDTC is the production of a National HR- and Training plan aiming at stronger co-ordination of all capacity building in the country, scholarships etc. and at a stronger focus on the actual labour demand in the country. Training and development ideally aims firstly at meeting the specific HR-needs and job demand in the country. The MDPAC also tries to establish a NHRDT-data base.
  - There was an interesting discussion on the challenge for the Ministry to recruit general managers in stead of teachers, who according to a representative from MPS ideally continue working at schools, where we need them urgently. The Admin division was advised to recruit general managers for these positions, not per definition teachers.

## V. CONCLUSION

The Way forward for this meeting was summarized by the PS as:

- The minutes and presentations would be circulated later. The Ministry would also try to share an 'Aide Memoire'. (see last page).
- Information shared at this meeting was very useful and interactive. All participants expressed to continue with these cross sector meetings. However a full day might be better to allow for more and deeper discussion.
- The Permanent Secretary/MDPAC assured being a partner in the education sector and that the relationship will be strengthened. She suggested that next time an evaluation form could be distributed in the end of the meeting.
- The next meeting to include other stakeholders/Ministries so an expanded participants.

- Members were informed of the next important education sector meeting would be the AJR on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2009. The next ESGC will be on 16<sup>th</sup> of September 2009. Invitations will be sent out earlier as requested in this meeting.

The closing prayer was offered by the MEHRD US (A). All were invited to a delicious lunch hosted by the PS/MEHRD.

## AIDE MEMOIRE, ESGC 26<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY 2009

- 1) The next Education Sector Governance Committee meeting will be held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2009
- 2) Participants will be the Ministry of National Planning and Aid Co-ordination, Ministry of Finance and Treasury and Ministry of Public Service
- 3) The aim of the ESGC will be information sharing and improved co-ordination and collaboration between the different Ministries in the management of the education sector.
- 4) The ESGC will mainly focus on strategic matters and on a specific, small number of participants. The AJR will be the wider forum for all stakeholders (government, development partners, provinces, Education Authorities, teachers, students, NGO's) where details on progress and challenges of the Education Sector will be shared and discussed
- 5) Also a representation of development partners will be invited to enable the government to seek advice and technical and/or financial assistance on matters discussed.
- 6) All participants in the ESGC have a 'stake' in the design of the agenda and can raise strategic issues in order to get clarifications or to advise the implementing Ministries.
- 7) The participants will jointly decide in the next meeting about other possible participants and stakeholders in the education sector such as the Ministry of Health, Rural Development, Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening, Infrastructure Development, Women, Youth and Children.
- 8) The Ministry of Education as the largest budget holder and employer of public servants seeks stronger collaboration with
  - a. the Ministry of Finance in areas as longer term and output oriented budgeting (Mid Term Expenditure Framework), costing of education plans and polices and full access to statistics for financial and expenditure analysis.
  - b. the Ministry of Public Service in areas as adequate HRD-support for education staff, recruitment of quality personnel for both national and provincial level in particular in positions for managers, implementation of appraisal procedures and quick reaction on disciplinary matters.
  - c. the Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Co-ordination in areas as access to approved Development Budget, establishment of the NHRDTC and improved consultation during the preparation and prioritization of the development budget.
- 9) The MEHRD could put in place a preparation meeting with the other Ministry stakeholders to jointly discuss the agenda and the organisation of the ESGC, to encourage active participation in the ESGC and a practical follow up.
- 10) The next ESGC-meeting will be longer (full day) to allow for more and in-depth discussion e.g. in small groups. Participants will be shared an evaluation format.

MEHRD, 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2009