



### **Dr. Michael Unage's Remarks**

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**Honourable Andrew Mald, Minister for Community Development, Religion and Family Affairs  
and Member for Moresby North East, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.**

The National Research Institute's management and staff are honoured and humbled by your presence here this morning, and offer their word of thanks and appreciation. NRI's mandate is to offer policy advice to government that is based on research evidences, and in order to do that a lot of work is required. At the start of this event, the Honourable Andrew Mald was presented with a bilum that contained some undisclosed items, and we may be curious as to know what's in it. Bilum, as you know, play a vital role in the life and activities of many Melanesian societies. For instance, bilums contain items taken to places as one's contribution to be shared, and eventually their consumption. As the newly appointed Minister for Community Development, and as part of our mandate, NRI thought that some research-based thinking might be of assistance as you navigate the Department placed under your responsibility. Those ideas, we presume, are contained in the bilum presented to you.

The National Research Institute is actually a "garden of thoughts". Some prefer to call it the Think Tank of Government, where ideas for policy become generated through research. A garden, in our places, contains heterogeneous crops. Likewise, ideas brewed here at the Institute are many and varied. Generating thinking in the area of community empowerment and development is, so to speak, a new crop added to the garden of NRI; initially as a seed in September 2008, and given the fertile ground, it began to sprout in September 2009. In the early growth stages, it already produced modest results; especially one NRI spotlight and 4 searchlight articles on issues of community empowerment and growth.

In 2010, the program produced its first product called *Community Transformation: Unlocking the Development Potential of the People* in which a group of academics, researchers and community development practitioners contributed papers that I edited for an NRI's Publication. In April this year, a second product appeared called *Community Driven-Development: A Case Study of the Domil Community*. The research report was launched here and later presented to the people of Domil village. A team led by the Deputy Director, Research, went there to thank the people for contributing to the repertoire of knowledge at NRI, and to acknowledge them as the real owners of this information. Fifty copies of the report were given to the Domil leaders, and the next day NRI got a big pig in return.

Today's event signifies the harvest of the third product and is called "*Community Empowerment: Policy Research Framework*" in which, NRI has the honour of inviting the Minister for Community Development, Hon. Andrew Mald to launch. As the tiler in this specific "garden of thought", I am quite content that the land still has plentiful nutrients for continuous harvest.

In the lead up to the final stages of the manuscript, I made a brutal decision to the shocker of the Research Management Team. Even now I am quite in doubt, whether to mourn or to dance to that decision. Violence was done to the manuscript by removing issues dealing with concepts, capacities, processes, and structures for community development, and what remained was the skeleton framework now to be launched. Perhaps, one consolation is that early next year, a publication titled *Community Development: A Conceptual, Procedural and Structural Analysis* will be launched and become available. This and the forthcoming publication are results of desktop study conducted by the community and people project.

All here present are involved in one way or another in trying to influence government policies, and in order to do that we need to be mindful of what policies actually exist, and to draw our clues from them. I only knew of the existence of the Integrated Community Development Policy, when I knocked into Dr Sinebare's office long after my stay here at NRI. Since taking possession of that policy, the program of community empowerment tried to align its publications as either supplements, or as resource

materials for the conceptualization and engagement strategies of the implementation of the Government's Integrated Community Development Policy.

On this note, The Former Minister, Dame Carol Kidu, in her forward to the *Community Transformation* said: (I quote) The publication could be a useful supplement to the Integrated Community Development Policy. From the themes contained in the *Community Transformation: Unlocking the development potential of the people*, sound development strategies are envisaged using the Integrated Community Development Policy as the guiding document. (end of quote).

In fact, the focus of the ICD policy is about Community Learning and Development Centre (CLDC). The publication of Domil Case Study demonstrates a community that has already practiced the concept of CLDC since 1992, long before the ICDP was conceptualized and formulated as a policy. The Domil Case Study report should be the handmaid to those in the Department of Community Development, especially those in the CLDC program.

The now to be launched policy research framework is guided by the Integrated Community Development Policy; however, other policies and declarations do inform the framework as well. They are the National Goals and Directive Principles, the Eight Point Development Plan, the Millennium Development Goals, the PNG Vision 2050, and the Determination Assisting Service Delivery Functions and Responsibilities.

By now some of you might be wondering why the Development Strategic Plan 2030 is not mentioned. I have a case in that the importance of involving people and community in developing PNG has been completely overlooked in the Development Strategic Plan. Partnerships arrangement in that document goes as far as the Community Based Organisation as service providers. Community mobilisation, awareness raising, involvement, and structural alignment and institutionalisation at community levels are absolutely missing in a document regarded as a road map for development.

This framework and the forthcoming publication, indirectly and in its own manner, tries to address this missing link. It is framed by the challenges faced by people in communities, and wishes to offer interventions necessary for research and policy.

Now, I will say something about the Policy research framework by briefly explaining the following tables.

Table 1: *Situational Analysis of PNG's Demographic, social and economic indicators*

Variables	Indicators	Source
Infant mortality total per 1, 000 live births	49	UNFPA
Life expectancy M/F	59.3/ 63.6	UNFPA
Maternal Mortality ratio	470	UNFPA
Primary Enrolment (gross) M/F	60 / 50	UNFPA
% Illiteracy (>15 years) M/F	37.9 / 46.6	UNFPA
Births per 1000 women ages 15-19	55	UNFPA
HIV prevalence rate (%) ages 15-49	1.5	UNFPA
Total Population (millions)(2009)	6.7	UNFPA
Projected Population (millions) (2050)	12.9	UNFPA
Average population growth rate (%) 2005-2010	2.4	UNFPA
% urban 2009	13	UNFPA
Urban growth rate (2005-2010)	2.3	UNFPA
Population ha arable & perm. Crop land	5.4	UNFPA
Total fertility rate (2009)	4.01	UNFPA
% birth with skilled attendants	39	UNFPA
GNI Capita PPP\$ (2007)	1, 870	UNFPA
Health Expenditure, public (% of GDP)	2.6	UNFPA
Under-5 mortality M/F estimates (2005-2010)	70/68	UNFPA
Access to improved drinking water sources	40	UNFPA
Human Development Index (out of 182 countries)	148	Vision 2050

Table 2 The three broad challenges and associated problems faced by communities

<b>Powerlessness</b>	<b>Ignorance</b>	<b>Poverty</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the feeling of vulnerability;</li> <li>- insecurity and anxiety;</li> <li>- uncertainty</li> <li>- indecisiveness;</li> <li>- loss of control and direction;</li> <li>- leadership crisis/tussle;</li> <li>- the experience of power vacuum;</li> <li>- the feeling of haplessness;</li> <li>- personal/communal displacement;</li> <li>- lawlessness and disorder;</li> <li>- Inter-group conflicts;</li> <li>- anonymity</li> <li>- substance abuse;</li> <li>- isolation;</li> <li>- mistrust</li> <li>- lack of cooperation</li> <li>- political instability</li> <li>- loss of communal values;</li> <li>- Corruption/ elite &amp; local capture;</li> <li>- disorganization;</li> <li>- disintegration of community;</li> <li>and</li> <li>- others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- illiteracy;</li> <li>- lack of access to basic education;</li> <li>- lack of access to information;</li> <li>- lack of knowledge and skills acquisition;</li> <li>- array of attitude problems;</li> <li>- lack of critical awareness;</li> <li>- lack of dialogue;</li> <li>- disease and malnutrition;</li> <li>- gender discrimination</li> <li>- witchcraft/sorcery accusation and execution;</li> <li>- aesthetic insensitivity;</li> <li>- inferiority complex;</li> <li>- negative complacency; and</li> <li>- others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lack of choice among alternatives;</li> <li>- lack of capital</li> <li>- poor living conditions;</li> <li>- homeless;</li> <li>- lack of land;</li> <li>- general hardships;</li> <li>- indolence;</li> <li>- lack of ownership;</li> <li>- inequality in the distribution of goods and services;</li> <li>- lack of basic government services;</li> <li>- high cost of living;</li> <li>- cash poverty;</li> <li>- over-population;</li> <li>- External debt</li> <li>- lack of food</li> <li>- lack of market</li> <li>- dependency;</li> <li>- dependency burden; and</li> <li>- other effects of poverty (prostitution, HIV/AIDS, theft, child labor, etc.)</li> </ul>

Flow Chart 3: Strategy of addressing the three broad challenges to achieve community empowerment

