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Governance in PNG is neither worse nor better at its level of development

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is showing long-term signs of marginal, slow improvements to governance, according to the PNG NRI Discussion Paper No. 192 titled **Papua New Guinea Governance Update 2021: Steady as she goes?** The Report is authored by Graham Teskey, Tara Davda, Abbas Maroof and Prashanth Parthiban.

The Paper examines governance in PNG in comparison with seven other countries – including one Pacific Island nation – at similar levels of development and with similar economic structures. The discussion paper is an important contribution to the continuing discussion about governance.

Effective governance occurs when a state has the authority, capacity and legitimacy to deliver public services, regulate the economy, maintain order and the rule of law, collect and use revenue, and act in the public interest.

People talk about ‘governance’, but this paper is unique because it brings established concepts and data to the table. This Discussion Paper provides a baseline for future work and stimulates informed discussion around the policies and programs needed to improve effective governance.

The Governance Update compared PNG’s governance indicators with those of Angola, Cambodia, Lao-PDR, Mongolia, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, and Timor Leste – countries possessing similar income per capita, extractives sector dependency and data availability.

While PNG rated lower in terms of capacity and effectiveness, in the political domain it scored consistently higher in measures of authority and legitimacy, possibly reflecting strong democratic traditions and broad acceptance of election outcomes. If the intention is to improve government effectiveness, there is a need to consider providing social services in every nook and cranny of the country.

The discussion paper was supported by the PNG-Australia Partnership and developed as a collaboration between PNG NRI and Abt Associates.

The Publication and Media Release can be accessed on the PNG NRI website
<https://www.pngnri.org>.

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