

Pacific Regional Policing Initiative

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Report Title:	Mid-Term Review: Pacific Regional Policing Initiative
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Background

The Pacific Regional Policing Initiative (PRPI) was jointly announced by the Prime Ministers of Australia and New Zealand at the Pacific Islands Forum in Auckland in 2003, and strongly supported by Pacific leaders. It is a five-year \$17 million regional programme supported by the governments of Australia, New Zealand and Fiji and working out of Suva, Fiji. The PRPI commenced in January 2004 and is scheduled for completion in December 2008. Its goal is to contribute to a safer, more secure and stable environment in Forum Island Countries (FICs) through developing the capacity and improving the quality of Pacific policing services. The PRPI is seen as a flagship for regional delivery of technical assistance.

Purpose and Objectives

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) (after 30 months of project activity) had four objectives:

1. to assess whether PRPI is contributing to an improved effectiveness in policing in FICs
2. to assess whether PRPI is an appropriate model for delivery of a regional aid programme
3. to consider whether additional funding is required for the remainder of the programme
4. to recommend whether PRPI should be extended beyond its initial five-year timeframe.

The MTR Team added a fifth aspect to the Review: (v) to consider the role and relevance of PRPI within the context of regional policing needs and broader policing assistance to the region.

Main Findings

The PRPI programme team, consisting of contracted advisors based in Suva, appear to have achieved a lot in two and a half years. The Review found that for the most part the programme has delivered an effective and appropriate collection of services that are meeting needs across the region. This has been done in the absence of any broad policing strategy. The Review considered that the PRPI, should not drive the development of such a policing strategy; it should be done by the regional police chiefs (PICP).

The Review found that the Key Stakeholder Group hasn't worked well and the PRPI has operated in the absence of a clear and effective governance framework. The question of governance of Australian and New Zealand support for regional policing is beyond the scope of this Review. However, there is a need for a new governance

structure for all New Zealand and Australia police programmes in the Pacific that also ensures guidance from the PICP. There has been some confusion on the part of national governments and police chiefs whether PRPI advisors have been representing the governments of New Zealand and Australia and their respective policies, and should be resolved as a matter of urgency.

Across the Pacific there are mixed messages being delivered about policing priorities, from basic community policing to countering transnational crime. Most FICs are unlikely to have the sophistication of policing to address regional and global transnational crime problems. Donors and PRPI need to ensure that the primary focus of capacity building support is at the most basic functions of policing: Pacific government budgets are unlikely to afford anything more. Other arrangements are (and will continue to be) necessary to ensure FIC access to other specialist police services when they are required.

The Review found a significant level of in-kind support from the Government of Fiji, principally through the Fiji Police Force. This has contributed significantly to the success of PRPI and has helped to ensure its services are regionally more appropriate. The greater the use of Fijian and other Pacific islanders in services delivery, the better they have been received. A healthy network of personal and professional contacts between police jurisdictions is slowly beginning to develop, something that should be nurtured further.

It is too early to tell whether PRPI has contributed to a safer, more secure and stable environment in FICs. However, it has built a solid foundation and the Review team formed the view that sustained support for basic policing is likely to lead to higher standards over time. This will need to be monitored carefully. The absence of agreed professional standards across regional police agencies and an associated region-wide monitoring and evaluation system will make any form of assessment of progress very difficult.

Feedback from all stakeholders about the progress and conduct of PRPI highlighted many areas that have been particularly effective and relevant. The following programme elements were found to be working well:

- support to jurisdictional planning and human resource functions
- community perception surveys
- the various workbooks on basic policing and the training associated with them
- the programme of training of trainers and operations of the regional training teams
- management training for first line supervisors
- communication and responsiveness to police chiefs and their personnel
- use of assessment and development centres
- the seriousness with which the programme team has taken monitoring and evaluation
- the development of fingerprint identification capability in some jurisdictions

- the regional delivery model, providing services of relevance to all jurisdictions, especially outside PNG and Solomon Islands.

Many suggestions were made for improvements (see recommendations). The five-year timeframe and somewhat arbitrary budget framework has caused PRPI implementation to be at a pace and complexity that is not ideal. The work programme for the next couple of years should be simplified, with greater attention to re-enforcing learning and basic on-the-job skills within jurisdictions.

Donors are receiving a good return on their investment from the consultants on the ground, though there is concern that the cost structure of the project is heavily skewed towards technical assistance/advisor salaries which command high management fees, which may not represent overall value for money.

Summary of recommendations:

- implement a governance structure for the regional initiative, and simplified planning processes
- PRPI should maintain a core focus on community policing and regional provision of basic policing services
- ethics and integrity, including human rights and gender equity are fundamental. The development and adoption of an ethics and integrity framework in each jurisdiction is needed
- more is required to ensure practical application of gender and HIV/AIDS strategies across all programme deliverables, including collaboration with relevant agencies
- policing services should be delivered more by regional police than by external consultants
- improving access to forensic and fingerprint services across the region
- consolidation of community policing
- establishment and management of regional police standards, curricula and training programmes
- the PRPI should withdraw from its current hands-on role and allow USP to take ownership of the tertiary programs and establish its own direct links to the police jurisdictions and students
- future intakes should fall under the normal AusAID/NZAID regional scholarships and awards
- the Annual Planning system for PRPI be simplified to encourage a longer-term perspective for PRPI and stronger ownership of its directions
- forward plans for PRPI should be available to Chiefs of Police in an accessible form and should include rolling country plans for PRPI assistance agreed with each Chief
- Australia, New Zealand and Fiji governments to commit to supporting police capacity development until at least 2016
- establish an incentive-based fund for operational support and monitor against progress on police performance indicators.

Key Issues and Learning for NZAID

Gender and HIV/AIDS

The PRPI appears to have developed sound strategies to address gender and HIV issues. However much more is required to ensure the practical application of these strategies across all programmes and to ensure full integration with other regional initiatives. This should include greater PICP Secretariat and PRPI collaboration.

The PRPI has a sound approach to mainstreaming gender and equity issues across all aspects of the programme, although more women within the PRPI advisory team would represent good role modelling. A simple Gender and Equity Strategy guides this. Significant progress is needed before police agencies ensure the safety and security of women in a custodial situation, in the family or in the general community and offer equal opportunities to male and female staff. There is room for PRPI to do more to support the *PICP Women's Advisory Network (WAN)* for instance, in consultation with PICP, to allocate resources to very practical support such as mentoring for WAN members.

Given the gravity of the threat to Pacific policing posed by the HIV/AIDS virus, the Review team found that the PRPI should do more to encourage the establishment of good organisational policies, expansion of testing and counselling, consistent implementation and ensuring that police personnel, especially new recruits, have the knowledge and means necessary to protect themselves from HIV infection.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is too early to tell whether PRPI has contributed to a safer, more secure and stable environment in FICs. However, it has formed a solid foundation and sustained support for basic policing is likely to lead to higher standards over time. This will need to be monitored carefully; however the absence of agreed professional standards across regional police agencies and an associated region-wide monitoring and evaluation system will make assessment of progress very difficult. Establishing such a system will require appropriate resourcing.

Local Expertise and Networks

The involvement of the Fiji Police Force has contributed significantly to the success of PRPI and has helped ensure that its services are more appropriate to the region. The greater the use of Fijian and other Pacific islanders in service delivery, the better they have been received. A healthy network of personal and professional contacts between police jurisdictions is slowly beginning to develop, something that should be nurtured further.

The management fees under the primary contract may provide incentives to the contractor to engage Technical Advisers rather than developing the capacity of Pacific staff or exploring the possibility of making greater use of existing resources within police agencies. The cost structure of the project is heavily skewed towards technical assistance/adviser salaries which command high management fees, which may not represent overall value for money.