



## **EAST NEW BRITAIN FINANCIAL INCLUSION STEERING COMMITTEE INDUCTION MEETING REPORT**

*This report is compiled by Mr. Tobias Toumne (CEFI's Special Projects Coordinator) and Mr. Busa Jeremiah Wenogo (CEFI's Special Projects Manager)*

### **Attendees**

#### **East New Britain Provincial Government/Administration**

Mr. Peter Peniat, Deputy Provincial Administrator (Socio Economic Services) – East New Britain Provincial Administration

Ms. Rosemary Murure, Advisor, Commerce - East New Britain Provincial Administration

Mr. Ludwig Ngori, Advisor(Policy, Planning & Research) - East New Britain Provincial Administration

Mr. Dominic Huranaka, Advisor, Department of Primary Industry - East New Britain Provincial Administration

Mr. Alkan Mararang, Advisor, Education - East New Britain Provincial Administration

Mr. Peter Tutvai, Acting Advisor, Community Development) - East New Britain Provincial Administration

Mr. Tommy Bossi, Coastal Fisheries - East New Britain Provincial Administration

Ms. Nathasa Aplin, Training and SME Officer, East New Britain Provincial Administration

Mr. John Liskia , Acting District Administrator, Pomio District

Mr. Gogor Lui, District Business Development Officer, Gazelle District - East New Britain Provincial Administration

#### **Introduction**

The following report provides a summary information regarding the East New Britain Financial Inclusion Steering Committee Induction Meeting held in Kokopo, East New Britain Province on February 14<sup>th</sup> 2023. The meeting was spearheaded by the Special Projects Unit of CEFI as part of its “Provincial Government Engagement Roll-Out Program” for East New Britain Province. The meeting took place at the GUNAN-NA-NIVIA(GNN) isolation centre at Takubar in Kokopo, East New Britain Province and was chaired by Mr Peter Peniat, Acting Deputy Provincial Administrator (Socio-Economic Sector).

## **Background and Purpose of the meeting**

The meeting was purposely to formally induct the members of the East New Britain Financial Inclusion Steering Committee with a large focus on educating them on the following;

- The content of the signed MOU and what it entails.
- Their role and responsibility as members of the ENB Financial Inclusion Steering Committee.
- The importance of financial inclusion and why it needs to be promoted and supported by the provincial government.
- To discuss and map out the key activities for the East New Britain Provincial Government in relation to financial inclusion.
- To prepare the provincial government to take ownership of the financial inclusion agenda starting with identifying financial inclusion as one of the province's key development priorities and incorporating it into their planning and budgetary process.

## **Key Discussion Points from the meeting**

Mr Peniat in his opening address highlighted that it is vital for the Financial Inclusion activities to be sustained and supported by the East New Provincial Government. He further stated that, since the signing of MOU, not much activities were undertaken apart from ToT trainings, thus it is about time, the provincial government should ensure that the key activities specified in the MOU are implemented.

In his presentation, Mr Wenogo provided a brief overview of the National Financial Inclusion Policy/Strategy, the status of the financial inclusion in New Guinea Islands and East New Britain, the Terms of Reference for the Provincial Financial Inclusion Steering Committee, the Financial Inclusion Rollout Strategy and touched based on some of the key aspects of the signed MOU between CEFI and the East New Britain Provincial Government that was signed on 22 July 2021.

Mr Wenogo stressed that while some initial progress have been made (such as the ToT Trainings) that was conducted last year), more work needs to be done to fully entrench financial inclusion in the province to address the large "financially exclusion gap". It is hoped that the signed MOU between CEFI and the ENB Provincial government will address this. The setting up of the Provincial Financial Inclusion Steering Committee is one of the key activities as outline in the MOU which should be the responsibility of the Provincial Government. The Steering Committee will be guided by a Terms of Reference (ToR) which specifically outlines the responsibilities of the committee.

In terms of cascading the financial inclusion activities down to the districts and LLG's he explained to the members that CEFI is looking at identifying key economic projects or activities in districts as a catalyst for promoting financial inclusion. CEFI will work with the partner provincial government to conduct as survey on this. The findings from that

survey should help develop an implementation plan that will guide the roll-out financial inclusion activities into the districts and LLG's. Potential MOU's between the districts, the provincial government and CEFI will be explored to pave way for these interventions to take place. He said that CEFI is at present working on a TOR to engage a Technical Expert to help in conducting this survey. The survey will be first undertaken in Milne Bay and West New Britain and then replicated to the other partner provinces.

In closing, he explained to the committee that the financial inclusion roll-out in the province will be guided by CEFI's Financial Inclusion Rollout Strategy which consist of three phases. These phases detail the key activities involved in each phase and the key outputs and outcome that will be achieved. It ends with highlighting the Key Performance Indicators of the partnership. In addition, he pressed on the ENB Provincial Government to invite financial institutions to become members of the committee as they are the key drivers of the financial inclusion campaign.

While commenting on the Financial Inclusion agenda in the province, the acting Provincial Administrator Mr Peniat stated that the Savings culture in the province is lacking, thus it is high time the the Provincial Government take on board the Financial Inclusion agenda as a priority. He expressed strong support for financial inclusion in the province acknowledging that it is critical to tackling many of the provinces' social and economic challenges. Collaboration between the provincial government and the different stakeholders is key. On this note, he noted that although both provincial government and financial institutions have different roles to play, it is important that they complement each other.

Ms Murure supported Mr Peniat's call particularly on the proposal for some sort of coordinating mechanism to be in place within the provincial administration to facilitate partnership among different stakeholders and coordinate financial inclusion efforts in the province. She gave her assurance that the provincial administration will set-up a desk and appoint someone to coordinate and facilitate financial inclusion activities in the province. She added that the initiative CEFI has undertaken especially the Strategy rollout plan and the set up of the Provincial Steering committee should be seen as a way forward for the province. On the composition of the Steering Committee, Ms Murure assured the members that, her office will ensure that they invite financial institutions onto the committee and that she will table the revised membership list in the next meeting.

Mr Liskia enquired when the ToT trainings in Pomio District. He also wants retail trainings to take place in his district. He further enquired on the selection criteria for participants attending ToT trainings for such districts like Pomio. CEFI was asked to provide one.

Mr. Huranaka suggested for a special committee to be established besides the Provincial Financial Inclusion Steering Committee to focus on addressing the financial inclusion agenda internally. He wanted to see that the committee should be able to assist in attending to outstanding matters before the next steering committee meeting convened.

He added that this special Committee should provide report to CEFI's Special Projects' Unit.

### **Proposed Key Action Item**

From the meeting the following key action items were noted;

- Mr Peniat was appointed as the chair of the Committee. Ms Murure was appointed as the alternate chair.
- The steering committee to have two (2) meetings each year.
- The next meeting for this year to take place in June/July this year. The exact date to be confirmed in due course.
- Steering Committee composition to be revised and finalized and tabled in the next meeting.
- ENB Provincial Government to set-up a financial inclusion coordinating desk and appoint a coordinator. Ms Murure to report on this progress in the next meeting.
- Survey on identifying major economic activities/projects in the province to be conducted. CEFI is working on a TOR to engage a technical expert to help out in conducting this survey. The survey will be first undertaken in Milne Bay and West New Britain and then be replicate to other partner provinces.
- Training of Trainers(ToT) for Financial Literacy Training to be conducted in Pomio District.
- Retail Trainings to be conducted. A training rollout plan has already been developed and submitted to CEFI Training Unit for their information.
- Opening of accounts to take place immediately after the conclusion of the retail training.
- 2023 workplan to be developed by CEFI's Special Projects Coordinator and submitted to ENB Commerce Division.
- 2024 Workplan to be developed and tabled in the final steering committee meeting for this year.
- ENB Provincial Government to consider setting up an internal committee to monitor the implementation of the key action items.

## Conclusion

The committee members were grateful to CEFI for conducting the induction meeting as it provided a clear understanding on the intention of the signed MOU and what is required to ensure that the aspiration and aim of the MOU is realized.

The commerce division assured members that they will send out invitation to financial institutions to become members and attend the next meeting. Church and CSO representatives will also be included in the next meeting. Overall, it was noted that it was noted that partnership and collaboration is a way forward for the successful rollout of the financial inclusion activities in the province.

### ***ENB Financial Inclusion Steering Committee Induction Meeting in pictures.***



Image 1: Representatives from the East New Britain Provincial Government pose for a group photo with CEFI's Special Projects Manager Busa Jeremiah Wenogo (2nd left-front) and Agustine Birie(2nd right-front) Front Row: (left - right) Mr. Gogor Lui DBDO,Gazelle District, Mr. Peter Peniat,Acting Provincial Adminsitrator (3rd left -front) Ms. Rosemary Mure (4th left-front) Ms.Nathasa Aplin, Training & SME Officer (1st right - front) Back Row(left- right) Mr Peter Tutvai, Acting Advisor-Community Development, Mr Alkan Mararang-Education Advisor, Mr John Liskia, Acting Distirct Administrator,Pomio District, Mr Ludwig Ngori,Advisor-Policy,Planning & Research, Mr Dominic Huranaka,DPI Advisor, Mr Tommy Bossi,Coastal Fisheries.



Image 2: CEFI's Special Projects Manager Busa Jeremiah Wenogo(Center) chatting with the Pomio District Acting Adminsitrator Mr Liskia prior to the meeting.



Image 3: Mr Peter Peniat (Acting Provincial Administrator) and Mr Agustine Birie (Consultant,CEFI) having a chat prior to the meeting.