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Local Government Accountability in Bougainville

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Abstract

The arguments for decentralisation are broadly about economic efficiency and enhancing democratic practices, such as participation and accountability. Decentralisation reforms in most developing countries are in line with the political arguments for making local governments more responsive to the people they serve, by enhancing greater citizen participation and local government accountability. The lack of accountability is often singled out as one of the main factors contributing to the ineffectiveness of many local governments. Therefore, by using a case study of two COEs in Bougainville (an autonomous region of Papua New Guinea), this thesis investigates what formal accountability mechanisms exist and how these mechanisms unfold in practice, particularly those between the COEs and their constituents. The findings of this research have identified the institutional relationships that the COEs have and – how accountability occurs – within these relationships. The conclusions of this research lean towards the suggestion that the legal requirements of accountability are the likely reason for the limitations to downwards accountability: and yet constituents are finding ways in which to hold their COEs to account.

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Acronyms

ABG	Autonomous Bougainville Government
ARoB	Autonomous Region of Bougainville
BEC	Bougainville Executive Council
BTG	Bougainville Transitional Government
CMP	Constituency Member of Parliament
COE	Council of Elders
CPC	Constitutional Planning Committee
GOPNG	Government of Papua New Guinea
LLG	Local-level Government
MUHEC	Massey University Human Ethics Committee
NGO	Non-government Organisation
OLPGLLG	Organic Law on Provincial Government and Local-level Government
PNG	Papua New Guinea
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VA	Village Assembly
VCC	Village Council of Chiefs

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Acronyms	iii
Table of Contents	iv
1.2 Significance of this study	2
1.3 Thesis Outline	3
CHAPTER 2: ACCOUNTABILITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT (A LITERATURE REVIEW)	5
2.1 Introduction	5
2.2 Local Government	5
2.2.1 Background of local governments	5
2.2.3 Local Government Reform in Papua New Guinea	12
2.3 Accountability	14
2.3.1 Defining the concept of accountability	14
2.3.2 Social accountability	17
2.3.3 Accountability in Local Government	18
2.3.4 Accountability in Local Government in Papua New Guinea	20
2.4 Summary of Chapter	22
3.1 Introduction	24
3.2 About Bougainville	24
3.3 The Evolution of Local Government in Bougainville: from the colonial era to autonomy	26
3.3.1 Under the German Colonial Administration	26
3.3.2 Prior to the Bougainville Conflict	27
3.3.3 The Council of Chiefs	28
3.3.4 The Council of Elders	28
3.3.5 The Village Assembly (VA)	30
3.4 Comparing the COE System to the LLG System in PNG	31
3.5 Events leading up to the Bougainville Conflict	32
3.6 The Autonomous Bougainville Government	33
3.6.1 Autonomy in Bougainville	33
3.6.2 Structure of Government in Bougainville	34
3.6.2.1 The Legislature	35
3.6.3 Accountability Mechanisms within the COEs	37
3.7 Chapter Summary	38
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY	40
4.1 Introduction	40
4.2 The Research Inquiry	40
4.3 Qualitative Case Study	41
4.4 Methods used	43
4.4.1 Document analysis	43
4.4.2 Semi-structured interviews with key informants	43
4.5 Ethics	44
5.1 Introduction	46
5.2 The Institutional Relationships of the COEs	47
5.2.1 The COE's relationships with its communities	47
5.2.2 Working with other COEs	50
5.2.3 The COE and the Village Assembly	52
5.2.4 COEs and Members of Parliament – ABG and National	53
5.2.5 COEs and the Local Level Government Division	56

5.3 The interactions of COEs and their Constituents	57
5.3.1 Facilitating dispute settlement and reconciliation	57
5.3.2 Community meetings and awareness campaigns	58
5.3.3 Service delivery and community projects.....	59
5.3.4 COE Members Maintaining Individual Integrity and that of the COE Office	61
5.4 Ways by which constituents hold COE members to account	63
5.4.1 Direct confrontation of COE members	63
5.4.2 Utilising the existing chief system.....	64
5.4.3 Going a step higher to the LLG Division	65
5.4.4 Constituents resisting COE authority and taking the law into their own hands.....	66
5.4.5 Utilising the Informal relationships within communities	67
5.5 Summary of the Findings	68
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	70
6.1 Introduction	70
6.2 Bougainville within the context of decentralisation in Papua New Guinea	70
6.3 The concept of accountability in theory and in practice	71
6.4 The directionality of the COE's accountability: horizontal and vertical (upwards and downwards)	72
6.5 Discussion on the main research question: How are existing accountability mechanisms unfolding between COEs and their constituents?	75
6.6 Concluding remarks	78
6.7 Recommendation for Policy and Further Research	79
References	80
Appendix 1: Complete list of COEs, number of VAs and COE members.....	84
Appendix 2 Content and first page of the Tsitalato COE Constitution	85
Appendix 3: Participant information sheet in English and Tokpisin	87
Appendix 4 Research question scheme	91
Appendix 5: MUHEC low risk notification	92
Appendix 6: Official clearance from the LLG Division to undertake research in Bougainville.	93
Appendix 7: Participant consent form – English and Tokpisin.....	94

List of Figures

Figure 1. Map of PNG showing German New Guinea (northern half) and British New Guinea (southern half).....	8
Figure 2. The long and short routes of accountability.	17
Figure 3. Map of PNG showing where Bougainville is situated	25
Figure 4. Sources of authority and structure of government in Bougainville	36
Figure 5. Explanation for Figure 4	37
Figure 6. Map of Bougainville showing location of research sites.	42
Figure 7. Number of respondents who recall instances of COE members being accountable, compared to times when they have been held to account by constituents.....	75

List of Tables

Table 1 COE accountability within its institutional relationships	72
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