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Title: Establishing Provincial Archives in Papua New Guinea’s 22 provinces; Taking archives to PNGs 22 provinces through participative public programming

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Room: Ian McLachlan East

Chair / moderator: Richard Foy

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Introduction

Indeed, Schellenberg, one of the founding fathers of the Archival profession makes reference to the notion of establishing of Archival Institutions. In the very first chapter of his book⁴, is the following quote;:

Let Your Eminence give orders throughout each and every province that a public building be allocated, in which building the magistrate (defensor) is to store the records, choosing someone to have custody over them, so that they may remain uncorrupted and may be found quickly by those requiring them, and let there be among them an archives, and let that which has been neglected in the cities be corrected.

- *Emperor Justinian*⁵

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⁴ Schellenberg, T. R. (1974). *Modern Archives, Principles and Techniques.* , Midway reprint

'Establishing Provincial Archives in Papua New Guinea's 22 provinces' is a discussion presentation from Papua New Guinea in view of the 2019 International Archives conference theme, *"Designing the Archives in the 21st Century"*. The presentation is an highlight of work in progress undertaken by the Office of Libraries and Archives with the objective of taking archives to PNGs 22 provinces and the people through participative public programming

The presentation begins with some background defining perspectives and concepts including a brief overview of the 22 provinces. In the main discussion is an outline of the intent of the *Office of Libraries and Archives 10 year (2016-2025) plan*, while the final part of the presentation is an highlight of implementation activities conducted so far. The presentation concludes with a summary of further implementations and recommendations.

Papua New Guinea, location and setting

In this presentation, Papua New Guinea is a nation state within the Melanesian region of the Pacific. It is located north of Australia between 3 degrees and 15 degrees south of the Equator. The country consists of over 700 indigenous linguistic cultural groupings most of which were formerly oral traditional societies.

Historically, Papua New Guinea was colonized by a number of successive colonial administrations British New Guinea (1884-1906) and Germany New Guinea (1884-1914), and certain arrangements under Australia (1946-1975). It was also a theatre of the Pacific War of 1942-1945. It gained political independence from Australia on 16th September 1975,.

For government and administration purposes, the country consists of three interdependent and interrelated tiers or levels of government; national, provincial and local-level government. At the provincial level, there are 22 provincial governments. Of the 22 provincial governments, two are administered under separate legislative arrangements; the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (AROB)⁶. The other is the National Capital District (NCD), the nation's capital.

⁵ Baldassare Bonifazi in his essay *De Archivis*, published in 1632, and reproduced by Lester K. Born, *The American Archivist*, Volume IV, Nov. 4 (Oct. 1941), 237 In Schellenberg, T. R. (1974). *Modern Archives, Principles and Techniques*. , Midway reprint

⁶ at time of writing (June, 2019), this region is preparing to go into Referendum to vote for either greater autonomy or independence

The 22 provinces are political as well as government and administration entities each with a Provincial Headquarter, a Provincial Governor and a Provincial Assembly responsible for enacting Provincial legislations and a provincial flag. There is also a provincial administration, the head of whom is a Provincial Administrator and a provincial public service. Each province consists of Open Electorates or Districts with a District Administration and the Open Member is a National Parliamentarian. There are in total 89 Open Electorates in the country.

At local level are the Local-level governments which are made up of local-level government wards. A ward comprises of census units made up of villages, hamlets, schools, health centres, church missions and plantations.

Archives

The term archives in this presentation is derived from the Australian Society of Archivists Inc (1987) whereby the term ‘archives’ can be either of the three concepts,

- a) the non-current records of an organization, institution or individual which are selected for permanent preservation because of their continuing value, and b) the repository or building (or part thereof) where archival material is stored, and c) an agency responsible for the selection, preservation, documentation and making available of archival material (Australian Society of Archivists Inc,1987)

Establishment of Archival Institutions

The establishment of archival institutions and the reasons for such from the perspective of this discussion is consistent with archival literature. For instance, Schellenberg (1956) writes about the establishment of archival institutions in France in 1790/1791, England in 1838, and the United States in 1934. For the three countries, there had been a state of disarray in relation to the state of records and as in the case of France, a revolution and there was a need to restore the records of a new era. Hence, the four reasons for the establishment of archival institutions by the three countries were in relation to; a) the need for proper housing of information resources to ensure improvement of government efficiency, b) preservation of records as cultural resources of a nation, c) preservation of records for personal interest for personal rights connected to citizens relations to government, and finally d) preservation of older official or government records of administrative value needed by government for its work. (Schellenberg, 1954:8-10)

Fast forward and in recent times (the Archival Platform, 2014) is the case of South Africa where in preparation for the establishment of the new South Africa under Nelson Mandela, we see a redefining of an Archival institution and the establishment and inclusion in *the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* of a *National Archives System*. A system to consist of a national archives to be responsible for records and archives of national governments and agencies and provincial archival institutions to be responsible for records and archives of provincial and local government entities of its jurisdiction. (the Archival Platform, 2014:35)

The *Library and Archives 10 year (2016-2025) plan*

The *Library and Archives 10 year (2016-2025) plan* is a document that was developed and produced by the Office of Libraries and Archives in 2016 and launched in 2017. It provides a roadmap to guide the Office of Libraries and Archives to move forward through observing its vision, mission, goal and the main trust of providing library and archives and records services to government departments, provinces and the people of PNG.

The incorporation of establishing of provincial archives in Papua New Guinea's 22 provinces as an activity in the *Libraries and Archives 10 year (2016-2025)*, is an initiative since such has never been in place since independence in 1975. Also, the reasons for devolution of archives and records services to provinces are many including the ones alluded to by Schellenberg. More so, in Papua New Guineas the reasons for such a move include the following:

1. Most of the provinces are home to indigenous cultural and linguistic societies which are steeped in their own cultural and traditional knowledge systems. The coastal provinces were contacted by European explorers in the 1700s and 1800s. After the Pacific War of 1942-1945, most provinces underwent administrative and government influences and operations and after 1975, all provinces were government and administrative entities, each creating records of their activities. As it is most of the provinces would now be heading for 50 years since Papua New Guinea attained independence in 1975. Currently, all provinces do not have a records centre and even an archival building facility for administrative and historic memory and as storehouse of their indigenous knowledge systems and government information.

2. The National Archives and Public Records Services in Papua New Guinea as an institution of government had its early beginnings in 1957. The function of the National Archives and Public Records Services of Papua New Guinea is stipulated in the *National Library and Archives Act 1993*. It is responsible for the preservation of records of lasting value for Papua New Guinea. And it operates in Port Moresby, the nation's capital and has a branch in the city of Lae, Morobe province.
3. The National Constitution of the independent national state of Papua New Guinea in its National Goals calls for Integral Development of its people, and the Papua New Guinea Government Vision 2050, which is a government vision has pillar one which calls for Human Capital Development, that by 2050, PNG should be an information literate, smart, wealthy, fair and healthy society.
4. The establishment of provincial archives or repositories in the provinces is a statutory requirement, as a result of the National Library and Archives Act 1993, been put to effect as from 27th May 1994. The Act caters for the decentralization of functions related to archival administration. Section 25 of the Act requires government instrumentalities such as provincial administration to work together with National Archives to ensure records worth retaining for period of time are adequately housed in specifically designed archives /records centers built to an archival standard.
5. Indeed, the initiative of establishing provincial archives, are to, provide greater access to National Library, Archives and Records Services information services, develop and improve National Library, Archives and Records Services internal human resources capabilities, knowledge and skills, and for development and implement key policies and directives for sustainable, fair, equal, and quality distribution of NLARS Services.

The mission and vision of the 10 plan is for the devolution of the role and functions of a National Archives and Records Services to ensure that a Provincial Archival and Records services will bring about improved and coordinated effective provincial records and archives management program for greater efficiency in management and much saving in cost of records storage space and equipment.

It is envisaged that Provincial Archival Facilities will promote the development of provincial archives system in the country and serve as information resources agencies in line with national archival services. It is also hoped that Provincial Archival facilities will be respective storehouses of information and societal records relating to each respective province, District and Local Level Government.

Devolution and sharing of Archival Functions

The 10 year plan provides for Quality Archives and Information Services to PNG by 2025 in Outcome NARS 19 – Provision of Provincial Archives, Sub-Outcome 1. Establishment and coordination of Provincial Archives and includes training of qualified staff who will be appointed to manage archival services functions at the provincial level.

Under the sharing arrangements, the Office of Libraries and Archives through a national archives system will; a) undertaken to sign a memorandum of Understanding between the Office of Libraries and Archives in partnership with each Provincial Government and other stakeholders in the province, b) be responsible for two provincial archivists who will be paid under Office of Libraries Personnel Emolument Vote, c) provide advisory services to Provincial Archives, and d) conduct training for provincial archives staff . On the other hand, each respective province will facilitate infrastructure development including; securing of land, and building of records and archival facilities, and purchasing of equipment.

Government endorsement of the Library and Archives 10 year (2016-2015)

The 10 year plan has been showcased and endorsed as a government document to a number of key government authorities. The Office of Libraries and Archives Board was behind the formulation of the Plan and indeed contributed immensely to its final production. The National Executive Council (NEC) was informed by way of Information paper number NG53/2017 and presented at meeting number NG 09/2017 which resulted in the endorsement of the plan through, Decision number NG 70/2017. The Plan was also presented on the floor of Parliament through a parliamentary ministerial statement delivered by the Minister for Education on the 30th of May, 2018.

The plan was also presented before the Central Agencies Coordinating Committee [CACC] at a special meeting number NG 08/2017 through a **policy** statement number 37/2017. Three Central Agency National Government Departments [Treasury, National Planning and Monitoring and Personnel Management] were also consulted for comments on the plan.

Establishment of provincial archives and records services in PNGs 22 provinces

Establishment of provincial archives and records services in PNGs 22 provinces is Activity NAR 19 – *Provision of Provincial Archives*, in the *Library and Archives 10 year (2016-2025) plan* for implementation by the National Archives and Public Records Services of Papua New Guinea. This activity is divided into 2 Sub-Outcomes. Sub-Outcome NAR 19.1 in particular is *Establishment and Coordination of Provincial Archive*.

A number of activities which have already been implemented include:

NAR 19.1.1 Conduct record management survey in each province

This activity has been undertaken even prior the formulation and production of the 10 year plan where the National Archives and Public Records Services has conducted records management survey to most provinces except three provinces. Reports have been produced with recommendations for implementation by provinces. For the most part, currently all 22 provinces are creating records but, do not have provincial records centres and or archival building facilities.

NAR 19.1.2 Submission of reports to National Archivist.

The records survey reports and recommendations for implementation by provinces have been produced and submitted to the National Archivist.

NAR 19.1.3 Information Paper on Establishment of 22 Provincial Archives including facts and considerations.

Under this activity, the National Archivist now Director – Archives has prepared and presented an Information Paper on Establishment of Provincial Archives including facts and considerations and has been fully endorsed by the National Library and Archives Board for implementation .

NAR 19.1.4 Information Paper - Deliberation and Endorsement by Libraries and Archives Board.

Under this activity, the National Archivist prepared and presented an Information Paper on Establishment of Provincial Archives including facts and considerations. This has been deliberated on and endorsed by the National Library and Archives Board for implementation

NAR 19.1.15 Consultation and liaison with Provincial Administrators - infrastructure and manpower arrangements.

This activity has been undertaken resulting in Memorandums of Understanding been signed and consultations with them in progress.

NAR 19.2 Appointment of provincial records and archives officers.

These activity has a number of sub activities including:

NAR 19.2.1 Recruitment and appoint of suitable qualified Records Management Officers/Archivists to oversee the Provincial Archives

Recruitment and appointment of provincial records and archives officers for two provinces have been done for the two provinces which the Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with.

NAR 19.2.2 Design a Training plan for In-house and external training on Records and Archives Management

Training plan for In-house training has been designed .

NAR 19.2.3 Seek and engage development partnership support to invited professionals to facilitate training in country.

A network with development partnerships support to facilitate training in Records and Archives Management in the country.

NAR 19.2.4. Printing of training guides/manuals.

Parbica Toolkit guidelines have been re-printed for this purpose.

NAR 19.2.5 Conduct training workshops, work attachments for newly recruited officers to acquaint themselves with the procedures of implementing records and archives services in the province.

Training is underway for one province and the other provinces will follow suit once MOU is signed with the respective provinces.

Future Activities

There are future implementation activities to be undertaken by the Office of Libraries and Archives through the PNG National Archives and Public Records Services. These include but are not limited to;

1. Development of a national policy for the establishment of provincial archives in Papua New Guinea's provinces
2. Development of a long term implementation plan for the establishment of provincial archives in Papua New Guinea's provinces
3. Provision of sample Archival Building floor plans relating to purpose built archival storage facilities.
4. Further follow up consultative meetings with Provincial Administrations relating to management of government records from creation, use and maintenance , disposition through to preservation of records.
5. Provision of advice to Provincial Governments and Administrations on Disposition of records and what records are to be preserved at the Provincial Archival Facilities.
6. Dissemination of Archival records to provinces where, archival records relating to the provinces which are preserved at the National Archives will be converted to various formats and disseminated to the provincial archives for access by citizens of each respective province and others.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are for further consideration and implementation in relation to the establishment of Provincial Archival and Records facilities and services in Papua New Guinea's 22 provinces:

1. For the National Archives and Public Records Services of Papua New Guinea to have in place short and long term Implementation Plans for the establishment of provincial archives and records facilities and services to Papua New Guinea's 22 provinces. This will include consultations and signing of Memorandums of Understanding with each of the respective provinces as well as other future activities.
2. For the National Archives and Public Records Services of Papua New Guinea to seek funding from FIDA and ICA to conduct training on records and archives management for Provincial Archivists and Records Managers in PNG

Conclusion

This presentation has been about establishing Provincial Archives and Records facilities and services to Papua New Guinea's 22 provinces through participative public programming in view of the 2019 International Archives Week's theme, *"Designing the Archives in the 21st Century"*.

It has been about the devolution of powers a national government agency embarking on building a national archives and records services system with the devolution of archival and records services and functions from the national level to the provincial level.

In taking archives to the PNGs 22 provinces and the people of the provinces through participative public programming based on recent lessons from South Africa (the Archival Platform, 2014), the Office of Libraries and Archives and more so, the Papua New Guinea National Archives and Public Records Services (PNGNAPRS) will be seen to take responsibility for the records at national level of national government departments and public institutions with the 22 provincial archival institutions taking responsibility for the records of provincial and local government entities.

Sources

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PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S 22 PROVINCES BY REGIONS

No	Province/ District	Name	Provincial Headquarter	Region
1	1	NCD	Port Moresby	National Capital District (NCD)
2	1	Western	Daru	Southern
3	2	Gulf	Kerema	
4	3	Central	Bautaman	
5	4	Milne Bay	Alotau	
6	5	Northern (Oro)	Popondetta	
7	1	West Sepik (Sandaon)	Vanimu	MOMASE
8	2	East Sepik	Wewak	
9	3	Madang	Madang	
10	4	Morobe	Lae	
11	1	Manus	Lorengau	New Guinea Island
12	2	New Ireland	Kavieng	
13	3	East New Britain	Kokopo	
14	4	West New Britain	Kimbe	
15	5	Autonomous Region of Bougainville (AROB)	Buka	
16	1	Eastern Highlands	Goroka	Highlands
17	2	Chimbu (Simbu)	Kundiawa	
18	3	Jiwaka	Banz	
19	4	Western Highlands	Mt. Hagen	
20	5	Enga	Wabag	
21	6	Southern Highlans	Medi	
22	7	Hela	Tari	