THE OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY OF ELECTION DATA IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT ON THE 2022 NATIONAL GENERAL ELECTION

OCTOBER 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The University of Papua New Guinea Political Science Department holds a diversity of staff who have regularly participated in the election process through election related studies, election observation and publishing work on elections. The department plans to remain committed to enhancing the electoral process in PNG by growing as a think-tank for elections as well as other political issues in the country. In an effort to further improve the department's involvement in enhancing elections in PNG, the department aims to enter more strategic partnerships and initiatives such as that with the NDI. Hence, this report serves as a means to enhance the electoral process through its findings on the assessment of open election data in PNG.

For more information about this research, please email us at mkabuni@gmail.com.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Elections are a basic feature of democracy, and a strong democracy depends on the upholding of democratic principles. A free and fair election relies on several key processes that occur before, on and after election day. Among other things, the amount of information available on elections is critical, as voters need access to this information to make informed electoral decisions.

"Election data" refers to information relating to the different aspects of electoral cycle processes. The 15 electoral processes that were monitored for this report include: the national electoral management body (EMB) and its administration, election management processes, electoral boundaries, electoral security, political party registration, ballot qualification, election campaigns, campaign finance, voter registration, voter list, voter education, polling stations, election results, electoral complaints, disputes and resolutions, and the electoral legal framework.

The monitoring of election information also took into account the following data principles: availability for free on the internet, granularity, completeness, analysability, proprietariness, non-discrimination, licensing requirements, availability permanence, and timeliness. The monitoring of an individual electoral process is determined to be mostly open, partially open or closed, considering how much information in each process is available in relation to the open data principles.

The scoring algorithm allocates six points for free availability on the internet, three points each for granularity, completeness, and analysability, and one point for each if the data is non-proprietary, license-free, permanent and timely. As a guide, a score equal to or less than 30% classifies data as not open; between 31% and 70% as partially open; and above 70% as mostly open.

Papua New Guinea signed onto the Open Government Partnership (OGP), which aims to address particular policy areas, one of which being the right to information. Being able to perform to this standard in terms of election data contributes to PNG's efforts to uphold transparency, accountability

and public participation, and increase public confidence in both the electoral process and the government of the day.

However, the 2021 report, *Promoting Election Integrity in the Pacific Island Countries,*[1] shows that in PNG election data was closed for the entire electoral process except for Political Party Registration, which was "partially open," while the electoral complaints, disputes and resolutions, and the electoral legal framework, were found "mostly open."

The initial stages of this research included a desk review of all election data available on official sources, such as the official website of the EMB, the Integrity of Political parties and Candidates Commission, and the parliament. The second stage involved a periodic monitoring of election information published on the official online platforms. It was noted that some data that were required for this research could only be found in physical form.

Difficulties in releasing data by EMB and other relevant organizations were prevalent throughout the process, making obtaining some particularly important datasets problematic. An observation that can be drawn from this difficulty is that if data is unavailable online, and obtaining hard copies is problematic for the average citizen, the related process is more likely to be 'closed' in terms of an overall assessment.

The report highlights nine (9) key findings which point to the overall challenges inhibiting the openness of election data in PNG:

- Low levels of education, access to information, and demand for election data puts little pressure on key bodies to make election data available to the public

- Slow move to utilizing online connectivity and the untimeliness of updating online information demonstrate the need to better utilize online systems

- While key legislation is available online, there is little public awareness

- The Voter Look-Up system is a welcome innovation, but its implementation should be strengthened

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[1] Promoting Election Integrity in the Pacific Island Countries, NDI, 2021

- Official data on security incidents is key to assessing how ethnic fragmentation and other interrelated factors continue to drive high levels of election-related violence

- Challenges in gaining access to data from public institutions with key roles in the election indicate a prevalent culture of reluctance to release information of public interest

- Budget and campaign finance data seemed to be the most difficult to access

- Lack of funding has affected the preparedness of the EMB to deliver the election and ensure that key data is made available to all stakeholders—including candidates, voters, and observers—in a timely manner, and

- Poor management and limited technical capacity led to ineffective and untimely implementation of electoral activities.

The report then puts forward several key recommendations to various stakeholders in the electoral process. Recommendations for Government and lawmakers include prioritizing election fundings for next elections, relevant public departments to strengthen the Open Government Partnership (OGP) through working to ensure openness of election data, and conducting a nationwide census prior to the next elections to address inaccuracy issues with the electoral roll experienced in the 2022 elections.

Recommendations for the EMB include timely communication for voter registration sites per local-level governments (LLGs), to increase voter education and awareness, and prioritize the timely and regular update of election information via the EMB official website.

Recommendations for partners, NGOs, and other civil society organizations include support to government and citizen efforts to enhance actions for open election data through technical or financial assistance, provide support to efforts of the EMB in terms of education and awareness on voting and electoral processes, and maintain a continuous public forum through the media discussing election-related issues to maintain public awareness and maintain pressure on sitting government to address these issues through policy making or amending of laws.

Finally, recommendations for voters highlight the need to increase demand for more data to be made public and take on personal obligations to spread awareness on the need for available, timely and updated election data. Recommendations also include that voters need to increase demand for political parties or independent candidates to make their campaign finances available and in detail to the public before contesting.

METHODOLOGY

The UPNG team monitored and observed information under 15 electoral processes over the 9-month period, starting in December 2021 to October 2022. Each team member was assigned between one to three processes and it was an individual task to monitor the availability of relevant information during the electoral process. This had to include information mostly from official sources, i.e., official websites, but unofficial sources were also taken note of such as Facebook pages and the media.

The initial stages of this research included a desk review of all election data available on official sources, i.e., the official websites of the EMB, other relevant bodies while also looking at relevant legislatures. The second stage involved basically a periodic monitoring of election information published on the official online platforms.

It was noted that some data that were required for this research were not found online, but could be obtained offline. However, difficulties in releasing data by EMB and other relevant organizations was prevalent making obtaining particular important datasets problematic.

For data that was unavailable online, the team established a call-back system, in which specific data sets from relevant bodies such as the PNG Electoral Commission and the Registry of Political Parties were requested in writing. Follow-up emails were sent and, after, follow-up visits were made in an attempt to acquire data requested in the letter. The letter to the election Commission can be found in *Appendix 2*.

Each team member had to document their findings on a monitoring tool developed to capture four basic aspects of data under each process; what law/legislation says about that process, what information was found, if it was available from an official source, and if not, where it was available. This tool was used to monitor the bulk of election information necessary under this project (see *Appendix 1*).

This difficulty highlights the fact that if data is unavailable online, and obtaining hard copies is problematic for the average citizen, it is more likely

to have that process 'closed' in terms of an overall assessment of that process.

A scoring system was used to give scores for each dataset under a particular process against open data principles. These overall scores calculated a percentage that determined the openness of a process—a score equal to or less than 30% classifies data as not open; between 31% and 70% as partially open; and above 70% as mostly open. A definition of the open data principles can be found in *Appendix 3*.

SUMMARY OF OPEN ELECTION DATA IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Process	Assessment
Election management body and administration	Partially open
Election management body processes	Not open
Electoral boundaries	Partially open
Election security	Partially open
Political Party Registration	Partially open
Ballot qualification	Not open
Election campaign	Not open
Campaign finance	Not open
Voter registration	Not open
Voter lists	Partially open
Voter education	Partially open
Polling stations	Not open
Election results	Partially open
Electoral complaints, disputes, and resolutions	Partially open
Electoral legal framework	Mostly Open

OVERVIEW OF KEY FINDINGS

The key findings below complement the quantitative analysis and reflect the main challenges faced in assessing the openness and transparency of election data in PNG. Many factors contribute to the results in this section and several identified challenges are recurring. They may be in relation to geography, the level of Internet connectivity, low economic and social development, increasing levels of corruption, ethnicity-related concerns, and the fact that this was also the first national general election held during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The key findings in this report are consistent with the baseline assessment on the Pacific Islands conducted in 2021, and provide additional insight to better understand the country context. The project team hopes that these reflections will inform constructive discussions with elections stakeholders and the government at large to identify ways to improve the electoral process in PNG.

1. LOW LEVELS OF EDUCATION, ACCESS TO INFORMATION, AND DEMAND FOR ELECTION DATA PUTS LITTLE PRESSURE ON KEY BODIES TO MAKE ELECTION DATA AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

Given the low level of education and awareness of election data, access to it is not routinely demanded by the public. Education, in general, continues to be a nationwide challenge in PNG, and many eligible voters do not see the need to obtain such information. Instead, electoral information is generally shared through word of mouth, or more recently, through social media and messaging apps such as WhatsApp.

Younger voters in general possess a greater understanding of the election process, despite relatively low levels of education. This is largely due to the influence of technology and its ability to distribute information published online, both officially and unofficially. However, internet access is still limited in many communities, especially in rural areas, and the majority of citizens may not have easy access to online election information.

The PNG Electoral Commission website, the main official source of information about elections, was back online only at the end of May 2022, after the election campaign had already started. Only then were efforts made to post election information for public consumption. Despite this, the website was not consistently online and crashed frequently in the following days, before it was readily available at all times.

Voting instructions displayed at a polling place during the 2022 PNG election

The PNG EC seemed to prefer Facebook as its main online communication platform, but many users complained that it failed to communicate key information, such as the polling schedule, in a timely manner.

2. SLOW MOVE TO UTILIZING ONLINE CONNECTIVITY AND THE UNTIMELINESS OF UPDATING ONLINE INFORMATION DEMONSTRATE THE NEED TO BETTER UTILIZE ONLINE SYSTEMS.

Although the EMB website is the official source of information about electoral processes and timelines, it was poorly managed, and the data it contained was inconsistent and untimely. In the pre-election phase, the websites of the PNG Electoral Commission and the Registry of Political Parties were under maintenance and inaccessible. When they did become accessible, there was no new information posted.
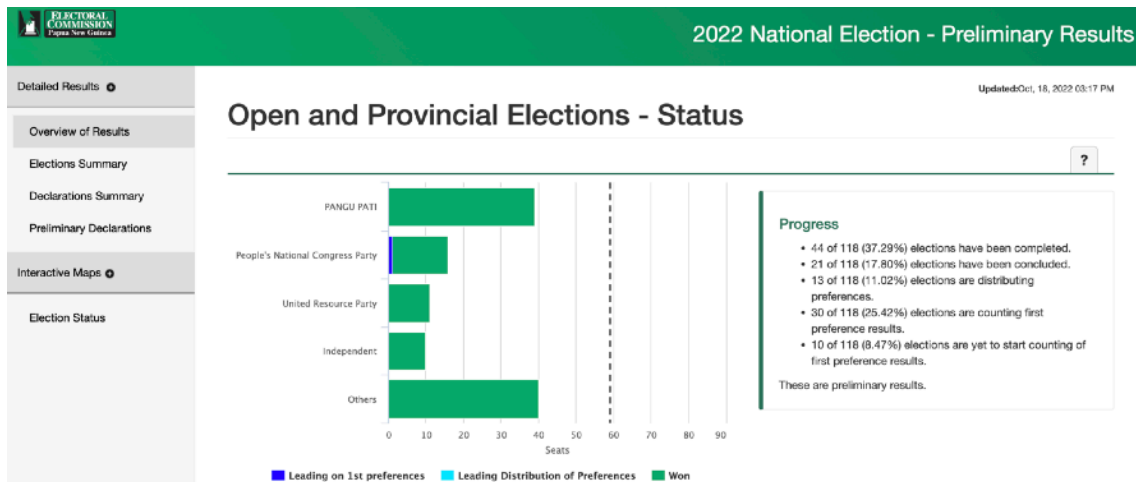
However, the Facebook page of the PNG EC was seen to be a bit more active in putting up information, although at times it lacked relevance and

had typos that led to confusion among viewers. For instance, the EMB Facebook page had published the polling schedule with errors and on the website, the polling schedule would not be made available until after polling began.

The PNG Election Commission website showing vote counting progress. Data retrieved on October 20, 2022. Source: https://results.pngec.gov.pg/

The Election Commission website still showing preliminary results. Data retrieved on October 20, 2022. Source: https://results.pngec.gov.pg/

Throughout the election process, the full capacity of the website was not utilized. Election results were not published in a timely manner, and some officially-declared candidates-elect were still shown as "in counting stage" on the website. Such miscommunications, especially during highly-contested elections when tension runs high, can create a vacuum of information that may lead to rumors, suspicion of fraud, and eventually to violence and a rejection of the election results. Therefore, we assessed that

the PNG EC scores poorly when it comes to the timely publishing of public-interest election information.

3. WHILE KEY LEGISLATION IS AVAILABLE ONLINE, THERE IS LITTLE PUBLIC AWARENESS.

The three main election-related laws of PNG are available to the public, including the Organic Law on National and Local-Level Government Elections (1997), the National and Local-Level Government Election Regulations (1997), and the Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (2003).

These were all available in .pdf format on the Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute (PACLII) website, and are readily accessed via internet search engines. This information is considered permanently available online, given that these laws are long-standing and have been consistently implemented since their passage.

This process is generally open, despite a low level of familiarity among the general public with these laws. However, PNG EC regulations and decisions relevant to the 2022 General Elections were not made available to the public in a timely and comprehensive manner.

4. THE VOTER LOOK-UP SYSTEM IS A WELCOME INNOVATION, BUT ITS IMPLEMENTATION SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED.

The introduction of the "Voter Roll Look-Up App" by the Electoral Commission was meant to allow registered voters to verify their on the Electoral Roll via the internet. However, the voters could not fully take advantage of this innovative tool due to a number of issues.

First of these was a recurring problem related to incorrect information in some voters' details, while other voters found their names registered in two or more wards. Such misrepresentations can be attributed to a rushed voter registration process, which took place within a time frame of just three months. Development delays also hampered the utilization of the app which was finalized late in the registration process, and in turn was poorly promoted. Due to compatibility issues, the app was only available for Android devices, and was disadvantageous to groups of voters based on their access to technology. Taken together, these observations point to the

need for online solutions which complement, not replace, direct and physical means of communication, as large swaths of the rural population do not yet have access to or familiarity with the requisite technology.

5. OFFICIAL DATA ON SECURITY INCIDENTS IS KEY TO ASSESSING HOW ETHNIC FRAGMENTATION AND OTHER INTER-RELATED FACTORS CONTINUE TO DRIVE HIGH LEVELS OF ELECTION-RELATED VIOLENCE.

Ethnic violence has been an ongoing internal security issue that extends beyond elections, and will require enormous effort by the PNG government to address its implications on society and people. The 2022 election has illustrated an acceleration from ethnic violence to electoral violence, whereby the elections are influenced along tribal and ethnic lines. This in turn created tribal fights, killings, and disruptions to basic government services, most notably in Kabum, Makarm, Porgera, Enga, Mendi—in Southern Highlands, the Western Highlands, and the National Capital District.

The tragic loss of life, destruction of public and private property, and tampering with sensitive electoral material (i.e., burning of ballot papers and boxes) were widely reported by the print and electronic media. The media was also seen to be a more effective channel for timely election information, such as through the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), the official broadcaster of the 2022 National General Elections in PNG.

Election-related violence in the 2022 election may well have been the worst in PNG's modern history. Cases of candidate-sponsored tribal and ethnic conflict and other outbreaks of voter violence due to frustration have surfaced throughout the country, with tactics becoming more gruesome and instances of electoral violence spread out across more geographic areas. In terms of election-related deaths, there have been reports of approximately 50 lives lost in total, although this is significantly lower than the number deaths observed in the 2017 elections.[2] These link to other, bigger challenges due to the unpreparedness of the EMB in managing the election process, and lack of education on elections in general and even for scrutineers.

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[2] Lyons, K, (July 26, 2022), Papua New Guinea election violence: what has caused it and what can be done?, The Guardian.

One of which is the low level of education in PNG and some citizens' low regard for the rule of law. For the government, the academia, and the civil society to be able to address the complex drivers of violence, it is therefore necessary to also have access to information related to security incidents—including the violence hotspots, statistics on victims and perpetrators, as well as security policy and plans—to analyze the potential gaps and opportunities to address them from an electoral information perspective.

6. CHALLENGES IN GAINING ACCESS TO DATA FROM PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS WITH KEY ROLES IN THE ELECTION INDICATE A PREVALENT CULTURE OF RELUCTANCE TO RELEASE INFORMATION OF PUBLIC INTEREST.

The lack of information online led the team to request public-interest data from the relevant government bodies. To obtain this information, first we contacted the public institutions via email, and then by making visits to their respective offices. These visits were met with excuses and requests by the PNG EC that the project team provide additional documentation, including a proposal to carry out the research and obtain the requested data on the team's behalf.

This may have well been a reflection of understaffing in the EMB itself, and considering they were heavily involved with late election preparation, there was no one to compile and disburse the information. Further, this data may not have been planned to be released or released after the election process was over. For example, data in regards to ballot qualification on a list of accepted or rejected candidates could not be obtained, and information available on the website and Facebook page constituted the bare minimum in regards to this process, i.e., candidate qualifications.

For certain provincial-specific information, further requests for data were emailed to each Provincial Electoral Office and the Electoral Commission head office, beginning in June to August, with no responses from either Electoral Commission or its provincial offices. The unwillingness by the EMB to release election data was experienced during the main office visits, where the team was advised that the information requested needed to be approved by the head of the EMB, the Electoral Commissioner, to be released. This was similar to the request for data from the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates Commission. Therefore, there may be a need for better enforcement of the Open Government Partnership to

compel the EMB and relevant bodies to make election data available and accessible by the general public via their official websites.

7. BUDGET AND CAMPAIGN FINANCE DATA SEEMED TO BE THE MOST DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN.

Election campaign posters for the 2022 PNG election, Bougainville

Information relating to election finance is among the most difficult to obtain, even from previous elections, and what information that can be obtained is very brief. Information on campaign budget and expenditure is not available and will not be available until after the election period has ended. In the last election, campaign finance information was released after the election and was summarized in a one-page table released in .pdf format.

This one-page report summarized the overall contributions and expenditures for members of parliament (MPs) and political parties in the 2017 national elections. However, this data would be more useful if it was more granular, showing details such as the allocation and specific use of the funds. Data on political party campaign funding was not available on the PNG EC website nor during the team's visit to the headquarters. Their responses were that all matters in relation to the campaign were to be released after the 2022 election.

The 2017 campaign funding report was the only document that was posted on the website; however, the .pdf document posted did not specify the

source of funding, i.e., associations or business groups that supported the political parties. The 2017 report only noted the overall amount of funding support the political parties received in the 2017 election.

The reluctance of the responsible body to release this kind of information reflects a lack of transparency in public service organizations. The concern by the responsible body is releasing private information showing sources of funding for election campaigns.

This lack of transparency fuels rumors amongst the public about the campaign funds acquired by some members to run their campaigns, further endangering public trust in the electoral process. Continuing its trend, information on election finance is the least transparent and less available, making this process continuously closed in our view.

8. LACK OF FUNDING HAS AFFECTED THE PREPAREDNESS OF THE EMB TO DELIVER THE ELECTION AND ENSURE THAT KEY DATA IS MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS—INCLUDING CANDIDATES, VOTERS, AND OBSERVERS—IN A TIMELY MANNER.

One of the biggest challenges in delivering the 2022 election successfully was the lack of funding and delay in accessing it from the National Government. This challenge negatively impacts the effective management of the electoral process from beginning to end, making the work of the EMB difficult and problematic. This was seen in many different electoral processes, such as electoral roll update.

As explained by Electoral Commissioner, Mr. Simon Sinai, the Electoral Commission was ready to conduct the Roll Update in 2021. However, delays in procuring adequate funding until September 2021, and the fact that they only accessed the funding in January 2022, resulted in the Commission conducting the Electoral Roll update for only three months prior to the issue of writs on May 26th.[3]

As a result of these challenges, the voter lists for most districts were incomplete and were not updated, leaving new and seasoned voters without a chance to vote. Another impact would be the violence that erupted among disgruntled voters after they were unable to find their name

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3 Gorethy, Kenneth, (12 July, 2022), Funding Affected Roll Update, Post Courier

on the electoral roll at their polling sites. A clear example can be seen in the East Sepik and Hela provinces, where ballot boxes were destroyed or set on fire because both long-time residents and new voters did not find their names on the electoral roll.[4]

Polling official checking names in the Voter Roll for the PNG 2022 election

In addition, a recent analysis[5] has found that the police face a recurrent funding gap of K126 million per annum and require an additional one-off injection of around K3.9 billion to ensure the Royal PNG Constabulary (RPNGC) can deliver its service mandate. Such funding constraints and lack of manpower have been common problems for the country's security forces, and had likely affected their level of performance during the election period. The electoral process would possibly have had less mishaps in general if funding requirements were delivered on time.

9. POOR MANAGEMENT AND LIMITED TECHNICAL CAPACITY LED TO INEFFECTIVE AND UNTIMELY IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTORAL ACTIVITIES.

Some challenges may have not been due to the lack of funding, but due to ineffective management and sound decisions by the EMB on how to implement certain processes. This may be true especially for processes

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[4] Disgruntled voters destroy ballot boxes, papers, (6 July, 2022), Post Courier

[5] Okole, Midelit, (13 May, 2022), Too little, too late? Securing PNG's 2022 national election?, DevPolicy Blog

such as voter roll update and its management. For instance, there were not enough copies of the Form 11 (Voter Registration Form) distributed in all 22 provinces, and even when there was a bulk supply of Form 11 and a good number of Ward recorders, there was delay in transferring funds or non-availability of transportation to deliver the forms and recorders to their designated wards, which were most often inaccessible due to the rough terrain.

The lack of *Form 11* could be attributed to the decision by the Electoral Commission to restrict its availability to match the estimated 15% increase in new voters (i.e., voters between 18-24 years old) over the last five years. As explained by a spokesperson for the Electoral Commission, the 15% limit was based on calculations of 3% increase of new voters per year.[6] However, we see that this was a miscalculation on the part of the National Statistics Office and Electoral Commission, because there were more eligible voters than anticipated, as described by countless media reports.

Interestingly, seven (7) new electorates were created right before the election process began. However, there seemed to be scarce data on the new electorates, and just as other data sets, specific data were difficult to obtain from the Electoral Boundaries Commission. The only information on the new electoral boundaries from the official sources were the names of the new electorates.

In terms of the polling schedule, the constant changes to the election schedule affected the timeliness of the release of this schedule. For voters, the polling schedule would not have been available until a day before polling began, and then published on the EMB website after polling had commenced. Voters that may have had to travel to vote in their provinces may have had to make rushed decisions or simply chosen to not vote at all.

After the election process had ended, the election complaints and disputes totalled up to as many as 94 after return of writs (Post courier, September 29, 2022) and reached around a 100 by the middle of October. After the election process had ended, the election complaints and disputes totalled up to as many as 94 after return of writs (Post courier, September 29, 2022) and reached around a 100 by the middle of October.

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[6] Maru slams 15% voter registration limit by PNGEC, (11 March, 2022), Post Courier

The National Court Registry of cases. Source: https://www.pngjudiciary.gov.pg/

The National newspaper and the Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea website provide listings for cases filed with the National Court which can also be obtained in Microsoft Excel format, including election petitions. The website does seem to be regularly updated; however, it does not publish the resolutions of these election petitions. Resolutions for election petitions, usually the more controversial cases, may be published in the media, thus making them available for public consumption.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT AND LAWMAKERS

- Prioritize funding for election planning to ensure effective planning and preparation for the elections can be done by the Electoral Commission, such as for electoral roll registration and updates.

- Funding for elections is recommended to be given one year after the elections in order to carry out Voter Registration in all LLGs thoroughly in preparation for the next election. This includes funding for training Electoral officials, such as Ward numerators and recorders. Release of funding early also gives time for a thorough training workshop twice or thrice a year, equipping these officials with the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their tasks professionally with confidence and ease. This would also ensure there are no excuses for delays in completing Voter Registration and updating of the Electoral Roll.

- The PNG Government, through the relevant departments, should work to make compulsory the publicizing of election data as part of its agreement to the Open Government Partnership (OGP).

- Conduct a nation-wide census four (4) years prior to the next general elections in 2027. This would give ample time for the Electoral Commission to use the Census Data in updating the Electoral Roll effectively and completely. Based on Census Data, an accurate estimation of new voters can be calculated and an accurate number of registration forms can be printed. Census Data can also assist the Electoral Commission to update the Electoral Roll unequivocally.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EMB

- Post all Voter Registration sites for all LLGs on a permanent Electoral Commission website and other media platforms some weeks before the actual registration program is rolled out. In that way, more people will make the necessary preparations to be present at Voter Registration sites to register their names.

- In order to create a well-informed population of voters in PNG, the PNG government, through the Electoral Commission, has to conduct voter education and awareness consistently. One way to achieve this is to partner with secondary and national high schools to conduct classes where teenagers and pre-adults learn about the electoral processes, legal implications and the LPV system. In this way, when the time comes for this mass population to vote, we can guarantee they will not face any difficulties and in return help the Electoral Commission to deliver a free, fair and safe election.

- Ensure that a priority of the EMB is to make available election data and news on the official website and to make sure information is released in a timely manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARTNERS, NGOS, AND OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

- Support government and citizen efforts in the country to enhance and improve initiatives and actions for open election data through technical or financial assistance

- Provide support to the efforts of the EMBs in terms of education and awareness on voting and electoral processes.

- Maintain a continuous public forum through the media discussing election-related issues in order to maintain public awareness and maintain pressure on sitting government to address these issues through policy making or amending of laws.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VOTERS

- Voters need to increase the demand for more data to be made public and take on personal obligations to spread awareness on the need for available, timely and updated election data in their communities.

- Voters need to increase demand for political parties or independent candidates to make their campaign finances available and in detail to the public before contesting.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. DATASETS, SOURCES, AND TIMING CONSIDERATIONS FOR OPEN ELECTION DATA

Process	Possible Data-sets	Likely data sources	Timing considera-tions	What the law says about this process?	What have you observed and found so far?	Official source of informa-tion	Availa-ble online
Legal processes							
Electoral boundaries							
Election Management body Administra-tion							
Election Management Body Processes							
Election Security							
Political Party Registration							
Ballot Qualification							
Election Campaigns							
Campaign Finance							
Voter Registration							
Voter lists							
Voter Education							
Polling stations							
Election results							
Electoral Complaints, Disputes and Resolution							

APPENDIX 2. LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS (SAMPLE)

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
POLITICAL SCIENCE STRAND
UNIVERSITY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Dear _____

We are pleased to inform you that the University of PNG (UPNG) has started a project which aims to assess the openness and transparency of election-related data in our country. We believe that a credible election is one that is inclusive, transparent, accountable, and competitive. While many observers focus on the specific event of Election Day, elections are actually a process made up of multiple components. Public confidence in each step of an election process is critical to the integrity of the election. In order for citizens to participate in, understand, evaluate and ultimately accept an election process and its outcome as representing their will, election data must be open to citizens.

In the absence of official data, rumors and disinformation can thrive, leading to the creation or exacerbation of social divisions and a trust gap between citizens and government. Having access to key evidence about each phase of the electoral process is crucial to competently evaluate the integrity of elections. UPNG has a keen interest in ensuring that critical electoral data is available, and in helping stakeholders use that data to enhance the integrity of elections and hold election management bodies and other electoral actors to account. This project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development and has been implemented in more than 25 countries. You can find additional information on this page: Open Election Data Initiative.

We would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you and discuss our project and the data we anticipate we might request from the Electoral Commission in the next few months to successfully implement our goals, and also having your insights on how overall transparency and integrity of the election process can be improved.

As part of our monitoring efforts, we would also be grateful if the [name of stakeholder] could send us the following information:

Election Body Administration
• The Electoral Commission's 2022 budget, detailed by line item, in Microsoft Office Excel or CSV format, by May 5, 2022.
• The campaign regulations, in Microsoft Office Word format, by May 5, 2022.
• A list containing all Election Awareness carried out which must include: (a) Election Awareness topics; (b) Media Platform used; in Microsoft Office Excel or CSV format, by May 5, 2022.

Election Commission, the Boundaries Department
• A list containing all constituency names and a hierarchy of administrative units in each constituency, in Microsoft Office Excel or CSV format, by May 5, 2022.
• Map Files of all constituencies—EC Central or Province-level Branches—please research first which level has authority on this (Provincial and Central ECs).

• A list containing all voter registration center locations for the 2022 General Elections, including: (a) full address & contact details of individual registration center; (b) total number of registered voters in each registration center (or electorates); in Microsoft Office Excel or CSV format, by May 5, 2022.

Political Party Integrity Commission
• A list of all contestants accepted for the 2022 General Elections, which includes the name of candidate and political affiliation, in Microsoft Office Excel or CSV format, by June 15, 2022.
• List of all contestants rejected for the 2022 General Elections, which includes the name of candidate and political affiliation, as well as the reason for rejection, in Microsoft Office Excel or CSV format, by June 15, 2022.

Kindly send the requested information to [email address]

We are also looking to hear from you regarding an in-person introductory meeting.

Respectfully,

APPENDIX 3: DEFINITION OF OPEN DATA PRINCIPLES

Open Election Data Principle	Definition
Availability for free on the internet	Data is readily available online, without any monetary requirement.
Granularity	Data is available to the finest level of detail possible. For example, election results available at polling station level; voters list down to the individual voter; list of polling stations includes the number of registered voters at each polling station and the full address of the polling stations and/or GPS coordinates.
Completeness	Data is available for all items in bulk (e.g., polling stations, candidates, incidents, etc.) at once.
Analyzability	Data available in a CSV or Excel format, as opposed to hard copies, image files, or other formats that are harder for stakeholders to analyze.
Non-proprietary	Data should be in a format in which no organization may have exclusive control of.
Non-discriminatory	No registration requirements to access data; data should be available to anyone and everyone without any limitations such as age, gender, political affiliation, etc.
License free	Data is open for re-use and redistribution for any purpose.
Permanently available	The data should be available for an indefinite period. This can help to evaluate processes that happened back over a period of time and compare with current events and record any instances of progress or retrogress.
Timeliness	The information must be provided as quickly as possible for it to be effective. For instance, voters need timely information about their registration status and where to register, so they can take action before the voter registration phase ends. Near real-time publication of provisional polling station results helps provide transparency in the counting process.